

## Down With UN Starvation Blockade!

# U.S. Bloody Hands Off Iraq!

FEBRUARY 10—As we go to press, the U.S. has announced the deployment of up to 3,000 more troops to the Persian Gulf. There is already more firepower concentrated in the region than at any time since the Gulf War seven years ago, including 20,000 airmen, sailors and Marines, scores of fighter-bombers and a huge flotilla of cruise missile launchers and other war-

ships, including one British and two American aircraft carriers. Defense Secretary William Cohen threatens that any military strike "would be far more than what has been experienced in the past, certainly since the Persian Gulf war." The Spartacist League, section of the International Communist League, calls for unconditional military defense of Iraq in the event of a U.S.

assault. *U.S. hands off Iraq!*

Once again, the American ruling class is intent on butchering Iraqi men, women and children as a show of "strength"—i.e., terror—to the rest of the world. The consequences of this imperialist arrogance are obvious. Yet it took Russia's besotted would-be tsar, Boris Yeltsin, to cut through the smokescreen and warn: "Clinton's

actions could lead to a world war. He is acting too brazenly there." This rational observation prompted an uproar in U.S. ruling circles. The *New York Times* (6 February) denounced Yeltsin's "inflammatory words" as "not helpful." Nonetheless, Clinton spokesmen felt compelled to issue a formal disclaimer that "we are able to mount a devastating *continued on page 2*

# Women and Permanent Revolution in South Africa



Chris Qwazi



Mbuzeni Zulu

**ANC neo-apartheid regime perpetuates superexploitation of black working masses and oppression of women: rural poverty (left), women workers at SA Dried Fruit protest racist and sexist degradation on the job.**

The following article is based on a presentation at Spartacist League forums in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area by comrade Karen Cole after her return from a visit to South Africa.

It is now nearly four years since Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) proclaimed a "non-racial" South Africa and assumed the reins of government. The election of the ANC-dominated government symbolized the formal end to the entrenched system of racist apartheid. But what exists today is neo-apartheid capitalism, a system which remains based on the brutal superexplo-

tation of black labor. This neo-apartheid regime rules at the behest and in the interests of the white capitalist ruling class, which continues to lord it over the vast majority of black, coloured (mixed-race) and Indian people.

Assisting the bourgeois-nationalist ANC in this are the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the largely SACP-dominated leadership of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), who have joined together in a "tripartite alliance," a nationalist popular front in which the workers organizations are tied to the cart of bourgeois nationalism and, through that, to the capitalist exploiters. The expectations of the black African masses have been widely shattered.

Unemployment among black workers—ranging to levels as high as 50 percent—is, if anything, more severe today

than it was before. The ANC's promises of housing for the millions who live in run-down shantytowns in the urban townships or in rural backwaters have proved to be a cruel hoax. Far from eliminating—or even substantially ameliorating—the brutal exploitation, oppression and poverty suffered by the mass of the population, the ANC in government has acted, as we warned it would, as black front men for the white capitalist rulers.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the condition of women in the "new" South Africa. While a February 1997 law legalizing abortion is quite broad on paper, the government won't and can't carry it out. The capitalist class, in general, opposes free access to abortion (except for its own daughters) because it allows women some freedom from total subservience to the family structure. The new law has faced an ideological backlash

from the Afrikaner Dutch Reformed church, the Catholic church and traditional tribal leaders.

But the real obstacles to providing access to abortion are the material conditions—no equipment, no facilities, no doctors. Johannesburg Hospital, the most modern hospital in the country's largest city, can only perform 4 out of the 44 abortions requested every day. In the name of eliminating apartheid "double" facilities, formerly segregated hospitals and clinics are being closed down. In the black townships, many clinics consist of trucking containers welded together. In the countryside, there is one doctor for every 10,000 to 30,000 people. Swamped by epidemic levels of tuberculosis and other diseases of poverty, as well as a sharp rise in the incidence of AIDS, overburdened health care workers can barely

*continued on page 8*



# Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

response without using nuclear weapons," while *refusing to rule out anything*.

Over the past eight years, the U.S. and its allies have already wreaked massive devastation on the Iraqi people. Tens of thousands were slaughtered during the one-sided 1990-91 Gulf War, and many more in subsequent missile strikes against Iraqi population centers, including an attack ordered by Clinton shortly after taking office in 1993. On top of this, the economic embargo of Iraq carried out under the auspices of the United Nations has killed more than a million people—primarily among the poorest and most vulnerable layers—including *well over 600,000 young children*. Iraqi UN ambassador Nizar Hamdoun underlined the horrific impact of this ongoing economic warfare when he pointed out that a new bombing attack would not

lead to "even 1 per cent of human casualties that the sanctions have caused. The sanctions are the silent bombardment of Iraq, but no one sees them on the television screens" (*Financial Times*, 4 February). We say: *Down with the imperialist starvation blockade!*

## Imperialist Rivalries Heat Up

Various pundits have noted that Clinton's bluster toward Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein, Washington's favorite bogeyman, has increased in proportion to the burgeoning sex scandal at the White House. But that is not what drives American policy in the Gulf. As we wrote when the U.S. last threatened to bomb Iraq a few months ago:

"Behind the U.S. military moves in the Persian Gulf is the intensified inter-imperialist rivalry over Near Eastern and Central Asian oil fields and pipeline routes. The Gulf War was an attempt by the U.S. to secure control of the region through projecting its military power, ultimately aimed against Japan, Germany and other U.S. rivals. Following the collapse of the USSR, conflicting interests between the

imperialist 'allies,' which had been subordinated to the anti-Soviet Cold War consensus, have increasingly come into the open."

—"U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf!"  
(WV No. 679, 28 November 1997)

With the exceptions of Canada, Australia and Tony Blair's Britain, the other imperialist powers have made it clear that their support to a U.S. attack is tepid at best. France, whose oil companies along with Russian and Italian interests have signed agreements for a huge share of Iraqi oil production once UN sanctions are ended, has more or less openly opposed a new military attack.

The U.S. gave an example of how it treats its imperialist "allies" last week when an American "Prowler" jet, part of the U.S. expeditionary force stationed in Italy for use in the Balkans, sliced through a cable and sent 20 people hurtling to their deaths in a cable car. Washington initially responded to Italian expressions of outrage by dismissing charges that the pilot had been reckless and denying that it was bound by Italian laws requiring the jet—which had been flying as low as 150 feet—to have been at a minimum altitude of 2,500 feet. This triggered widespread calls by Italian politicians and the population at large for the removal of U.S. bases. While opposing illusions in "democratic" Italian imperialism pushed by the governing social democrats and their "communist" bloc partners, we support the demand for closing U.S. bases in Italy. *U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans! U.S. imperialism—Get your bloody hands off the world!*

Washington has also been unable to garner support for bombing Iraq from its Arab client states. Even the pliant Saudi regime has refused to allow U.S. bases there to be used for bombing runs, and Prince Sultan categorically declared: "We are against striking Iraq as a people and as a nation." For its part, Zionist Israel, which has been passing out gas masks to everybody but Palestinians as part of a war scare, firmly backs the U.S. Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank fired tear gas and rubber-coated steel bullets into a crowd of 500 Palestinians protesting the U.S. war moves against Iraq, injuring 15. And, as was revealed by Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu in 1986, the Zionist state has its own significant nuclear arsenal. For his courageous act, Vanunu was kidnapped and thrown into a windowless dungeon, where he remains to this day in solitary confinement.

As during all imperialist military adventures, the U.S. government and media are working overtime to churn out lies, demonizing "the enemy" and sounding the tocsin for war. Supposedly, the war moves against Iraq are aimed at forcing Saddam Hussein to allow UN "weapons inspectors" free rein in finding and eliminating purported stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. In fact, there is little evidence that Iraq has such weapons. In any case, since the rudimentary technology needed to produce them is much the same as that needed to produce food supplies and other basic necessities, the U.S. would literally have to bomb Iraq back to the Stone Age to meet its stated goal. Indeed, it was with the justification of going after chemical weapons plants that Washington bombed an infant formula factory on the outskirts of Baghdad during the Gulf War.

Meanwhile, Congressional Republicans are pushing for an all-out assault to topple Saddam Hussein. But as the *New York Times* (6 February) noted, "the only sure way to remove Mr. Hussein is to invade Iraq, occupy Baghdad and either capture the Iraqi leader or force him into exile," entailing the risk of massive American casualties. And that is a risk the U.S. bourgeoisie has been fearful of taking ever since its humiliating military defeat in Vietnam. With the ranks of the military overwhelmingly composed of black, Hispanic and other working-class youth who have little in the way of ideological motivation and are merely looking for a steady



WV Photo

During 1990-91 Gulf War, SL called for defeat of racist U.S. imperialism.

income and some job training, an American ground invasion and occupation could be a risky proposition indeed.

All the frenzy over Saddam Hussein's supposed weapons of mass destruction obscures the fact that the American capitalist class maintains not only the world's largest nuclear arsenal but also enormous stores of chemical and biological weapons. And it remains the only power to have used nuclear weapons in wartime, incinerating over 200,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. U.S. imperialism also seriously considered the use of *chemical weapons* against Japan in World War II. The U.S. Naval Institute's *Proceedings* (January 1998) reports on a little-known plan called "Operation Olympic," which would have led to the murder of an estimated *five million* Japanese civilians by dropping nearly 60,000 tons of poison gas in 15 days, and then another 24,000 tons every month until Japan surrendered.

## For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War!

During the Gulf War, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs raised the call: "Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!" In contrast, liberals and reformist "socialists" sought to pressure the American rulers to "bring the boys home" and pushed UN sanctions—themselves an act of war—as a supposedly "peaceful" alternative to direct American military action. The reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) claimed to oppose sanctions and declared that "in the case of the blockade and in the event of an actual war, we are on the side of Iraq" (*Socialist Worker*, October 1990). But in practice, they tailed the liberals. Thus, the ISO endorsed a January 1991 "Campaign for Peace" march in Washington, D.C. which joined the imperialists in condemning Iraq's annexation of Kuwait and called for UN sanctions. In other words, the ISO endorsed a call to starve the Iraqi people with a blockade backed up by aircraft carrier groups, troops and missiles (see "ISO in the Antiwar Movement," WV No. 520, 15 February 1991).

We fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. and internationally as the only way to end the threat of imperialist war. While unconditionally opposing imperialist war moves against Iraq, we give absolutely no political support to the capitalist regime there, which has secured its rule through anti-Communist massacres, anti-working-class repression and bloody subjugation of the Kurdish people. It is the task of the Iraqi proletariat, leading oppressed women and ethnic, national and religious minorities, to sweep away the bloody regime of Saddam Hussein through socialist revolution. The International Communist League is committed to reforging Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution, linking the struggle for the emancipation of the toilers of the Near East to the fight for socialist revolutions around the world, especially against the main enemy of humanity—U.S. imperialism. ■



TROTSKY

## Democratic Tasks and Permanent Revolution

The various "socialists" who support Nelson Mandela's African National Congress in South Africa implicitly or explicitly embrace the dogma of "two-stage revolution," which ties the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and puts off the struggle for proletarian power to an indefinite future. The October Revolution of 1917 confirmed the perspective of permanent revolution advanced by Leon Trotsky, who argued that

the resolution of the historic tasks of the bourgeois revolution in backward Russia required the proletarian seizure of power. Stalin/Bukharin's revival of the Mensheviks' stagist formula paved the way for the bloody defeat of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27. In the wake of this betrayal, Trotsky generalized the program of permanent revolution as applicable to all countries of belated capitalist development.

The peculiarities of a country which has not accomplished or completed its democratic revolution are of such great significance that they must be taken as the basis for the programme of the proletarian vanguard. Only upon the basis of such a *national* programme can a Communist party develop its real and successful struggle for the majority of the working class and the toilers in general against the bourgeoisie and its democratic agents.

The possibility of success in this struggle is of course determined to a large extent by the role of the proletariat in the economy of the country, and consequently by the level of its capitalist development. This, however, is by no means the only criterion. No less important is the question whether a far-reaching and burning problem "for the people" exists in the country, in the solution of which the majority of the nation is interested, and which demands for its solution the boldest revolutionary measures. Among problems of this kind are the agrarian question and the national question, in their varied combinations. With the acute agrarian problem and the intolerable national oppression in the colonial countries, the young and relatively small proletariat can come to power on the basis of a *national democratic* revolution sooner than the proletariat of an advanced country on a purely *socialist* basis....

A country can become "ripe" for the dictatorship of the proletariat not only before it is ripe for the independent construction of socialism, but even before it is ripe for far-reaching socialization measures. One must not proceed from a preconceived harmony of social development. The law of uneven development still lives, despite the tender theoretical embraces of Stalin. The force of this law operates not only in the relations of countries to each other, but also in the mutual relationships of the various processes within one and the same country. A reconciliation of the uneven processes of economics and politics can be attained only on a world scale. In particular this means that the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in China cannot be considered exclusively within the limits of Chinese economics and Chinese politics.

