

## Imperialist Rivalries Heat Up



**U.S. Capitalism in the "New World Order"**

Reuters

Despite Washington's grudging acceptance of the deal worked out by United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan with Iraq over "weapons inspection" in late February, U.S. imperialism has maintained the massive armada of destruction assembled in the Persian Gulf. The continuing threats by Democratic president Clinton to launch military strikes against the Iraqi people, punctuated by Republican Congressional leaders' demands that the UN agreement be repudiated outright,

### PART ONE

strip bare the U.S. rulers' lying pretext that the threatened bombing was aimed at ensuring access by UN "inspectors" to Iraq's supposed arsenal of chemical and biological weapons.

As we noted in a statement last issue, "Behind the war buildup in the Gulf is the drive by U.S. imperialism to assert its 'right' to ride roughshod over the colonial and semicolonial peoples of the world and to demonstrate to its imperialist rivals that the massive American arsenal of destruction continues to make it top dog." While liberals and reformists pleaded with the rapacious American ruling class to adopt more "peaceful" policies and to "let Iraqis live," the International Communist League forthrightly called for military defense of Iraq in the event of U.S. imperialist attack and advanced the perspective of proletarian revolution as the only way to eliminate the danger of imperialist war. As we have from the moment UN economic sanctions were first imposed nearly eight years ago, we declare: Down with the imperialist starvation blockade of Iraq!

The conflicting appetites among the imperialist powers—with Britain fulsomely backing the U.S., and France among others openly opposing military action—continued to be revealed in the UN Security Council debate on the Annan agree-



Reuters

**U.S. war buildup against Iraq takes place as rival imperialist powers compete for control of oil and natural gas in region. In East Asia, U.S.-dominated IMF imposes starvation austerity on workers from South Korea (left) to Indonesia, provoking widespread protests.**

ment and the threat of a future missile strike against Iraq. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union has exacerbated interimperialist rivalries: trade war between the U.S. and Japan, the resurgence of German imperialism in East Europe, sharpening conflicts over control of oil and natural gas resources and pipeline routes around the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea. Amid a renewed scramble among the three major powers—the U.S., Japan and Germany—to redivide markets and spheres of exploitation, the outlines of the world situation increasingly resemble those before the first inter-imperialist world war of 1914-18.

The October Revolution of 1917, led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, pointed the way out of imperialist slaughter and capitalist exploitation and oppression. Today, the ICL fights to build revolutionary workers parties as part of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International to lead new October Revolutions internationally. Alongside the current military buildup in the Gulf is the use of the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund to impose starvation austerity on the workers of Southeast Asia and Latin America—and the slashing of wages and welfare programs in the U.S. Imperial-

ism, as Lenin stressed, is "the highest stage of capitalism." We present below the first part of an edited presentation by comrade Joseph Seymour, given at the recent Third International Conference of the International Communist League, describing the origins and development of the imperialist system.

\* \* \*

In 1909, a group of New York and London banks were negotiating a loan to the Dominican Republic. The collateral for the loan was to be the customs duties collected by the Dominican government.

Jacob Schiff, the principal Wall Street banker involved in this deal, asked his British colleague, Sir Ernest Cassel: "If they do not pay, who will collect these customs duties?" Cassel replied: "Your marines and ours."

This exchange illuminates a basic principle of capitalism, as well as every other social order based on the exploitation of labor by a distinct class of property owners. So-called property rights—whether in the form of loans, direct investments or trade agreements—are just pieces of paper unless they are backed by

*continued on page 4*

**Misremembering the *Maine***

**A Century of U.S.  
Imperialist Plunder**

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# On Pennsylvania's Death Row

## Hunger Strike Protest Against Prison Crackdown

Up to 111 prisoners on death row at the infamous SCI Greene complex in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania have launched a hunger strike to protest new regulations imposed on March 5 which drastically curtail what few rights they have. Prisoners are now being allowed only one 15-minute telephone call a week and only one hour of family visits instead of two. Television and radio antennas have been confiscated, as have sweat suits and shoes. Limited to one striped uniform, two pairs of underwear and prison-issue slippers, prisoners are forced to endure chilly cells without warm clothing.

The day the regulations were imposed, guards swept through the cells confiscating any books, toiletries and other possessions that did not fit into a single, small box. Among those targeted was death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was forced to turn over some 16 boxes of personal materials, including legal papers. Besides further dehumanizing the prisoners, this move is a blatant attack on their right to have the legal materials necessary to pursue their defense efforts. Many of Mumia's confidential legal materials are now in the hands of prison authorities and, presumably, the prosecutor's office.

The new regulations are no doubt a

retaliation against a modest but significant legal victory by Jamal and other prisoners in January, when a federal court ruled that SCI Greene had deprived them of the right to private conversations with their attorneys and ordered prison officials to provide a confidential meeting place for such discussions. As a reprisal against prisoner lawsuits, the authorities have installed a video camera in the reception area, and visitors are submitted to an "Ionscan" machine (in addition to the metal detector) to supposedly ferret out drug residues on their skin and clothing!

In a statement from Greene's death row, Mumia denounced the latest attempt by prison authorities to further torture death row prisoners and crush their will:

"Several years ago in *Live From Death Row*, I wrote about the attack on the life of the mind. This is that attack realized. In one fell swoop, the state has sanctioned those on Death Row for 'practicing their constitutional right,' for suing and winning in court."

Jamal has been fighting for his life since he was falsely convicted in 1982 for the shooting death of a Philadelphia cop, railroaded to death row because of his history as a young leader of the Black Panther Party, a supporter of the MOVE organization and a prominent journalist

who has spoken out eloquently against police brutality and racist oppression.

In 1989, when Jamal and other death row prisoners at Huntingdon prison went on a hunger strike for two weeks to protest the degrading conditions there, the coldblooded prison authorities were perfectly content to see them die before their execution date. Today, as his battle for freedom has become a symbol around the world of the struggle to abolish the racist death penalty, Mumia does not want to give the state the pleasure of seeing him die in a hunger strike.

The Greene hunger strikers are ultimately risking starvation to assert their human dignity. Their protest highlights the fact that the death penalty, whose victims are vastly disproportionately black or Hispanic, is a barbaric system of institutionalized state terror. In branding people as non-humans whose lives are expendable, the racist death penalty goes back to the system of black chattel slavery.

As Marxists, we are unequivocal opponents of the institution of the death penalty—we do not accord the state the right to determine who lives or dies. The labor movement must actively take up the fight to free Mumia as part of the struggle to abolish the racist death penalty. Overwhelming evidence has been assembled testifying to Jamal's innocence, but he did not and cannot have a fair trial in the capitalist courts.

The current massive speedup on death row reflects the general intensification of racist state repression and is part and parcel of the capitalist attacks on working people and the poor carried out by the partner parties of capital, the Democrats and Republicans. To put the hideous machinery of legal lynching out of business, it is necessary to mobilize the social power of the multiracial working class under the leadership of a revolutionary workers party to sweep away the capitalist system through socialist revolution. ■

## Letters

### On Regional Autonomy and Algeria

3 January 1998

To the Editor:

In the article "Civil War Bleeds Algeria" (WV No. 680, 12 December 1997), we write that "Trotskyists call for the full equality of all languages used in Algeria—Arabic, Berber and French—but we also uncompromisingly defend the Berbers' right to regional autonomy." A "right to regional autonomy" presupposes that we have already made the determination that the Berbers cannot, may not or do not want to form their own nation-state, i.e., to exercise the right to self-determination.

More fundamentally, as formulated, the sentence implies that we defend this right in the present capitalist Algeria. Regional autonomy presumes that there is agreement between two sides, with certain governmental forms, diplomacy, etc. There are occasions when Marxists may agree with regional autonomy under capitalism if it is a question posed by others: for example, the Scots now have a measure of regional autonomy—their own parliament. But at best this can only be utopian nonsense in Algeria today. At worst, it builds illusions in the ability of the bourgeoisie to find a solution to the national question and thus belies our insistence on the need for a perspective of permanent revolution in Algeria.

It appears to me that in Lenin's Bolshevik Party, regional autonomy was only ever put forward as a possibility under a

workers government. Just as we call for the right of self-determination in order to take the national question off the agenda, the Soviet Union set up a federated system where various peoples had regional autonomy in order to undercut the fear that the centralizing principles of communism were no different from Russian chauvinist oppression under the tsar. A relevant article on this matter is the "Letter to the New Unity Movement," printed in the International Communist League pamphlet, *The Fight for a Revolutionary Vanguard Party: Polemics on the South African Left*, which goes into the question of regional autonomy in Africa (not under the current political configuration). The document cites Lenin's December 1913 "Critical Remarks on the National Question," which is also helpful to review.

As a comrade wrote in a 1992 document for internal discussion, "We have stated in our press that we are for the equality of all languages in Algeria: Arabic, Berber and French. However, *the workers in power* [my emphasis] would, in addition, accord local Berber-speaking regions the *political power* to administer local or regional issues, within the framework of policy decided democratically at the national level." I suspect that this is what we meant to say in the WV article.

Comradely,  
Elizabeth Kendall



TROTSKY

#### For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

*International Women's Day, March 8, originated in 1908 in a march by female garment workers in New York City. Nine years later, a strike by women textile workers in Petrograd marking this workers' holiday signaled the beginning of the proletarian upsurge in Russia which culminated eight months later in the Bolshevik Revolution. The proletarian seizure of power—a beacon to workers and oppressed around the world*

—pointed the way to the emancipation of women. The communist program for women's liberation was laid out in 1920 at the Second Congress of the Communist International in a resolution edited by German Communist leader Clara Zetkin.

For women to achieve full social equality with men in truth and fact and not just on the passive pages of dead law books, for women as well as men to win the possibility of unrestricted achievement and free development of their full human personality, two primary conditions must be met. First, private property must be uprooted and replaced by social property. Second, the activity of women must be integrated into the social production of a new order free of exploitation and subjugation. Only the realization of these two conditions will prevent women from becoming economically dependent on men as wives and mothers in the family, or, as a result of the class conflict between exploiter and exploited, falling under the economic subjugation and exploitation of the capitalist as proletarian women working a job. Only this will prevent one-sided, excessive demands—whether of household duties and motherhood or of work on the job—from squandering valuable talents and gifts and making impossible a harmonious integration of both spheres of duty....

The foundation of communism is the social ownership of the large, economically dominant means of production, distribution, and commerce. In doing away with private ownership in this realm, communism eliminates the cause of the subjugation and exploitation of man by man, the social conflict between rich and poor, exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed. In so doing it also eliminates the economic and social conflict between men and women.

—"Theses for the Communist Women's Movement,"  
*The Communist International in Lenin's Time*, Vol. 2 (1991)



LENIN

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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## On Slogans Against U.S. Imperialist War Moves

24 February 1998

To the Editor:

The last two issues of *Workers Vanguard* have featured articles putting forward revolutionary proletarian opposition to U.S. imperialism's war moves against Iraq. However, these articles contain slogans which are either incorrect or open to misinterpretation.

The slogan above the headline "Down With U.S. War Moves in the Persian Gulf!" (WV No. 685, 27 February) reads: "Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Class Struggle!" As one of several slogans appearing on leaflets building Spartacus Youth Club speakouts against Clinton's threatened terror bombing of Iraq, this call, while abstract, was nonetheless an

evocative attempt to provide a working-class thrust for opposition to the American capitalist rulers. But as it appears in the WV headline, the slogan is not only meaningless but open to the reformist conclusion that imperialism can be defeated short of socialist revolution. To make a point of comparison, as war weariness deepened in the U.S. during the prolonged, losing imperialist war in Vietnam, the Spartacist League raised the slogan "Labor Strikes Against the War!" But the SL did not promise that such strikes would thereby defeat U.S. imperialism, though we were certainly going to throw ourselves into the battle.

