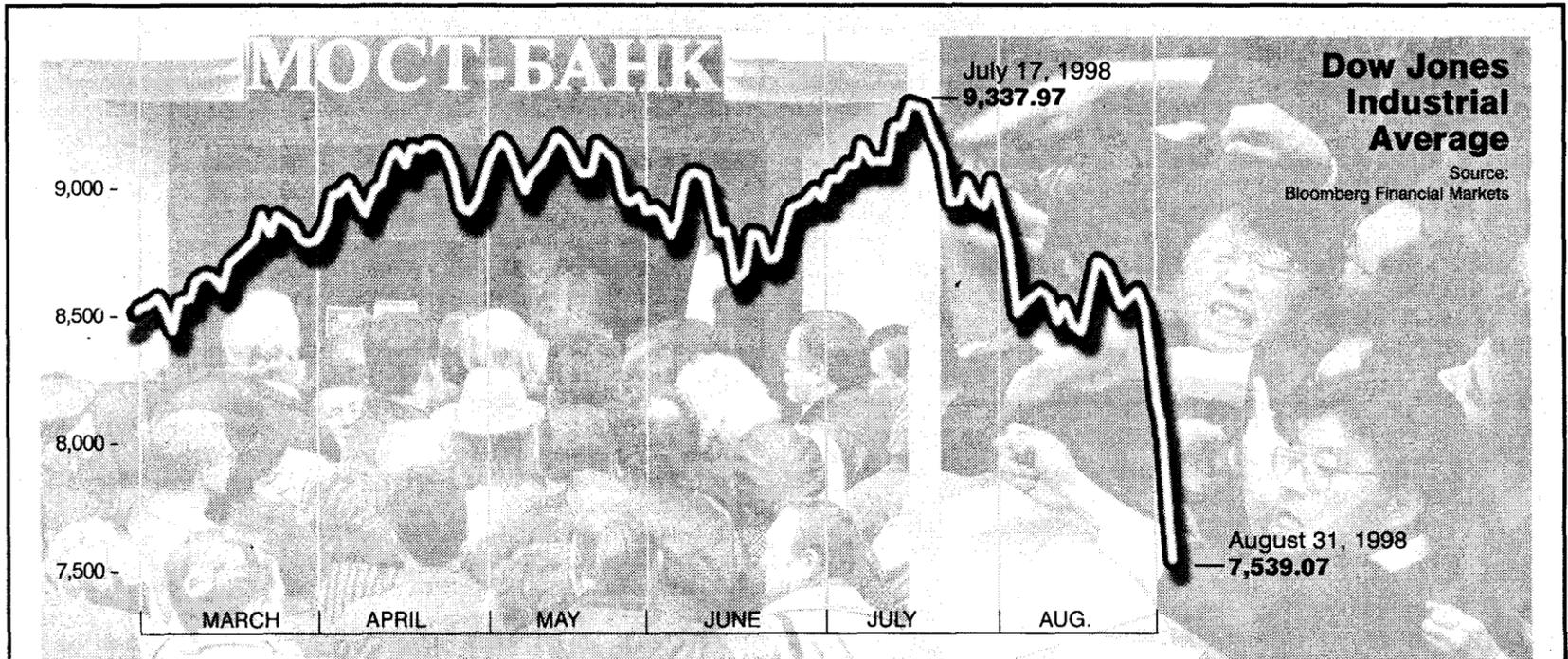


## Chaos in Russia, Depression in East Asia

# Wall Street Bubble Bursts



Photos: Reuters; AFP

Stock prices plunge amid growing financial turmoil around the world: Russians throng Moscow bank (left), Japan sinks deeper into recession.

SEPTEMBER 6—The sharp plunge in stock prices last Monday, the steepest point decline since the record-setting fall of last October's "Black Monday," sent tremors coursing through the international financial circuit. The tabloid *New York Post* (1 September) blared, "Kiss Your Assets Goodbye!" The chief economist for the giant Wall Street firm of Morgan Stanley talked of "a sense of despair and desperation" in financial markets. The London *Economist* (5 September) pointed "to mounting concern that the

turmoil in emerging markets will end in worldwide depression."

The immediate trigger for the collapse came when Russia's months-long financial disintegration turned into a total meltdown in mid-August. The bankruptcy of the regime of President Boris Yeltsin—in every respect—is manifest. As the ruble has dropped in value against the dollar by nearly two-thirds, banks have been besieged by angry crowds seeking to get out what money they can, while the already impoverished populace

is frantically trying to buy any food and other necessities they can. Yesterday, the head of the country's central bank quit and the Russian parliament rejected for the second time Yeltsin's bid to reappoint Viktor Chernomyrdin as prime minister. Chernomyrdin fumed that the country was on the verge of going "up in flames."

Coming on top of the East Asian economic crash and the deepening recession in Japan, the Russian collapse sowed panic in stock markets around the globe,

leading to plunges over the past two and a half weeks ranging from 9 percent in Tokyo to 14 percent in Frankfurt and 32 percent in Rio de Janeiro. But as a number of commentators have pointed out, Russia's real weight in the world economy cannot account for what has been happening to stock markets from East Asia to South America and Wall Street—except perhaps as an irrational overreaction. Russia's entire annual output, at present exchange rates, is smaller than

*continued on page 9*

## Kim Dae Jung Enforces IMF Austerity

# South Korea Regime Orders Brutal Cop Attack on Strikers

### U.S. Troops Out of Korea!

SEPTEMBER 5—Some 10,000 South Korean riot police stormed six Mando Machinery auto parts plants two days ago to drive out workers occupying the factories. Cops hauled off up to 1,600 strikers in two plants alone, including union leaders, and bloodied untold numbers of workers. This brutal assault was ordered by South Korean president Kim Dae Jung in order to break the 18-day strike against threatened mass layoffs at the country's largest auto parts supplier. Coming amid a wave of worker unrest against layoffs and other

attacks dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) "bailout" of the crisis-ridden South Korean economy, this massive cop strikebreaking was a warning by the Kim regime to the whole of the South Korean proletariat.

Kim's election as president last December was hailed by a host of leftists and liberals in South Korea and in the West as a victory for "democracy." Kim won his spurs as a "reformer" while he was a political prisoner under the former U.S.-backed military dictatorship. But he came to office with the solid backing of U.S. imperialism. A White House spokesman hailed his election as a "big opportunity," while the *New York Times* (20 December 1997) declared that his "credibility with the unions" put him in a "good position to convince his

*continued on page 11*



Reuters

Massive police assault unleashed by Kim Dae Jung government to drive out strikers occupying auto parts plant in Asan, South Korea, September 3.



# Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

## South Africa: Protest Lynch Mob Murder of Immigrants!

JOHANNESBURG, September 6—Three days ago, a rabid mob, whipped into a frenzy against “foreigners” at a rally of unemployed in Pretoria, brutally murdered three immigrants from other African countries on a commuter train. The immigrants were chased through the train by thugs wielding *sjamboks* (leather whips). A Mozambican man was thrown from a window and killed by an oncoming train. Two Senegalese men were electrocuted and burned alive after they tried to escape their attackers on the roof of the train.

These horrific anti-immigrant lynchings cry out for a mass protest mobilising the power of labour in defence of immigrant rights. This should be aimed against the neo-apartheid regime of the bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress (ANC), which has orchestrated and manipulated a xenophobic backlash against immigrant workers. Spartacist

South Africa, section of the International Communist League, calls for a proletarian-centred fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

At every level of society, immigrants are under vicious attack in the “new” South Africa. The apartheid *sjambok* and “pass” are now used against migrants from throughout the continent. Mass roundups of immigrants stacked into cattle cars are routine, while top echelons of the ANC Women’s League make thousands of rands by running the Lindela deportation centre in Randfontein. Hawkers in the Johannesburg area have been harassed, beaten up and had their wares confiscated by jobless rivals. Police aid white racist farmers by deporting immigrant workers at month’s end, just before payday. Inkatha Freedom Party tribalist chief Gatsha Buthelezi runs point for the ANC at the Ministry of Home Affairs, deporting an increasing number of

migrants, with nearly 200,000 people kicked out last year.

In the 1994 elections which installed Nelson Mandela in power, many immigrants had been granted temporary identification papers and voter cards and encouraged to vote. But when they came to collect permanent identity documents after the vote, they were arrested and deported. Mandela’s government—a nationalist popular front based on a tripartite alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)—has become the primary political agent for the Randlord capitalists and their senior partners on Wall Street and in the City of London financial centre. With its “one nation” rhetoric, the ANC consciously pits indigenous South Africans against immigrant workers in order to divert attention from the real enemy: neo-apartheid capitalism, under which the overwhelming majority of the population is kept in desperate poverty and blacks remain at the bottom.

South African capitalism has long relied heavily on migrant workers, coming mostly from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland, who form a strategic component of labour in the gold and diamond mines. The dirtiest jobs in the mines, as well as on construction sites and farms, are derisively known as “Maputo work,” a reference to the capital of Mozambique. Following the ANC’s election in 1994, South Africa became a magnet for immigrants from across the continent looking for jobs and shelter. Impelled by poverty and desperation, many continue to risk being killed by

crocodiles in the Limpopo River or mauled to death by lions in Kruger Park as they seek entry into the country.

Many migrants arrive from neighbouring countries that sheltered South African exiles during the anti-apartheid struggle. Some are refugees from war and famine in places like Rwanda, Nigeria and Congo—countries where the South African bourgeoisie has sought to play a role as the junior partners of U.S. imperialism, brokering imperialist deals in the renewed neocolonial scramble for Africa. Many of these immigrants strongly identified with the ANC, seeing it as the leader in the struggle against apartheid. Defence Minister Joe Modise, a former member of the ANC’s guerrilla wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe, now recommends cranking up the voltage on South Africa’s electrified border fences to “lethal mode.”

The fight against anti-immigrant terror must be linked to the struggle to build a Leninist party which will mobilise the proletariat against all forms of oppression and exploitation, including organising the unemployed. In a country where “official” unemployment among the black majority hovers at 50 per cent, there is a real danger that the jobless poor can be recruited as strikebreakers against the unions. A march in Pretoria led by Unemployed Masses of South Africa, with placards reading “We want jobs, not foreigners,” was the immediate inspiration for the brutal murder of the three immigrants. Yet desperate immigrants are only the first target.

Demagogic nationalist ANC politicians have sought to turn popular sympathy against the trade unions by portraying them as defending a privileged minority of black workers. This is a lie! Unionised black workers—like black workers as a whole—typically use much of their pay to help support unemployed relatives in both the townships and the countryside. It is the ANC and its partner, the reformist SACP, which defend the interests of the truly privileged minority in South Africa: the white financiers, industrialists, mine owners and landlords.

A class-struggle leadership in the trade *continued on page 11*



TROTSKY

### Human Labor and the Dialectics of Nature

*The development of human civilization, especially since the Industrial Revolution beginning in the late 18th century, has brought about significant and unanticipated changes in the natural environment. Today, bourgeois politicians and intellectuals voice concern over environmental problems, some even speaking of looming ecological catastrophe, but offer no solution other than, at best, ineffectual reforms within the frame-*

*work of the profit-driven capitalist system. In addressing the interrelationship between human labor and the natural environment from the standpoint of historical materialism, more than a century ago Friedrich Engels stressed the need for proletarian revolution, which would lay the basis for an internationally planned socialist economy to replace the anarchy of capitalist production.*

The animal merely *uses* its environment, and brings about changes in it simply by its presence; man by his changes makes it serve his ends, *masters* it. This is the final, essential distinction between man and other animals, and once again it is labour that brings about this distinction....