It is precisely here that we come up against the two mutually exclusive standpoints: the international revolutionary theory of the permanent revolution and the national-reformist theory of socialism in one country. Not only backward China, but in general no country in the world can build socialism within its own national limits: the highly-developed productive forces which have grown beyond national boundaries resist this, just as do those forces which are insufficiently developed for nationalization.

—Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution* (1931)



LENIN

# WORKERS VANGUARD

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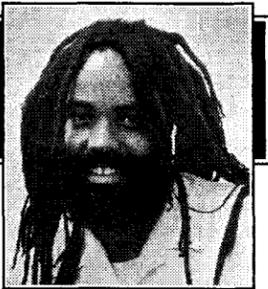
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13 February 1998

## From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal



### La Amistad and American Law

The film and publishing worlds are all abuzz over the controversy brewing around the Stephen Spielberg work, *Amistad*, and claims of plagiarism made by acclaimed writer, Ms. Chase-Ribaud. Not having seen it, however, the writer thinks it premature to offer an opinion at this time.

The story of the Spanish schooner *La Amistad* is a very real historical drama that provides some interesting insights into the struggle for freedom in an age of global white supremacy and unbridled capitalist greed that fed on Black misery and stolen labor.

In short, it is the story of how 49 captured and chained Africans, while being shipped from Havana, Cuba to Puerto Principe, escaped from their shackles, slew the crew of slave traffickers, including the captain, leaving alive two Spaniards (Ruiz and Montez) only on the condition that they navigate the vessel back east to Africa. Ruiz and Montez deceived the Africans, who were unfamiliar with navigation, by sailing east during the day, but west by night, thereby bringing the vessel into U.S. coastal waters. When the Africans went on shore for provisions they were met and seized by officers and crew of the U.S. Brig Washington. Once again, these Africans were shackled, this time by officers and representatives of the U.S. government. The schooner *Amistad* was seized for salvage, and Spanish diplomats filed a formal request for the return of their "pirated" property: the boat, its cargo, and 49 Africans, called "ladinoes" in their papers.

Most readers know that the Spanish diplomatic effort failed, and that the Africans prevailed in their suit for freedom, both in the Connecticut District Court and in the U.S. Supreme Court in 1841. Why?

At the time of the decision, both America and the Spanish colony of Cuba were firmly held slave societies, each with millions of Africans in bondage. The case began less than 10 years after Nat Turner and his rebels rocked the nation with a slave revolt in Southampton County, Virginia. Fifteen years after *Amistad*, this same court would rule in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) that people of the "negro African race" were "regarded as beings...so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect."

How then, can one reconcile the seemingly liberating message of *The U.S. v. The Libelants, etc., of the Schooner Amistad* with the damning repression voiced in *Dred Scott*?

To read the actual opinion of the court offers us invaluable insights and answers this question. Justice Joseph Story, who wrote the opinion in the case, left little room for the popular illusion that the *Amistad* case was about slavery—it was really about international law:

"If these negroes were, at the time, lawfully held as slaves under the laws of Spain, and recognized by those laws as property capable of being lawfully bought and sold, we see no reason why they may not justly be deemed within the intent of the treaty to be included under the domination of merchandise, and, as such, ought to be restored to the claimants;..." (*Amistad*, p. 591)

Having secured counsel, "Cinque" (his real name, Singbe-pieh) and the other captives argued that they were *unlawfully* seized in Africa, *unlawfully* taken to Cuba, and, as free-born Africans, fully entitled to resist slavery. The lawfulness of the Slave Trade was a

crucial issue to the court, but international law was the determinant:

"Nothing is more clear in the law of nations, as an established rule to regulate their rights and duties, and intercourse, than the doctrine that the ship's papers are but prima facie evidence, and that, if they are shown to be fraudulent, they are not to be held proof of any valid title." (p. 595)

The problem, Justice Story wrote, was that the "negroes"... "had been transported from Africa, in violation of the laws of the United States..." and the "law of Spain itself."

That "Cinque" (Singbe-pieh) and his fellow captives were finally freed from their American captivity by a court composed primarily of slaveowners was a remarkable, and unprecedented, achievement. We are rightly and justly inspired by their passionate struggle for freedom from Spanish and U.S. shackles, and their victory.

For Africans born in the U.S., however, it brought them no closer to freedom.

Unlike the captives of the *Amistad*, international law did not apply to their wretched condition, and for them, as well as those shackled Black millions in Cuba, there was little to celebrate with this decision.

1 January 1998

© 1998 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

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

## A System of Barbaric, Racist State Murder

# Abolish the Death Penalty!

We publish below a statement issued by the Partisan Defense Committee following the February 3 execution of Karla Faye Tucker in Texas.

The decision by Texas state officials to execute Karla Faye Tucker, in the face of an unprecedented array of protest both here and internationally, is a statement that the American ruling class will accept no constraints in implementing the ultimate weapon in its bloody arsenal of state repression. Tucker was the first woman to be put to death by the state of Texas since the Civil War. But in the three decades since executions were resumed in this country after a brief pause in the early 1970s, 144 men have been legally murdered in Texas alone.

As he has consistently, Governor George Bush once again refused appeals for clemency or even for a stay, making this the 59th execution he has overseen in his three years in office. But Texas is hardly alone. The death penalty is now the law of the land in 38 of the 50 states. Under Democratic president Bill Clinton, the federal government has extended the death penalty to scores of offenses and gutted the right of *habeas corpus*, paving the way for a massive acceleration of the assembly line of death. Clinton made his intentions clear in 1992, by personally presiding over the execution in Arkansas of Rickey Ray Rector—a brain-damaged, 38-year-old black man—as the centerpiece of his election campaign.

Since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court has sanctioned the legal lynching of 438 people, including juveniles and the mentally ill and incompetent. In twice turning down Tucker's petitions for a stay, the Court has declared the death chamber to be the last bastion of equal opportunity in

this increasingly raw and desperate capitalist society. Two more women await execution in the coming weeks: 54-year-old Judi Buenoano in Florida and Erica Sheppard, a 24-year-old mother of three in Texas.

Karla Faye Tucker was white, a woman and a "born again" Christian. These attributes drew to her cause even such rabidly racist and pro-death forces as right-wing Christian fundamentalist Pat

alty because we do not accord to the state the right to decide who lives and who dies. The system of official state murder intensifies the brutality and barbarity of society in all respects, and, in this deeply bigoted capitalist country, it is racist legal lynching, directly descended from the Slave Codes and the subsequent lynch law of Jim Crow which was used to terrorize the oppressed into submission.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal exem-



Chicago, 1995: Protest against threatened execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Robertson. Liberal abolitionist Steven Hawkins, executive director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, said: "Miss Tucker has given us a human face again." Tucker's face was no more "human" than the nearly 3,400 other people crowding the country's death rows. The distinction is that they are overwhelmingly poor and black or Hispanic; they will never be granted "redemption" in the eyes of this racist capitalist system.

The Partisan Defense Committee is unequivocally opposed to the death pen-

altes what the death penalty in America is all about. A black man, an eloquent writer and radio journalist, a determined fighter against social oppression, Mumia was framed up and railroaded to Pennsylvania's death row on bogus charges of killing a Philadelphia policeman because of his outspoken defense of the tiny MOVE organization, because of his history as a leading activist in the Black Panther Party, because he was and remains a thorn in the side of the racist capitalist rulers and their armed guardians, the cops. Governor Tom Ridge has already

announced he will sign a new death warrant immediately if Jamal's current legal appeal is rejected by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. If Texas is the capital of legal lynching, Pennsylvania is "gearing up to be the Texas of the North," as Pierre Sane, the secretary-general of Amnesty International, put it following a recent prison interview with Mumia. Sane added, "In the imposition of the death penalty, Philadelphia is the single most racially biased jurisdiction in the United States. Worse than Georgia. Worse than Mississippi. Worse than Alabama."

The struggle for Mumia Abu-Jamal's life and freedom must be taken up by the powerful, integrated labor movement as the rallying cry for the abolition of the death penalty as a whole. In acting for its own interests and those of all the oppressed, the working class must break the chains with which the labor bureaucracy ties it to the capitalist rulers and the Democratic Party in particular and fight for a workers government.

The death penalty combines the arbitrary cruelty and torture of an earlier era with the ruthless machinery of the modern capitalist state. The lethal injection which was used to kill Tucker is promoted as the sanitized, "civilized" way of death, but it is actually the essence of high-tech barbarity. We salute the simple decency and courage of inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary, the notorious hellhole at Angola, who, in 1991, carried out an integrated protest in solidarity with prisoners who refused to build a "hospital examination" table, destined to be used for future executions.

The death penalty is at the forefront of the bourgeoisie's drive for increased state repression to maintain its rule in a decaying system which offers working people fewer rights, fewer jobs, less housing, education and medical care. The rising curve of official executions parallels the unofficial street executions carried out by cops in the ghettos and barrios under cover of the so-called "war on drugs." The racism, barbarism and degradation fostered by the capitalist system will not be done away with this side of a socialist revolution. ■

# Young Spartacus

## Enlightenment Rationalism and the Origins of Marxism

The first four parts of this series, based on two presentations given by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour during an SL internal class series last summer on the origins of Marxism, were published in WV Nos. 673, 674, 675 and 683 (5 September, 19 September, 3 October 1997 and 30 January 1998).

### PART FIVE

To understand the politics of the mature Hegel, it is necessary to understand the meaning of liberalism—both the term and, more importantly, the underlying concept—in the age of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic empire. Liberalism represented a middle ground between reaction and democracy, between right and left.

Reactionaries wanted to turn the calendar back to before 1789, to restore monarchical absolutism—backed by a state church—which would suppress all political and religious dissent. In a formal sense, democracy meant a republic with a government elected on the basis of universal male suffrage. However, democracy also had a strong connotation of social leveling shading into communism, a connotation reinforced by the course of the French Revolution. It was assumed on all points of the political spectrum that if the workers and peasants were allowed to vote in a government, that government would take from the rich to give to the poor. In short, “democrat” in those days was a soft-core term for “red.”

Liberalism meant support for a constitutional monarchy in which the king shared power with a parliament representing men of property. Liberals generally favored religious tolerance, considerable freedom for intellectual discourse and government support for scientific investigation and technological progress. They opposed the legal privileges of the nobility and advocated equality before the law (but *not* equality in making the laws). In short, liberalism represented the interests of the bourgeoisie as against the landed nobility on the right and the workers and peasants on the left.

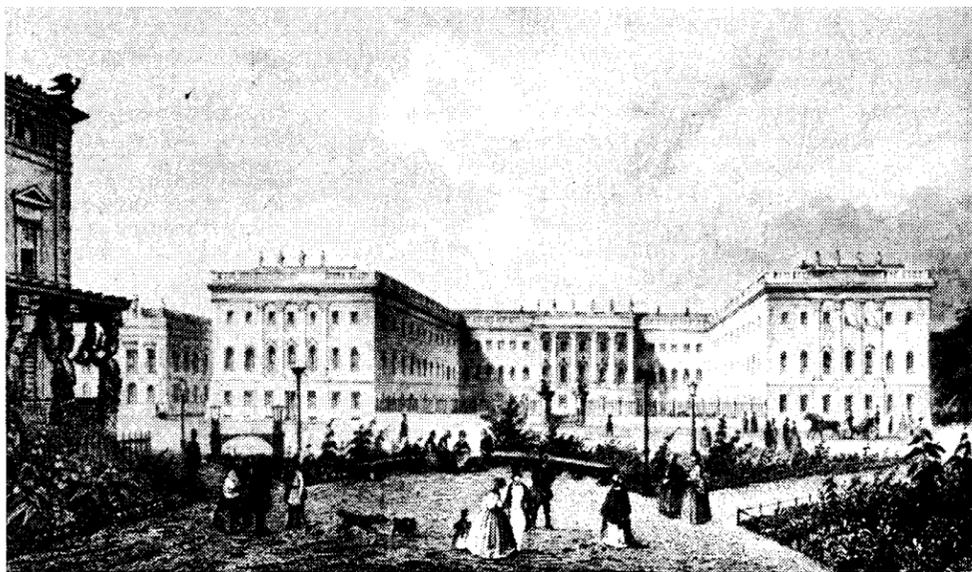
Liberalism in this sense did not come to Germany through revolution or even internally generated reform but through

military conquest from without. In 1807, Napoleon defeated the Prussian army at the battle of Jena. He then occupied western and southern Germany, which he proceeded to reconstruct along the lines of post-revolutionary France. In a letter of instruction to his younger brother



Historia Photo, Bad Sachsa

Georg Hegel exercised a profound influence on younger generation of progressive German intellectuals as head of the philosophy department in the 1820s at University of Berlin (right), today Humboldt University.