In the article "U.S. Bloody Hands" *continued on page 11*

WORKERS VANGUARD

## ISO Threatens SYCer at S.F. State

# Goons for Liberalism

Last month, the Spartacus Youth Clubs mobilized against the imperialist war moves in the Near East, raising the call: Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack! U.S./UN/NATO Troops Out of the Persian Gulf! At several campuses we ran into another group which claimed to be organizing against the threatened U.S. attack on Iraq, the International Socialist Organization (ISO). Unlike the SYC, which forthrightly says that only communist revolution will end imperialism, the ISO pleads to Clinton, "No Blood for Oil."

The clash of opinion and test in action of the various forces claiming to be socialist is a crucial element in raising the consciousness of working people and youth. But this is exactly what the ISO doesn't want. Like its British parent organization, the Socialist Workers Party, which is renowned for its thuggery against other leftists, the ISO regularly resorts to exclusions and physical hooliganism to resolve the glaring contradiction between its socialist pretensions and its abjectly reformist practice. Thus four bullies from the ISO recently accosted a female member of the SYC at San Francisco State University (SFSU) and threatened to break her ankles if she ever talked to any of them again.

Meanwhile, in New York a six-man ISO goon squad physically excluded the SYC from a February 24 "teach-in" about Iraq at New York University (NYU). As we noted in a letter printed in NYU's *Washington Square News* (4 March):

"In keeping with the ISO's anti-communist support of the imperialists' Cold War drive for counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and deformed workers

states of Eastern Europe, these 'socialists' are in apparent agreement with the White House administrator who complained that more competent organizers of Clinton's Columbus, Ohio 'Town Hall Meeting' fiasco 'wouldn't have given tickets to the Spartacist League'."

The SYC opposes all thuggery within the workers movement and the left. We stand for open and free democratic debate among those claiming to struggle to end capitalist barbarity. We reprint below a February 25 leaflet issued by the San Francisco SYC against the ISO's vile

of the NCCAW (National Coalition of Campuses Against the War) planning conference, something which I am ashamed of now." He also reported that prior to that, an ISO leader "told us that he had physically thrown Sparts down a flight of stairs to keep them from one of their educations."

\* \* \*

As the U.S. imperialists geared up for a massive attack on Iraq, the Spartacus Youth Clubs held speakouts and meet-



While reformist ISO pushed liberal appeals for more "humane" imperialism at February protests against U.S. war buildup, Spartacists fought for revolutionary program to defeat imperialism.



Young Spartacus photos

provocation at SFSU. After this leaflet was released, there was a flurry of traffic on the Internet about the ISO's legacy of violence in the left. This included one former ISOer in Chicago who wrote that during the Gulf War seven years ago, "I aided the ISO in keeping the SL out

ings on campuses across the country declaring "Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack! U.S./UN Out of the Persian Gulf!" Our opposition to the imperialist war moves against Iraq is part of our opposition to capitalist exploitation around the globe. Imperialism is not just

some bad policy of the bourgeoisie—it is the highest expression of this whole system of capitalist exploitation. To increase its profits, finance capital is driven to make war to capture new markets for exploitation. The war buildup in the Gulf is intended to demonstrate to the U.S.' imperialist rivals that the massive American arsenal of destruction still makes it top dog. At home the same racist U.S. rulers have condemned millions of welfare mothers, immigrants and their children to starvation and death.

Capitalism means racism and war—it cannot be reformed; it must be overthrown through a socialist revolution. The power to do that lies in the hands of the working class mobilized in its own interests and those of all the oppressed under the leadership of an internationalist revolutionary workers party. Defeat U.S. imperialism through class struggle at home! Break with the Democratic Party of war and racism! For a workers party

that fights for socialist revolution!

The SYC's proletarian internationalist opposition to imperialism stands in marked contrast to fake socialists like the International Socialist Organization (ISO), who spend their time pleading with

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## Pleading for Imperialist "Peace" Workers World, ISO Welcome "Antiwar" Reactionaries

In our own campus speakouts and protests and through contingents at demonstrations around the country last month, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs called for defense of Iraq against threatened U.S. attack and stressed the need for workers revolution as the only way to put an end to imperialist wars. In contrast, reformists like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and the Workers World Party focused on liberal pleas to the murderous U.S. ruling class to allocate "money for jobs, not war" and begging imperialist leader Bill Clinton, "don't bomb Iraq." Such lowest-common-denominator appeals to the "masses" found these "socialists" in bed with some pretty reactionary types. Some who turned out for their "antiwar" demonstrations would have been killing each other in different circumstances.

A February 28 "National March for Peace and Justice" in New York, sponsored by Workers World's "International Action Center" and heavily built by the ISO, was marked by loud chants of "Allah Akbar" (god is great). Among the speakers invited to address the crowd from the platform was a self-described "Afghan freedom fighter" who railed against "Russian invaders." It is not surprising that the ISO would welcome

as its own a spokesman for the bloodthirsty, CIA-backed *mujahedin* who murdered Soviet soldiers and have made Afghanistan a hellish nightmare for women—since the anti-Communist ISO eagerly embraced their "cause." But nor was there a peep of protest against the presence of this reactionary cut-throat from the more-Stalinist-than-thou Workers World Party.

The day before, at the Berkeley campus of the University of California, the ISO rubbed shoulders not only with Muslim fundamentalists but also with a group of "Libertarians Against War." Indeed, the signs carried by the far-right Libertarians—including "Make Money Not War" and "No New War—No New Taxes!"—were barely distinguishable from the ISO's own slogans. And at a March 2 "teach-in" at Rutgers University in New Jersey, heavily promoted by the ISO (and retrograde black nationalist Amiri Baraka's Unity & Struggle), one "antiwar" speaker attacked Clinton from the *right*, complaining that the U.S. imperialists did not do enough to get rid of Hussein in 1991!

Their occasional "socialist" rhetoric notwithstanding, the ISO and Workers World push liberal politics

aimed at reforming—and prettifying—the capitalist system of racism, exploitation and war. Thus they appeal to and blend in with all manner of opposition to U.S. war moves in the Persian Gulf, from bourgeois pacifists to Arab nationalists. Workers World regularly fêtes Ramsey Clark, former U.S. Attorney General under Lyndon Johnson during the Vietnam War.

The "classless" rallies the reformists promote and build do nothing to fight imperialist war; on the contrary, they foster illusions that imperialism is merely a "bad policy" which can be changed through mass pressure. Marxists understand that imperialism is nothing other than the highest stage of capitalism and can only be defeated through socialist revolution to uproot the entire capitalist system.

We seek to win youth and others outraged by the atrocities and barbarities of this imperialist ruling class to the understanding that they must join in the fight to forge a revolutionary workers party to lead the struggle for proletarian power. Such a party is vital to bringing to the proletariat the consciousness that, with its strategic role in the production process, its organization and numbers, the working class uniquely has the social power and historic interest to smash capitalism and create a communist society. Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!

While calling for defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack, we give no political support to Saddam Hussein's bloody capitalist regime, which has maintained power through the massacre of Communists, Kurds and other ethnic and religious minorities. We say: Down with the oil sheiks, colonels, emirs and Zionist rulers! Workers to power—For a socialist federation of the Near East! Only communist revolution, here and internationally, can end imperialist war!

# Imperialist Rivalries...

(continued from page 1)

military force. And this is not some abstruse Marxist principle. Every Mafia loan shark understands that if he does not have at his command someone who can break the kneecaps of people who owe him money, he will experience a much lower rate of repayment.

In general, the amount of military force necessary to maintain property rights outside one's own country is substantially greater than within it. As a historical norm, the imperialist bourgeoisie does not face an immediate or short-term prospect of proletarian revolution within its own nation-state. But investments in foreign countries, especially in what are today called Third World countries, are far more vulnerable to popular unrest, at times to local bourgeois-nationalist forces and not least to rival imperialist states. The men who own and run General Motors do not now believe that they need a strong U.S. military to protect their auto plants in the American Midwest. But they do think they need a strong U.S. military to protect their auto plants in Mexico. And the top managers of Exxon know damn well that without the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force their oil fields in the Persian Gulf would not be theirs for very long.

The world capitalist economy, from its very beginnings in the 16th century, was based on strong national states and shaped by the conflicts between them. As Lenin emphasized, the development of modern imperialism beginning in the late 19th century went hand in hand with the enormous growth of militarism at both the material and ideological levels. This was not some unique, profound insight on Lenin's part. The imperialists themselves were saying as much loud and clear. Leo Amery, a right-wing British politician, declared in 1905:

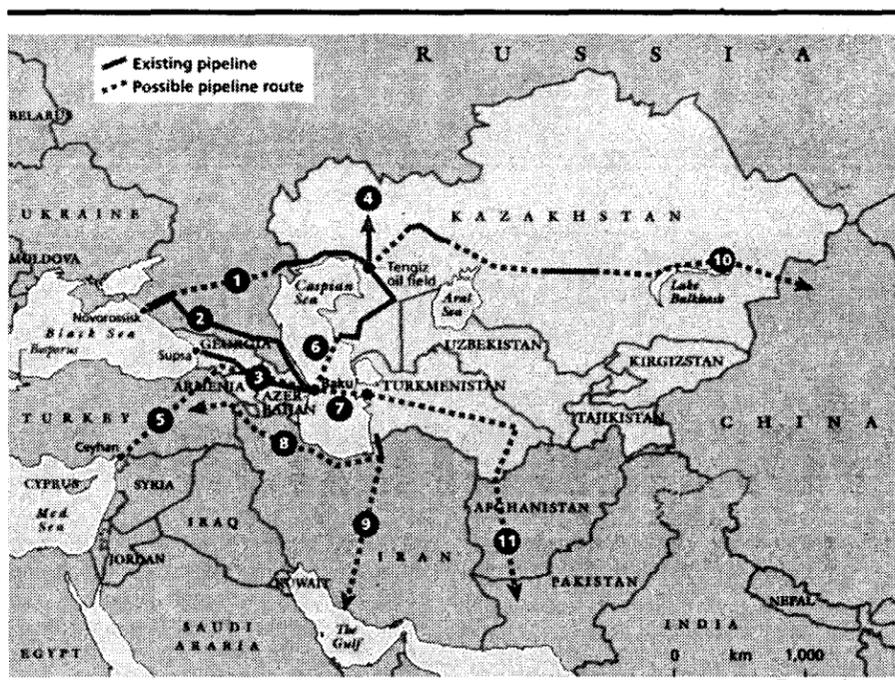
"Every year the competition for power among the great world states is getting keener, and unless we can continue to hold our own, unless we can keep our invincible Navy, and unless we can defend the Empire at every one of its frontiers, our Empire and our trade will be taken away from us by others."

—quoted in Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (1987)

Likewise, Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz, the architect of the modern German navy, explained and justified the First World War in his memoirs as follows: "We had global commerce, which compelled us to world power." Imperialist politicians and military men of the pre-1914 era were far more honest and less hypocritical than their present-day counterparts.

## The Second Generation of Imperialist Powers

The best way of understanding those changes in the world economy over the past few decades which have been mislabeled "globalization" is to present a broad historical overview of world capitalism from the mid-19th century to the present, focusing on the interaction between international economic develop-



Economist map

**Counterrevolutionary destruction of USSR has intensified interimperialist rivalry, as capitalist powers compete for control of new pipeline routes in Central Asia.**

Der Spiegel



ments and the major imperialist states. The Industrial Revolution began in England and Scotland in the early 19th century and then spread to France and the Low Countries (Belgium and Holland). In the late 19th century, there emerged three new industrial capitalist powers: the United States, Germany and Japan. However, the way in which industrial capitalism developed in these three countries was very different, differences whose effects exist to this day.

What became the American bourgeois state originated in the era of mercantile capitalism as a settler colony of Britain, then the most socially and economically advanced country in the world. Consequently, the American rural economy was not burdened by the heritage of feudalism, unlike the backward peasant villages of 19th-century France and Germany, not to speak of Japan. Agriculture in the northern part of the U.S. was based on relatively large family farms which were highly commercialized and technologically dynamic. This, in turn, generated a large and growing internal market for manufactured goods, from clothing to farm machinery.