It required the labour of thousands of years for us to learn a little of how to calculate the more remote *natural* effects of our actions in the field of production, but it has been still more difficult in regard to the more remote *social* effects of these actions.... The men who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries laboured to create the steam-engine had no idea that they were preparing the instrument which more than any other was to revolutionise social relations throughout the world. Especially in Europe, by concentrating wealth in the hands of a minority and dispossessing the huge majority, this instrument was destined at first to give social and political domination to the bourgeoisie, but later, to give rise to a class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat which can end only in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the abolition of all class antagonisms.—But in this sphere too, by long and often cruel experience and by collecting and analysing historical material; we are gradually learning to get a clear view of the indirect, more remote social effects of our production activity, and so are afforded an opportunity to control and regulate these effects as well.

This regulation, however, requires something more than mere knowledge. It requires a complete revolution in our hitherto existing mode of production, and simultaneously a revolution in our whole contemporary social order.

—Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*,  
Marx and Engels *Collected Works*, Vol. 25 (1987)



LENIN

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 696

11 September 1998

## Spartacist Events

### Spartacist Forums

Flint Strikers Cripple GM—  
General Strike Shakes Puerto Rico  
**Class Struggle in the  
American Empire**

#### BERKELEY

Saturday, September 19, 7 p.m.  
2060 Valley Life Sciences  
UC Berkeley

For more information: (510) 839-0851 or  
(415) 777-9367

#### LOS ANGELES

Sunday, September 13, 3 p.m.  
Hollywood United Methodist Church  
6817 Franklin Avenue  
(Highland Ave. exit off 101 Freeway)

For more information: (213) 380-8239

#### SAN PEDRO

Saturday, September 12, 4 p.m.  
Peck Park Community Center  
560 North Western Avenue  
(at Crestwood)

For more information: (213) 380-8239

#### BOSTON

**The Fight for Revolutionary  
Marxism Today**

Speaker: Len Meyers,  
editor of *Workers Vanguard*  
Saturday, September 26, 7 p.m.

102 Sever Hall  
Harvard University, Cambridge  
(take the Red Line to Harvard)

For more information: (617) 666-9453

#### MADISON

**U.S. Imperialism—Get Your  
Bloody Hands Off the World!**

Tuesday, September 15, 7 p.m.

Memorial Union  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
(See “Today in the Union” for room)

For more information: (312) 454-4930

#### NEW YORK CITY

**The Class-Struggle Road  
to Black Freedom**

Thursday, September 24, 7 p.m.

Loeb Student Center, Room 408  
New York University  
(566 La Guardia Place near W. 4th St.)

For more information: (212) 267-1025

### Spartacus Youth Club Classes

#### BERKELEY

**The Capitalist State and the  
War on Workers, Blacks and  
the Oppressed**

Wednesday, September 16, 7 p.m.

206 Dwinelle, UC Berkeley

For more information, readings: (510) 839-0851

#### NEW YORK CITY

**Marxism: A Guide to Action**  
Tuesday, September 15, 7 p.m.

**Anti-Labor Attacks, Cop Terror  
and the Capitalist State**

Tuesday, September 29, 7 p.m.

Loeb Student Center, Room 413  
New York University

For more information, readings: (212) 267-1025

# Court Decision Acknowledges F.O.P. Vendetta

## Mumia Abu-Jamal Wins Important Legal Victory

We print below a press release issued by the Partisan Defense Committee on August 28.

On August 25, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals found that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections had violated the First and Fourteenth Amendment rights of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The court decision stemmed from a federal civil rights lawsuit filed by Jamal in 1995 charging Pennsylvania prison officials with punishing him for publishing his powerful prison writings.

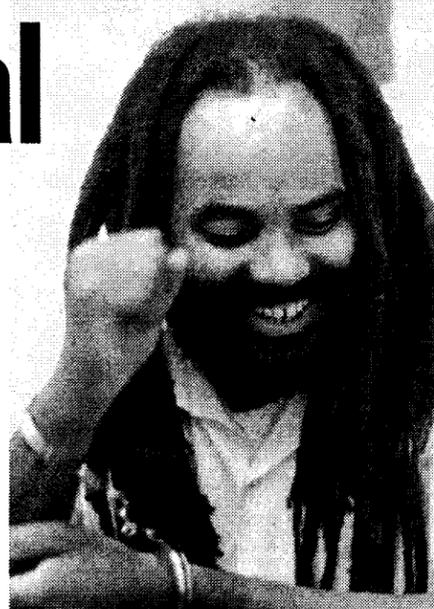
Arguing that prison officials had subjected Jamal to irreparable harm through an investigation in which they inter-

ruling denies him access to attorney-designated paralegals, whose visits began being blocked at the same time that the prison authorities were launching their efforts to gag Jamal.

The Department of Corrections argued that rules against inmates conducting "business" gave prison officials the right to open Jamal's attorney mail and to subject him to disciplinary actions. Bluntly dismissing this argument as "nonsensical," the Court of Appeals ruling states: "We have difficulty seeing the need to investigate an act that Jamal openly confesses he is doing. Jamal's writing is published, and he freely admits his intent to continue. Continued investigation and enforcement of the rule invades the privacy of his legal mail and thus directly interferes with his ability to communicate with counsel."

Pointing out that Jamal worked as a journalist before his conviction, and that his writings continued to be published in more than 40 publications after he was imprisoned on death row, the decision notes that the prison authorities' investigation of Jamal's writings and broadcasts only began in 1994, following interviews of Jamal by National Public Radio (NPR). The ruling argues that prison authorities "did not claim to be burdened by his actions until the Fraternal Order of Police [F.O.P.] outcry in 1994," and that they did so "because of the content of Jamal's writing, not because he was being paid for it."

Following the publication of Jamal's book, *Live from Death Row*, in 1995, prison authorities denied Jamal access to the press or other media from February through September of that year. During this period, a death warrant was signed against Jamal. Prison officials were intercepting, opening and reading Jamal's correspondence with his defense attorneys, copying these letters and sending them to the assistant general counsel of the Department of Corrections. The Court of Appeals ruling notes that even though the prison officials' attorney concluded that these letters were not relevant to the investigation, he nonetheless sent them to the Office of General Counsel, "the office charged with advising the Governor of



COC Productions

Pennsylvania on, among other things, signing death warrants."

In June 1995, Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge signed the execution warrant against Jamal just as defense attorneys were filing a petition to overturn his 1982 conviction on frame-up charges of killing Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner. During Jamal's appeal hearing that summer, Judge Sabo and the prosecution repeatedly accused Jamal of deliberately waiting until the death warrant was signed before filing his appeal papers. This claim was exposed as a fabrication in a previous ruling on Jamal's civil suit by district court judge Donetta Ambrose. Ambrose acknowledged that the prison authorities' actions led to a delay in filing these papers because of "the unwillingness of counsel and of Plaintiff [Jamal] to communicate freely by mail after having been informed that legal mail had been opened by prison officials."

Pittsburgh attorney Jere Krakoff, who together with Tim O'Brien represented Jamal in his civil suit, spoke to the importance of the court's recognition of the violation of Jamal's First Amendment rights as a writer. As Krakoff noted: "It's an extraordinarily important principle not only for Jamal but for all prisoners and for all society at large to hear from Jamal." As Richard Genova of the Partisan Defense Committee, which has been active in Jamal's defense for the past decade, said:

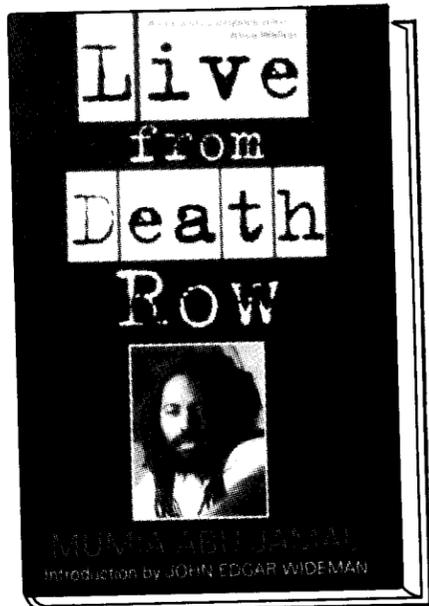
"At a time when the state is stripping prisoners of virtually any and all constitutional rights, the political vendetta waged by the state against Jamal is so

blatant that even the Court of Appeals judges recognized the prison authorities' investigation as political retaliation aimed at silencing him. These judges are far from sympathetic to the cause of prisoners' rights, particularly those of an outspoken black radical. That even they could see the police forces of the F.O.P. behind the punitive actions against Jamal by prison officials is a stunning, albeit unintended, confirmation of the whole state frame-up machine which had targeted Jamal from the time he was a 15-year-old spokesman for the Black Panther Party. This vendetta continued when Jamal was a widely known journalist who eloquently exposed the racist reality of daily life in America, particularly the brutal cop attacks on the MOVE organization. It culminated in his being falsely convicted and sentenced to death in 1982."

In 1994, NPR caved in to the F.O.P.'s frenzied campaign against Jamal and refused to air Jamal's commentaries. Today again, the F.O.P. and its supporters are revving up their campaign for Jamal's death, publishing a full-page ad in the *New York Times* (14 June) demanding that he be killed. The cops and prison authorities want to silence Jamal in order to make it easier to kill him. An articulate and compassionate black man who eloquently describes the horrors of this barbaric system of injustice, Jamal's writings and broadcasts give the lie to the racist propaganda justifying executions with the claim that those sentenced to death are psychopathic murderers. As Gene Herson, labor coordinator of the Partisan Defense Committee, argued:

"While we welcome the Court of Appeals decision, we warn that it should not blind Jamal's supporters as to the nature of the courts as part of the whole state machinery of repression and death. As Mumia continues to struggle and speak out from death row on behalf of the oppressed, it is urgent that the power of the multiracial labor movement be actively mobilized in the fight to free this innocent man and abolish the racist death penalty."

Jamal's appeal of his conviction is now before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Funds are urgently needed for Jamal's legal defense. Get your union or organization to make a contribution now to the Bill of Rights Foundation (earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense") and mail to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. For more information about Jamal's case and about the PDC, call (212) 406-4252 or e-mail to 75057.3201@compuserve.com. ■



Publication of Jamal's powerful death row commentaries in 1995 enraged cops and prison authorities intent on silencing him.

cepted and opened his privileged legal correspondence with his defense lawyers, the court ruled that they be ordered to stop any further investigation of Jamal and desist in punitive actions against him. At the same time, in a blow against the ability of Jamal to fight for his life and his freedom, the Court of Appeals

### Just Out!

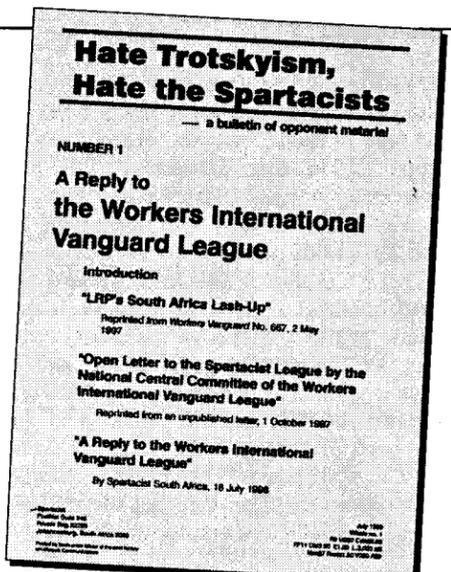
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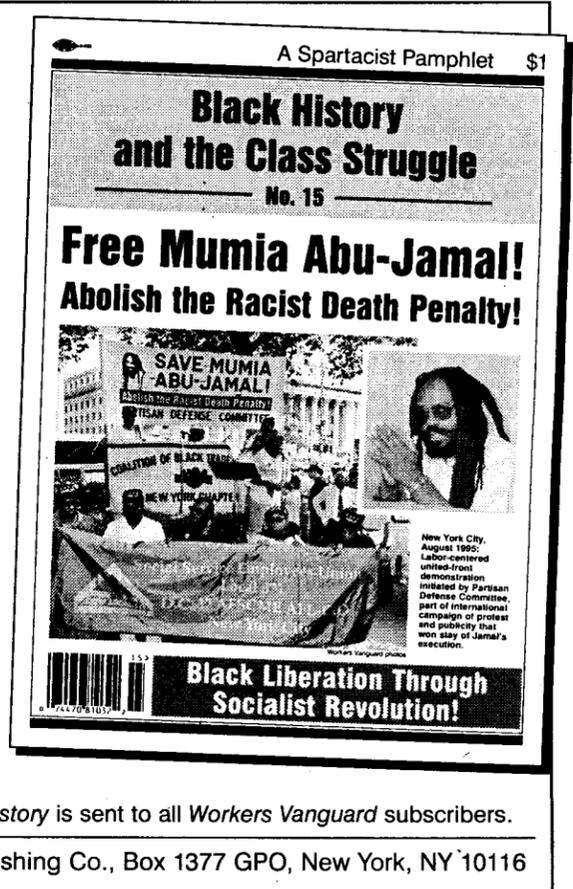
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- For Non-Sectarian, Class-Struggle Defense!
- Death Row Speedup Targets Minorities
- Philly Cops' Reign of Terror
- Desperation, Segregation and the "Ebonics" Controversy
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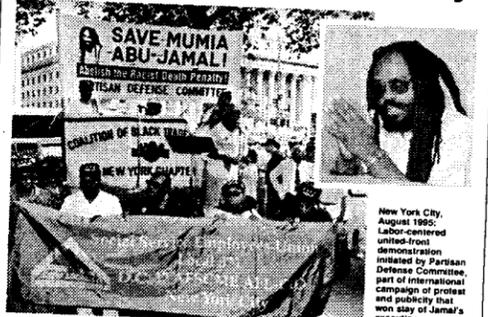


A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1

Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 15

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!  
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!