F. Hirchenhein

Jerome, whom he had installed as king of a newly created western German state, Napoleon wrote:

“What German opinion impatiently demands is that men of no rank, but of marked ability, shall have an equal claim upon your favour and your employment; and that every trace of serfdom, or of a feudal hierarchy between the sovereign and the lowest class of his subjects, shall be done away with. The benefits of the Code Napoleon, public trial, and the introduction of juries will be the leading features of your government.... What people will want to return under the arbitrary Prussian rule, once it has tasted the benefits of a wise and liberal administration?”

—quoted in George Rudé, *Revolutionary Europe 1783-1815* (1964)

When Napoleon wrote of winning over German opinion, he did not, of course, mean the opinion of workers and peasants but that of the bourgeoisie and its intellectual representatives, like Hegel. And to a large extent he succeeded in doing so, at least initially. A few years earlier, the great German composer Beethoven dedi-

cated his Third Symphony, the *Eroica*, to Napoleon, although he soon became disillusioned with the liberal emperor. Beethoven was more radical and idealistic than Hegel, who remained a loyal supporter of Napoleon to the end, and even after the end. Hegel edited a pro-French

in the educational system a climate of religious tolerance and respect for intellectual discourse.

Following Napoleon's downfall in 1815, Hegel sought to preserve and cautiously extend the liberal reforms and intellectual climate engendered by the

newspaper under the Napoleonic occupation and then became head of a prestigious *gymnasium*, equivalent to an elite prep school like Eton in England or Andover in the U.S.

Not all of Germany was incorporated into the Napoleonic empire. The Kingdom of Prussia, while stripped of its western provinces, remained an independent state in northeastern Germany, then a relatively economically backward region. This proved to be unfortunate, not only for Napoleon but for the future course of world history, in other words, for us as well.

### Liberalism and Absolutism in Prussia

The defeat at Jena had a traumatic effect on the Prussian ruling class, the so-called Junkers. Dominant elements among them recognized they would have to reform and modernize the Prussian state if it was to survive in the Europe of Napoleon. One of the leading reformers, Prince Hardenberg, who later became Hegel's patron, wrote in 1807:

“The illusion that one can resist the revolution most surely by holding fast to the old and by vigorously persecuting the principles that hold sway in such times has in fact resulted in producing the revolution and in giving it a steadily expanding influence. The authority of those principles is so great, they are so generally acknowledged and promulgated, that the state that does not adopt them shall be faced either with accepting them forcibly, or with its own downfall.”

—quoted in Jacques D'Hondt, *Hegel in His Time* (1988)

The so-called “era of reforms” did not change the class nature of the Prussian state. It remained an absolutist monarchy dominated by the Junker nobility. But the Prussian state acquired a liberal façade which was most visible in the sphere of education and intellectual life. State-funded public schools were provided at nominal fees for all young males, both Protestant and Catholic. This engendered

French occupation. He denounced reactionary attempts to restore the institutions and conditions of the old Germany:

“We must oppose this mood which always uselessly misses the past and yearns for it. That which is old is not to be deemed excellent just because it is old, and from the fact that it was useful and meaningful under the different circumstances, it does not follow that its preservation is commendable under changed conditions—quite the contrary.... The world has given birth to a great epoch.”

—quoted in Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (1972)

In 1818, Hegel accepted an invitation by the Prussian government to become head of the philosophy department at the University of Berlin, the most prestigious academic institution in Germany. In 1830, he was elevated to rector of the university. He was thus very much an establishment intellectual. It has become common to maintain that Hegel in his last years idealized the Prussian state as the very embodiment of reason in the Europe of his day. This is a distortion or, at any rate, an oversimplification of Hegel's views, one which Marx carefully avoided in criticizing Hegel.

Hegel believed that the Prussian state could organically evolve into one fully representing the principles of reason, not that it actually did so. His principal work of political philosophy, the *Philosophy of Right*, which was written in this period, is implicitly critical of the Prussian state from a liberal standpoint. It advocated a parliamentary-type body representing public opinion, which did not then exist in Prussia. It advocated civil rights for Jews, rights which did not then exist in Prussia. It advocated official tolerance for those Christian sects such as the Quakers and Anabaptists whose members opposed in principle serving in the Prussian army.

In short, Hegel was a liberal by the standards of the Germany of his day. Furthermore, the policies of the Prussian

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government in the 1820s, especially in education and intellectual life, were relatively liberal amid the extremely reactionary conditions of post-Napoleonic Europe. I am emphasizing this because it is necessary to understand the *subsequent* divisions and breakup of the Hegelian school after Hegel's death. Had Hegel been a reactionary supporter of monarchical absolutism and Christian orthodoxy, how could a significant current of his followers have become radical democrats, atheists and even communists?

There have been more than a few historical conjunctures over the past 200 years in which young liberal intellectuals have been propelled toward the radical left. The 1960s in the U.S. was such a conjuncture. Most of the older comrades in this room, myself included, began their political activism as liberals. On the other hand, I suspect very few of you, if anyone, first became involved in politics as a flag-waving American patriot, a hardline racist or a religious fundamentalist.

## Hegel's Philosophy

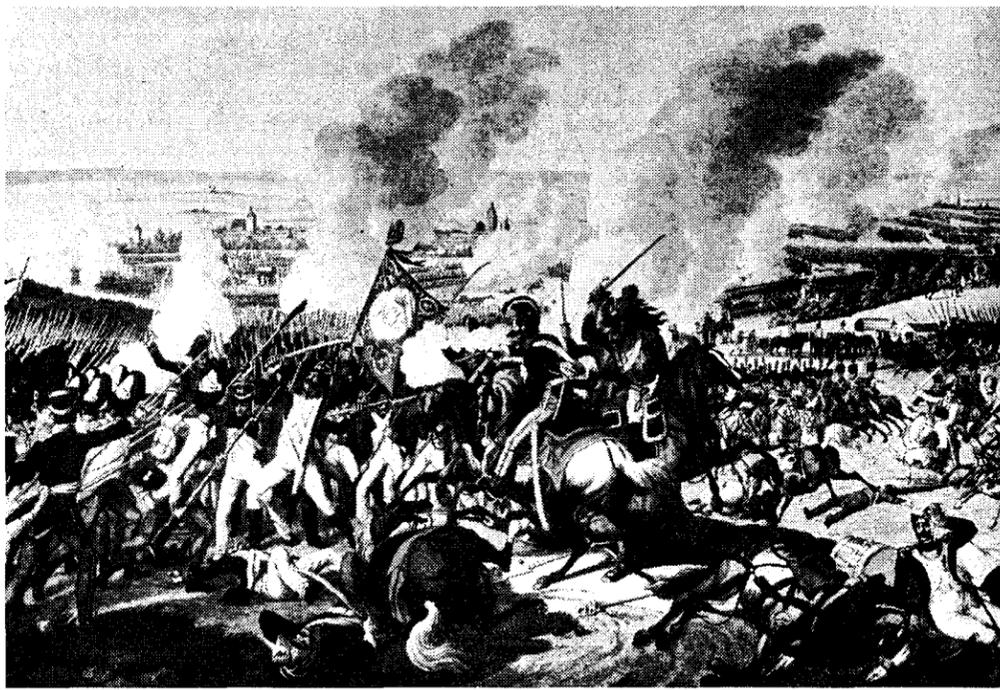
Hegel has a well-deserved reputation for being the most tortuously obscure, the most impossibly difficult to understand of any major thinker. Key terms in his philosophical system—spirit, reason, reality, existence—are invested with a meaning very different not only from our understanding of them but also from the understanding of other German philosophers in his own lifetime. After Hegel's major work, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, was published in 1807, the German philosopher Schelling, his friend since their university days, complained in a letter to Hegel that the book made no sense to him. So if you've tried reading Hegel and given it up as hopeless, you have a lot of company.

There's another reason that Hegel is difficult for us to understand that has as much to do with us as with Hegel. When we consider the concept of god and religious ideas, we naturally have in mind the Judeo-Christian tradition. In this tradition, god is an all-powerful supernatural patriarch. God gives Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai; he destroys Sodom and Gomorrah to punish the sinfulness of their inhabitants. God is the big boss, the top honcho. As they say in the mafia, *il capo di tutti capi*, the boss of all bosses.

But Hegel's god is not the great mafia don in the sky. His conceptual framework was rooted in ancient Greek philosophy. In a sense, he was the last of the ancient Greek philosophers and was regarded by his followers as the Aristotle of the modern age. It's no accident that as a young Hegelian philosopher, Marx chose to write his doctoral dissertation comparing two schools of ancient Greek philosophy.

In ancient Greek philosophy, the line between the profane and the divine is *not* between the natural and the supernatural but between the ephemeral and the eternal. The human body is regarded as profane because it is subject to decay and death. Mathematics, on the other hand, is divine because it embodies eternal and unchanging truths. The square root of four is always two, from the beginning of time to the end of time. Similarly, the value of pi as the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter is unchanging. Thus, for Plato, Aristotle and their followers the study of mathematics is divine not because it endows one with magical powers but because one thereby acquires knowledge of that which is eternal and unchanging. The same is true for philosophy and also astronomy, since the ancient Greeks believed that the heavenly bodies were fixed in space.

Hegel's conceptions are rooted in ancient Greek philosophy, especially neo-Platonism, and also in certain currents of Christian mysticism. A key element of this tradition is that god exists *through* man, through his consciousness and faith, not outside and independently of man.



Historisches Museum, Frankfurt am Main



Bibliothèque Nationale

**Battle of Leipzig, 1813: Napoleon's defeat by the Russian and Prussian armies ushered in a period of reaction throughout Europe.**

Thus the medieval German mystic Meister Eckhart wrote: "The eye with which God sees me, is the eye with which I see Him, my eye and His eye are one.... If God were not, I should not be, and if I were not, He too would not be" (quoted in J.N. Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-Examination* [1958]).

For Hegel, god—which he prefers to call "the absolute"—is *not* a supernatural entity but a process of formation. He thus gives divinity a historical character: there is a single, necessary chain of development from the primordial creation of matter to the highest level of human consciousness attained by philosophy. Nature is considered to be a lower phase in the self-development of the

prehends the entire previous course of nature and spirit. The achievement of absolute knowledge by man is at the same time for Hegel the achievement of god's own self-consciousness: "God is only God if he knows himself; furthermore, his knowing himself is his self-consciousness in man and man's knowledge of God which leads to man's knowledge of himself *in God*" (quoted in Nicholas Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx* [1967]).

Hegel is not only tortuously obscure but is regarded as a very humorless guy. Well, Voltaire he ain't. Nonetheless, he seems to have had a bit of a sense of humor and even a capacity to make light

on instruments the way other people heard it. A poet might compose a poem in his head before he writes it down on paper or recites it aloud. A computer programmer might have a new program in mind before he sits down at a keyboard and transforms it into electrical impulses. In intellectual activity, ideas often precede and determine their material and public manifestations.

For Hegel, man—in the natural, biological sense—is to thought what a piano is to music: man exists so that thinking can exist. For materialists, it's the other way around: thinking exists so that man can exist and survive. And let's not be human chauvinists about this. Thinking exists also so that wolves and cats can exist. Take my cat Bubula, for example. She thinks so that she can catch birds and swipe my lunch meat when I'm not looking. She does not catch birds and swipe my lunch in order to contemplate the world spirit. In fact, she doesn't think much about the world spirit at all since she can neither eat it nor play with it.

## Does History Have a Conscious Aim?

A modern student of Hegel, J.N. Findlay, accurately defined his philosophy as teleological idealism:

"He employs throughout the Aristotelian notion of teleology or final causation, and he holds Mind or Spirit to be the final form, the goal or 'truth' of all our notions and the world.... Hegel's thoroughgoing teleology means, further, that nothing whatever in the world or our thought can have any meaning or function but to serve as a condition for the activities of self-conscious Spirit."

Teleological idealism ascribes to nature and/or history a purpose or goal of its own. Much human activity, especially labor, is teleological. What people do and the order in which they do it is often determined by what they want in the future. Before a carpenter builds a wooden table, he has a plan on a blueprint or a computer disc for what that table will be like. How he selects the wood, measures the wood, cuts the wood, treats the wood is determined by the desired end-product. If the table is to be three feet high, he'll cut the legs three feet in length, not two feet or four feet.