At the same time, 19th-century American capitalism benefited from massive foreign investment from Britain as well as the immigration of well-to-do Englishmen and Scotsmen. In 1914, British investment in the United States was greater

than in India and South Africa combined. The financial integration of the British and American capitalist classes was reinforced at a more basic level, as the daughters of the Yankee moneyed aristocracy married into English ruling circles. Two of J. P. Morgan's nieces, for example, married English aristocrats, and the mother of Winston Churchill—the personification of 20th-century British imperialism—was the daughter of a New York financier.

These favorable internal and external conditions generated in the U.S. a large and broad-based capitalist class operating with a relatively weak central government. In fact, the U.S. did not even have a central bank until 1913. Before then, the House of Morgan acted as a de facto central bank. Monopoly capitalism in the U.S. (as in Britain) developed in a gradual and organic way out of competition among a multiplicity of freewheeling entrepreneurs. Many large American corporations—agricultural machinery firms like International Harvester and John Deere, Standard Oil (whose main successor is Exxon), Ford Motor—were wholly owned for decades by the founding entrepreneur and his heirs. They grew by plowing back profits and were already quite large when, to expand further, they had to tap into outside capital through the sale of stocks and bonds.

In Germany and even more so Japan, by contrast, industrial capitalism was from the beginning highly concentrated and centralized under the auspices of a strong and interventionist state. Individual German entrepreneurs simply lacked the capital to launch manufacturing enterprises of sufficient scale and advanced technology to compete with already established British firms. Hence the Prussian-German government encouraged the mobilization of capital through the banking system. Imperial Germany under Bismarck pioneered the investment bank—which not only provided the bulk of capital for industrial enterprises but arranged for mergers and acquisitions and generally guided managerial policy. This holds true today as well. German stockholders in Siemens and Volkswagen give their proxy votes not to the management of these firms but rather to their

hausbank, which is regarded as the best guarantor of their interests.

Japan, which in the mid-1800s was much more economically backward than Germany, consequently required an even greater degree of monopolization and state intervention to become an imperialist power. Following the Meiji restoration in 1867, the new Japanese ruling group modeled its political structure and economic policies in large measure on imperial Germany. Bismarck himself told a Japanese emissary to restrict direct foreign ownership so as to preserve his country's national independence. The core of Japan's heavy industry was directly established by the Meiji state and then toward the end of the 19th century sold off to politically favored, family-based capitalist groups. This was the origin of the *zaibatsu*—huge integrated complexes of industrial, financial and commercial capital closely tied to the state—like Mitsui, Mitsubishi and Sumitomo. The same system continues today under the name of *keiritsu*.

## The Buildup to World War I

The emergence of the three new industrial capitalist powers in the late 19th century underlay the two major interimperialist wars of the 20th century. The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 marked a fundamental divide in modern imperialist history. What is today called the globalization of capitalism is a *partial* return to the norms of the pre-1914 imperialist era. From the beginning of World War I to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the *political* conditions for the international movement of capital were far less favorable than in the pre-1914 era.

This can be seen from a few basic statistics. By 1914, total productive assets held by British capitalists outside Britain amounted to well over one-quarter of the capital stock within Britain itself! In the case of France, the second leading exporter of capital, the total value of long-term foreign investment came to 15 percent of the domestic productive wealth. In comparison, the market value of productive assets held by American capitalists outside the United States today is about 9 percent of the total capital stock in the U.S. The comparable figures for Japan are somewhat less and for Germany substantially less.

The two institutions key to the exceptional globalization of capitalism in the pre-1914 imperialist era were colonialism and the gold standard. Particularly Britain and France, but also other West European countries as well as the U.S. and Japan, exercised direct state power over millions of toilers throughout the world. British plantation owners in India had no fear that the Indian government would enact laws unfavorable to them because the Indian government was *their* government.

It was also standard practice for imperialist states to use military force on behalf of finance capital against backward countries which were nominally independent. For example, when the government of Venezuela said it could not repay its foreign loans—mostly from British banks, and a few German banks—as scheduled in 1902, Britain and Germany momentarily overcame their own rivalry and dispatched their navies to jointly blockade Venezuela, demanding the Caracas regime pay up or they would starve the country into submission. Britain and Germany backed off only when the U.S. asserted its monopoly over gunboat diplomacy in the region and told them to stop poaching on its turf.

While colonialism and gunboat diplomacy were the political preconditions for the large-scale movement of capital from imperialist to backward countries, the gold standard was a precondition for the large-scale movement of capital among the imperialist states. The gold standard ensured that exchange rates were fixed, that there were few or no restrictions on the international movement of capital and that real interest rates were stable and closely linked in the major financial

# WORKERS VANGUARD

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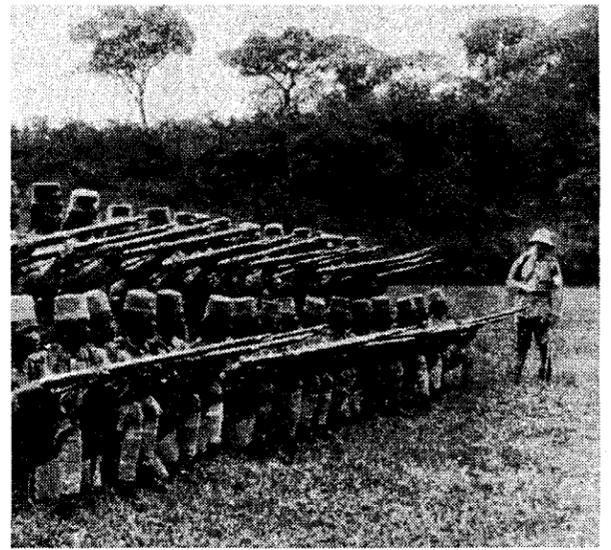
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Der Spiegel

Turn of century saw rise of second generation of imperialist powers. From left: U.S. invasion of China during 1900 Boxer Rebellion, Japan's defeat of Russia at Port Arthur in 1905, German officers train colonial troops in East Africa in 1915.

capitals—London, Paris, New York. British holders of American railway bonds did not have to worry that their assets would be devalued by hyperinflation or the depreciation of the dollar against the pound. And if they wanted to sell those bonds, exchange their dollar earnings into pounds and reinvest their money in Britain, they did not have to worry that the U.S. government would obstruct such a transaction.

By the beginning of the 20th century, a sharp and growing imbalance had emerged between Britain and France's vast colonial dominions and financial wealth on the one hand and on the other, their industrial capacity, which is the ultimate basis of military strength. When a unified German state was created under Bismarck in 1871, Britain accounted for *one-third* of the world's manufacturing capacity and Germany only 13 percent. Britain was producing seven million tons of iron and steel, Germany only one and a half million. Two generations later, Britain's share of world industrial capacity had been reduced to 15 percent, slightly *less* than that of Germany. By 1914, Germany was producing nearly twice as much iron and steel as Britain. German ruling circles therefore demanded a redivision of world markets and spheres of exploitation corresponding to its greater and growing industrial strength. In the words of German chancellor Bernard von Bülow: "We cannot allow any foreign power, any foreign Jupiter to tell us: 'What can be done? The world is already partitioned'."

There is today a strong tendency to conceive of imperialism in Third Worldist terms as the domination and exploitation of Asia, Africa and Latin America by the United States, West Europe and Japan. However, this conception is too narrow and overly simple. The primary targets of German imperial expansion leading up to World War I lay within Europe, not outside it. Germany's main war aims in 1914 were the annexation of economically valuable regions in northern France, the reduction of Belgium and Holland to client states and the annexation of the Ukraine from tsarist Russia. This was a specific historical expression

of a general pattern. Imperialist bourgeoisies which are growing relatively stronger internally demand and strive to obtain a larger share of the surplus value generated outside their own national states.

### Economic Effects of the War and the Bolshevik Revolution

The First World War killed off the gold standard. With the exception of the United States, all the major combatants financed their huge, unprecedented military expenditures by printing money while imposing tight controls over all international transactions. When the war ended in 1918, price levels in the major capitalist countries bore no relation what-

ing the 1920s were far higher than in the pre-1914 era. This reflected the general climate of political insecurity—fear of a new major war, of civil wars and of "red revolution." Bankers and other financiers thus demanded a higher return and faster payback on money they loaned out.

The political-economic impact of the Bolshevik Revolution was especially great in the larger semicolonial countries, like Mexico and China. In the 1920s, following the Mexican Revolution of 1910-17, Mexico was ruled by bourgeois nationalists, predecessors of the current PRI regime. Encouraged by the Bolshevik example, the new Mexican rulers refused to pay the foreign debt of over one billion dollars—mainly to American

House of Morgan and other international financiers was also next to nothing.

In China, the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution was far greater and more direct than in Mexico. The Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 was defeated only because Stalin and Bukharin ordered the Communist Party (CCP), which stood at the head of the small but powerful proletariat, to liquidate into Chiang Kai-shek's bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang. However, Chiang's counterrevolutionary regime did not succeed in restoring political order. Peasant armies led by Mao Zedong's CCP controlled some regions of the country, while various rival warlords controlled other regions. Consequently, Wall Street and London were not about to risk their money in Chiang's China. The only significant foreign investment in China in this period was undertaken by Japan in Manchuria *after* it conquered and occupied this region in 1931. Here again we see that military-political control is a precondition for the large-scale movement of capital from an imperialist to a backward country.

The struggle of the major capitalist powers to redivide markets and spheres of exploitation led in 1939-41, as it had in 1914, to an interimperialist world war. But there was, of course, a major difference: the existence of the Soviet Union, which remained a workers state despite its degeneration under the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy. In its drive to dominate Europe, Germany invaded and sought to subjugate Soviet Russia. The defeat of the German Wehrmacht by the Soviet Red Army decisively affected the shape of the postwar world. The United States, with the defeat of its main imperialist rivals, Germany and Japan, became the hegemonic world capitalist power. But the global hegemony of American imperialism was blocked by the Soviet degenerated workers state, which had emerged from the war as the second-strongest state in the world. From West Europe to South America to East Asia, the course of economic developments between 1945 and 1991 was integrally connected with the Cold War.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



VAAP

October Revolution led by Lenin's Bolsheviks pointed way out of imperialist slaughter of World War I. Banner at December 1917 Russian workers demonstration includes call: "Long Live Soviet Power Which Has Paved the Way for Peace Among Nations."

ever to either prewar foreign-exchange parities or real purchasing power. The attempt to resurrect the gold standard in the mid-1920s was buried under the wreckage of the Great Depression of the 1930s, as the major capitalist countries reacted with what were called "beggar thy neighbor" trade policies: higher tariffs, trade quotas, currency depreciation, foreign-exchange controls (especially in Nazi Germany) and the establishment of regional economic blocs dominated by a single imperialist power, such as Japan's "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."

No less important than World War I in shaping the economic conditions of the 1920s and '30s was the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. This resulted in, among other things, the repudiation of the Russian tsarist debt and the formation of the Communist International, which weakened the colonial system by enormously strengthening the forces of national liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin America. For the first time since the Revolutions of 1848 in Europe, the propertied classes were truly haunted by the spectre of communism.

In 1930, the British liberal economist John Maynard Keynes blamed the Depression on the fact that interest rates dur-

investors—inherited from the old regime of Porfirio Díaz. Unlike the Bolsheviks, the Mexican bourgeois nationalists did not openly repudiate the foreign debt. Rather they prolonged negotiations with the House of Morgan on the terms of repayment for years and, in the end, paid next to nothing. The other side of this was that new investment in Mexico by the



National Archives

U.S. troops invaded Siberia during 1918-21 Civil War as part of imperialist effort to overthrow young Soviet republic.