New York City, August 1995: Labor-centered united-front demonstration initiated by Partisan Defense Committee, part of international campaign of protest and publicity that won stay of Jamal's execution.

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

# Philly Cops' Reign of Terror

The following is reprinted from the new issue of Black History and the Class Struggle (No. 15, August 1998).

This August 8 marked the 20th anniversary of the massive police assault on the black MOVE commune in Philadelphia's Powelton Village neighborhood. Following a 15-month siege—which included the erection of an eight-foot-high fence sealing off a four-block area—at 6 a.m. on that August 1978 morning over 600 cops surrounded the MOVE compound. After bringing in a bulldozer to rip down a stockade fence around the house and using a crane as a battering ram to break down boarded windows, the cops used smoke bombs and water cannons to drive MOVE members and their children out of the house.

After a single gunshot was heard, the cops lacerated the house with thousands of rounds of ammunition. One of their own, James Ramp, long a central figure in the Philadelphia Police Department's "Stakeout" squad, was killed in the police crossfire. When the barrage of bullets stopped, MOVE member Delbert Africa crawled out of a basement window. Suffering from a bullet wound, shirtless, his hands above his head, Delbert Africa was attacked by heavily armed cops who repeatedly kicked and stomped on him while he lay helpless on the ground.

In August 1981, nine MOVE members were sentenced to prison terms of 30 to 100 years on false charges of killing Ramp. Four months later, prominent black Philly journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who had raised his eloquent voice in defense of MOVE, was arrested and framed up on false charges of killing another Philadelphia policeman, Daniel Faulkner. The following July, Mumia was sentenced to death. Then on 13 May 1985, the Philly cops—working together with the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms—came to finish the job they had started in 1978, dropping a bomb on MOVE's Osage Avenue home. Eleven black people—including five children—were killed and an entire black neighborhood reduced to smoldering rubble.

Central to every one of these deadly racist assaults were the Philadelphia Police Department's notorious "red squad"—the Civil Affairs (CA) unit—and the Stakeout unit, an urban death squad of police sharpshooters. CA inspector George Fencel issued the first warning in the August 1978 attack on the MOVE house, his voice booming over a cop bullhorn: "You have exactly two minutes in which to come out." Two to three dozen specially trained and heavily armed Stakeout cops who were positioned close to the MOVE home were then mobilized for the kill.

Seven years later, it was also Stakeout cops who drove MOVE members back into the inferno of their burning Osage Avenue home under a hail of gunfire. Among these cops were some of the self-described "veterans of '78," including those who had viciously beaten Delbert Africa. As Charles Bowser, a black former deputy mayor who headed the city's whitewash commission on the MOVE bombing, concluded in his book, *Let the Bunker Burn*: "The facts were that some of the police had come to Osage Avenue to kill—to kill by bullets or to kill by fire, but to kill nevertheless."

On 9 December 1981, the first cops to arrive at the scene where Mumia Abu-Jamal lay critically wounded by a bullet from Faulkner's gun were Stakeout squad members Robert Shoemaker and James Forbes. The highest-ranking officer on the scene was Inspector Alfonse Giordano, a former Stakeout commander. A police report later that night shows that Fencel was also called into the investigation. These cops knew exactly who Mumia was; they had been trying to get him for years.

## The Racist Cop Vendetta Against Jamal

Jamal had been in the crosshairs of the CA—formed in the mid-1960s as the Civil Defense (CD) squad—and Stakeout units since the age of 14, when he was brutally beaten and arrested by the cops

their source unidentified officers from the CD unit.

The Stakeout squad, an elite unit largely made up of former military men, was put together by then-deputy police commissioner—later police commissioner and mayor—Frank Rizzo in response to the eruption of the city's black ghetto in 1964. It was formed as part of the drive by bourgeois state authorities to crush any expression of opposition—particularly by blacks—to vicious racism and police brutality. Philly's Stakeout squad was the model for

manhood and wore bullet-proof vests, and Rizzo's taunting of a number of Panthers as 'yellow' because they dropped their guns in response to a police order rather than engage in battle all suggest that the raids were planned as a pretext to provoke a shoot-out." In other words, the raids were a setup for a kill.

As we noted in "Mumia Abu-Jamal: The COINTELPRO Files" (WV No. 624, 2 June 1995):

"Mumia Abu-Jamal survived the rulers' onslaught against the Black Panther Party in the late '60s and early '70s. He was not assassinated in his sleep in the dead of night like Chicago Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. He was not then railroaded into a prison hellhole like Los Angeles Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) who has spent the last 25 years of his life buried alive for a crime that the government knows he did not commit—because they had wiretaps proving his innocence. But the feds and the Philly cops did not call off their vendetta against Jamal with the demise of the Panther Party. They continued to hate him for his eloquent and impassioned defense of black rights, and particularly because he remained defiant and unbowed in the face of state repression and racist oppression."

Jamal's defense of MOVE in 1978 further whetted the cops' appetite to get him. The Stakeout police surrounding the Powelton Village house saw Jamal as he entered and left the compound to conduct radio interviews. They seethed with hatred for his sympathetic coverage of MOVE. Ramp was elevated to the pantheon of police heroes—to this day, the Philly police department rifle sharpshooting team gives out an annual "James Ramp award." At a press conference following the 1978 cop attack, Rizzo ominously looked straight at Jamal as he blamed Ramp's death on the "new breed of journalism." Rizzo warned: "You're going to have to be held responsible and accountable for what you do." He seized on the killing of Ramp to scream for restoration of the death penalty: "Put them in the electric chair, and I'll pull the switch."

Jamal's sympathetic courtroom reports of the trial of the nine MOVE members charged with Ramp's killing enraged the police. He also covered the 1981 trial of three of the Stakeout cops who tortured Delbert, which resulted in the judge's acquittal of the cops on all charges. At that trial, a key witness for the defense was none other than CA head George Fencel. Perhaps most galling to the cops, Mumia was there to cover the celebration when MOVE founder and leader John Africa was acquitted of federal conspiracy and weapons charges in July 1981.

Only months later, the Stakeout cops who found Jamal bleeding at the corner of 13th and Locust Streets with a cop lying fatally wounded a few feet away finally saw the opportunity to frame him up. Giordano, described by Donner as "one of Rizzo's favorite officers," ordered that Jamal, who was near death, be taken to the Police Administrative Building for interrogation, finally relenting and allowing him to be taken to the hospital. Giordano was later the first to manufacture the claim that Mumia had confessed to killing Faulkner. In July 1982, Mumia was sentenced to death in a "trial" that in every respect was a travesty of justice. Ever since then, the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) has been screaming for the state's executioners to "pull the switch."

## Philadelphia Police State

The sinister web of police surveillance, terror and frame-up that succeeded in entrapping Jamal is no aberration. Rather



Wide World



UPI  
Above: Capping 15-month siege, Stakeout unit and other Philly cops launched murderous assault on Powelton Village MOVE house, August 1978. In May 1985, Stakeout cops also played central role in FBI/police firebombing of Osage Avenue MOVE home which killed eleven people, including five children, and destroyed entire black neighborhood.

for daring to protest a 1968 election campaign appearance in Philly by George "Segregation Forever" Wallace. At age 15, when Mumia became co-founder and Minister of Information of the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party (BPP), he was placed under daily surveillance by Fencel's CD unit, which closely collaborated with the FBI's "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO). Indeed, the Philly CD squad served as a model for the deadly COINTELPRO operation which resulted in the murder of 38 Panthers around the country and the frame-up of hundreds more. In the 800 pages of FBI documents obtained by Jamal in 1995, report after report list as

SWAT teams later formed in cities across the United States. Rizzo himself became an icon of racist "law and order" among cops nationwide, particularly for his attacks against the Black Panther Party.

The Stakeout unit was prominent in the 1970 raids of three BPP offices. With Fencel's CD unit in the lead, 45 heavily armed Stakeout cops stripped the Panthers' Wallace Street office bare, even ripping the plumbing from the walls. Outside, Panther members were lined up against the wall and ordered to strip. In his book *Protectors of Privilege* (University of California Press [1990]), Frank Donner notes, "The fact that the raiders were specially chosen for their marks-

it demonstrates the very nature of the capitalist state, its cops and courts, which exist as the bourgeoisie's machinery for the repression of the working class and oppressed. As the gap between the haves and have-nots increasingly widens, the rulers clamp down even further against the exercise of the most basic democratic rights by the population, lest the spark of social protest ignite a conflagration. To keep the lid on an ever seething cauldron of discontent, more cops are poured onto the streets and their powers to act as a law unto themselves are increased. While the Philadelphia cops are hardly unique, they have long stood as perhaps the starkest expression of the rampant police bonapartism that is increasingly the trend throughout the U.S.

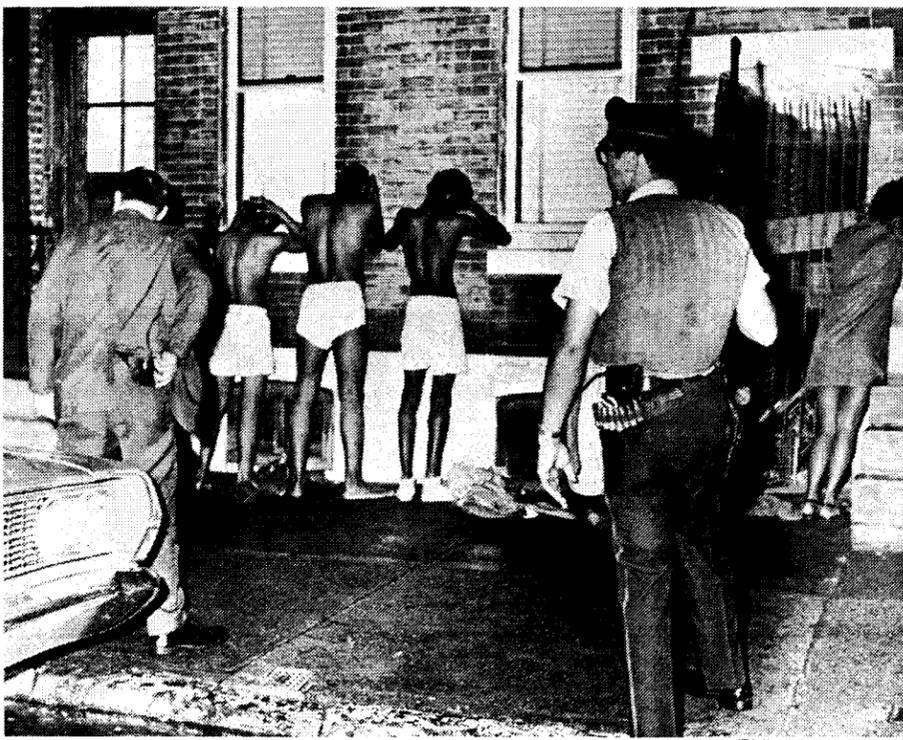
The city in which Mumia Abu-Jamal was "tried" and sentenced to die has a particularly pronounced racist history going back to well before the Civil War. In 1862, black abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass wrote: "There is not perhaps anywhere to be found a city in which prejudice against color is more rampant than in Philadelphia." It was the most pro-South—and segregated—city north of the Mason-Dixon line, reflecting the interests of Philadelphia's ruling class, which was heavily involved in cotton and the textile industry, in the maintenance of slavery.