Human activity—whether individual or collective—can be teleological because men have a consciousness which enables them to link what they want in the future to what they do in the present and in the intervening period. But nature and history *do not* have the conscious capacity to plan and determine their own futures. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels scathingly criticized teleological idealists, for whom

"later history is made the goal of earlier history, e.g., the goal ascribed to the discovery of America is to further the eruption of the French Revolution. Thereby

*continued on page 6*

**Europe in 1811: Napoleonic Empire reorganized western and southern Germany on a bourgeois-liberal basis, removing vestiges of the old feudal order.**



absolute, with spirit as the highest phase. Hegel writes:

"Nature is by no means something fixed and finished for itself, which could also exist without Spirit; rather does it first reach its aim and truth in Spirit. Just so Spirit on its part is not merely something abstractly beyond nature, but exists truly and shows itself to be Spirit, insofar as it contains nature as subjugated in itself."

—quoted in

*Hegel: A Re-Examination*

What Hegel means by "spirit" are those intellectual activities—art, religion, philosophy—by which man appreciates and seeks to comprehend the totality of existence.

For Hegel, lower levels of human culture and civilization give rise to higher levels marked by greater knowledge and spiritual maturity. This process culminates in what Hegel terms absolute knowledge, the point at which man com-

prehends his own ideas. On one occasion, he concluded a lecture to his students with these words:

"A new epoch has arisen in the world. Finite self-consciousness has ceased to be finite; and in this way absolute self-consciousness has, on the other hand, attained to the reality which it lacked before. This is the whole history of the world up to the present time.... I bid you a most hearty farewell!"

—quoted in Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (1972)

So what are we to make of it all? In a sense, Hegel's concept of spirit is an idealization and generalization of human intellectual and cultural activity. A composer might think of a new piece of music before he writes the notes on paper or plays it on a piano. Beethoven was composing great music when he was totally deaf and couldn't hear it played

## Enlightenment...

(continued from page 5)

history receives its own special goals and becomes 'a person ranking with other persons' (to wit: 'self-consciousness, criticism, the unique,' etc.), while what is designated with the words 'destiny,' 'goal,' 'germ,' or 'idea' of earlier history is nothing more than an abstraction from later history, from the active influence which earlier history exercises on later history."

Since Marx rejected and opposed teleological idealism, why then are Hegel's philosophical conceptions an important constituent element of Marxism? Cen-

single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations."

One of the most influential doctrines of the last period of the Enlightenment was utilitarianism, developed by the Englishman Jeremy Bentham. This doctrine held that the behavior of all men was motivated by the desire either to obtain pleasure or avoid pain. Hegel regarded utilitarianism as an empty and trivial truism, since what is pleasurable and painful for members of a given culture at a certain level of historical development is different than for members of another culture at a different level of development. Greenland Eskimos and German philosophy students both strive

then adds the important qualification: "The only labour which Hegel knows and recognises is *abstractly mental* labour"—that is, art, religion, philosophy.

The materialist understanding of the "self-creation of man" through labor is clearly and succinctly stated by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology*:

"History is nothing but the succession of the separate generations, each of which uses the materials, the capital funds, the productive forces handed down to it by all preceding generations, and thus, on the one hand, continues the traditional activity in completely changed circumstances and, on the other, modifies the old circumstances with a completely changed activity."

### Hegel: Reason and Reality

Central to Hegel's political philosophy is the view that the actual course of history is governed by the self-development of the "world spirit." He writes: "A people has the constitution which corresponds to the consciousness which the world spirit realizes in that people." During the Napoleonic wars, Hegel asserted: "Through consciousness spirit intervenes in the way the world is ruled. This is its infinite tool—then there are bayonets, cannon, bodies. But the banner [of philosophy] and the soul of its commander is spirit. Neither bayonets, nor money, neither this trick nor that, are the ruler. They are necessary like the cogs and wheels in a clock, but their soul is time and spirit that subordinates matter to its laws."

—quoted in Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*

Hegel's most famous aphorism is "what is rational is real and what is real is rational." This is not only ambiguous, but its two parts are implicitly contradictory. If what is rational is real, then what is not rational is fated to disappear. But if what is real is rational, then the world as it currently exists is by definition rational. Furthermore, world history is subject to major reversals. If Napoleon's victory over the Prussian army in the battle of Jena represented the progress of reason in history, as Hegel maintained at the time, then how could the victory of

and the ball is kicked out of bounds and is picked up by a 12-year-old kid. He wants to play. He does his Michael Jordan imitation. He fakes left, he fakes right, he drives to the hoop. If Hegel were watching this, he'd say: "This is not a real basketball player but merely the unsubstantiated appearance of a basketball player." But let's say the kid hits a couple of outside jump shots. Then you'll say, "Hey, this kid's for real. Let him play."

So that's the problem. How do you know what's really real and what's merely existent? In a war between two major states, how do you know which side represents the progressive development of the world spirit and which is a dead remnant of the past? Here Hegel cops out with the most famous metaphor in philosophical literature:

"One word more about giving instructions as to what the world ought to be. Philosophy in any case always comes on the scene too late to give it. As the thought of the world, it appears only when actuality is already there cut and dried after its process of formation has been completed.... When philosophy paints its grey in grey, then has a shape of life grown old. By philosophy's grey in grey it cannot be rejuvenated but only understood. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk."

—*Philosophy of Right*

Minerva is the ancient Roman goddess of wisdom and the owl was her symbol. So what Hegel is saying is that the progress of reason in the world can be judged only in hindsight.

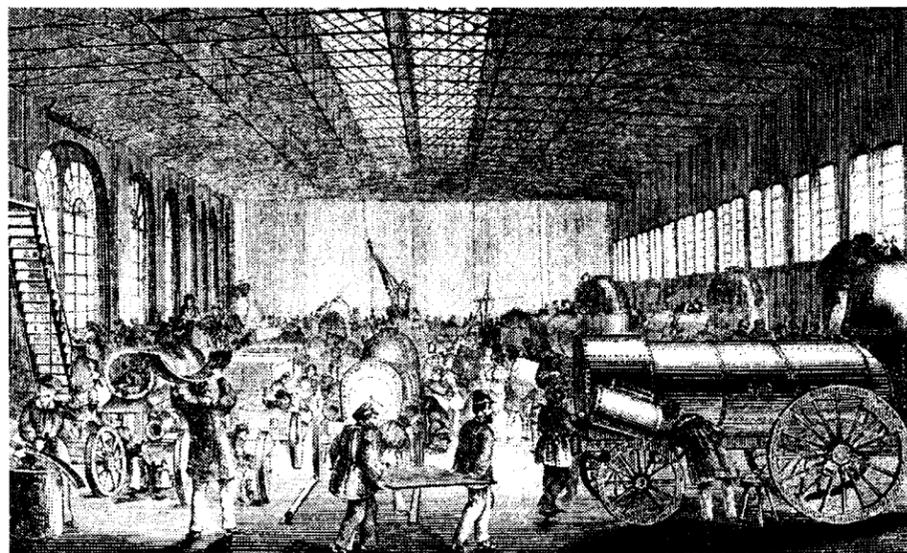
This political stance, which Hegel adopted in the 1820s, was possible only because that was a period of reactionary stabilization throughout Europe. There were no major wars, no revolutions, no serious threats of revolution. In Germany there weren't even any significant social or political conflicts. Minerva's owl could thus muse about the past in peace and tranquility.

But let's say that in 1825 a popular revolution in France overthrew the Bourbon monarchy, and revolutionary France then went to war with Prussia. The head of the philosophy department of the University of Berlin could hardly say, "I'm neutral. I'll wait for the outcome, think about it a while and then determine which combatant embodied the world spirit." Hegel's above-the-battle political posture was untenable except in the historical short term. Thus, within a decade of his death in 1831 his followers broke up into increasingly hostile factions.

### Emergence of the Hegelian Left

The break first came on the religious front. Hegel considered himself to be a devout Christian of the Lutheran persuasion. He maintained that religion expressed in the language of symbol and metaphor the same truths which philosophy expressed in the language of logic. He believed that Jesus Christ represented that point in history when man became aware of his own divine nature. However, Hegel's philosophy was not really compatible with Christian orthodoxy. As a modern scholar, Nicholas Lobkowitz, put it in his *Theory and Practice*, Hegel claimed "that man has become capable of Knowledge in the most far-reaching and daring sense, that is, of an Absolute Knowledge ascribed by Christianity to God alone."

Even during his lifetime, Hegel's views were attacked as heretical by religious fundamentalists—the so-called pietists in Germany—and these attacks escalated after his death. At the same time, some of Hegel's followers argued after his death that his philosophy transcended Christianity. In 1835, David Strauss published *The Life of Jesus*, in which he maintained that Jesus was a mythological figure created by the Hebrew people, similar to other religious-mythological figures. More fundamentally, Strauss argued that the world spirit operated through human-



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**Berlin factory in 1840s. Hegel's political doctrines represented the interests of the German bourgeoisie against both the conservative landed nobility and the working masses.**

trally because Hegel was the first major thinker to maintain that human nature was social nature and that it therefore changed and evolved through the historical development of civilization. He rejected and opposed the prevailing Enlightenment view that human behavior was governed by unchanging biological needs and impulses such as the instinct for self-preservation. Similarly, he rejected and opposed the conception of society as a collection of atomized individuals whose behavior could be understood independently of their historically given culture. Here is the crux of Hegel's criticism of Enlightenment thought in this regard:

"If one thinks away everything that might even remotely be regarded as particular or evanescent, such as what pertains to particular mores, history, culture or even the state, then all that remains is man imagined as in the state of nature or else the pure abstraction of man with only his essential possibilities left. One can now discover what is necessary in man merely by looking at this *abstract* image."

—quoted in Lewis P. Hinchman, *Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment* (1984)

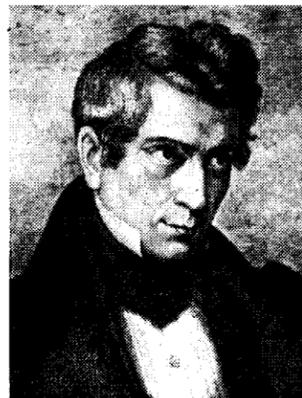
In his "Theses on Feuerbach"—as we shall see, Feuerbach was a throwback to Enlightenment naturalism—Marx makes exactly the same point: "The essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each

to attain pleasure and avoid pain. But Eskimos would find reading Hegel quite painful and German philosophy students are unlikely to take much pleasure in eating walrus blubber.

Hegel was the first major thinker to maintain that how men think and act is primarily governed by their own self-created culture and not by natural law.



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**Ludwig Feuerbach (left) and David Strauss, leading figures in the Hegelian left.**

As Marx wrote in one of his then-unpublished early works, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, "Hegel conceives the self-creation of man as a process.... He thus grasps the essence of *labour* and comprehends objective man—true, because real man—as the outcome of man's *own labour*." However, he

the Prussian army over Napoleon six years later at the battle of Leipzig also represent the progress of reason?

Hegel, however, did not regard the march of reason in history like it was the Prussian army on parade, one measured step forward after another. He allowed that there may be periods in which reason is thrown into a retreat, as well as sideways marches and a good deal of meaningless shuffling around. Here Hegel's terminology becomes very confusing because he distinguishes "reality" from "existence," the German words being *wirklichkeit* and *dasein* respectively. Reality is that which conforms to reason, while existence is merely that which happens to exist. As Hegel puts it: "All else, apart from this actuality established through the working of the concept itself, is ephemeral existence, external contingency, opinion, unsubstantiated appearance, falsity, illusion and so forth" (*Philosophy of Right*).

Since I was initially scheduled to give this educational first in Chicago, where some of the older comrades are into playground basketball, I figured I'd use playground basketball to explain the difference between reality and existence in the Hegelian sense. Say you're playing

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# Anti-Smoking Hysteria Against Teenagers Government, Butt Out!