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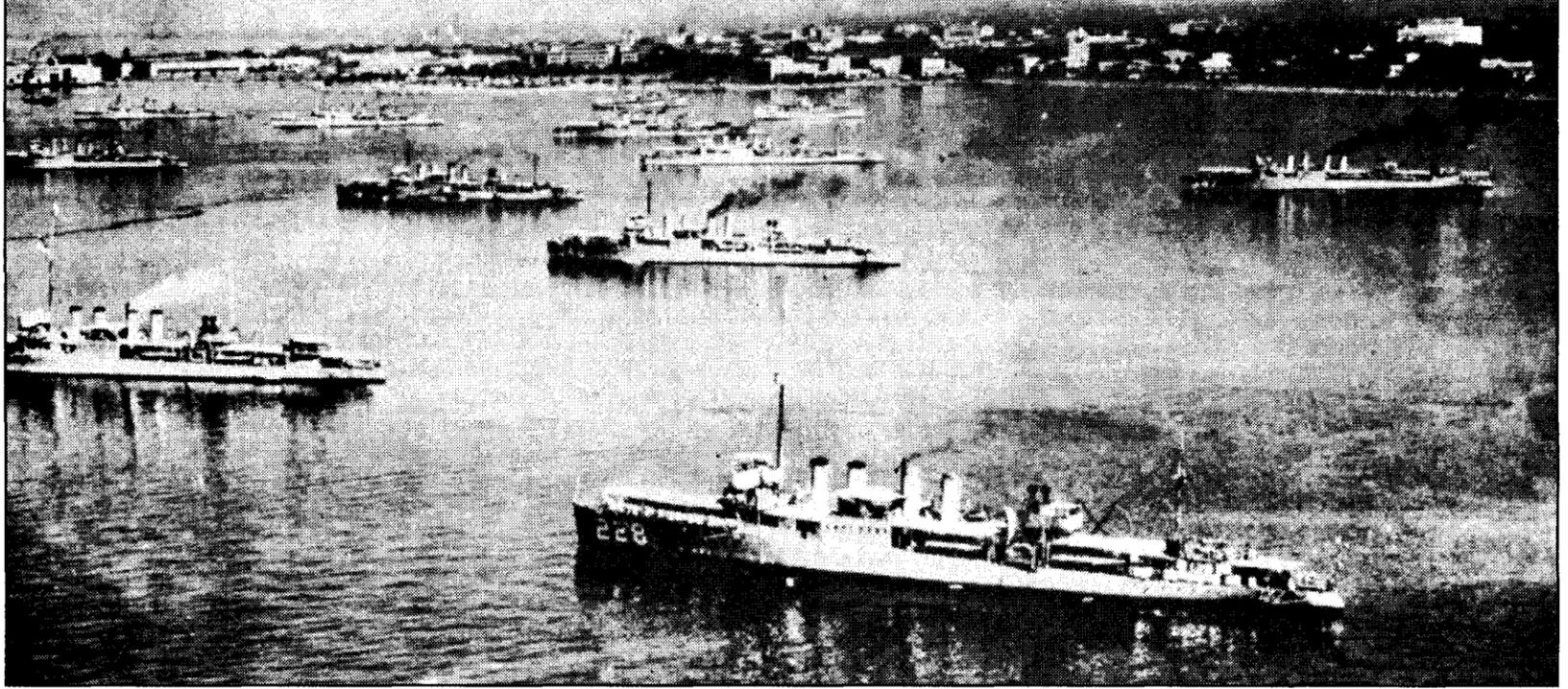
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# A Century of U.S. Imperialist Plunder



American fleet blockades Manila Bay in Philippines, 1898. Spanish-American War ushered in era of U.S. imperialist freebooting and gunboat diplomacy. UPI

Fittingly, as they were assembling an armada of mass destruction for use against the people of Iraq last month, the U.S. capitalist rulers celebrated the centenary of their emergence as an imperialist power. Regurgitating the jingoist call of the Hearst press 100 years ago, the U.S. Postal Service last month issued a stamp emblazoned with the slogan, "Remember the *Maine*," the battle cry for the U.S. war of colonial conquest against the decaying Spanish empire.

In his work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Russian revolutionary leader V. I. Lenin cited the 1898 Spanish-American War as a key event marking the advent of capitalist imperialism. The U.S.' swift and easy victory over Spain resulted in its seizure of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, and its bid as a contender for world domination. The development of a mighty armed force for intervention abroad was accompanied at home by the consolidation of racist Jim Crow segregation and the cultivation of a chauvinist labor bureaucracy.

The war with Spain ushered in a century of U.S. imperialist freebooting and gunboat diplomacy throughout Latin America and the world. Washington soon engineered a revolt against Colombia to enable the construction of the Panama Canal in what became the "independent" protectorate of Panama. Between 1900 and 1933 American troops were sent four times to Cuba, twice to Nicaragua, six times to Panama, seven times to Honduras. Beginning in 1915, the U.S. occupied the black republic of Haiti for 19 years, leaving in its wake a brutal puppet dictatorship. The conquest of the Philippines, leading to decades of bloody colonial repression, was a statement of U.S. imperialist appetites in the Pacific and a harbinger of the future war with Japanese imperialism, which culminated in the American A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Burgeoning competition between the U.S. and Japan in the Pacific points once again to renewed interimperialist conflict, this time posing

**For Unconditional Military Defense of Cuba Against Imperialism and Internal Counterrevolution!**

**For the Right of Independence for Puerto Rico!**

the nuclear annihilation of all humanity.

Today, Puerto Rico remains a colony of the U.S., while the Philippines, though nominally independent since 1946, is a semicolony dominated by the U.S. and Japan. Cuba was a corrupt, impoverished fiefdom of the United Fruit Company and the Mafia for decades. Imperialist domi-

to the brink of capitalist restoration (see "Castro Welcomes Pope of Counterrevolution," WV No. 685, 27 February).

The Spartacist League supports the right of independence for Puerto Rico and calls for unconditional military defense of Cuba against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution, while fighting for



Claridad



Brown Brothers

**Cuban independence fighter José Martí (far left) died in struggle against Spanish colonialism, warned against U.S. occupation. Emilio Aguinaldo led Filipinos in heroic resistance first against Spain, then U.S.**

nation was broken only after the 1959 victory of Castro's petty-bourgeois guerrilla forces over the Batista dictatorship, when the new regime expropriated capitalist property beginning in 1960, creating a bureaucratically deformed workers state. Besieged by a U.S. embargo, further isolated by the collapse of the Soviet Union, undermined by the Castroite Stalinist bureaucracy, Cuba today is being pushed

proletarian political revolution to oust the Castroite bureaucracy. Down with the U.S. starvation blockade of Cuba! This is part and parcel of our fight to sweep away rapacious U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution.

**"A Splendid Little War"**

While bourgeois mythology portrays the U.S. war against Spain as an effort

to assist Cuban independence fighters against colonialist rule, in truth it was a predatory war to conquer markets and sources of cheap labor and raw materials. On the eve of the war, a *Washington Post* editorial declared, "We are animated by a new sensation. We are face to face with a strange destiny. The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people." When war was declared in April 1898, Senator Albert Beveridge proclaimed:

"American factories are making more than the American people can use; American soil is producing more than they can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours.... American law, American order, American civilization, and the American flag will plant themselves on shores hitherto bloody and benighted."

The American bourgeoisie had long had designs on Cuba and Puerto Rico. In 1823, the year the Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed, asserting U.S. hegemony over the Americas, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams wrote that the two Caribbean islands "are natural appendages to the North American continent." Particularly following the depression of 1893, as armies of unemployed roamed the country, the American bourgeoisie looked to the control of new markets and colonies as a means to prevent another economic collapse. By 1898, 10 percent of American industrial and agricultural products were sold abroad, totaling \$1 billion. The gaping disparity between the economic might of American capitalism and its lack of colonial possessions impelled it to war.

By the time the U.S. declared war on Spain, Cuban nationalists had already virtually driven the Spanish colonialists out of the country. The revolution begun in 1895, under the leadership of José Martí and Antonio Macéó's Cuban Revolutionary Party, was the second uprising against colonialist rule in less than two decades. Spanish military forces responded with a brutal *reconcentrado* campaign driving peasants off the land. Over the next two

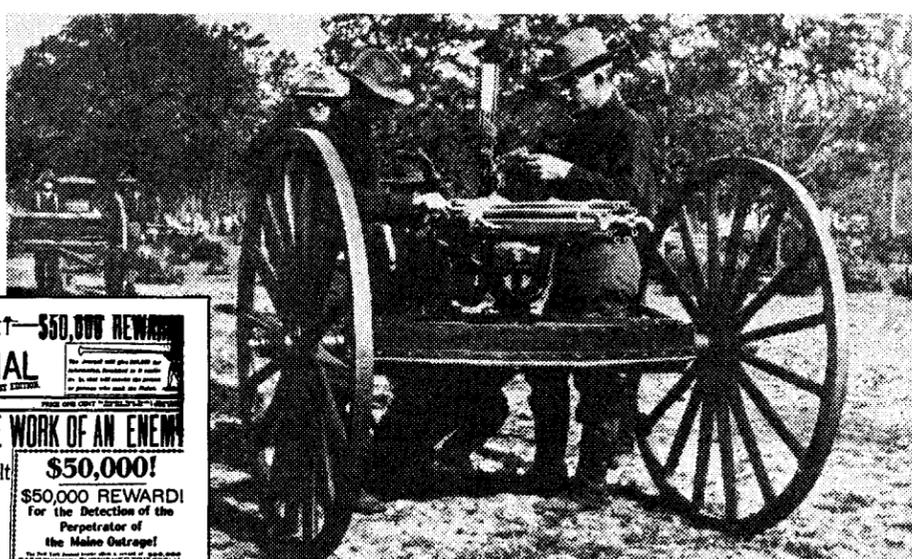
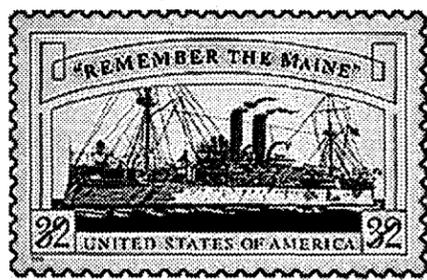
**For Socialist Revolution Throughout the Americas!**

# Misremembering the *Maine*

years, an estimated one-third of the rural population died of hunger and disease. Despite Martí and Macéó's deaths in battle, by 1898 the nationalists controlled the countryside, Spain had become financially exhausted and its army demoralized. Fearing an independent Cuba and alarmed by the presence of German naval vessels in the Caribbean, the U.S. dispatched the battleship *Maine* to Havana harbor.

After three weeks at anchor, on February 15 an explosion ripped through the *Maine's* hull, taking 266 lives. Even though Spanish sailors had helped pull survivors from the sea, less than two days later William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* (17 February 1898) declared the *Maine* "was split in two by an enemy's secret infernal machine," providing a pretext to mobilize popular support for war. "Remember the *Maine*! To hell with Spain!" rang out from pulpits and podiums around the country. The following month, a Naval Commission of Inquiry concluded that the ship had been destroyed by a submerged mine. (A 1975 re-examination by Admiral Hyman Rickover concluded that the explosion was due to the ship's faulty design, which placed coal bunkers next to magazines where powder was stored in copper containers.) In April, President McKinley asked for authorization to dispatch American troops and the Congress obliged with a joint resolution "demanding that the government of Spain relinquish its authority and government in the island of Cuba and Cuban waters, and directing the President of the United States to use the land and naval forces of the United States to carry these resolutions into effect." Two days later, McKinley ordered a naval blockade of Cuba.

The "splendid little war," as U.S. Secretary of State John Hay called it, lasted all of 113 days. As Martí had warned, "Once the United States is in Cuba, who will get her out?" The American occupation was brutal. Cubans who opposed U.S. decrees were horsewhipped in the street. Journalists were thrown in jail and



National Archives  
100 years later, new stamp celebrates jingoist war cry pushed by Hearst press as pretext for conquest of Cuba. U.S. Gatling gun crew prepares for 1898 invasion.

corrupt Batista regime and expropriated capitalist property.