Irish immigrants in Philadelphia were originally referred to as "white Negroes" and correspondingly consigned to the lowest orders. The divide which pitted native Protestant workers against Catholic immigrants, who were brought in to supply cheap labor for the mills and foundries, came to be supplanted by racial hatred pitting white against black. As described in Noel Ignatiev's book, *How the Irish Became White*, the Democratic Party served as the agency for assimilation of the Irish into "white" society, albeit at the bottom end. Democratic Party politicians promoted virulent racism against blacks as the glue to cement the immigrant laboring masses to the interests of the ruling elite.

With the mass migration of blacks to the North during World War I came forcible segregation into ghettos, enforced by racist thugs both in police uniforms and Klan robes. In the 1920s, Pennsylvania had the fourth-largest Klan concentration in the country; the Philadelphia area alone had 30,000 Klansmen. When the federal government ordered the hiring of eight black workers at the Philadelphia Transit Company during World War II, this was met by a racist "work stoppage" organized by the transit bosses. When Democratic president Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered the army in to enforce wartime no-strike laws, some Southern soldiers took the opportunity to try to impose Jim Crow segregation on city buses, provoking mass resistance from outraged black riders.

Philadelphia remains one of the most intensely racist cities in the United States. During the 1950s and '60s, the city was rigidly racially segregated, with the partial exception of the Powelton Village area in West Philly near the University of Pennsylvania. No less than in a city somewhere in the Deep South, a black person could get in trouble very fast with either the racist cops or a gang of local racists simply for being in the wrong neighborhood or on the streets at the wrong hour. With its 40 percent black population, Philadelphia has the largest concentration of black people in the very white state of Pennsylvania.

In this city—grotesquely referred to as the "City of Brotherly Love"—race is politics. Whether Democratic or Republican, capitalist politicians make a name for themselves on the racially polarized terrain of "Filthy-delphia." This essential fact of life explains the rise to power of a fascistic racist pig like Frank Rizzo and the fanatical preoccupation by the city's police department and prosecutors with the Black Panthers, MOVE and Mumia Abu-Jamal. In Philly, the name of the



Ligato/Philadelphia Bulletin

**Frank Rizzo's racist reign of terror.**

**Above: 1970 cop raid of Philadelphia Black Panther offices.**  
**Right: Following 1978 assault on MOVE, then-mayor Rizzo lashed out at "new breed" of journalists like Jamal (near right) for sympathetic coverage of MOVE.**



Owens/Philadelphia Bulletin

game is and always has been to keep black people "in their place" and in the ghettos. For the city's white capitalist establishment, racial paranoia is as intense as it was for former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, whose operational credo for the deadly COINTELPRO operations against the Black Panthers was that they constituted the "greatest threat to the internal security of the U.S."

In this sense, the city of Philadelphia is a concentrated expression of the development of racist American capitalism, which is rooted in the segregation of blacks at the bottom of society and in which the color bar serves to obscure and reinforce the irreconcilable class divide between labor and capital. While Irish, Italians and Poles in Philadelphia remained divided in separate neighborhoods, the hatred of all was directed against the black population. Out of this cauldron of ethnic hostility and racial hatred emerged a bonapartist police force that operated like a gang of white racist ethnic thugs. This was personified by Rizzo, who once boasted he would "make Attila the Hun look like a faggot."

Ethnic and racial hostilities were increasingly exacerbated with the devastation of heavy industry beginning in the 1970s, which reduced Philadelphia to a huge urban wasteland. In this context, the racist bonapartism of the Philadelphia police became even more pronounced as the cops were deployed to keep the lid on this pressure cooker of discontent. Again black radicals were a particular target. Following the decimation of the Black Panther Party by COINTELPRO, including stoking the murderous factional feuds resulting from the Panthers' nationalist strategy, the Philly cops embarked on a 20-year vendetta against MOVE. Jamal, whose role in the BPP had already put him squarely in the cops' sights, was a prominent target of this police vendetta.

**A Conspiracy of Terror**

The 1978 beating of Delbert Africa—captured in slow motion on television news cameras—had an impact on the

city which presaged the impact that the LAPD beating of black motorist Rodney King would have across the country some 13 years later as a symbol of racist cop brutality. This atrocity by the Philly cops came atop a wave of coldblooded street executions by police and growing exposure of systematic frame-up methods employed particularly by the Homicide Division.

An editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (20 August 1978) noted that for black elected officials and community leaders, who had no sympathy for MOVE, the beating of Delbert Africa, "brought to a head an accumulation of resentment of police violence and frustration that the city administration and the Police Department have held no one accountable for it." The editorial expressed the city rulers' concern "to prevent the resentments and frustrations which have been at work in the last week and more from growing into what could be dreadful and explosive proportions." In 1979, the feds moved in to try to quell the growing outrage and shore up the cops' authority, filing a civil rights suit against the city and the police department citing "widespread, arbitrary, and unreasonable physical abuse."

In response, the cops went on a rampage. Four hundred off-duty cops besieged the offices of the *Inquirer* after it ran a series of chilling photographs of the attack on Delbert Africa. Two thousand cops jammed an F.O.P. lodge to demand the ouster of black cop Alphonso Deal—a 24-year police veteran and head of the North Philadelphia chapter of the NAACP—when he called for dismissing those cops responsible for the beating. When three Stakeout unit members were indicted for the beating of Delbert Africa, 500 cops marched on City Hall, and the head of the F.O.P. cried, "They should have killed all of them."

The F.O.P. and an outfit called "Philadelphia Police Wives and Interested Citizens" went to the offices of the U.S. Attorney General to protest the suit against cop brutality. A leading representative of the cops' wives reported that her

group had been gathering evidence since the 1970s of a "conspiracy among revolutionaries and radicals to assassinate police." The federal suit was soon dismissed for "lack of jurisdiction."

Following Mumia's frame-up, Faulkner's widow, Maureen, has likewise been cynically paraded around by the F.O.P. to portray Jamal as a vicious and sadistic killer who had long been conspiring to "assassinate police." At Jamal's 1982 trial, prosecutor Joseph McGill pointed to Mumia's earlier reference to a quote from Mao Zedong—"Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun"—to argue that it "proved" Jamal's intention to kill a cop. Thus, McGill argued that Mumia be sentenced to death—on the basis of his political beliefs. The F.O.P. and Philly D.A.'s office continue to peddle the lie that the prosecution's case against Jamal was overwhelming. But an article on McGill in *Philadelphia Magazine* (May 1986) reports that "Jamal's conviction was considered a miracle in law enforcement circles." No doubt: it was a frame-up pure and simple!

Fencl, Giordano and the other cops who had been itching to get rid of Jamal for many years were involved in railroading him to death row. Marcus Cannon, an eyewitness on the scene the night of the shooting of Faulkner, has reported that he saw two white men who appeared to be part of a street scene jump into action with guns drawn and rush toward the site. This fits a description of the so-called "granny" squads of the Stakeout unit, who dressed up as elderly, infirm or homeless people in order to entrap and shake down "suspects" and were backed up by plainclothes cops in unmarked cars. The Center City area of Philadelphia, the scene of the 1981 shootings of Jamal and Faulkner, was one of the prime locations covered by these "granny" squads.

History is not a conspiracy, but there are conspiracies in history. We are not saying that the cops who were at the scene of 13th and Locust Streets the night of 9 December 1981 knew Jamal was going to be there. But they were there and had the chance they had long awaited to catch Mumia in their racist frame-up machine. This was the culmination of a political vendetta, extending back more than a decade, against a man whose impassioned defense of the victims of Philly cop brutality had earned him a special animus among these thugs in blue and their masters in the city and federal government.

As we wrote in "Mumia Abu-Jamal: The COINTELPRO Files":

"The fight to save Jamal and to abolish the racist death penalty is part of the struggle for black equality in America. It will take a workers revolution to put the capitalist state's machinery of death out of business once and for all and bring to justice the hired thugs who have committed untold crimes against the working class and minorities in the name of 'law and order.' Only then will the records of the government's secret police agencies be opened for all to see. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" ■

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# Young Spartacus

## Eco-Radicalism and Bourgeois Politics

We conclude below an edited presentation by comrade Joseph Seymour of the Spartacist League Central Committee. Part One was published in WV No. 695 (28 August).

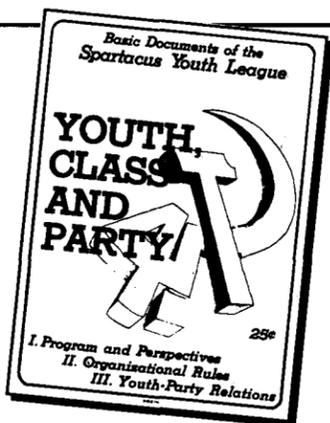
Between the 1920s and 1950s, conservationist organizations consisted in the main of patrician mountaineers, as leftist historian Kirkpatrick Sale aptly described them. They represented a minor current in

### Part Two

American bourgeois politics. The occasional conflicts between the Sierra Club and lumber companies or between the Audubon Society and real estate developers were not the stuff of front-page news or broad public interest. The emergence of the environmental movement as a major player in American bourgeois politics was a product of the political developments of the 1960s and 1970s.

The majority of young leftist radicals in the 1960s—white and black—considered that white workers benefited from U.S. imperialist exploitation internationally and that this accounted for the prevalence of racist and chauvinist attitudes among them. (For a comprehensive analysis of New Left radicalism and its course of development, see our 1971 pamphlet, *Youth, Class and Party*.) The foremost theoretical exponent of Maoism in the U.S. at this time, Paul Sweezy, maintained that the working class in the advanced capitalist countries had in its large majority become a labor aristocracy.

Hence, the relatively high standard of living in the U.S. was regarded as a fundamentally bad thing. It was seen as directly responsible for the impoverishment of what is now called the Third World and as the root cause of racism and support for imperialist militarism. At the time of the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Greenpeace, for example, stated: "Ecologically, the war in the Persian Gulf is a consequence of a fundamentally destructive way of life, centered on our addic-



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### For International Socialist Planning, Not Capitalist Plunder!

tion to oil"—"our" meaning the American people as a whole.

#### The New Left and Eco-Radicalism

This way of looking at the world originated in the late 1960s when neo-Malthusianism converged with certain currents of New Left radicalism. In the late '60s and early '70s, a journal called *Ramparts* served as an interface between the left wing of the liberal, university-based intelligentsia and what was called "the movement"—Maoists, anarchoid types, "revolutionary" black nationalists. The September 1969 issue,

accounts for the fact that Ehrlich was a tenured professor at one of the country's elite universities while the Panther leaders were being killed and imprisoned. New Left radicalism stood for the global redistribution of wealth from the have to the have-not countries. Maoists and radical black nationalists identified themselves with social revolutions in backward countries like China and Cuba, which expropriated the imperialist-owned factories, mines, oil fields, plantations and other property.