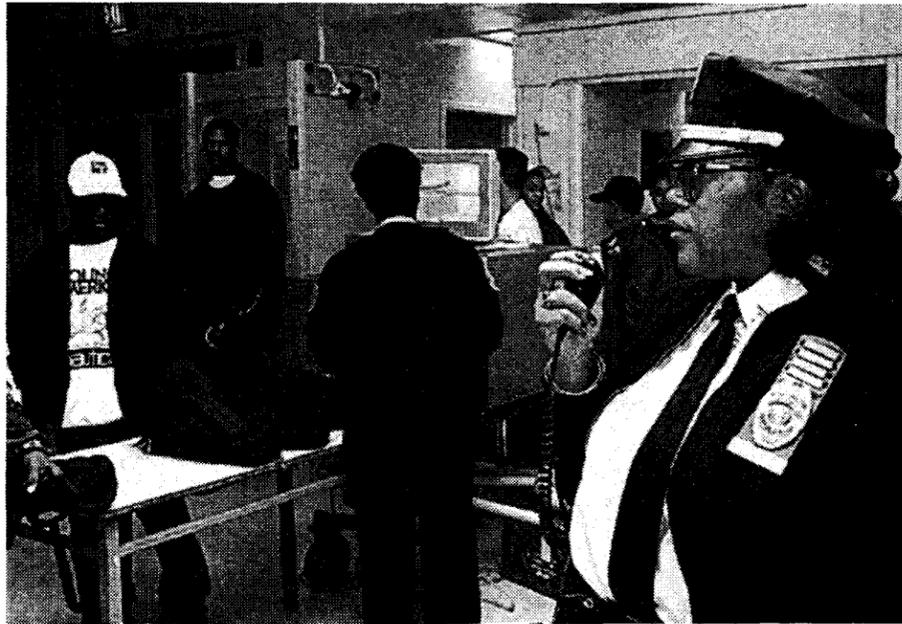
Undercover plainclothes cops stalk the alleyways and parking lots behind public schools. Hidden surveillance cameras monitor favorite hangout spots. Hordes of laboratory technicians analyze gallons of potentially tainted urine. The efforts of counterintelligence agents to uncover terrorist spy networks? A national dragnet to locate suspected serial killers? No, these are just the latest tactics being employed by local officials across the country to stamp out that traditional American rite of passage—teenage smoking.

In Gothenburg, Nebraska, where such police-state methods are now being used, anyone under 18 caught smoking a cigarette can be fined from \$35 to \$100. In Nashville, Indiana, an 18-year-old high-school athlete was barred from playing the season's final football game when traces of nicotine were found in the cup he was forced to piss in. And in five states across the country, being young and having a pack of Marlboro Lights can get your driver's license revoked, get you a fine of \$1,000 or even a sentence of up to six months in a youth detention center!

As if being young in this country wasn't hard enough—with rotten schools, crummy jobs and a bleak future in general—now the government has decided to set its vicious cops and other agencies of state repression on those youth who get some enjoyment or relief out of smoking or chewing tobacco. America has a whole slew of repressive laws that are aimed at those the government labels as "minors." From the laws against underage smoking and drinking to the reactionary "age of consent" laws governing consensual sexual activity to state regulation of what is "acceptable" clothing or "appropriate" artwork for youth, the bourgeoisie wants youth to be submissive, complacent and

totally subservient to the institutions of capitalist society—the state, the church and the family. The last thing that the racist rulers of this country want is a generation of "spoiled" youth who somehow believe that they have any right to make decisions concerning their own lives and who question official religious and political creeds. Public high schools are

enough to legally consume alcoholic beverages, you still have to register for Selective Service. Which is probably not coincidental. Behind these latest attacks, which even the *New York Times* (7 December 1997) labeled "draconian," lies the ruling class' desire for a new generation of an obedient and regimented population which will unquestioningly



Sotomayor/NY Times

**Ban on teen smoking is part of increasing social regimentation of youth by capitalist rulers. At NYC high schools, cops subject students to metal-detector checks.**

increasingly making it against the rules—often punishable by suspension or expulsion—to engage in *off-campus* activity that they deem wrong, including smoking and drinking within the privacy of students' own homes.

In the United States, before you're old

follow orders. For those kids unable to find decent jobs in America's deindustrialized economy, there will always be a place open in the army as efficient cannon fodder to be expended in the Balkans, the Korean peninsula, Iraq or wherever else American imperialism wants to

stage its next bloody slaughter.

The anti-smoking crusaders see attacking the rights of youth as their way to intensify their general attack on the rights of anyone to smoke. Youth, who in most states are legally barred from smoking until their eighteenth birthday, are generally considered to have no rights and to be the property of their parents. Thus, they are easy targets in the sights of the health-nut yuppies and medical industry cost-cutters. As we wrote in "Anti-Smoking Tyranny: Bourgeois Hypocrisy and 'Health Fascism,'" (*WV* No. 612, 9 December 1994): "In the last few years, the beansprout totalitarianism and 'health fascism' nurtured among California La La Land yuppies has mushroomed into a nationwide big-business crusade aimed at turning the country's 50 million smokers into pariahs and criminals." Now California has introduced even more repressive laws. There, they want to ban smoking from all public buildings including the last public refuge of the smoker: bars.

These latest triumphs in the campaign of the "health fascists" really have nothing at all to do with the health or welfare of the general public. As both Democrats and Republicans go after social services and health care programs with their budget-slashing axes, they turn around and blame the sick for the diseases they contract and deny them access to medical benefits. As well, the insurance companies would love to save a lot of money by reducing the number of smokers on their rolls. And if they can get people to stop smoking while still young, all the better. Like most things in this society, it all boils down to capitalist profits.

We don't deny the harmful effects that smoking can have on the smoker. However, this is quite beside the point. As Marxists who are fighting for a world of social abundance and individual freedom, we think it is a simple democratic right that all people, whether or not they happen to be 18 years old, should be able to read, eat, drink, smoke and enjoy whatever other consensual activities that they want without the cops, courts, employers or health-fanatic totalitarians interfering. We say: Government, butt out! ■

ity as a whole and not merely through those who embraced Christ as savior. "Is not the idea of the unity of divine and human natures a real one in a more lofty sense," he asked rhetorically, "when I regard the entire human race as its realization than if I select one man as its realization?"

It was Strauss who first used the terms left, center and right to describe the divisions within the Hegelian school. He was referring to the respective attitudes toward Christianity, not toward the Prussian state. But since Prussia was officially a "Christian state," repudiation of Christian orthodoxy necessarily had political implications. Even though he was not at all a political radical, Strauss was subjected to such fierce denunciations by the ecclesiastical and academic establishment that he emigrated to Switzerland.

While Strauss repudiated Hegel's Christianity in the name of his philosophical principles, other Hegelians repudiated Hegel's political quietism, symbolized by the night-flying owl of Minerva. In 1838, August von Cieszkowski, a Polish count, published *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie*, which translated means "A Foreword to the Wisdom of History." Cieszkowski maintained that Hegel was wrong and inconsistent in asserting that man could acquire knowledge only of the past but not of the future. By studying past history and current developments, Cieszkowski claimed, one could project the future—not in specific detail, to be sure, but in broad outline. Hence men could and should actively support the progressive development of the world spirit, not merely contemplate it after the

fact. Thus Cieszkowski declared that man need no longer be a "blind instrument either of chance or of necessity" but had become the "conscious master builder of his own freedom." "Humanity," he maintained, "has become mature enough to make its own determinations perfectly identical with the Divine Plan of Providence" (quoted in Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice*).

Cieszkowski was a left Hegelian as that term was then used, but he was not a leftist in the political sense. Like Hegel, he was a moderate liberal and therefore opposed to democracy, not to speak of social revolution. He was also a Polish nationalist. The belief that intellectuals should involve themselves in politics in

order to realize their principles and ideals is not inherently leftist or even liberal. After all, religious fundamentalists and fascists, too, are very hostile to the existing state of affairs and want to change the world in accordance with their ideals.

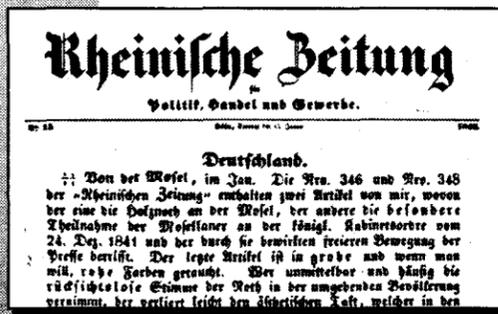
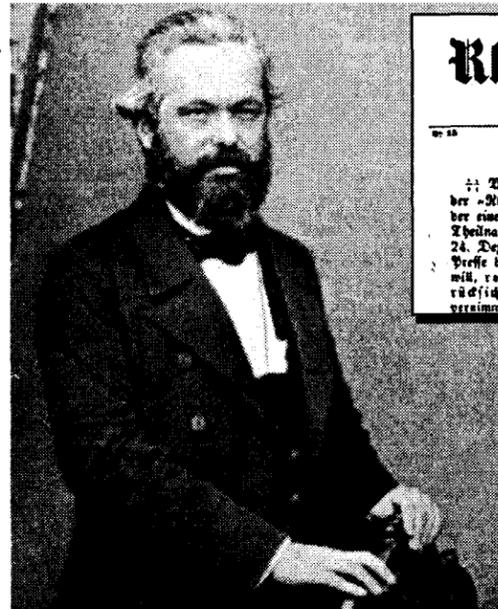
Why then did most of those Hegelians who favored political activism rapidly evolve toward the left, toward radical democracy and even communism? Initially, the left Hegelians shared Hegel's liberal political outlook and respect for the Prussian state. In 1838, Arnold Ruge, a key figure in this movement, declared: "If the state contains within itself, as does Prussia, a reforming principle, then there is neither the necessity nor the pos-

sibility of a revolution" (quoted in David McLellan, *The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx* [1969]). This statement had important implications for the future. First, it implies that the Prussian state needs to be reformed, and second, that if it proves unreformable, then revolution is both necessary and possible.

In 1840, the old king died. His son and successor was a religious fundamentalist who was more active in imposing his monarchical authority. Thus both government policy and general ideological climate moved to the right. Censorship was tightened. The left Hegelians were purged from their teaching posts in the universities; even the moderate Hegelians lost their former high status in the German academic establishment. This academic "red" purge directly affected the young Marx, whose expectation of a university appointment was dashed.

The rightward shift in political conditions adversely affected not only the left-Hegelian intellectuals but also the liberal bourgeoisie, which was strongest in the Rhineland, then the most economically developed region of Germany with the closest cultural affinities to France. For a brief period, the left-Hegelian intellectuals became spokesmen and publicists for a bourgeois-liberal opposition. The main expression of this collaboration was a newspaper, the *Rheinische Zeitung*, subtitled "For Politics, Industry and Commerce." The paper's chief financial backer, Ludolf Camphausen, would later be named Prussian prime minister during the revolution of 1848.

Beard



**Karl Marx first entered the political stage in the early 1840s as editor of the bourgeois-liberal *Rheinische Zeitung*, a newspaper "For Politics, Trade and Industry."**

[TO BE CONTINUED]

# South Africa...

(continued from page 1)

take care of upper respiratory illnesses and paraffin fuel poisoning from dangerous primitive stoves. Only a revolutionary overthrow of the existing capitalist system can even *begin* to address the health needs of women and remove this murderous degradation and misery.

Another burning issue is the migrant labor system, which forces families to separate, so men working in the cities take city wives and country wives, while men in the rural areas may simply take multiple wives as personal slaves and more sources of income. Yet the migrant labor system remains a key underpinning of neo-apartheid capitalism. Mandela cannot dismantle it because these institutions assist in making labor-intensive gold mining so profitable for the imperialists. Today, some ANCers sit on the boards of directors of these companies. A revolutionary vanguard party would expropriate the mine owners and industrialists without compensation.

The growing discontent of the masses, including women workers, is evident in South Africa. One of the first strikes to challenge the ANC-led government was a strike of nurses in September-October 1995, and it was also one of the first to be smashed (see "Mandela Regime Cracks Down on Black Labor," WV No. 637, 19 January 1996). The nurses denounced Mandela as the "driver of the gravy train." The "gravy train" is the shorthand derogatory name for the thin layer of blacks who have made it in the "new" South Africa. The nurses were abandoned by the SACP and the COSATU bureaucrats, who called the strike "counterrevolutionary." In the aftermath of the strike, 60,000 nurses were fired in the Eastern Cape, where the local government was headed by the SACP. This is the strikebreaking face of nationalism. More recently, COSATU has postponed and canceled protests to demand family leave and childcare provisions which it supports on paper.

The Spartacist group of South Africa, section of the International Communist League, seeks to forge the Bolshevik workers party which is desperately needed there. We fight for a black-centered workers government that would take power from the "Randlords" in Johannesburg and Cape Town and their imperialist backers in the City of London and Wall Street. Only then will there be genuine national and social liberation for the black majority, and democratic rights for coloureds, Indians and other Asians as well as those whites who would accept a government centered on the black working class.

## Combined and Uneven Development

To provide a theoretical cover for its participation in the strikebreaking capitalist government of the racist South African rulers, the reformist SACP preaches the Menshevik program of "two-stage



**Government fired 60,000 nurses after September 1995 wildcat in which strikers carried signs reading "Away with Mandela." Below: desperately understaffed and underfunded clinics are incapable of providing decent health care for black masses.**

Spartacist

Gisèle Wulfsohn/Impact Visuals



revolution"—"democratic" capitalism today and socialism some time in a future that never comes. This program has historically been a recipe for bloody defeats. What two-stage revolution has meant from China in 1925 to Indonesia in 1965 and Chile in 1973 is the mass murder of communists and workers.