## America's Racist Empire

Days after the U.S. declared war on Spain, Admiral Dewey's naval forces captured Manila Bay in the Philippines. While Spanish forces were rapidly defeated, it took a three-year war of extermination by 70,000 U.S. troops under General Arthur MacArthur to crush the Filipino nationalist fighters led by Emilio Aguinaldo. Ironically, the U.S. had brought Aguinaldo back from Hong Kong on an American warship in 1898 in order to place him at the head of an insurrection against Spain.

Up to a half million Filipinos were slaughtered between 1899 and 1902 in a heroic uprising which fueled anti-colonial sentiments throughout the region. Brigadier General Jacob Smith ordered his troops: "I want no prisoners. I

for light and guidance," until god told him that "there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them." It was in reference to the Philippines that the poet laureate of the British Empire, Rudyard Kipling, coined the racist-imperialist watchword of the "white man's burden."

In the U.S., even many so-called "progressives" justified America's imperial trampling over the dark-skinned peoples of the Pacific with an outpouring of vile racist garbage. The *Nation* railed in 1899 that the annexation of the Philippines—and Hawaii and Guam in 1898—brought under U.S. jurisdiction a "varied assortment of inferior races which, of course, could not be allowed to vote." In the Philippines, U.S. commanders incited their troops for the slaughter—including the extermination of entire towns—with lynch-mob tirades against "n-----s." Not surprisingly, many among the four segregated black regiments stationed there solidified with the embattled rebels, and a large number deserted or went over to the other side. One black soldier, William Simms, recalled how he was reproached by a young Filipino who challenged him: "Why don't you fight those people in America who burn Negroes, that make a beast of you?"

The U.S. brutally crushed a dozen more national uprisings before the Phil-

ippines was finally granted formal independence in 1946. Occupied by Japan during much of World War II, the islands were a particular focal point for its attempt to oust the U.S. from the Pacific. The American colonial administration had been so onerous that many Filipinos initially greeted the Japanese forces as liberators. But the brutal Japanese occupation soon provoked an insurrection by the Stalinist-led Hukbalahap guerrilla forces. Implementing Stalin's line of support to the "democratic" imperialists in World War II, the Filipino Stalinists welcomed the returning U.S. forces and joined with them in sweeping up the remnants of the Japanese army. But as soon as Japan had been dislodged from the islands, the U.S. occupiers disarmed and crushed the Huk fighters. On 4 July 1946, Washington finally implemented its longstanding promise to grant the islands formal independence, impelled not least by protests among U.S. troops demanding to be sent home.

## Imperialism Abroad, Jim Crow at Home

The capitalist rulers' wars of racist conquest abroad were accompanied by the intensification of racist repression against black people in the U.S. Two years before the Spanish-American War, the U.S. Supreme Court codified Jim

*continued on page 8*



National Archives

Up to 500,000 Filipinos were slaughtered by U.S. during war of extermination against independence fighters between 1899 and 1902.

"anti-American" publications were shut down by military censors. The U.S. contemptuously rejected Cuban demands for universal suffrage, not least because it would have meant giving the vote to the 40 percent of the Cuban population which was black. Signs appeared in Havana cafés reading, "We cater to white people only." One American black spokesman, Charles G. Baylor, trenchantly observed: "Nearly all the leaders and fighters in the Cuban army of liberation are men who, if in South Carolina, Mississippi or Louisiana would be made to ride in the 'Jim Crow Cars,' and would be refused the right to occupy a private residence on Beacon Street in Boston."

American business interests set about taking over railroads, mines and sugar properties. After three years of U.S. occupation, Cuba was poorer than it had been 80 years before. The occupation ended in 1903, only after Cuba had been forced to incorporate into its constitution a clause giving the U.S. the "right" to intervene whenever it saw fit. For the next 56 years, the Cuban toilers suffered under the neo-colonial domination of U.S. imperialism, until Castro's guerrilla forces ousted the

wish you to kill and burn. The more you kill and burn the better you will please me." Men, women and children were herded into concentration camps, as the U.S. implemented the same *reconcentrado* policy which had been carried out by the Spanish colonialists in Cuba. The systematic torture techniques used by the American forces would later be applied by Washington's death-squad regimes in Latin America, passed on at the notorious School of the Americas—more aptly known as the School of the Assassins—now located at Fort Benning, Georgia.

American capitalists had salivated over the prospect of taking over Spain's colonial possessions in the Pacific, as a gateway to profitable markets in China. Speaking from the Senate floor in 1900, Beveridge ranted: "The Philippines are ours forever.... And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We will not retreat from either." For his part, McKinley invoked divine inspiration to come to the same conclusion. Describing his decision to annex the islands, McKinley explained how "I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God

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Britannia Community Centre  
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no credit

Left: Demonstration for Puerto Rican independence, New York, 1937. Right: Nationalist militants arrested after opening fire in U.S. Congress in 1954 (from left): Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Andrés Figueroa Cordero.



AP

## Imperialist Plunder...

(continued from page 7)

Crow segregation with the *Plessy* decision declaring "separate but equal" the law of the land. The years 1889 to 1903 saw an average of two lynchings a week. The bourgeoisie, represented by the Republican Party, which had smashed the Southern slave system during the Civil War in order to ensure the expansion of American capitalism, had long since made its peace with the former slaveowners. Now, seeking to sanctify imperialist aggrandizement, it adopted their racist ideology. The *Boston Evening Transcript* (14 January 1899) observed that Southern race policy was "now the policy of the Administration of the very party which carried the country into and through a civil war to free the slave."

The American bourgeoisie's emergence as an imperialist power was also prepared by, and fueled, attacks on the U.S. working class. From the national railway strike of 1877 to the execution of the Chicago Haymarket martyrs in 1887 and the 1892 steel strike in Homestead, Pennsylvania, the class struggle was marked by one anti-labor massacre after another. The 1890 Sherman Anti-Trust Act was used to bust unions on behalf of the growing American monopolies. Particularly targeted for repression were immigrant workers, who brought with them the Marxist and anarchist views which were widespread among the European proletariat. In 1903 Congress passed legislation barring immigrants who "believe in or advocate the overthrow by force and violence" of the U.S. government, the first such law criminalizing political beliefs since the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. A 1902 anti-anarchist law in New York became the model for a spate of "criminal syndicalism" laws during World War I and for the 1940 Smith Act, under which first Trotskyists and then Communist Party members and Puerto Rican independence fighters were jailed.

Another instrument for disciplining the

working class came through the cultivation and consolidation of a chauvinist trade-union bureaucracy—personified by American Federation of Labor (AFL) chief Samuel Gompers—which identified its interests with those of the imperialist ruling class. In 1897, the AFL denounced plans to annex Hawaii and Gompers opposed U.S. intervention in Cuba. In its monthly journal, the *International Association of Machinists* spoke out against the jingoist outcry over the *Maine*, noting the absence of any such clamor over the deaths of workers in industrial accidents. But as soon as war was declared, Gompers did an about-face, calling the war "glorious and righteous" while mouthing opposition to U.S. annexations.

Gompers was also in the leadership

opposed the government's annexationist plans out of racist fears of a further influx of nonwhite peoples. Referring to Carnegie's crushing of the Homestead strike, Secretary of State John Hay ridiculed his pretensions as an "anti-imperialist": "He says the Administration will fall in irretrievable ruin the moment it shoots down one insurgent Filipino. He does not seem to reflect that the Government is in a somewhat robust condition even after shooting down several American citizens in his interest at Homestead."

Counterposed to those like Gompers, who linked hands with racists and monopolists, was socialist Daniel De Leon, who characterized the AFL leader and his ilk as labor lieutenants of the capitalist class. In a "Word to the Proletariat

tional Socialist Organization follow in the footsteps not of Daniel De Leon but of Samuel Gompers. In protests against the recent U.S. war moves in the Persian Gulf, such "socialists" too sought to ally with whatever bourgeois "peace" forces they could find and promoted illusions in a more "humane" imperialism.

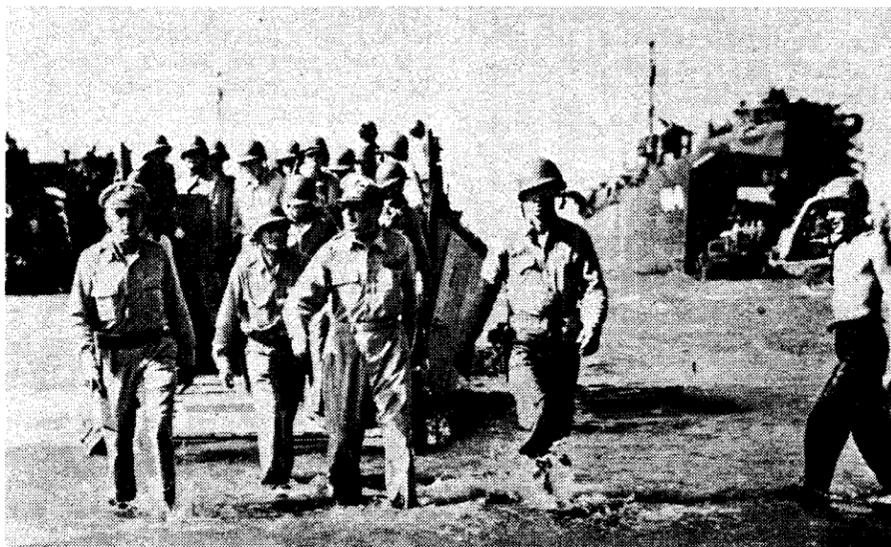
### For Proletarian Revolution Against U.S. Imperialism!

Despite a half century of nominal independence, the Philippines remains an impoverished semicolonial vassal of the U.S. During the anti-Soviet Cold War, the Philippines provided strategic naval bases for U.S. imperialism's savage war against the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. For decades, Washington propped up the hated, corrupt Marcos dictatorship. When Marcos became too discredited to continue ruling, the U.S. turned to longtime American stalwart Cory Aquino, who was catapulted to power by the 1986 "people's power" protests.

At the same time, imperialist investment in the Philippines has created the potential gravediggers of capitalist rule: a young, vibrant proletariat, including doubly oppressed women workers. As Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky laid out in his theory of permanent revolution, in the colonial and semicolonial countries it is only through the seizure of power by the proletariat—led by a Leninist vanguard party and marching at the head of the peasantry and oppressed ethnic and national minorities—that genuine national liberation and agrarian revolution can be achieved. Socialist revolution in the backward countries would necessarily have to link up with—and would act as a powerful impetus for—the fight for proletarian power in the imperialist centers.

The liberation of Puerto Rico, one of the few colonies left in the world, is intimately bound up with the fight for workers revolution in the U.S. Poor in natural resources, Puerto Rico has been primarily valued by the U.S. capitalist masters as a staging ground for U.S. aggression in the Caribbean—from the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 to Santo Domingo in 1965 and Grenada in 1983. While providing a reservoir of cheap labor for American corporations investing there, the island's population has also regularly been used as cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism's wars, which is why Puerto Ricans were "granted" U.S. citizenship (minus the right to vote in federal elections!) in 1917. Since that time, 40 percent of the Puerto Rican population has migrated to New York and other mainland cities.

U.S. domination of Puerto Rico is an unbroken history of bloody colonial repression. Under Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, the U.S. brutally suppressed the pro-independence Nationalist Party, jailing its leader, Pedro Albizu Campos, and others in 1936. In the Ponce massacre a year later, at least 20 people were murdered and another 150 wounded as cops fired into a crowd protesting the jailing of the Nationalist leaders. Albizu died in 1965, having spent most of his life in prison, and his party was utterly wiped out following an attempted 1950



U.S. reconquest of Philippines in 1945 led by General Douglas MacArthur (center), whose father Arthur MacArthur commanded American forces in brutal crushing of Filipino nationalist fighters four decades earlier.