Neo-Malthusians like Ehrlich maintained that socialist revolution in backward countries could not prevent mass

ment officials, engineers, lawyers and the like.

In the early '70s, the liberal bourgeoisie undertook a concerted effort to regain the loyalty of their wayward offspring.

In 1972, the Democratic Party ran a "peace" candidate for president, George McGovern, who echoed some of the themes of New Left radicalism. While McGovern was overwhelmingly defeated by the Republican Nixon, he succeeded in convincing many young leftists that they had a place in the Democratic Party. Right after the U.S. pulled its troops out of Vietnam in 1973, Nixon and the Democratic Congress abolished the draft. Hostility to U.S. imperialism among young, male intellectuals became far less intense once they were no longer compelled to fight and possibly die for it. At the same time, the Supreme Court legal-



Levick/Black Star

Populist signs at 1977 protest against nuclear energy reflected New Left origins of many eco-radicals.

which also carried three statements from exiled Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver, contained a piece titled "Eco-Catastrophe" by Paul Ehrlich, a professor of biology at Stanford. Here was Ehrlich's message:

"Western society is in the process of completing the rape and murder of the planet for economic gain. And, sadly, most of the rest of the world is eager for the opportunity to emulate our behavior. But the underdeveloped peoples will be denied that opportunity—the days of plunder are drawing inexorably to a close...."

"For mankind has artificially lowered the death rate of the human population, while in general birth rates have remained high. With the input side of the population system in high gear and the output side slowed down, our fragile planet has filled with people at an incredible rate. It took several million years for the population to reach a total of two billion people in 1930, while a second two billion will have been added by 1975! By that time some experts feel that food shortages will have escalated the present level of world hunger and starvation into famines of unbelievable proportions."

I want to emphasize not only important similarities between this kind of neo-Malthusianism and the main currents of New Left radicalism but also a fundamental difference. This difference

famines and that a program aimed at rapid industrial growth would only accelerate the coming eco-catastrophe. These neo-Malthusians viewed the world economy like a children's birthday party in which there was a very large bowl of cookies. American, West European and Japanese children got to the party first and ate up most of the cookies. If the children from Latin America, Africa and Asia who arrived later tried to eat as much as the Americans and Europeans, they would only run out of cookies sooner.

During the 1970s, many New Left radicals embraced Green politics. Activists who had defended the Black Panthers against government repression in the late '60s, ten years later were defending birds, fish and salamanders, supposedly threatened by government construction projects. How and why did this development take place?

The leftist radicalization of student-youth in the late 1960s was disturbing for the American bourgeoisie, especially its liberal wing. Every other dorm room at elite universities like Harvard and Berkeley sported posters of Malcolm X, Che Guevara and Mao Zedong. Yet the residents of these dorms were the social, and in many cases biological, heirs of corporate executives, top-level govern-

ized abortion, thereby removing the main grievance that young women of the privileged classes held against the American bourgeois state. Under these conditions, "the movement" rapidly disintegrated.

In this context, conservationist organizations played a role in reintegrating erstwhile New Left radicals into bourgeois politics. A 1971 manifesto by the Sierra Club made the following appeal: "If there are any young activist SDS hippie anarchist conspirators in the audience, I would urge you to go out and get your college to institute departments of green studies at once, and while you're at it, put away the books on traditional economics" (quoted in William Tucker, *Progress and Privilege: America in the Age of Environmentalism* [1982]).

Green radicalism appealed especially to the anarchoid, hippie counterculture wing of the New Left, which opposed Marxism-Leninism in principle. The Green movement advocated a radical restructuring of the economy and a corresponding change in social attitudes, while having nothing to do with the working class which this type of New Leftist had always disdained as a bunch of racist, flag-waving bigots. Moreover, the ecology movement was gaining real political clout. Organizations like the



**Gun-toting gas station attendant in California during 1979 oil shortage. Bourgeoisie seized on crisis to push austerity under cover of "conservation."**

Sierra Club and its offshoot Friends of the Earth could take on large corporations in court—and sometimes win. Most important of all, Green radicals had an enormous sense of moral superiority, that they and they alone were concerned with the future of life on earth.

During the 1970s, environmentalism became an increasingly important component of liberal bourgeois politics—with one very significant exception. Black leaders were skeptical or hostile to the environmentalist craze. In 1979, Vernon Jordan, then head of the Urban League, stated that environmentalists "will find in the black community absolute hostility to anything smacking of no-growth or limits-to-growth. Some people have been too cavalier in proposing policies to preserve the physical environment for themselves while other, poorer people pay the costs."

While Jordan's remarks were self-serving, they were also very much on target. Environmentalism was a liberal form of what was then called the white backlash. White middle-class liberals and radicals, who had earlier actively supported the civil rights movement, had now turned away from the cause of the black masses in order to pursue their own interests, like maintaining a pleasant suburban environment with lots of greenery, birds and trees.

## Capitalist Economic Austerity

There was another major factor behind the development of a significant environmentalist movement in the 1970s: a change in economic conditions and a corresponding change in liberal economic ideology. From the 1930s to the 1960s, the Democratic Party, especially its liberal wing, espoused Keynesian economics, promising full employment and higher growth rates through a mix of certain fiscal and monetary policies. The right wing of the Republican Party denounced Keynesianism as "creeping socialism." They argued that ever larger budget deficits would impose a crushing burden of debt on future generations and would undermine the financial stability

of the American state. The Democrats were generally viewed as the party of economic growth, the Republicans as the defenders of the status quo.

But that changed in the late 1970s. The U.S. economy had begun to deteriorate in the late 1960s and real wages stagnated. This situation was aggravated when the Anglo-American oil cartel and its Saudi Arabian client state manipulated a fourfold increase in the world market price of oil, falsely claiming that the world was running short of petroleum. A major global economic downturn in 1974-75 was widely blamed on

**U.S. president Carter touring Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in 1979 after near meltdown. Under capitalist system, safety is subordinated to profits.**



Miller/Time



Dirck Halstead

the oil crisis. The profits of American corporations fell sharply, as the downturn exposed their declining international competitiveness.

The capitalists responded by seeking to increase the rate of exploitation. Major companies demanded and got giveback contracts from the unions with reduced wages and benefits. The Democratic Carter administration in the late 1970s oversaw the worst deterioration in the economic conditions of the American working class since the Great Depression of the 1930s. To justify this, liberal

Democrats told American working people that for decades they had been living beyond their means by consuming cheap but irreplaceable energy. In a major speech shortly after becoming president in 1977, Carter called for "painful" sacrifices as he asserted: "Our energy problems have the same cause as our environmental problems—wasteful use of resources."

Needless to say, this was not a popular program—except among environmentalist groups, which criticized Carter for not going far enough. The environmentalists thus became agitators and propagandists for bourgeois economic austerity measures. And the Democrats now became the defenders of the economic status quo. Now, the Republicans promised more rapid economic growth through a change in government policies, namely large cuts in taxes. The so-called "tax revolt," closely linked to the white backlash, led to the ascendancy of the Republican right with Reagan's victory over Carter in 1980.

The Reaganites initially adopted a flagrantly anti-environmentalist stance. They slashed the budget of the Environmental Protection Administration. James Watt, a Colorado lawyer who specialized in defending corporations against suits by environmentalist groups was appointed

secretary of the interior, in charge of national parks and forests. These policies produced a powerful backlash. Major environmentalist organizations like the Sierra Club, Audubon Society and Nature Conservancy grew more rapidly than ever before. By the mid-1980s, they claimed a total of five million members, concentrated in the upper echelons of American society. The environmentalist movement generated huge sums of money for public relations, Washington lobbyists and lawsuits.

By the mid-1980s, the Reaganites beat

Novosti



**As Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky (left) explained in his writings on science, Marxists favor technological progress to eradicate scarcity and human misery. Dnieper hydroelectric station built under Soviet planned economy was part of effort to bring electricity to backward, rural Russia.**

Arkady Shaikhet



Basil Blackwell Inc.

a retreat on the environmental front. When Watt was dumped as secretary of the interior, one environmental lobbyist remarked cynically: "We're sorry to see him go, he was the best organizer we ever had" (quoted in Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement, 1962-1992* [1993]). In its second term, the Reagan administration conciliated the environmentalist movement, while Reagan's vice president and successor, George Bush, adopted a pro-environmentalist stance.

## "Deep Ecology": A Reactionary Utopia

The emergence of the environmentalist movement as a major player in American bourgeois politics, even within the Republican Party, predictably generated a schism, as Green radicals accused major organizations like the Sierra Club and Nature Conservancy of selling out to the corporations. The founder of Earth First!, Dave Foreman, who himself had been an environmental lobbyist in Washington, now asserted: "You should never support a piece of legislation" (quoted in Sale, *Green Revolution*).

In general, the Green radicals embraced the doctrine of "deep ecology" developed by a Norwegian, Arne Naess, in the 1970s and propagated in the U.S. by

a group of professors at Humboldt State University in Northern California. "Deep ecology" takes environmentalist ideology to its logical conclusion: denouncing what it terms "anthrocentric" thinking, it opposes civilization in the name of protecting the rest of nature from the inherently destructive tendencies of the human species. In their 1985 tract *Deep Ecology*, Bill Devall and George Sessions state: "The intuition of biocentric equality is that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding and self-realization."

"Deep ecology" and Green radicalism more generally have a quasi-religious character, in that nature is regarded as a higher and ultimately unknowable power which man cannot control for his own ends without utterly destructive consequences. The root cause of the supposed environmental crisis is thus the intellectual arrogance of the human species. Thus the eco-radical Robert van den Bosch states:

"The basic problem is that our brain enables us to evaluate, plan, and execute. Thus, while all other creatures are programmed by nature and subject to her whims, we have our own gray computer to motivate, for good or evil, our chemical engine."

—*The Pesticide Conspiracy* (1978)

"Deep ecology" argues for the dissolution of existing states and their replacement by self-sufficient "bioregions." There would be no cities, no international trade or travel. According to Earth First!, modern industrial society must "give way to a hunter-gatherer way of life, which is the only economy compatible with a

*continued on page 12*

# "Little England" Labourites Embrace

## Russian Fascists

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 163 (July/August 1998), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

In an article headlined "Russia's Racist Depths," British Socialist Party (SP) leader Peter Taaffe issued a call for "the international labour movement...to assist the left in Moscow and the rest of Russia to combat the virus of racism, nationalism and fascism" (*Socialist*, 15 May). Seeking to revive the flagging fortunes of the "Youth Against Racism in Europe" (YRE) groups set up by the SP (formerly Militant Labour) and other affiliates of

### WORKERS HAMMER

the reformist Committee for a Workers International (CWI), Taaffe appeals for "active assistance" to enable the YRE "to produce material explaining to the youth of Russia the real aims and purposes of the fascist groups."

The *Socialist* article describes the ominous rise in fascist terror in Boris Yeltsin's Russia, including an attack Taaffe witnessed on one of his supporters in Moscow. But *Taaffe's appeal is a cynical fraud through and through*. Not only did the CWI enthusiastically support the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution which ushered in the rising tide of racist terror, but *Taaffe and his Russian supporters apologise for fascist killers in their midst*.

### "Democratic" Counterrevolution and "Red-Brown" Chauvinism

Capitalist restoration has subjected the working masses of the former Soviet Union to an unparalleled decline in living standards. Mass unemployment, homelessness, malnutrition and disease are today rampant and growing. In the absence of organised working-class resistance, the fascists have seized on such economic desperation. The growth of murderous fascist gangs has been fuelled as well by the Great Russian chauvinism pushed by the new capitalist rulers. Reports in the Western press of the near-deadly beating of a black American soldier and the bombing of a Moscow synagogue in May only hint at the wave of fascist terror against dark-skinned people from the Caucasus, Jews and African and Asian students and visitors.