If there were ever a country crying out for socialist revolution, South Africa is it. The black masses have suffered decades of apartheid terror and murder, and continue to be ground down by the industrial and mining magnates, the Randlords, and by the Wall Street and City of London financiers, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The intense contradictions of South Africa exemplify what Leon Trotsky called "combined and uneven development." Everywhere you see aspects of advanced capitalism side by side with abysmal backwardness. This is the country that performed the first heart transplant in 1967. Now the hospital unit where this happened is shutting down for lack of funds, while millions have no access to any health care at all. The militant, unionized black miners extract the gold and precious metals which are traded by the world's wealthiest people on the capitalist markets, and

then these same workers, when they get a day or two off from their murderous labor, return to visit their wives, who mostly live in homes with no electricity or water.

We traveled from the modern, fortress-like white-flight suburbs north of Johannesburg to Soweto, center of anti-apartheid struggle for years, at the far opposite end of the city. Huge mounds of mining waste separate Johannesburg from Soweto. There are miles of identical tiny four-room houses with no indoor plumbing on red dirt streets with no signs and no stores of any kind. On one side of the street, you can see a coloured township; on the other, the black township. Interspersed with what is called "formal housing" is the "informal housing"—huge squatter camps made up of bits and pieces of scrap wood and corrugated metal—whose residents are taxed even for outdoor waterspouts. You can also see the "hostels," bleak all-male workers' barracks. Crowds of unemployed youth hang out on the main roads.

As we drove along the highway toward the border of Swaziland in the northeast, we saw squatter huts and lean-tos littering the roadside. One rural youth said to me, "Soweto is as good as it gets for black South Africans." The white farmers have been expelling black farm laborers en masse, in fear that the government will offer the laborers legal rights to the land they work, and that they will bring their families with them. The dispossessed continue to pour into the cities, as do thousands of others from the impoverished rural areas, driven by illusions that under the ANC there would be jobs and housing. In one squatter town in the West Rand—perched, like a number of others, on dolomitic ground containing massive, dangerous sinkholes—some 80,000 residents are served by seven water taps.

Having undertaken an extension of electrical wiring, the government now considers this effort a big mistake. People can't afford electrical appliances, can't repair them and many can't even read the directions on how to use them. Meanwhile, whole townships have had their electricity cut off for nonpayment—by some of the same people who led

the township protests in the 1980s. These cuts have provoked widespread protests, but the government argues that apartheid is over and now you have to pay your bills. The logic of the ANC's bourgeois-nationalist program requires the repression of struggle to maintain an "investor-friendly environment" for their imperialist masters.

South Africa confirms in an exceptionally clear way Leon Trotsky's theory and program of permanent revolution. What we mean by "permanent revolution" was shown by the victorious 1917 Russian workers revolution. In the backward countries in this century, the epoch of imperialist decay, the democratic gains achieved by the earlier European bourgeois revolutions can no longer be carried out by bourgeois nationalists like the ANC, who are weak and dependent on their imperialist masters. Having already divided up the world for exploitation, a handful of the most powerful bourgeoisies economically strangle the masses of the former colonial countries. Neither national independence nor agrarian revolution is possible within the constraints of the capitalist system. Only a socialist revolution, with the proletariat at its head, the peasantry and all the oppressed, particularly women. The fight for proletarian power in the backward countries must be linked to a perspective of workers revolution in the imperialist centers.

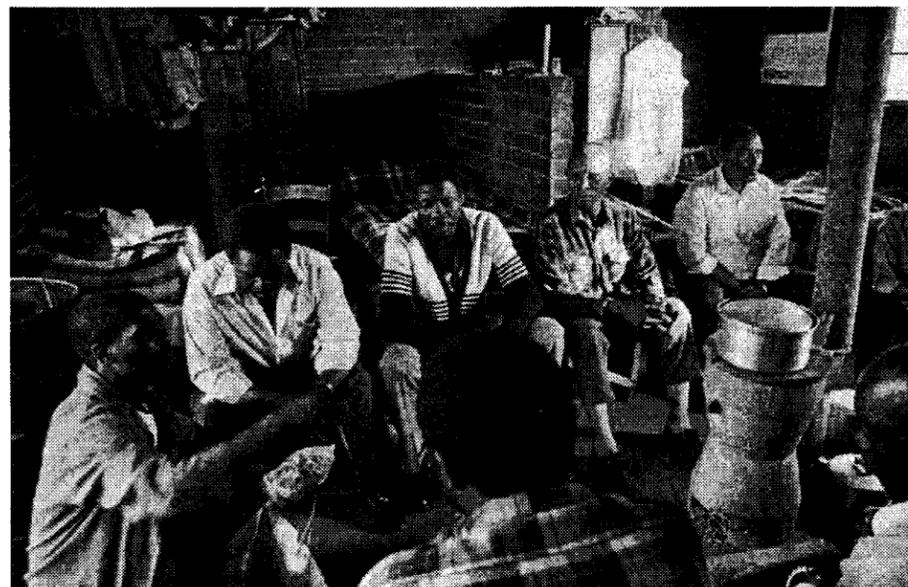
Under British rule, South Africa's tribal laws were codified to suit the colonial administrators' need to control the population in order to allow for profits to be reaped unchallenged. Under apartheid, tribal chiefs like Mangosuthu Buthelezi of the Zulu-based Inkatha—party of the tribal chieftains who continue to hold sway in the old rural areas—were groomed as collaborators and agents of the racist regime. Today, Mandela continues conciliating Buthelezi and Goodwill Zwelithini, who are considered constitutional monarchs in the new nation. In fact, the abortion bill was held back a year so as not to alienate Inkatha, which opposes abortion.

From its inception in 1912, the ANC has always had a nationalist program—albeit with more "socialist" rhetoric when it was in opposition—promoting the false ideology that all people who live within the borders of South Africa have a common interest which stands higher than class divisions. In the "new" South Africa, the tiny white ruling class continues to own 87 percent of the land and 90 percent of the productive wealth. And the ANC is committed to maintaining the capitalist status quo, whose bedrock has always been and *continues to be* the superexploitation of black labor.

## For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

As Marxists, we understand that the productive forces constitute the skeleton, the economic structure of society. All the legal, political, religious and cultural relations are aspects of the superstructure resting on top of the productive forces. Capitalist exploitation is enforced by the state—an organ of class oppression made up of the cops, the courts, the prisons and the army. Women are specially oppressed through the institution of the family, an economic and social unit which is a mainstay of social reaction along with organized religion. Poor and working-class women are the slaves of the slave and serve the purpose of raising a new generation of exploited toilers.

Far from alleviating the condition of women, the introduction of capitalism by the imperialists led to the perpetuation and reinforcement of the most retrogressive aspects of tribal culture—for example, *lobola*, the bride price. The system of enforced polygamy, an institution for the enslavement of women, is also an example of a barbaric ancient custom—a remnant from an agricultural and slave culture—which was reinforced by apartheid capitalism. The process of inculcating these customs starts early: girls are kidnapped at a young age and forcibly



**Zulu migrant workers near Johannesburg are forced to live in bleak barracks separated from their families.**

Der Spiegel

held in so-called "ritual schools," where older women instruct them in total subservience to men and how to be the bearers of traditional culture to the next generation.

Men purchase wives—who are often still children—traditionally paying for them with livestock, now usually with cash. When the wife bears children, they become the man's property as well; so the woman loses her children if she leaves him. This system—in which women are totally subservient appendages of the male laborer—suits the modern mine and factory owners. And by pitting low-paid women workers against their class brothers, modern capitalism seeks to undermine wage gains achieved through union struggles. This generates hostility against working women. It is no surprise that rape and other violence against women are widespread in South Africa today.

The fate of women and their struggle for full emancipation is tied to the proletarian class struggle against capitalism. We fight to end patriarchal practices oppressive to women, like the polygamy system and the bride price—legacies of social backwardness which are upheld by tribal reactionaries in league with the capitalist rulers. Since the beginning of class society thousands of years ago, the institution of the family has been the fundamental source of the subjugation of women as dependent domestic slaves. In a socialist planned economy, the family as a social unit will be replaced by socialization of childcare and household duties. Only then can relationships be entered into freely and without economic compulsion.

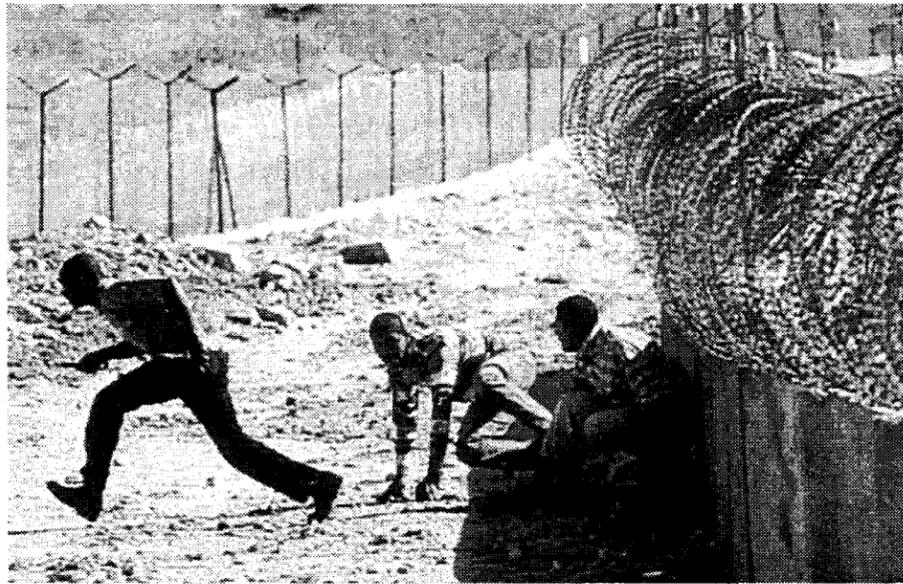
We champion full equality for women

their own land. Black landowners were evicted from all areas deemed to be "white," i.e., from any piece of land worth anything. Nonwhites had no ownership rights; all movement was controlled by pass laws; intermarriage was forbidden.

Human beings were reduced to "labor units"—that was the term commonly used—and stored in workers' barracks. The Riotous Assemblies Act and the Suppression of Communism Act banned all political activity which created "feelings of hostility between European inhabitants...and the Coloured and Native inhabitants." Violators could be instantly expelled from the district or even the entire country. Many were, and many were simply assassinated by the police.

The Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act and many other laws were aimed at completely separating the races: 90 percent of coloureds were restricted to the Western Cape and 90 percent of Indians were restricted to Natal in the east. Every urban area had separate enclosed residential sections, whose creation required massive forced population transfers. Any integration and tribal mixing, which was natural in an increasingly urban population, was consciously reversed. Whole towns that had been integrated were leveled. At the museum now, you can see remnants of Cape Town's integrated District 6, which was bulldozed. It was a fact of life to be jailed repeatedly for pass-law violations, and jail often meant torture and death.

The Immorality Act and the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act prohibited all sexual contact between the races. The Abortion and Sterilisation Act of 1975



T. Dollaart

**Mozambicans scramble across border into South Africa. ANC-led government enforces deportations of immigrant workers, refugees.**

and their full integration into the workforce. We call for equal pay for equal work and free, safe abortion on demand as part of free, quality health care for all. The elimination of women's oppression requires a tremendous leap from the existing material conditions—and this can *only* be achieved through socialist revolution, not only in South Africa but through the creation of an *international planned economy* based on elevating human production for the needs of all. In other words, the liberation of women cannot be carried out apart from the emancipation of the working class as a whole. We seek to build an internationalist revolutionary party, a tribune of all the oppressed, which leads the proletariat in sweeping away the capitalist system worldwide.

### From Apartheid Police State to Neo-Apartheid "Democracy"

Those who became politically conscious in the 1990s may not fully appreciate just how grotesque was the racist system which twentieth-century capitalism created in South Africa. Apartheid was not just an extreme case of the sort of Jim Crow segregation seen in the American South. African blacks, who make up about 80 percent of the population, as well as the smaller groups of coloureds and those of East Indian origin, were all made foreigners, pariahs in

was aimed at controlling the black population. Women laborers and Soweto schoolgirls were forced to take contraceptive injections, and there were many forced sterilizations and IUD fittings. Meanwhile, back-street abortions killed thousands of black women. Black women could not sign contracts nor inherit any property.

So-called "bantustans" were carved out of the least arable, desolate land where there was no economic means of support. The idea was that men would migrate to the mines, live in barracks, work nearly to death, and then return to their "homeland" when they were no longer productive. Women and children remained in the bantustans hundreds of miles away unless a woman managed to escape—leaving her children behind for other family members to raise—to become a domestic servant for some white family. In the white residential suburbs of Johannesburg, you still see groups of uniformed black maids and nannies sitting on the street curbs during their breaks.