UPI

of the Anti-Imperialist League (AIL), along with liberals like Mark Twain and W. E. B. Du Bois and reactionaries like steel magnate Andrew Carnegie and arch-segregationist South Carolina Senator "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman. The AIL was formed in July 1898 in opposition to the annexation of Cuba and grew to a membership of 500,000 as the U.S. carried out its bloody war in the Philippines. Many AIL leaders, Carnegie among them,

of Spain," De Leon denounced the capitalist system from an internationalist standpoint, declaring: "Its material needs require the sufferings of other nations, gloats over their defeats, needs their scalps...the capitalism of no nation can inflict sorrow on another without inflicting it on its own" (quoted in David Herreshoff, *The Origins of American Marxism* [1967]). Today, reformists like the Workers World Party and the Interna-

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# ISO...

(continued from page 3)

Clinton to please "Don't bomb Iraq." It's a cruel joke to pretend that the petitions the ISO is circulating at SFSU will restrain the hand of the most rapacious imperialist power on earth. In its appeals to liberal pacifism, the ISO deliberately obscures the class divide between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and sows dangerous illusions that this capitalist government can be pressured into more humane policies.

When SYC members at SFSU counterposed our communist program of proletarian opposition to war last Thursday (February 19), the ISO went into a frenzy. Incapable of a *political* response these liberals in "socialist" clothing resorted to *thuggery*! Four ISOers surrounded a young woman student SYC member as she was walking across campus and threatened her with physical violence: "If you ever talk to one of our people again, we'll break your damn ankles." When other SYCers rushed to the aid of their comrade, the cowardly ISOers alternately tried to justify and deny their threat of physical violence in front of a crowd of SFSU students in the main plaza. As other

students expressed their repugnance at the cowardly threat, one by one the ISOers skulked away.

Since the beginning of the Gulf War seven years ago, we Spartacists have protested both the U.S. attacks on Iraq and UN embargo, itself an act of war which has already led to the deaths of almost one million Iraqis. At our demonstrations we raised "Down With the Starvation Blockade of Iraq! The UN Is a Den of Thieves!" In contrast, liberals and reformist "socialists" sought to pressure the American rulers to "bring the boys home" and pushed UN sanctions as supposedly a "peaceful" alternative to direct military action. In 1991, the ISO dropped its paper opposition to sanctions and endorsed a January 1991 "Campaign for Peace" march in Washington which joined the imperialists in condemning Iraq's annexation of Kuwait and called for UN sanctions. This was a call to starve the Iraqi people with a blockade backed by aircraft carrier groups, troops and missiles. Last year the ISO's British parent group urged working people to vote for Tony Blair's Labour Party, whose capitalist government is the only other imperialist power wholeheartedly supporting the current U.S. war moves.

At SFSU last week, attempting to

defend their threats against our member, an ISOer "accused" us of hailing the Red Army's intervention into Afghanistan in 1979. You're damn right we did! The Soviet Union went into Afghanistan to shore up a regime which sought to implement minimal reforms to bring the country closer to the 20th century, including freeing women from the veil and providing education for girls. As against the Kremlin Stalinists' half-hearted military struggle and then withdrawal, we called for extending the social gains of the Russian Revolution to the Afghan peoples. In contrast, the ISO cheered the bloody CIA-backed Afghan *mujahedin* butchers and wrote that "we welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan." Today, under the viciously anti-woman Taliban, women aren't allowed to work and have been attacked even for seeking treatment from a doctor!

The only successful "antiwar" movement in history was the October 1917 Russian Revolution when the working class took state power and abolished capitalist rule. We unconditionally defended the Soviet Union despite the subsequent bureaucratic degeneration of the workers state. In contrast, the ISO lined up on the side of imperialism, promoting the vilest

anti-Communism and supporting every counterrevolutionary movement aimed at the destruction of the Soviet Union. They greeted Boris Yeltsin's imperialist-backed 1991 "countercoup," which signaled the final undoing of the Russian Revolution, crowing "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing." It certainly was cause for "rejoicing" by the imperialist rulers, who in the aftermath of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union see nothing standing in the way of their system of unbridled exploitation, poverty, racism and war.

We of the Spartacus Youth Club, youth group of the Spartacist League/U.S., fight to build a revolutionary internationalist workers party to overthrow the imperialist rulers and build an egalitarian socialist society, in opposition to reformists like the ISO, whose socialist pretensions mask their adaptation to the capitalist order. The SYC fights to win students over to the side of the working class and to become active partisans in its struggles against the imperialist bombers who starve blacks and the poor at home and Iraqis abroad. Join us in our struggle for new October Revolutions and a permanent end to the threat of imperialist war! ■

uprising, the failed Blair House attack on President Truman and a 1954 shooting incident by four *independentistas* in the U.S. Congress. In the 1980s, the FBI used Puerto Rico as a testing ground for its "anti-terrorism" campaign of infiltration, disruption and provocation, targeting trade unionists, pro-independence activists and others. In 1992, it was revealed that the government had kept "subversives" files on fully 135,000 out of the total population of 3.5 million.

This month, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a measure, by one vote, calling for another plebiscite in Puerto Rico to choose between continued "commonwealth" status, statehood or independence. In the last such toothless referendum in 1993, the independence option garnered only 4 percent of the vote, reflecting widespread sentiment that this would mean even deeper impoverishment (see "For the Right of Independence for Puerto Rico!" WV No. 588, 19 November 1993). Meanwhile, in the U.S. there has been a racist "English only" furor against admitting Puerto Rico as a state because Spanish is an official language there.

Marxists defend Puerto Rico's right to self-determination and support struggles for independence in order to strike a blow against U.S. imperialism and to remove the national question from the agenda in Puerto Rico. But we are not in favor of forcing annexation, federation, or even independence on anyone, least of all by racist U.S. imperialism.

Whatever its formal political status, the impoverishment, exploitation, racism (particularly against dark-skinned Puerto Ricans) and imperialist domination of



San Juan, October 1997: 100,000 workers in Puerto Rico staged one-day strike to protest proposed privatization of telephone company.

the island will remain until the Puerto Rican workers, in league with their class brothers and sisters in the U.S., take the road of socialist revolution to overthrow American capitalism. Subject to both exploitation and national oppression, the Puerto Rican proletariat has a history of militant struggle. Most recently, 100,000 workers staged a one-day protest strike in October against the threatened privatization of the local telephone company. However, for this power to be mobilized in the struggle against the Yankee imperialists and their Puerto Rican compradors requires a political fight against the class-collaborationist union tops as well as against the influence of petty-bourgeois nationalism.

Particularly following the collapse of the Soviet Union and imperialist triumphalism over the "death of communism," the "left" nationalist movement has been reduced to utter impotency. The Puerto

Rican Socialist Party (PSP), which used to count thousands of supporters, has simply dissolved in the last few years, urging its members to join the "multi-class" New Independence Movement. And at best the independence movement today can offer merely symbolic gestures, such as former PSP leader Juan Mari Bras' renunciation of American citizenship.

Puerto Rican workers in major North American cities can serve as a living link between workers' struggles on the island and on the mainland. And for the multiracial working class in the U.S., the fight to defend Puerto Rico's right to independence is integrally linked to their struggle against the American bourgeoisie. It is necessary as well to mobilize the U.S. proletariat in defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Key to this is proletarian revolution in the belly of the beast to sweep away the U.S. capitalist rulers. And that requires the forging of an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist party built in irreconcilable opposition to the chauvinist, anti-Communist AFL-CIO labor lieutenants of U.S. imperialism. ■

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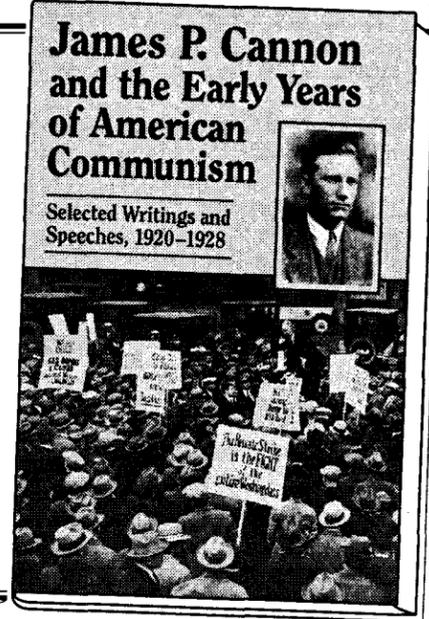
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# Working Mothers...

(continued from page 12)

menial jobs to survive. Meanwhile, programs like Head Start, free school lunches and vaccination plans have been torn to shreds, making even the minimal provisions which once existed for the children of poor families things of the past.

The vilification of working mothers is the latest phase of the "family values" crusade which has targeted everyone from day-care workers and welfare recipients to the "deadbeat dads" who are vindictively jailed for failing to pay court-ordered child support. As we pointed out in "Race, Sex, Class and the Capitalist War on the Poor":

"The family socializes people to behave according to certain norms—for example, the definition of 'manhood' in this country is the ability to support a wife and children. The so-called 'crisis of the family' is directly related to the destruction of high-paid union jobs. You cannot have a stable family life without a stable income. Today, one in three American men between the ages of 25 and 34 cannot earn enough to support a four-person family."

—*Women and Revolution* No. 45, Winter-Spring 1996

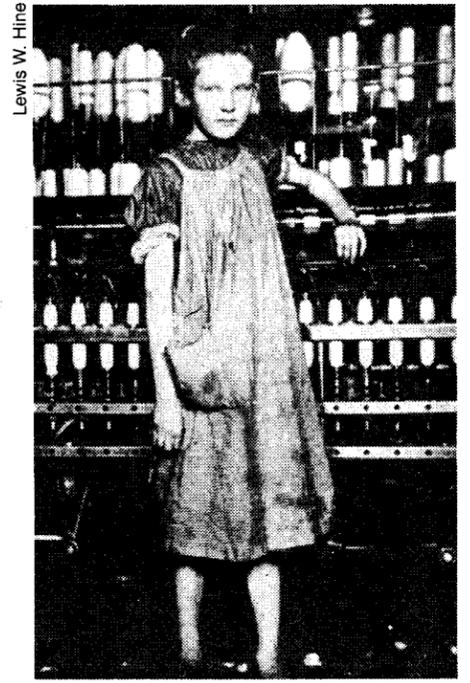
## The Demon Working Mother

The U.S. ruling class is caught in a contradiction. On the one hand, it needs to retain women, along with blacks and immigrants, as part of the "reserve army of labor." They are given jobs when the capitalists need their labor, only to be sent to the unemployment lines when the economy cools down. The lower wages paid to women and minorities—as part of pervasive discrimination on the job—also act to drive down the wages of all workers. On the other hand, the ruling



Library of Congress

Victorian era idealized middle-class family but brutal reality for poor and working-class families included child labor in textile mills.



Lewis W. Hine

to this day (see "Satan, the State and Anti-Sex Hysteria," *Women and Revolution* No. 45, Winter-Spring 1996). George Bush used his 1992 State of the Union address to claim that the crisis of the cities was due to "the dissolution of the family," while born-again Christian demagogue Pat Robertson ranted at the 1992 Republican convention that feminists were leading a "socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians."

It was largely in reaction to the Republicans' anti-abortion platform (and the downright crazed profile of the party's extreme right wing) that Clinton won the presidency in 1992. But the Democrats are no less hostile to social programs which benefit poor, minority

abortion clinics in favor of dead-end reliance on the courts.

Now the capitalists have geared up their propaganda mills to go after petty-bourgeois women professionals as well. A piece in the *New York Times* (11 November 1997) sneers that for many women in two-paycheck homes, "working really is not about the money" but rather more like "an illicit pleasure, almost akin to sneaking off to have an affair." And in the hysteria surrounding the Massachusetts "nanny trial," those who didn't want to lynch the young English *au pair* for the death of a baby in her care blamed the mother for selfishly pursuing her career as a doctor. The not-so-subtle message is that women who do not devote their lives to child rearing and household drudgery—tasks which remain "women's work"—are wanton creatures who have abandoned any sense of family responsibility.