After fascists threatened "to kill one non-Aryan every day after Hitler's birthday on April 20," two Asian women were viciously beaten by a mob of skinheads in a Moscow shopping area. African students are attacked nearly every day, and skinhead gangs recently rampaged through dormitory rooms at Moscow State Veterinary Academy. On 7 May, a 25-year-old Azerbaijani trader was stabbed to death in a Moscow market by skinheads in black uniforms. The cops who were on the scene colluded in this racist murder. And when 1500 Azeris marched through Moscow to express their outrage over this killing, the cops dis-

persed the procession and Mayor Luzhkov threatened to prosecute the protest organisers. The role played by Yeltsin's cops should come as no surprise; since the capitalist counterrevolution, Caucasians and Central Asians have repeatedly been rounded up and expelled from Moscow and other Russian cities.

Grotesquely, the fascist killers have also been embraced by the self-styled "Left Vanguard," *Levy Avangard*, Russian group of the CWI. This was disgustingly evident at a May Day forum in Moscow featuring Taaffe himself speaking on "The British Labour Party, One Year Later." Three members of the so-called "National Bolshevik Party" (NBP) were seated in the room, dressed in their standard black leather and openly flaunting Nazi-style armbands. When a comrade of the International Communist League attending the meeting saw the fascists, he immediately urged the organisers to expel the NBP scum. The ICL spokesman then declared from the floor:

"There are three members of the fascist NBP here with their Nazi regalia. The organisers of this meeting have said they refuse to remove them. This is a provocation and an obscenity, as a representative of the ICL I am leaving."

As our comrade left—and the Nazis stayed—Taaffe shouted out, "Good!" Three others walked out in protest, including a young Azerbaijani woman who knew only too well what the NBP fascists stand for.

The CWI's flirtation with the fascist scum did not begin at the May Day forum. The Moscow anarchist journal *Naperekor* (January 1997) reported that the Russian Taaffeites' "Left Anti-Fascist Resistance" (LAS) has harboured NBP supporters since its founding in October 1996. Most recently, *Levy Avangard* (May 1998) issued an open appeal to the fascists titled "How to Understand the NBP." This sickening piece praises NBP *führer* Eduard Limonov for his "deserved fame" as a writer (!) and expresses "pity" for the Nazi terrorists as "daydreaming" idealists and "phrase-mongering windbags." Urging the fascists to "acknowledge reality," it concludes with the invitation, "Why are you still not with us?"

The *Levy Avangard* article *spits on the graves of the millions of Soviet workers and soldiers who died defeating Hitlerite Nazism and mocks all those who are being beaten, stabbed and bombed by fascists today!* Do the Taaffeites want the NBP "daydreamers" to carry out *more* actions like their August 1996 rally denouncing Yeltsin's pact with Chechen independence fighters as "treason" or their march through Moscow last November carrying swastika-like banners? Limonov himself is a racist killer who crows about joining Serb chauvinists in "ethnic cleansing" operations against

Bosnian Croats. Another NBP leader laments Hitler's "regrettable mistake" in attacking Soviet Russia instead of joining with it to attack the West (*St. Petersburg Times*, 2-8 June 1997). Indeed, *Levy Avangard* (November 1997) has itself acknowledged that, at least in one town, the "majority" of the NBP consists of "Nazi-skinheads" who "are responsible for numerous attacks on Arab and Negro students."

In his recent *Socialist* article, Taaffe writes of "the economic and social wasteland which is capitalist Russia today." But Taaffe and his supporters bear their share of political responsibility for bringing about this wasteland. In August 1991, the Taaffeites—whose paper was then called *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (Workers De-

brown coalition" of Stalinist has-beens, monarchists and outright fascists in recent years. The same April-May 1992 issue of *Rabochaya Demokratiya* which annested the capitalist counterrevolution also featured a grovelling front-page appeal to the "red-brown" Toiling Russia group. This article did not even mention Russian chauvinism or anti-Semitism.

In the December 1995 elections, *Rabochaya Demokratiya* gave backhanded support to the KPRF, an outright bourgeois-nationalist party which is the current embodiment of the "red-brown coalition," burying a nominal disclaimer against "political support" to Zyuganov beneath reams of "fight the right" rhetoric and a headline which screamed, "Not One Vote for the Right!" The Russian Taaffeites subsequently changed the name of their paper to be more acceptable in this rabidly chauvinist milieu. The current issue of *Levy Avangard* does not so much as mention Russia's imperialist



Sanin/Segodnya

Moscow protest by Azeris in May against a racist murder by skinheads.

mocracy)—joined Russian Orthodox priests, would-be capitalists and other reactionary rabble on Yeltsin's counter-revolutionary barricades. *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (April-May 1992) sought to whitewash its active support to the forces of capitalist restoration by absurdly *denying* that "the liquidation of the USSR weakened the position of socialism in the world."

But as the ravages of capitalist restoration became evident and the Yeltsinite "democrats" increasingly despised, the CWI opportunists shifted gears. To his British readers, Taaffe hypocritically declaims how "sickening" it was to see this year's May Day rally in Moscow, organised by Gennady Zyuganov's Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), "sullied by the presence of fascists and racists, some of whom openly carry anti-Semitic placards." But in Russia, Taaffe's outfit seeks a common language with these nationalists and has ever more aggressively tailed after the "red-

ambitions or the right of the Chechen people to self-determination—or even the rampant skinhead terror in Russia.

### Beware YRE "Anti-Racism"

The aim of the latest YRE campaign—limited to "explaining" the purposes of the fascist terrorists—is thoroughly in keeping with its liberal politics, informed by the CWI's reformist view that the racist cops are "workers in uniform" and its craven appeals to the capitalist state to ban the fascists (see Spartacist Pamphlet, "Militant Labour's Touching Faith in the Capitalist State," August 1994). Indeed, Taaffe's call for "lobbies and pickets of Russian embassies...protesting against the free rein that is given to fascist and neo-fascist groups" dovetails well with the current designs of the "democratic" imperialists and their International Monetary Fund (IMF) vultures to promote investment by "cleaning up" the image of Yeltsin's Russia. To this

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Moscow synagogue bombed by fascists in May.

# Wall Street...

(continued from page 1)

the \$241 billion which Japanese stocks lost in the last week of August alone.

Russia was, so to speak, the straw that broke the back of the Wall Street boom. Beginning in the early '90s, the "baby boomer" generation increasingly invested their pension funds in the stock market as if it were an automatic money-making machine. This massive infusion of money drove up stock prices to astronomical levels having no relation to corporate profitability. For several months, U.S. central bank head Alan Greenspan and the *Economist*—house organ of international financiers—have warned that the Wall Street bubble was going to burst.

Profits in the U.S. have been declining, and the situation facing "multinational" corporations and banks in most of the rest of the capitalist world is far worse. Since last fall, financiers and bourgeois economists of all political persuasions have voiced concern that the Asian economic crisis could lead to a full-blown world depression on the scale of the 1930s. Financial markets are so volatile and nervous, political conditions in much of the world so unstable and conflict-ridden that any major shock—say, a popular upheaval in Mexico or a war between India and Pakistan, or even an Iranian military incursion into Afghanistan—could have produced the kind of panic in stock markets around the globe that we are now seeing.

During his visit with fellow lame duck Boris Yeltsin in Moscow last week, U.S. president Clinton implored Russians to follow "the fundamental imperatives of the global market." Those are hardly encouraging words these days. South Korea, despite an International Monetary Fund (IMF) "bailout" package of close to \$60 billion and sharpening attacks on the jobs and living standards of the working class, continues to sink deeper into depression. China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state whose Stalinist rulers have been driving the country headlong toward capitalist restoration, has also been affected by the Southeast Asian economic crisis, itself triggered in good part by the flood of cheap exports from China's growing "free market" sector.

Most importantly, Japan, industrial powerhouse of Asia and the world's second-largest economy, is in the throes of its worst economic and political crisis in decades (see "Japan Economic Crisis Shakes Imperialist Order," *WV* Nos. 693 and 694, 3 July and 31 July). Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto resigned following a humiliating showing for his Liberal Democratic Party in parliamentary elections in July, but his successor has been no less successful in putting together a package for "economic recovery." In the past year, Japan has experienced its first major bank failures in half a century, sharp cuts in investment in productive capacity and record levels of unemployment. Painting a picture of growing global economic chaos, a former vice chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Alan Blinder, wrote in a recent op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (25 August):

"Several Southeast Asian countries are in what can only be called a depression. China, it is said, may have to devalue its currency. Japan is sagging badly. Russia lurches from one crisis to the next. And parts of Latin America look shaky."

## "Death of Communism" Myth Goes Splat

Post-Soviet Russia's role in the world, or even the world economy, cannot be measured simply in terms of industrial output, volume of foreign trade, debt exposure by Western and Japanese banks, etc. While Western, mainly German, banks stand to lose well over \$100 billion as a result of the Russian financial meltdown, the impact of the economic collapse there is primarily political and ideological. Russia may be economically bankrupt, but it still has a formidable nuclear arsenal, including thousands of warheads. As for the ideological impact, we noted in "Death of Communism"

Myth Goes Splat" (*WV* No. 677, 31 October 1997) following last October's stock market crash that the imperialist rulers seized on the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union to proclaim a "bright new world of unfettered capitalism." We continued:

"There was even talk of 'the end of history,' in the fatuous words of State Department ideologue Francis Fukuyama, with the contradictions generated by the anarchic capitalist mode of production suppressed or at least easily controllable. Corporate directors and the International Monetary Fund and World Bank envisioned a return to the 'golden age' before the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution—few or no restrictions on international movement of capital, stable foreign-exchange rates, 'investor-friendly' governments and, above all, a limitless growth of profits."

Today, even Fukuyama admits to having second thoughts about his rosy vision of the "end of history," writing: "There are two things on the horizon that I think are really quite scary: that the Asian crisis could broaden into a global depression, in which case all bets are off about everything; and essentially that Russia could fail in its attempt to Westernize and go backward seriously" (*New York Times*, 30 August).

The burgeoning international economic crisis has also intensified the inter-imperialist rivalries which came into sharp relief following the destruction of the



**Russian miners demanding back wages blockade Trans-Siberian railway. Capitalist counterrevolution has led to impoverishment of working people.**

Soviet Union. Washington's demands that Tokyo put its economic house in order have grown increasingly bellicose in recent months. This comes after years of trade disputes, as the U.S. has tried to blackmail Japan into slashing its export levels. And while the U.S. is loath to throw more money at Russia, Germany not only faces a default on some \$30 billion in loans but as well a potential military threat should Russia descend into chaos. A vice president of Germany's huge Commerzbank warned: "We cannot let Russia, a superpower so near to Germany, fall deeper and deeper into crisis" (*New York Times*, 25 August).

Today, the mood of bourgeois triumphalism has been replaced by panic in international financial markets and fear of a major world depression. At the same time, these conditions are impelling the working masses into struggle. In recent months, the Yeltsin regime has been confronted by a series of workers strikes—spearheaded by the miners who blockaded trains carrying vital supplies. In Indonesia, a popular upheaval last spring led to the ouster of right-wing military dictator Suharto by his own generals. In South Korea, the highly combative working class is resisting the savage austerity measures demanded by the IMF. The powerful Japanese proletariat, facing the elimination of "lifetime employment," is being shaken out of its political complacency and conservatism. And the U.S.—the core country of world capitalism—was hit this summer by the longest and most effective auto strike in decades and by the powerful Teamster strike against UPS last summer.

Nonetheless, this increased combativity comes amid a historic retrogression in class consciousness, particularly in West Europe where mass reformist Communist

Parties commanded the allegiance of advanced sectors of the proletariat. With the victory of capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, workers were sold the lie that "socialism has failed." As a result, today even many formerly pro-Soviet workers in the West no longer identify their struggles with the goal of achieving a socialist society. The International Communist League seeks to instill in the proletariat the revolutionary-internationalist consciousness which animated the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

The continued existence of capitalist imperialism brings with it not only widespread immiseration for the world's working people but the danger of a new global depression and another cataclysmic world war. Socialist revolutions internationally—ushering in a classless, egalitarian society based on production for need, not for profit—is the only answer to the anarchy and brutality of the capitalist system. It is the task of the ICL to forge the proletarian leadership needed to lead humanity out of this abyss.