After the 1994 elections, the most liberal bourgeois-democratic constitution in history was penned. Here's a sample quote: "The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sex-



AP

**"Power-sharing" for racist capitalist rulers: Nelson Mandela (center) joins Thabo Mbeki, successor as head of ANC, and former apartheid leader F. W. De Klerk in applauding new constitution, 1996.**

ual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth." But these fine words *cannot be carried out* because achieving even these elementary democratic rights requires smashing the rapacious profit system, which has been left untouched. In fact, the constitution is also explicit about defending the right to private property—just in case someone should take the ANC's past socialist rhetoric seriously.

### Imperialism and ANC Nationalism

With the exception of the Spartacists, all self-proclaimed socialists in South Africa support, in one form or another, the ANC-led "tripartite" government, a *bourgeois* regime. In the 1994 elections, we opposed a vote to the ANC or any of the other components of the nationalist popular front, calling instead for proletarian class independence. The ANC's "rainbow nation" and "nation-building" rhetoric provide a cover for continued capitalist immiseration and anti-immigrant terror, as well as for the South African bourgeoisie's regional imperialist aspirations. When the Congo's Laurent Kabila made some noise about a rail nationalization, it was Nelson Mandela himself who intervened to object because the railroad was partly owned by imperialist interests. Thabo Mbeki, who recently replaced Mandela as head of the ANC, wines and dines with billionaire Bill Gates and oversees the capitalist austerity measures that the World Bank demands.

The nationalist ANC defends the same state borders that the British colonialists arbitrarily drew in 1910 for the old Union of South Africa, borders which have no relationship to tribal or ethnic groupings. Immigrant workers from across these borders are horribly abused; for example, white farmers recruit Mozambican laborers, then call the cops on payday to have them deported. The cops, courts and military that enforced apartheid have remained intact. Now top ANC women

government ministers run a profit-making deportation center filled with desperate immigrant workers. The ANC touts this as an example of blacks seeking "a stake in the economy"—women get to take part in cutting the throats of the South African and immigrant working masses.

Another "nation-building exercise" is Desmond Tutu's ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, where vicious apartheid murderers are amnestied. These hearings are intended as a safety valve to defuse the just anger of those whose families and comrades were murdered, tortured or imprisoned by the bloody apartheid regime. What's important here is that the murderers and torturers are *still in power!*

Some may ask, "Why can't the Mandela regime change this?" Reformists and liberals hail the ANC for leading the "liberation" struggle and claim that the victory against apartheid was ensured by the economic sanctions imposed by the Western imperialist powers. This is a fraud. How, then, did Nelson Mandela come to be catapulted from the horrors of imprisonment in Robben Island to the pinnacle of government in Cape Town?

Increasingly, the rigid structures of apartheid had begun to collide with the need for skilled black labor to increase profits. At the same time, the growth of a powerful and organized black proletariat posed an ever-sharper challenge to the entire system of apartheid capitalism. The township revolts and mass stayaway strikes of the mid-1980s cracked the apartheid state's rigid controls over the urban black working masses. In 1985, the powerful COSATU labor federation was formed, combining many of the burgeoning black industrial unions. The level of social ferment was reflected in the fact that many black workers and youth openly espoused the cause of communism and were drawn—mistakenly—to the SACP.

The installation of the ANC-dominated government in 1994 was also directly

*continued on page 10*

## ICL Pamphlet

Letters and articles presenting the Marxist position on key questions of debate on the South African left: for revolutionary proletarian opposition to the "neo-apartheid" government of the now bourgeois-nationalist ANC; the debate over a "mass workers party"; the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution vs. the doctrine of "nation-building" in colonial and neocolonial countries.

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## The Fight For a Revolutionary Vanguard Party: Polemics on the South African Left

Leon Trotsky: Letter to South African Revolutionaries

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# South Africa...

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connected to the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union earlier in the decade. The Soviet Union had sponsored the ANC and the closely allied SACP. Like other petty-bourgeois nationalist movements in the "Third World," the ANC sought to maneuver between Moscow and Washington. But with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR, Mandela & Co. went pleading to the U.S. and other imperialist powers. His imperialist sponsors brokered the "power sharing" deal between the ANC and the apartheid Nationalist Party, and celebrated in every Western financial center when it succeeded.

## Women and the Anti-Apartheid Struggle

Historians who try to write about the struggles of black women in South Africa have noted that this history is difficult to reconstruct because writing about it was banned. Nonetheless, there is a long history of black women activists organizing against apartheid pass laws, boycotting high rents, mobilizing against transport fares and defending the right to brew beer.

Until 1913, only men had to carry passes. From 1913 through 1920, black women carried out one of the only successful early protest campaigns against the pass laws. Women in the Orange Free State refused to carry passes, and hundreds were thrown into jail. The jails in small rural towns grew so full of women resisters that many were carted or marched to jails elsewhere. The government finally backed down, and women did not carry passes until the 1950s, when they moved to the cities in increasing numbers. In 1956, a march on Pretoria to protest the pass laws drew 20,000 women—mainly black, but also including coloured, Indian and white. As protests continued around the country, the apartheid rulers responded by burning homes to the ground and carrying out beatings, shootings, arrests and banishment. In the Sharpeville massacre of March 1960, police opened fire on thousands of blacks demonstrating against the pass laws, killing 69.

As growing numbers of coloured, Indian and black women became part of

the modern proletariat after World War II, women workers also began to play a leading role in labor struggles. In the 1940s and '50s, food and canning workers in the fruit-growing areas of the Western Cape were largely led by women, both coloured and black. In the Transvaal, black women were driven into the cities because of growing impoverishment, and over half were employed in the clothing industry. The garment workers union there organized a branch for black women even before it allowed in black men. In 1954, unionized black women in Johannesburg protested racist pay reductions, in the face of constant attempts by the employers to pit white, black and coloured workers against each other. Two years later in Port Elizabeth, the cannery owners were forced to back down as black women led factory-based protests against the pass laws.

The pass laws were part of the increasingly draconian laws about residence requirements, movement restrictions and exclusions from union organization which drove women out of the urban areas—and out of employment. For many, all that was left in the cities was domestic service. Nevertheless, black women continued to enter industry, and the 1970s and '80s marked a rise in militancy. Massive strikes in Durban from 1972 to 1974 nearly brought the city to a halt. These strikes were very significant. They shattered the atmosphere of intimidation and enforced silence that had been imposed on the country in the wake of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. In some textile mills, African women were the first to down tools.

In 1973, women rag sorters in Pine-town came out on strike. By the end of the day, every factory of one of the largest multinational corporations in Natal had been shut down by strikes which lasted up to seven days and ended in wage concessions. Strikes spread through 1974 in the Eastern Cape mills where black and Indian women were concentrated. By 1980, when more massive strikes broke out, women made up 70 percent of the workforce in the mills. In Port Elizabeth, coloured women fighting for union recognition sparked an international boycott of Eveready batteries in 1978. In the South Cape, black and coloured women led the most significant strike in the food and canning industry in the 1970s, achieving victory after seven months and a national boycott.

## Forge a Bolshevik Workers Party!

Political groups which are simply the left wing of the existing capitalist order cannot liberate women, or anyone else for that matter. Petty-bourgeois nationalists like the Azanian People's Organisation and the Pan Africanist Congress, as well as the reformist and centrist left, all play the role of pressure groups on the ANC and project some long period of capitalist stability for South Africa. For its part, the reformist SACP is the chain that binds the most militant and class-conscious workers to their class enemies through the nationalist popular front. As part of the fight for a revolutionary proletarian party, we seek to split the most politically advanced workers from the SACP.

The Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), linked to the reformist Socialist Action group here in the U.S., was behind the "Workers List Party" (WLP) which ran in the 1994 elections. We extended critical support to the WLP because it ran *against* the ANC and drew a crude class line against bourgeois nationalism. But while claiming to pose a working-class alternative, it never directly criticized the ANC as a capitalist party. In fact, WOSA consistently echoes the ANC's "nation-building" rhetoric and denies the reality of the ethnic and tribal conflicts that are being exacerbated under the bourgeois ANC government. More recently, WOSA has been trying to put together an anti-Leninist lash-up which dismisses the continuing relevance of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution (see "Death of Communism" Confab in South Africa,"



Women played heroic role in anti-apartheid struggles: 1957 Johannesburg protest against pass laws (above), 1959 women's demonstration in Cato Manor near Durban subjected to bloody assault by apartheid cops.

Rand Daily Mail

Laurie Bloomfield



WV No. 682, 16 January).

The reformist Socialist Workers Organisation, which is the counterpart to Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain and the International Socialist Organization in the U.S., supported the ANC in 1994. The hallmark of this outfit was its capitulation to Cold War imperialism, refusing to defend the remaining gains of the Russian Revolution and cheering the capitalist counterrevolutions which destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East Europe.

The October Revolution showed the way forward for countries like South Africa. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, the capitalist class was expropriated and a workers state was erected on the foundations of a planned, collectivized economy—the precondition for an egalitarian socialist society. This happened in a country with a small but socially concentrated working class, a large, backward peasantry and many national minorities. The Bolshevik Revolution was the greatest defeat for world imperialism and the greatest victory for the world working class. It represented an enormous leap particularly for women.

The Bolsheviks understood that you cannot simply abolish the economic functions of the family, you must replace it. The Soviet government immediately removed all impediments to legal equality, giving women the right to vote, breaking the hold of the church over marriage and divorce by making them simple matters of civil registration. The Bolsheviks legalized abortion, set up literacy schools, outlawed discrimination against homosexuals, abolished the concept of illegitimacy, established day-care facilities, communal dining rooms and laundries. In an isolated, backward country, their efforts could only hint at the possibilities for women had socialist revolution spread to the advanced industrial countries. The consolidation of the Stalinist bureaucracy, whose nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" glorified the backwardness of the young Soviet state and opposed international

extension of the revolution, led to a reversal of many of the Bolsheviks' policies in regard to women as well. We stand in the revolutionary *internationalist* tradition of the Bolsheviks.

For South African workers, revolutionary internationalism is a matter of life and death. A proletarian revolution there would immediately face the imperialists, particularly America's ruthless rulers. One obvious and central ally of a black-centered workers government in South Africa would be class-conscious black workers in the U.S. American blacks have always seen in South African apartheid an image of their oppression as a race-color caste here, and a revolutionary party in the U.S. will have a large black component. These links can only be forged through the construction of internationalist vanguard parties in South Africa and the U.S. And it is only through the fight for Trotskyist parties as part of a reformed Fourth International that the struggle for women's emancipation everywhere can go forward, because only such a vanguard party has a program to liberate them. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For a Bolshevik workers party, a tribune of the people! For world socialist revolution! ■



Gubby/JB Pictures

Reformist SACP betrays aspirations of pro-communist workers, carries out capitalist dictates as part of new government.

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# "Family Values" ...

(continued from page 12)

copyright laws justified in the name of "protecting" children from pornography, while access to abortion for poor and rural women in particular has actually decreased.

"Family values" based on religiosity, chastity and the like constitute a conservatizing ideology to regiment the population and prop up bourgeois "law and order," aimed at justifying the family, the key institution for the oppression of women in class society. This entails glaring hypocrisy: mothers are supposed to stay home and care for their kids—unless they're on welfare, in which case they're supposed to leave their kids at home with no babysitter and go out to work. For the bourgeoisie, the family is of value in ensuring that property is transmitted from one generation to the next through "legitimate" heirs. The proletariat, for its part, is meant to produce future generations of workers to be used as fodder for capitalist exploitation. But what meaning do "family values" have when applied as a normative prescription to those who have no property to transmit? For the idealized "middle class" (which, according to America's bourgeois ideologues, is defined to mean everyone with a job), the moral injunctions of this never-never land amount to: sell your daughters only in marriage and only for a pittance.

In countering the attacks on her husband, Hillary Clinton pointed, with some plausibility, to a "vast right-wing conspiracy." Whitewater "special prosecutor" Kenneth Starr is a former Bush appointee who has already spent over \$30 million, fielding an army of FBI agents, in his search for something, anything to hang on the Clintons. The Rutherford Institute, a far-right Christian "think tank" headed by an anti-homosexual bigot, is sponsoring Paula Corbin Jones' sexual harassment suit against Clinton. Former Nixon dirty trickster Lucianne Goldberg, who spied on George McGovern's 1972 presidential campaign, set up "Monicagate" by getting a disgruntled low-level Bush administration leftover to secretly tape Lewinsky's rambling confidences about her crush on "Schmucko" Clinton. Goldberg is the "literary agent" for Mark Fuhrman, the fascistic former LAPD detective who came to symbolize the whole system of racist cop frame-up when his repeated spewing of bigoted epithets and blatant set-up methods emerged during the criminal prosecution of O. J. Simpson.