In his pioneering work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Friedrich Engels laid out the material basis for women's oppression in class society. In primitive, communal hunter-gatherer society, the division of labor between men and women was based not on female dependency but on the biological reality of childcare. As culture advanced and laid the basis for a social surplus, private property developed, society split into antagonistic classes and the property-owning class secured and maintained its rule over the rest of society through the establishment of an armed state apparatus. With private property came the family and patrilineal descent, which Engels called "the world historic defeat of the female sex":

"With the patriarchal family and still more with the single monogamous family, a change came. Household management lost its public character. It became a *private service*; the wife became the head servant, excluded from all participation in social production. Not until the coming of modern large-scale industry was the road to social production opened to her again—and then only to the proletarian wife. But it was opened in such a manner that, if she carries out her duties in the private service of her family, she remains excluded from public production and unable to earn; and if she wants to take part in public production and earn independently, she cannot carry out family duties."

The ability of women to break out of the stultifying confines of the household and participate in social production is vital to their emancipation. We call for full equality for women and for measures to free them from household drudgery as part of the fight for *women's liberation through socialist revolution!* Free 24-hour child-care! Free abortion on demand—free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work—fight for jobs for all!

## From "Rosie the Riveter" to "Harriet the Homemaker"

"Family values" reactionaries hold up as an ideal the white, suburban, middle-class family (man as breadwinner, woman as homemaker, 2.5 kids and a dog) popu-

larized in 1950s sitcoms like *Ozzie and Harriet*. Particularly in contrast to the Great Depression of the 1930s, the then-new Levittown-style suburbs were presented as the American paradise, whose portals were open to all (white) people through hard work. Almost half of all new suburban housing depended on financing by the federal government, which also doled out billions for the new interstate highway system and for educational benefits under the GI Bill. (Of course, these white suburbanites were not denounced as "welfare cheats.") The relative prosperity of the short-lived "American Century" came as the U.S. emerged from World War II as the hegemonic imperialist power; on the other hand, high wages and benefits earned by unionized workers during the 1950s were the gains of bitterly fought union battles in the 1930s and 1940s.

Preceding the myth of meek "Harriet the homemaker" was that of a heroic "Rosie the riveter" during World War II, when the bourgeoisie needed huge numbers of women workers to replace the men serving as imperialist cannon fodder. Between 1940 and 1945, the female labor force grew by over 50 percent, and three out of four women who started working then were married, most with school-age children. The government quickly organized and financed day-care centers for 1.5 million children, more than were in any kind of day care in 1974. The postwar crusade for the family was aimed at getting women back into the home, since the returning soldiers were replacing them on the job.

As the episode of World War II makes clear, how prevailing bourgeois ideology treats the sanctity of the family is directly tied to the needs of capitalist society at any given time. In the pre-industrial period of home economy, basically everyone worked. In *The Way We Never Were*, Coontz observes: "Not until the late nineteenth century did people elevate the nuclear family to their central source of loyalty, obligation, and personal satisfaction.... Far from forming the traditional basis of civic responsibility, this ideal represented a rejection of older obligations beyond the family."

The "traditional" family became the model for middle-class and bourgeois society only with the development of industrial capitalism in the 19th century. Modern manufacturing created the wealth of goods and higher standard of living that allowed the urban middle class to flourish. But the "sentimental and gentle Victorian family," notes Coontz, "depended for its existence on the multiplication of other families who were too poor and powerless to retreat into their own little oases.... Childhood was prolonged for the nineteenth-century middle class only because it was drastically foreshortened for other sectors of the population." In 1820, "half the workers in many factories were boys and girls who had not reached their eleventh birthday." Women who eked out a living by meeting the growing demand for domestic servants had to



Lopez/NY Times

September 1997 rally in New York by Local 1199 health care workers. As part of multiracial proletariat, women workers have social power to sweep away capitalist system of exploitation and oppression.

class needs the family as a socially conservatizing force, a transmission belt for bourgeois ideology.

For the bourgeoisie itself, the family serves as the means for the inheritance of property through "legitimate" heirs. For the proletariat, it is meant to bear the cost of raising the next generation of workers to be used as fodder for capitalist exploitation and imperialist wars. For the vast majority of the population, which has no property to transmit, the "model" family is a distant abstraction which exists overwhelmingly to ensure compliance with the bourgeois order. The reactionary offensive pushed by the ruling class in recent years has aimed at reinforcing the family, the main institution for the oppression of women of all classes.

In the 1980s, cuts in childcare and education programs by the Reagan administration were accompanied by a series of vicious prosecutions against day-care workers. Convicted on lurid sexual charges amid bizarre stories of "satanic ritual abuse" of the children in their care, many of these workers remain imprisoned

and working women. In 1996, Clinton joined with Congressional Republicans in ending "welfare as we know it." And it was a Democrat, New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who foreshadowed the attack on welfare in the 1970s, counseling a policy of "benign neglect" and blaming the "black matriarch" and the "breakdown" of the black family for the poverty and degradation of the ghettos. Such racist diatribes have since been echoed by a layer of black capitalist politicians and pseudo-nationalist demagogues like Louis Farrakhan.

Both capitalist parties have overseen the erosion of abortion rights in this country, giving a green light to reactionary religious fanatics to bomb clinics and kill abortion providers. The bipartisan attacks on abortion are part and parcel of the anti-sex witchhunt and a fundamental assault on social benefits and health care. Meanwhile, in the name of support to "their" man in the White House, the feminists have done nothing to protest Clinton's dismantling of social programs while they have demobilized defense of

# Slogans...

(continued from page 2)

Off Iraq!" (WV No. 684, 13 February), we raise the call for "unconditional military defense of Iraq" against imperialist attack. Tacking the word "unconditional" onto the correct call for military defense of Iraq is a mechanical and thoughtless application to a semicolonial *capitalist* country of the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of the former Soviet Union—a degenerated *workers* state—and bureaucratically deformed workers states such as Cuba and China against imperialism and counterrevolution.

As pioneer American Trotskyist James P. Cannon stated in a 1939 speech, the call for unconditional military defense of the USSR "simply means that we defend the Soviet Union and its nationalized property against external attacks of imperialist armies or against internal attempts at capitalist restoration, without putting as a prior condition the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy." Alternatively, Leon Trotsky explained in "War and the Fourth International" (1934) that defense of the Soviet Union against the capitalist enemies "irrespective of the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict, is the elementary and imperative duty of every honest labor organization" (emphasis added).

The unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and deformed workers states flows from the *class character* of these states, based on their collectivized property forms. Iraq is *not* a workers state, and the call for unconditional military defense imparts to the Iraqi regime a progressive class content, implying that we would militarily defend it under all circumstances—for example in a war with Iran. But, in fact, we gave no support to either side in the squalid 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War, instead raising the position of revolutionary defeatism, i.e., that Iranian and Iraqi workers should "turn the guns around" against their own bourgeois ruling classes.

Applying the slogan of *unconditional* military defense to semicolonial countries means throwing class criteria out of the window and extending a political blank check to bourgeois regimes (a species of the "anti-imperialist united front"). Other examples abound of situations where it is inappropriate for the proletariat to give military support to such regimes or movements "irrespective of circumstances." On the eve of World War I, the struggle for Polish self-determination was subsumed under the looming inter-imperialist conflict. In the same war, the struggle of Serbia against the Central Powers likewise became subordinated to the imperialist enemies of Austria and Germany. Again, while the Chinese Trotskyists correctly called for military support to the Guomin-

dang armies of Chiang Kai-shek against the Japanese occupation beginning in 1937, during World War II that struggle, too, became decisively subordinated to the Allied Powers' war against Japan. And then there is the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas war between Britain and Argentina, in which neither side merited the slightest support from the working class. As a banner of the Spartacist League/Britain declared at the time, "Falklands: The Workers Have No Side—The Main Enemy Is at Home!"

By way of contrast, Leon Trotsky, in "The Sino-Soviet Conflict and the Opposition" (1929), argued for unconditional defense of the Soviet Union in the military clashes with Chiang Kai-shek's semicolonial China and over the Chinese Eastern Railway and denounced his Stalinist calumniators for falsely branding the Left Opposition as having a policy of "conditional defensism." Other instructive examples to consider are the Chinese deformed workers state's intervention in Tibet, as well as the subsequent 1960 Sino-Indian border war. In these cases as well, we were guided by a policy of unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against the class enemy.

Particularly following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, which has brought vastly increased imperialist pressures on the deformed workers states of Cuba, China, Vietnam and North

Korea, it is crucial to insist on and explain the need for unconditional military defense of these states against the imperialists and against domestic counterrevolutionary forces as well. At the same time, we fight for the overthrow of the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies through proletarian political revolution. As Trotsky wrote in regard to the Soviet Union, the best defense of the bureaucratically deformed workers states is international socialist revolution.

During the latest U.S. war moves, it was the elementary and imperative duty of Marxists to take a side with a dependent, semicolonial country in a military conflict with imperialism. Therefore, we take a revolutionary defeatist position toward U.S. imperialism should it unleash war on Iraq and to call for its military defense against imperialist attack. The other side of this coin is our call for a perspective of permanent revolution in Iraq and throughout the Near East: the understanding that it is the task of the proletariat, leading the peasantry and mobilizing oppressed women, Kurds and other ethnic and national minorities, to sweep away the bloody Saddam Hussein regime and all the murderous colonels, sheiks and Zionist rulers of the region through socialist revolution, linked to the fight for proletarian rule in the imperialist centers.

Comradely,  
George Foster

board out their own children, while Irish and German immigrant girls "went into service" at the age of 11 or 12.

The cotton for the burgeoning textile mills of the 19th century was produced by slave labor of all ages and both sexes. It was only in the 1920s that child labor was formally abolished even in the wealthiest of capitalist countries, the U.S. Today, it is on the rise again, not only in the semicolonial countries of the "Third World," but in the garment sweatshops of New York's Chinatown.

The same racist stereotypes which are today used to scapegoat black mothers on welfare echo those used over a century ago to justify slavery and, later, entrenched Jim Crow segregation. In 1844, Secretary of State John Calhoun denounced free blacks in the North for "vice" and "pauperism." After radical Reconstruction was smashed by the Compromise of 1877 between the Northern bourgeoisie and the former slavocracy, racist historian Philip Bruce argued that black children were born into "moral degeneracy" because emancipation had removed the slaveowner's moral authority. Black women who tried to stay home and nurture their children were accused of "female loaferism," as the planters made sure that wages were low enough to force women back into the cotton fields to raise the family income.

Likewise, the current assault on welfare is accompanied by a vicious campaign pounding away at the racist stereotype of the supposedly "freeloading, black, unwed welfare mother." Typical was a recent piece in the *Wall Street*

*Journal* (24 November 1997) which approvingly quoted an official from a home for single mothers: "In the old days, people got pregnant on purpose to get on welfare." People go on welfare *because they cannot find work!* In fact, as Coontz points out, out-of-wedlock births fell from 1960 to the early 1970s, when welfare benefits were rising, and rose as benefits dropped sharply in subsequent years. Moreover, women who are on welfare not only have fewer children on average, but are less likely to have additional children the longer they stay on welfare.