## Yeltsin and Wall Street: From Hero to Goat

There is a measure of historical justice in the fact that the financial collapse of Yeltsin's Russia triggered the worst few weeks on Wall Street in over a decade. It was during a visit to the financial center

of world capitalism nine years ago that Yeltsin launched his career as the paramount leader of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. Yeltsin had earlier played a key role under Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, who took over the Kremlin in 1985 under the banner of market-oriented *perestroika* "reforms." Yeltsin soon broke with Gorbachev, denouncing his "half-way measures." Seeking the backing of American imperialism, he toured the U.S., where he was fêted by the likes of David Rockefeller. Speaking at Columbia University, the ex-Stalinist apparatchik declared: "I have seen that capitalism is flourishing."

The restoration of capitalism in Russia and the other former Soviet republics cannot, of course, be explained by the machinations of one blustering demagogue and his imperialist sponsors. The social base of the counterrevolution was a large layer of Soviet yuppies, typically the privileged children of Stalinist bureaucrats, who aspired to the more affluent lifestyle and social status of their counterparts in New York, Paris and West Berlin by looting the economy built up under the Soviet Union. They called themselves "democrats" and preached "free-market" economics as a cure-all for the USSR's economic stagnation and backwardness relative to the advanced capitalist countries. They also expected that by restoring capitalism they would be generously rewarded by the imperialists with investment funds, bountiful aid and "soft" loans.

As the Soviet bureaucracy rapidly disintegrated in 1989-91, especially along national lines, the pro-Western "democrats" shifted their support from Gorbachev to Yeltsin. The decisive moment came in August 1991 when elements of the beleaguered Gorbachev regime, call-

ing themselves the "State Emergency Committee," moved to take over the Kremlin and restore order. Contrary to Western imperialist propaganda, the Emergency Committee was not aiming to restore the old Stalinist "command" system or revive the centrally planned and collectivized economy on which the Soviet degenerated workers state was based. Rather it aimed for a bureaucratically controlled restoration of capitalism within a Russian-dominated state encompassing all of the territory of the USSR.

U.S. president George Bush openly orchestrated the successful maneuvers of the Yeltsin camp against the Emergency Committee. Washington threatened to launch a new Cold War—including economic sanctions and support to nationalist forces in the non-Russian republics—if the Emergency Committee prevailed. At the same time, the U.S. made it clear that a Yeltsin regime could expect substantial economic support. In December 1991, Yeltsin rudely booted Gorbachev out of the Kremlin and officially announced the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Yeltsin's August 1991 countercoup was a pivotal event in determining the fate of the Soviet Union, the world's first workers state. Trotskyists fought for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution and for proletarian political revolution to sweep away the nationalist bureaucracy in the Kremlin. In the weeks following Yeltsin's August 1991 countercoup, the ICL distributed over 100,000 copies of a statement in Russian throughout the Soviet Union with the call, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (*WV* No. 533, 30 August 1991).

This stood in sharp contrast to virtually the entire spectrum of centrist and reformist groups around the world, who lined up behind Yeltsin and his imperialist patrons. The social-democratic organization led by Tony Cliff in Britain, represented in the U.S. by the International Socialist Organization, rejoiced that "Communism Has Collapsed" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991). The British centrists of Workers Power, who falsely claim to be Trotskyist, even boasted how one of its supporters had joined the speculators, racketeers and Russian Orthodox priests on Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades! Thus, these supposedly "revolutionary" groups demonstrated their fundamental loyalty to the imperialist rulers.

In the absence of a concerted proletarian mobilization, the Soviet Union succumbed to capitalist counterrevolution. As we wrote at the time:

"Atomized and bereft of any anti-capitalist leadership, lacking any coherent and consistent socialist class consciousness, skeptical about the possibility of class struggle in the capitalist countries, the Soviet working class did not rally in resistance against the encroaching capitalist counterrevolution."

—*How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*, Spartacist pamphlet (August 1993)

However, it was no easy task for would-be Tsar Boris to cohere a strong regime amid the political and economic wreckage of the Soviet Union. Prodded by Washington, in September 1993 Yeltsin dissolved the Russian parliament—which was dominated by a "red-brown coalition" of ex-Stalinist "patriots" and openly reactionary Russian nationalists—and then ordered a military assault on the parliament building. Yeltsin then pushed through a new constitution enshrining an all-powerful presidency and a very weak parliament.

The accelerating economic decline and immiseration along with the bloody colonial war against Chechnya in the Caucasus soon destroyed what remained of Yeltsin's popular authority. Six months before the 1996 presidential elections, Yeltsin's approval rating had sunk to a mere 6 percent while the most popular candidate was Gennadi Zyuganov, head of the Communist Party-Russian Federation. Despite its name, this is a bourgeois-nationalist party with ties to elements of

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# Wall Street...

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the new capitalist exploiters, who for the most part are drawn from the industrial managers of the former Soviet Union. Yeltsin bought the elections with the help of \$14 billion from his imperialist sponsors. As we wrote at the time, "Thanks to the deep pockets of the International Monetary Fund, Yeltsin was able to piece off those sectors of the new exploiters, who in the end united behind his candidacy" ("Washington Buys Russian Elections," *WV* No. 649, 2 August 1996). But the pockets of the IMF were not deep enough to prevent Russia's total financial collapse two years later.

## "Corporatist, Criminal-Style Capitalism"

Russia has a huge, well-trained labor force and a large, first-rate technical intelligentsia. But to exploit this manpower efficiently would require a massive infusion of investment capital to reconstruct, retool and modernize the country's industrial plant. Instead, the industrial plants inherited from the Soviet era have been driven into the ground. There is no more striking index of the primitive state of capitalism in Russia than that *three-quarters of all transactions are done by barter* without money or credit.

In 1992-93, the Yeltsin regime sold off the industrial enterprises, mines and oil fields developed under the Soviet planned economy to a handful of Kremlin insiders for a small fraction of their actual worth. Reputedly, seven tycoons—who were the core backers of Yeltsin's 1996 election campaign—control over half of the Russian economy. Grigory Yavlinsky, an early advocate of capitalist restoration who is now a leading liberal opponent of Yeltsin, pithily describes Russia's economy as "corporatist, criminal-style capitalism."

In certain respects, post-Soviet Russia has taken on the economic and political structure of a Third World country. Exports consist almost entirely of oil, natural gas and precious metals. The oil barons are therefore the only people who have large amounts of dollars and other hard currencies, which they use to buy government officials from local city halls to the Kremlin. Typical in this regard is Kremlin power broker Boris Berezovsky, who runs the Sibneft oil company which finances his own bank. The premier political agent for Russia's oil barons is Viktor Chernomyrdin, who ran the Soviet natural gas industry, which he transformed into a giant monopoly corporation, Gazprom, pocketing a fortune for himself in the process.

The post-Soviet Russian economy is marked by the almost complete absence of foreign investment in productive activities, not only in manufacturing but also in the lucrative extractive sector. In this respect Russia contrasts sharply with the smaller East European countries of the former Soviet bloc. American and German capitalists readily buy up, retool and construct plants in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic—but not in Russia. Why not? Because they cannot exercise effective political control over Russia.

The new capitalist entrepreneurs and their political agents in Poland and Hungary are more than happy to be junior—very junior—partners of Frankfurt and Wall Street. They accept their lowly position in the "new world order." But Russia's tycoons, their political agents and their military men aspire to rule a great imperialist power, dominating at least the non-Russian regions of the former USSR, the so-called "near abroad." All of Yeltsin's major rivals—Communist Party head Zyuganov, ex-general Aleksandr Lebed, Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov—play up Russian national grievances and ambitions and strike a posture hostile to the West, especially the U.S.

The interplay between this corporatist capitalism, Western fears of Russia's imperialist ambitions and the repercus-

sions of the Asian economic crash have now brought about total political and financial chaos. To begin with, Russia's new capitalists don't pay taxes. Since 1991, Yeltsin has cut social programs to the bone and also substantially reduced military spending. The real wages of government employees have fallen 40 percent, as have old-age pensions. Still, last year the Yeltsin regime ran a budget deficit amounting to 6 percent of the country's total national output.

## Asian Crisis Topples Russia's Financial House of Cards

The Asian economic crash caused international moneymen to turn a jaundiced eye at other so-called "emerging markets," especially Russia. In South Korea and Indonesia, "crony capitalism" at least oversaw a real expansion in productive capacity. But crony capitalism in Russia resulted in a wholesale destruc-



Syigma

Yeltsin launches counterrevolutionary coup in front of Moscow White House, August 1991 (left). Same White House after military assault ordered by Yeltsin in October 1993, following disbanding of parliament.

tion of productive capacity. And Tsar Boris looked very like a Slavic Suharto. In fact, the eruption of mass anti-Suharto protests in Indonesia in mid-May marked the beginning of the collapse of Russia's financial markets.

Moscow government bonds could be sold only at ever higher interest rates on ever shorter terms. The Russian treasury was redeeming up to \$8 billion a month at interest rates from 50 to 100-plus percent. And the only reason anyone was buying them at all was a belief that in a crunch the U.S. and Germany would pay off rather than see Yeltsin go down the tubes as strikes paralyzed the country and angry mobs ran through the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Washington and Bonn, the moneymen reasoned, would not let Russia become an Indonesia with 10,000 nuclear warheads. But could the Western imperialist powers prevent it, and at what cost?

The massive bailouts of South Korea, Indonesia, etc. have depleted the reserves of the IMF, World Bank and kindred international financial institutions. Japan is facing the daunting task of bailing out its *own* banks which are saddled with \$600 billion in "non-performing" loans. Moreover, the Yeltsin regime is manifestly corrupt and inefficient. For every dollar provided by the IMF, 50 cents ended up in offshore bank accounts of Yeltsin cronies and the other 50 cents was frittered away. Late last year, the IMF suspended a scheduled payment of \$600 million until the Yeltsin regime brought its tax-collection act up to par. Responding to this pressure, in March Yeltsin fired his entire cabinet and replaced them with a team of youthful "free marketeers."

The IMF continued to dole out money to Moscow, but only as if it were rationing food and water in a lifeboat adrift on the high seas. When Russia's financial markets started their sharp slide downward in late spring, IMF chief Michel Camdessus conspicuously turned his back on Moscow. "Contrary to what markets and commentators are imagining," Camdessus lectured like a professor

addressing particularly obtuse students, "this is not a crisis. This is not a major development." Statements like this, as much as anything else, turned Russia's financial mess into a major development, indeed.

With no prospect of a large and immediate Western bailout, every holder of Russian stocks and government bonds—whether foreign or home-grown—dumped them forthwith and converted the ruble proceeds into dollars or other hard currencies. An eleventh-hour "rescue package" worked out with the IMF in late July was too little, too late and had too many strings attached. Every dollar flowing into Moscow from Washington instantaneously flowed back out again as the run on the ruble became a rout. Former World Bank economist Charles Blitzer exclaimed: "Robbery is going on, that's the only way to describe it.... It seems Russia's oligarchs are engaging in big-time



Suau/Time

capital flight" (*New York Times*, 26 August).

On August 17, the Yeltsin government in effect declared bankruptcy, devaluing the ruble and suspending payments on foreign loans for at least three months. With everyone from Wall Street bankers to Siberian coal miners calling for his head, Yeltsin moved to re-cement his ties to Russia's new tycoons by reappointing Chernomyrdin, who had been dumped from the job only months ago, as acting prime minister. Chernomyrdin has tried negotiating for a "power-sharing" deal with the Communist opposition in parliament and is ominously calling for an iron-fisted "economic dictatorship" to impose order on the country.