There are certainly plenty of right-wing Republicans itching to get even with the Democrats for the Watergate investigation which blew Nixon out of the White House in the 1970s. But by the time he was forced to resign, "Tricky Dick" had become a liability to the ruling class. He had not only been caught ordering break-ins against the bourgeois opposition party but had come to embody U.S. imperialism's humiliating defeat on the battlefields of Vietnam. Even then, the bourgeoisie was loath to go for impeachment, fearful that this

Italian magazine *Panorama* caricatures "Sex and Power" in puritanical America with parody of poster for movie about *Hustler* publisher Larry Flynt.



would damage the "sanctity" of the imperial presidency.

But Clinton has been a competent and reliable servant for the American ruling class—vastly expanding the racist "war on crime," axing welfare, launching the assault on Social Security and generally causing immense misery and human suffering in order to keep profits soaring. At the same time, his popular support has been cushioned by the much-touted "boom" economy. Still, in this deeply irrational country, there's plenty of room for irrational cabals by far-right Christian yahoos. Several days into the Lewinsky scandal, the New York *Daily News* blared from its front page, "Out of Control."

It was Democrat Jimmy Carter, a "born again" Christian, who helped propel Bible Belt Moral Majority types like Jerry Falwell into mainstream respectability within the Republican Party. Beating the pulpit for racist "ethnic purity" and confessing to "lust in his heart," Carter launched a drive for "moral rearmament" aimed at burying the Vietnam syndrome and socially regimenting the population in preparation for Cold War II. Religious reaction at home—and abroad, witness U.S. support to the *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan—was a handmaiden of the imperialist offensive to foment capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union.

Aiding and abetting the Moral Majority reactionaries were right-wing feminists like anti-porn demagogue Andrea Dworkin, who augmented the fundamentalists' arsenal against "sin" and "lust" with rhetoric against "women's degradation." Dworkin now whines: "Women of Hillary's age—my age—have a responsibility not to let the men who are our peers exploit and destroy younger women" (London *Guardian*, 29 January). Echoing the sexist myth of women as eternal victims, Dworkin and her ilk provide ideological ammunition for reactionary "age of consent" laws, whose latest victim is Mary Kay Letourneau, a Seattle teacher who will spend the next seven years of her life behind bars, charged with "statutory rape" for a love

affair with a 14-year-old student. Joining Dworkin & Co. are dyed-in-the-wool liberals like *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert. Herbert's loyalty did not waver even when the Democratic president signed the anti-welfare law consigning millions of black women to homelessness and hunger. But now he is up in arms because Clinton may have had "sex with a 21-year-old intern"—the ultimate disenchantment.

Falling in step behind these disillusioned feminists and liberals is the social-democratic International Socialist Organization (ISO), which declaims, "Rarely has the bankruptcy of politicians been so clear." The New York City ISO has been advertising meetings with titles like "Caught in Sex Scandal! What About the Crimes Clinton Gets Away With?" and "Clinton: Sex, Lies and Broken Promises." Does the ISO consider sex in the White House a crime? And what are the "broken promises"? Clinton came through on his promises to *his* class—to "end welfare as we know it," to escalate imperialist military intervention against Bosnia and Iraq in the name of "humanitarianism" and "democracy," to try to strangle Cuba. Liberals with a thin veneer of socialist rhetoric, the ISO promotes illusions in reforming the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism, and the capitalist system it upholds.

It is notable that the legal basis for sexual harassment suits is an amendment added by a Dixiecrat Congressman to Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act with the aim of getting the whole bill voted down. Since then, particularly through the efforts of Dworkin sidekick Catherine MacKinnon, this has been used to deem virtually any sexual innuendo or consensual relationship involving an

employee and a superior at the workplace as harassment. On the campuses, this has been manifested in the "date rape" witch-hunt and a proliferation of *in loco parentis* anti-sex "conduct codes," including outright bans on *any* sexual contact between teachers and students. A particularly vindictive case in point is that of Yale math professor Jay Jorgenson, a talented teacher and researcher who was hounded out of his job and any teaching position after a female student claimed she'd had a *consensual* sexual relationship with him (*New Yorker*, 9 February).

As communists, we fight against any manifestation of the racist abuse and victimization routinely meted out to women, blacks and other minorities. The anti-sex witchhunt serves to ideologically reinforce the deep oppression and exploitation suffered by the vast majority of women in this country. We oppose all laws against so-called "crimes without victims"—e.g., drugs, prostitution and the numerous anti-homosexual statutes still on the books. Down with reactionary "age of consent" laws! Government out of the bedroom!

Throughout much of the world, the U.S. is seen as downright weird for its obsession with the private lives of its public officials. The French press made a point of recounting how former president François Mitterrand's widow and mistress grieved together at his funeral bier. When conservative columnist George Will warned sternly of Clinton's supposed lack of "moral authority" to send young people into battle against Iraq, liberal Alexander Cockburn dismissed this as absolute nonsense, noting: "During the first World War, when 7000 British soldiers a day were dying on the Western front, the British prime minister was David Lloyd George, aka 'the Welsh goat,' who was consorting openly with his secretary, Frances Stevenson, and jumping every woman incautious enough to come within arm's length of him."

Sex is no crime. The real crimes of the American ruling class and their political ringmasters in the White House are monstrous and murderous. Bill Clinton won his spurs to represent the U.S. bourgeoisie during his first run for the presidency, when he returned to Arkansas to personally oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black man, Rickey Ray Rector, just as the Gennifer Flowers affair was emerging. And in April 1993, Clinton and his attorney general Janet Reno unleashed the biggest government slaughter of American civilians in the 20th century, ordering the incineration of nearly 100 men, women and children at the racially integrated Branch Davidian commune near Waco, Texas. Today, Clinton yearns for his own "desert slaughter" against the Iraqi people. These are the crimes for which Clinton and his class will be condemned in the court of the victorious world proletarian revolution. ■

## Abortion Rights...

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rights, particularly for teens—has led to a sharp decline in the availability of abortion. This is especially true in the South, but throughout the U.S., 84 percent of all counties do not have abortion facilities.

As part of the fight for free abortion on demand, we call for mass, militant defense actions, backed up by the social power of the labor movement, to disperse the rightist mobs which besiege the clinics and provide cover for deadly terror attacks. In contrast, liberal feminists like the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League—tailed by various reformist "socialists"—have demobilized clinic defense by placing their faith in the Democratic White House and the capitalist cops and courts. Yet Clinton has repeatedly

expressed his willingness to sign legislation outlawing late-term abortions, the current spearhead of the drive to ban all abortions.

Speaking at a February 2 protest called by NOW in New York City against the Birmingham bombing, a Spartacist League spokesman counterposed a class-struggle program to the feminists' reliance on Clinton's Democrats:

"It's important to understand that these bomb-by-night terrorists and killers are encouraged by the war on the poor, minorities, immigrants and other oppressed people carried out by both capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, who are starving women and children. Clinton has overseen a sharp assault on poor and minority women. He's axed welfare, he's cut health care and child-care, and there are no abortions allowed at all on military bases. The fight to defend abortion and women's rights can't be separated from the struggles of all working people and minorities against the all-sided attacks of the capitalist class. That's why we call for the building of a revolutionary workers party. Defend the clinics—Take a stand! Free abortion on demand!" ■

### Spartacist 4 Forum

Break with the Democrats—For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

**Mobilize the Integrated Power of Labor to Fight for Black Freedom!**

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New York University—Loeb Student Center, South Lounge Theater  
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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## "Right to Life" Killers Bomb Birmingham Clinic

The heinous bombing of the New Woman, All Woman Health Care Center in Birmingham, Alabama on the morning of January 29 underscored the growing—and deadly—threat to the right to abortion. The attack left one person dead and another seriously injured. Amid the scorched wreckage, nurse Emily Lyons was found lying in a pool of blood—blinded in one eye and with major leg wounds—as was the mangled corpse of a security guard, Robert Sanderson. The bombing came only one week after the 25th anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion nationwide, and one year after an abortion clinic in Atlanta was struck by two bombs.

The Birmingham clinic is a key facility because it serves women from the entire region. A week before the bombing, 500 "right to life" thugs had tried to shut it down. Similar mobs have blockaded the clinic for years, threatening patients and clinic workers. In claiming responsibility for the attack, a right-wing outfit called the "Army of God" ominously threatened "anyone" in the United States associated with the manufacture or distribution of the French abortion pill RU 486. This group also claimed to have carried out the 1997 bombings of the clinic in Atlanta and a lesbian nightclub there. These night-riding terrorists are a deadly threat



Reuters

February 2 protest in New York City against bombing of Birmingham, Alabama women's clinic by anti-abortion bigots.

WV Photo



### Defend Abortion Rights!

not only to women and gays but to all minorities, particularly blacks. Recall that Birmingham was where KKK killers murdered four young black girls in a church in 1963!

The latest bombing is part of an escalating wave of attacks against clinics and

abortion providers, the deadly auxiliary to the efforts to roll back abortion rights in Congress and the courts. In 1993 and 1994, two abortion doctors and an escort were shot dead in Pensacola, Florida by gunmen linked to the KKK. Also in 1994, two clinic workers were murdered in a

barrage of gunfire in Brookline, Massachusetts. These murderous attacks and the daily harassment of abortion-seekers and clinic workers—combined with the imposition of "waiting periods" and other severe legislative restrictions on abortion

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## "Family Values" Reaction, Sex and the White House

For weeks now, the media have breathlessly retailed reams of gossip about what President Clinton did (or did not do) in the privacy of the Oval Office with enthusiastic White House intern Monica Lewinsky. This farcical media circus, which had *Nightline's* Ted Koppel solemnly wondering whether oral sex really constitutes adultery, has its dark side. *Wag the Dog*, the new movie about a president faking the invasion of a small

country as a diversion from a sex scandal, is Hollywood fantasy. But large numbers of very real human beings are soon likely to be slaughtered, as Clinton prepares to unleash his genuinely criminal lust to bomb Iraq back to the Stone Age.

While this country is increasingly soaked in religious (and other) backwardness, the population at large has seemed far less perturbed about a *Melrose Place* presidency than the pundits and politicians;

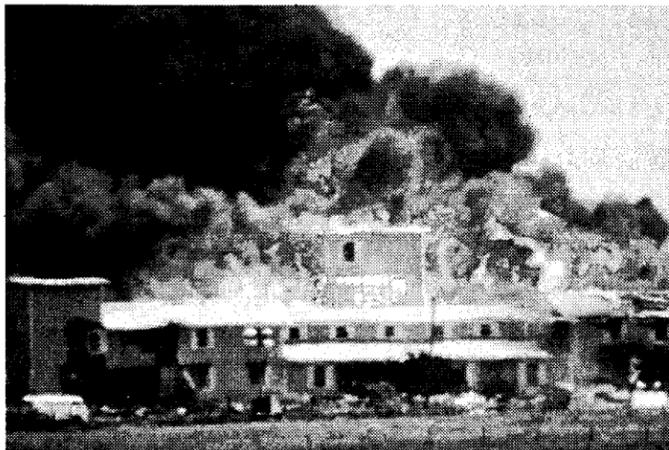
Clinton's approval rating has soared. It's worth noting that beneath all the public puritanism, pornography is a multibillion-dollar industry which dwarfs the returns from Disneyland, Broadway and major league baseball combined. Moreover, the notion that even the president of the United States could be brought down by sex snoops does not sit well with many people. Voicing a widespread sense of repugnance at this prying, one woman in

Illinois told the *New York Times* (3 February): "I don't want people asking questions about the President's sex life because I don't want anyone asking about mine."

When Democrat Gary Hart was forced to withdraw from the presidential primary races in 1987, we observed: "Government has no business interfering in private life, which means basically sex. The corollary is that the private life of people in government should be nobody's business either. Interesting, perhaps, but a little screwing around is no crime against humanity, unlike the vicious imperialist wars—both open and secret—against everyone and everything that interferes with capitalism's profits" ("Bush in the Bushes? Bedroom Snoops Sink Gary Hart," WV No. 428, 15 May 1987).

Clinton won the presidency in '92 largely because millions of women were repulsed by the Republicans' anti-abortion platform. But the reactionary "family values" crusade which has now engulfed the White House has been amply promoted by Clinton and his party—from the "don't ask, don't tell" sham which has led to even wider persecution of gays in the military to the ever more ominous

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Action Press



Aral/Sipa

Anti-sex liberals, feminists amnesty capitalist chief Clinton's crimes: Branch Davidian commune near Waco, Texas incinerated by federal agents, 1993; Baghdad residential district flattened by U.S. missile strike.