When septuplets were born last fall to a white Baptist family in Carlisle, Iowa, the "heartland of America," the news magazines uniformly proclaimed it a "miracle" and corporate hearts were touched. But as some liberal commentators noted, if this "miracle" had happened to a single black welfare mother in New York City, would she have gotten a free house, baby food, strollers, car seats, Pampers and other cash and goodies? No, she'd be denounced for being "promiscuous" and "irresponsible" and, under Clinton's "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act," she'd be ordered to leave her kids on their own after 12 months (three months in New York State) in order to slave away in "workfare" for a few hundred dollars a month in food stamps and benefits. But if she leaves her kids alone, she's charged with "child abuse" and her kids are taken away by the state. We will never forget the brutal 1983 murder of Patrick Mason, a five-year-old black

child in Orange County, California who was blown away in his home by a racist cop. His mother, who left him watching TV while she went to work, was threatened with prison for placing her son in a "life-endangering situation" while the cop was awarded \$35,000 in "compensation" for "psychological damage."

## For a Leninist Party, Tribune of the People

For Marxists, the ability of women to work outside the individual household is of decisive importance, because once they lay their hands on the levers of social power, their relationship to male workers increasingly becomes one of comrades and companions in the class struggle, not household slaves shut away from the world. This is particularly clear in countries of belated capitalist development. In Southeast Asia, for example, women workers among the increasingly combative proletariat have played leading roles in strikes and protests. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin noted about the young industrial proletariat—largely derived from the peasantry—in tsarist Russia:

"Large-scale machine industry, which concentrates masses of workers who often come from various parts of the country, absolutely refuses to tolerate survivals of patriarchy and personal dependence.... The drawing of women and juveniles into production is, at bottom, progressive.... By destroying the patriarchal isolation of these categories of the population who formerly never emerged from the narrow circle of domestic, family relationships, by drawing them into direct participation in social production, large-scale machine industry stimulates their development and increases their independence, in other words, creates conditions of life that are incomparably superior to the patriarchal immobility of pre-capitalist relations."

—"The Development of  
Capitalism in Russia"  
(March 1899)

To emancipate women means the family as an institution has to be *replaced* with collective childcare and housework, in order to bring women fully into social life. This requires a socialist revolution to overthrow capitalist class society. And it is in their role as workers that doubly oppressed women, side by side with their class brothers, have the social power to sweep away this system of exploitation and oppression. Key to this is the forging of a proletarian vanguard party which acts as, in Lenin's words, a tribune of the people. As we noted in "Race, Sex, Class and the Capitalist War on the Poor":

"In order to even begin to fight, the workers movement must take up de-

mands like equal pay for equal work and free, quality childcare. These issues address the real, day-to-day concerns of the working people of this country. But the cowardly, pro-imperialist 'leaders' of the official labor movement are an obstacle. We need class-struggle leadership in the unions and a *revolutionary Leninist party*—a multiracial workers party capable of leading all the exploited and oppressed against the capitalist bosses and their state....

"In a socialist society, where those who labor will rule, there will be jobs for all, free education and health care—including free abortion on demand and free contraception for all who want it—and free, quality housing for all. 'Welfare,' 'workfare' and poverty will be relics of a barbarous past." ■

# Toronto...

(continued from page 12)

marshals moved in to denounce the protesters for "harassment"—and to defend the imperialist military butchers. Finally, the four uniformed soldiers were escorted out of the hall, as the crowd cheered.

The WCPI, Socialist Action, New Socialist Group and the Cliffite International Socialists (I.S.—cothinkers of the American ISO) joined in driving the army recruiters out (though two Cliffites were later overheard arguing over whether they were right to do so). On the other hand, members of the Communist League (CL—affiliated to Jack Barnes' Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.) abstained from driving out the military and actually *denounced* the protest against the Iranian government!

At a WCPI workshop which included a video with grisly footage of a woman in Iran being stoned to death for adultery, a CLer intervened to complain how "disappointed" she was that "two tables" had been forced out of the fair and that the Iranian government representatives had been "harassed." When a TL comrade denounced this outrageous defense of those who supported stoning women to death, the CLer responded that the leftist protesters had "terrorized" the women agents of the ayatollahs and "emotionally stoned them!"

All those who joined in shutting down these tables should be proud of this symbolic step in reclaiming IWD as an internationalist, working-class holiday. We say: U.S./Canada out of the Persian Gulf! Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Women's liberation through socialist revolution! ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## For Free 24-Hour Childcare!

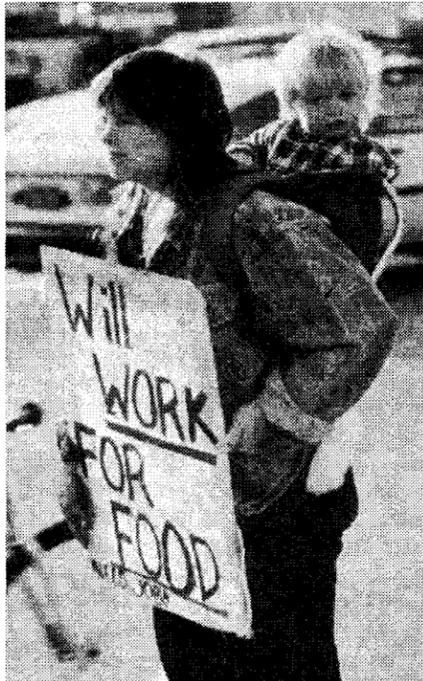
# Government Targets Working Mothers

From the sensationalist media blitz around the Massachusetts “nanny trial” last fall to a barrage of diatribes against supposed “parental neglect,” working mothers are being cast as the latest demons in the ongoing “family values” witchhunt aimed at bolstering the institution of the family and reinforcing social conformity. And, as usual in this deeply racist class society, the principal targets are poor and minority women.

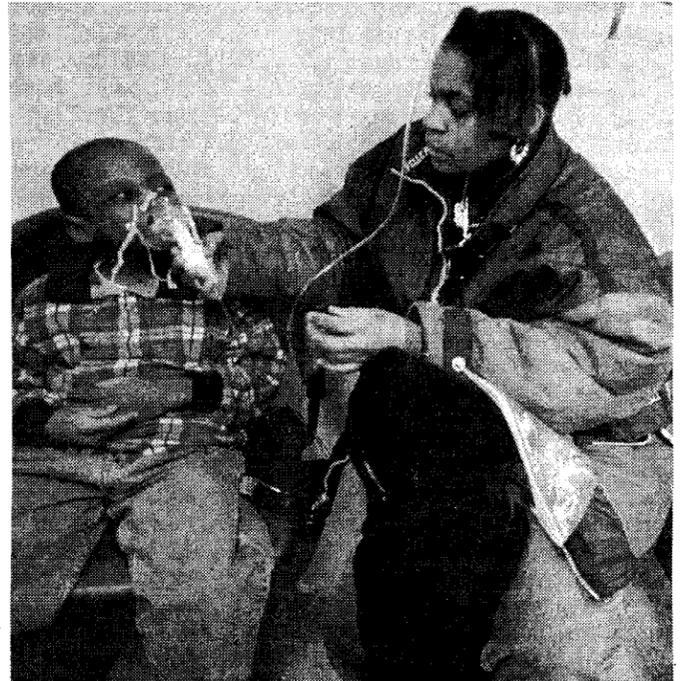
While Bill Clinton now cynically touts a proposed package of tax breaks for better-off families as “the largest single investment in child care in the nation’s history,” in November the Democratic president signed a little-noticed measure which will literally rip apart minority families. The “Adoption Promotion Act” recalls Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich’s scheme to throw kids from inner-city families into orphanages, which was widely denounced at the time as a throwback to the 19th-century conditions of Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*. Signed into law on Thanksgiving eve, the day before the vaunted American “family holiday,” Clinton’s act is “intended to make it easier to remove children from abusive families”—defined by the *New York Times* (17 November 1997) as including teen mothers, drug users and people with AIDS—and place them permanently in foster care. With black children accounting for nearly half of all those in foster care in the U.S., this perverse law brings to mind the decades-long government policy in “White Australia” of stealing Aboriginal kids from their families.

The abuse of children certainly does take place within the harsh confines of the family. But what the self-appointed guardians of morality for the poor mean by “abusive families” can be gleaned from a *New York Times* (25 October 1997) account of some of the recent

**While capitalists slash welfare, childcare and health care, desperate working mothers are demonized in “family values” crusade. Far right: pediatric asthma emergency room in South Bronx.**



Economist



Naso/NY Daily News

spate of arrests in New York City for “child neglect”:

“Sourette Alwysh, 34, was arrested for living with her 5-year-old son in a roach-infested apartment without electricity or running water.

“Madalyn Melendez, 27, was charged with having sex in the cramped bedroom she shared with her two young boys....

“And Sidelina Zuniga, 39, stood accused of leaving her two sons—one 10, the other 4—at home for an hour and a half while she shopped at a grocery store.”

These women were torn away from their children and thrown behind bars for the “crime” of being poor!

Today there is a widening chasm between the handful of rich at the top and most of the rest of the population. To sharpen its competitive edge against its imperialist rivals, the American bour-

geoisie has ratcheted up the rate of exploitation, relentlessly driving down real wages, cutting back job-related benefits and slashing away at “social overhead” costs. Amid the wreckage of broken and betrayed strikes and massive givebacks by the pro-capitalist union tops, real wages have plunged by more than 20 percent over the past two decades.

In her book, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (BasicBooks, 1992), historian Stephanie Coontz, a professor at Evergreen State College in Washington, draws a parallel between the “Gilded Age” of untrammelled capitalist exploitation toward the end of the 19th century and the current “greed generation”: “In both the 1870s to 1890s and the 1970s to 1990s, sentimentalization of private life

coincided with a destruction of limits to unrestrained wealth-seeking and political ambition.” Today, as Coontz points out, “Without the work of wives, the entire bottom 60 percent of the U.S. population would have had real income losses between 1979 and 1986.” And half of the new jobs created in the 1980s paid a wage lower than poverty level for a family of four.

More than at any time since the end of World War II, women are forced to work to support themselves and their families. And the elimination of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and other welfare programs has forced single mothers to leave their young children at home in order to enroll in slave-labor “workfare” schemes or accept the most

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## Feminists Police International Women’s Day Fair

# Toronto Protesters Say: “Army Recruiters Out!”

TORONTO—When more than a thousand International Women’s Day (IWD) marchers arrived at the annual IWD fair at Ryerson University on March 7, they discovered that the feminist organizers had allowed two new stalls this year. Prominently occupying one corner of the room was a recruiting table for the Canadian Armed Forces—the imperialist military that helped to massacre more than 100,000 Iraqis in 1991 and is part of the U.S.-led strike force massed in the Persian Gulf today. In the middle of the room, female representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran were

showing videos and giving out propaganda grotesquely praising the Iranian government’s treatment of women!

When the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste (TL), Canadian section of the International Communist League, joined with other leftists to force the removal of these tables, the feminists called on the campus security guards to suppress the protests. Even before the march arrived, the feminist organizers evicted one Iranian leftist for loudly protesting the mullah regime’s presence. A TL comrade who spoke out in his defense and denounced the Iranian

regime as a deadly enemy of women and minorities won cheers and applause from many in the room. The feminist thought-police responded by threatening to have the security cops remove the TL’s table.

When the marchers arrived, several dozen Iranian and Kurdish women, backed by more than a hundred other protesters, including supporters of the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (WCPI), surrounded the Iranian government table, chanting in English and Farsi: “Down with the Islamic Republic!” IWD marshals quickly moved in

to defend the agents of the Islamic regime, calling in the campus cops and screaming that the Iranian leftist protesters, many of them victims of terror and repression at home, were engaging in “harassment” and “male violence.” But the protest continued, and the marshals formed a human chain to escort the ayatollahs’ representatives out of the hall.

The TL also joined the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) in initiating a united-front action to drive out the army recruiters. Supporters of the TL, OCAP and Anti-Racist Action moved across the room to set up a line in front of the Armed Forces table, chanting “Army out, Army out!” Within minutes, hundreds of others had joined in. Linking the Canadian army’s terror against the Iraqi people to its repression of Native people—like the Mohawks at Oka in 1990—a TL comrade raised the call, “Butchers of Oka, Butchers of Iraq!” Joining in the chants, demonstrators ripped up army recruiting leaflets and posters. Once more, the IWD

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