## For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!

The Yeltsin regime is internally shaken, universally despised and discredited. The recent strikes by miners and other workers are a welcome sign of reawakened combativity on the part of Russia's proletariat. But to overthrow the corporatist, criminal-style capitalism they face, a new vanguard of the multinational working class of Russia must be forged based on an understanding of the historic significance of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, the subsequent Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state and the counterrevolution led by Yeltsin in 1991-92.

It was the October Revolution of 1917 led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party which, by expropriating the Russian capitalists and landowners and kicking out the imperialists, laid the basis for a planned, collectivized economy. But the Bolshevik Party which led the revolution was destroyed by Stalin through a political counterrevolution in 1923-24, in which a nationalist bureaucratic caste seized the reins of power. Yet despite the gross mismanagement and massive parasitism of the Stalinist bureaucracy, the economic and cultural development of the Soviet Union brought substantial benefits to its working people—not only Russians

but also Ukrainians, Georgians, Uzbeks, Tajiks, etc.

Development toward a genuinely socialist society could take place only in the context of an internationally planned socialist economy brought into being through workers revolutions in the advanced capitalist countries of North America, West Europe and Japan. But the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, in the guise of building "socialism in one country," was viscerally opposed to this perspective. By the 1980s, decades of corrupt and stifling Stalinist misrule had produced political apathy and cynicism among the Soviet working class. As Trotsky predicted in the 1930s, the Stalinist bureaucracy—if not overthrown by a proletarian political revolution—would generate from within its ranks capitalist counterrevolutionaries tied to and supported by world imperialism.

Emboldened by the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union, the bourgeoisie internationally has escalated attacks on workers and minorities. The gains made by South Korean workers during the past few decades of industrialization are being wiped out by the economic crash and dictates of the IMF. The Japanese ruling class is scrapping its traditional corporate paternalism (e.g., "lifetime employment") as the country sinks ever deeper into recession. West Europe is beset by mass unemployment, and the "welfare state" is being dismantled by both right-wing and social-democratic governments. And the U.S. ruling class has been acting as if it can do *anything* to the workers, the poor, the elderly, the black and Hispanic communities.

The onset of a bear market on Wall Street is likely to intensify the conflict between labor and capital. With Social Security under the gun, millions of American workers have come to rely on pension funds—many of whose assets are tied to the stock market—to see them through their retirement years. Now those funds are dwindling daily. And the capitalists will try to recoup their losses by laying off workers and seeking to intensify the rate of exploitation.

Especially with the world economy lurching toward a major depression, the working class cannot defend itself against the onslaught of capital solely through strikes and similar labor actions. For example, corporations losing money and intent on cutting back operations might well take on a long strike with the aim of defeating the workers through exhaustion and sheer economic hardship. Moreover, under conditions of increasing economic hardship, reactionary demagogues will seek to foment racial, national, ethnic and religious hatreds, trying to turn sectors of the exploited against one another: witness the fascist attacks on immigrant communities in West Europe or the murderous anti-Chinese riots in Indonesia.

Revolutionary vanguard parties must be built to lead the proletariat in struggle against all forms of national, racial and social oppression. Struggles to defend jobs, wages and working conditions must be linked to a broader program of struggle against the capitalist system as a whole. In advancing a series of demands to combat unemployment, growing immiseration and racist and fascist terror, Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky explained in the 1938 Transitional Program, founding document of the Fourth International:

"It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of *transitional demands*, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat."

The situation cries out for new October Revolutions to expropriate the bourgeoisie and lay the basis for an international, planned socialist economy. The ICL fights to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International to lead the proletariat to the conquest of power from South Korea to Russia, Japan and the U.S. ■

# South Korea...

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followers that they need to endure a year or two of pain." We warned that the "democratic" Kim regime's declared intent to enforce IMF austerity would mean "intensified repression against the workers movement" ("IMF 'Bailout' Means Misery for South Korean Workers," WV No. 681, 2 January). Kim has now demonstrated that he is every bit as prepared as his dictatorial predecessors to unleash police-state repression against workers who resist the IMF's starvation dictates.

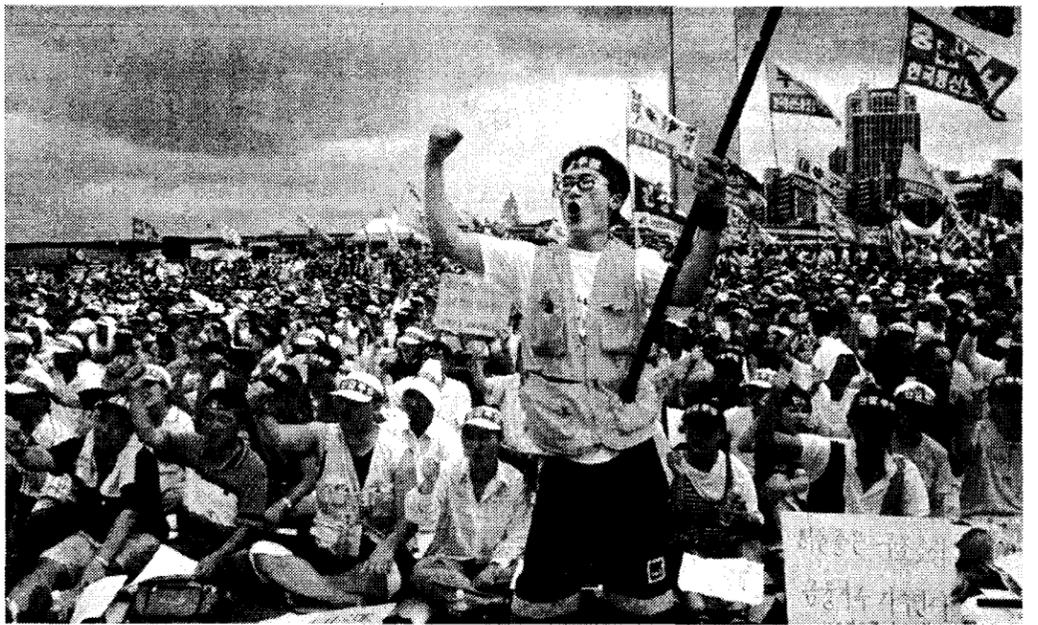
With the deepening of the East Asian economic crisis, South Korean workers this summer were being thrown out on the streets at a rate of 8,000 per day. But the crisis has also provoked a wave of workers struggles as well as a tide of nationalist sentiment in broad layers of the society. A prolonged strike against Hyundai—the country's largest auto maker—ended last month in the face of a massive cop siege. Despite the threat of military repression, Hyundai workers this week overwhelmingly rejected the agreement ending the strike, defying union leaders who had caved in to demands for hundreds of layoffs.

As South Korea's capitalist rulers cracked down on the trade unions, the U.S. and Japanese imperialists were issuing hysterical tirades against the Stalinist regime in North Korea after its launch of a test missile that flew over Japanese territory. Washington seized on the missile test to again rail that North Korea was developing nuclear weapons, while Japan called off efforts to "normalize" relations with the North. These imperialist provocations are part and parcel of a 50-year-long counterrevolutionary drive to crush the bureaucratically deformed workers state in the North, which issued out of a social revolution that overthrew the capitalists and landlords. In the 1950-53 Korean War, U.S.-led forces under the aegis of the United Nations slaughtered upwards of three million people and leveled whole cities.

To this day, the U.S. has over 37,000 troops in South Korea, and another 40,000 in Japan. The massive American military presence is a dagger aimed at the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states and an assertion of the U.S. capitalist rulers' interests in the region against the dependent South Korean bourgeoisie and against rival Japanese imperialism. It also serves as a

Protest earlier this summer by South Korean Hyundai workers on strike against threatened mass layoffs.

Ki Ho Park/Kistone



warning to South Korean workers, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. As proletarian internationalists, the Spartacist League demands: U.S. troops out of Korea! We stand for the unconditional military defense of North Korea against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. But the nationalist Stalinist regime in Pyongyang, which promotes suicidal illusions in a "peaceful reunification" with the South, itself undermines the collectivized foundations of the North Korean deformed workers state. Trotskyists fight for the revolutionary reunification of Korea through socialist revolution in the South and proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucracy in the North.

Continuing in the footsteps of its predecessors, the Kim Dae Jung government has combined its drive against the unions with police-state repression against the left. In May, Kim's secret police rounded up 26 supporters of the International Socialists of South Korea (ISSK), co-thinkers of Tony Cliff's British Socialist Workers Party and the American International Socialist Organization. Like the left and labor movement in general, ISSK supporters have repeatedly been victimized under the draconian National Security Law, which can send people to prison for as little as listening to a North Korean radio broadcast. The government's repression is aimed at silencing even the mildest dissent. In fact, the Cliffites share the South Korean rulers' anti-Communist hatred of the North, refusing to defend it against the Seoul regime and U.S. imperialism.

Among those backing Kim's election last year were leaders of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). The KCTU emerged in the late 1980s in opposition to the government-sponsored KFTU labor federation, which had been set up under the auspices of the South Korean secret police. Following Kim's election, the KCTU joined a tripartite committee with representatives of the government and the *chaebol* monopolies to oversee the implementation of layoffs, wage cuts and other IMF austerity measures. Now, in response to the police attack against the Mando plant occupations, a KCTU spokesman has threatened to pull out of the committee and announced, "We will stage a general strike." But KCTU leaders have repeatedly pulled back from such confrontations—including a threatened general strike in July—out of loyalty to Kim.

South Korea's independent unions have displayed unquestioned militancy.

But this combativity is undermined by the nationalism which pervades the left and labor movement. As we stressed in our January article: "The South Korean proletariat can go forward only on the basis of complete and unconditional independence from the bourgeoisie. This is all the more urgent today, as the South Korean ruling class seeks to line the workers up to sacrifice their livelihoods and struggles in order to appease imperialist dictates."

The Asian economic crisis poses pointblank the need for a revolutionary struggle against the capitalist order. To lead the fight against imperialist oppression and degradation in dependent countries such as South Korea requires the leadership of a Trotskyist party based on the perspective of permanent revolution: the seizure of power by the proletariat, marching at the head of women, poor peasants and all the oppressed and linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the imperialist centers. ■

# South Africa...

(continued from page 2)

unions would fight to mobilise labour in defence of immigrants and all the oppressed. But under their existing leadership, the unions are chained to their class enemies by the political logic of nationalism. This is most demonstrably seen in the government alliance of COSATU, the largest union federation in South Africa, with the ANC/SACP. In response to the train lynchings, COSATU called on the government to "create jobs to prevent such attacks" (*Sunday Independent*, 6 September). But Mandela's neo-apartheid regime cannot possibly meet the aspirations of the masses for jobs, homes, decent living standards, medical care and education. In the absence of a revolutionary struggle for proletarian state power, the grievances of one sector of the oppressed will continue to be channelled into hostility toward other sectors.

The brutal murders in Pretoria are a dark portent of escalating racial and ethnic/tribalist hostilities. Only the forging

of a revolutionary proletarian party that acts as a tribune of the people in the fight for a black-centred workers government can cut through the hatreds born of the horrendous poverty produced by capitalist superexploitation and the divide-and-rule policies of the apartheid masters. As we wrote in "South Africa Powder Keg" (reprinted in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12, February 1995), shortly after Mandela became the first black president of South Africa:

"So long as the struggle over the redistribution of the country's wealth is defined in national-ethnic terms and limited to a purely South African framework, it could well trigger race war, bloody tribalist conflict and economic collapse. Only a *proletarian internationalist* perspective, linking the reconstruction of South Africa to a world socialist revolution, can ensure that a just and egalitarian society will be erected on the ruins of the apartheid state."

A socialist South Africa would not be limited to south of the Limpopo River but would use the industrial and mineral wealth of the country for the social and economic liberation of the impoverished masses of the African continent. This is the only way forward. ■

# Labourites...

(continued from page 8)

end, Yeltsin government spokesmen have also issued cynical denunciations of skin-head attacks.

Even as they ape the worst excrescences of Great Russian chauvinism, the Taaffeites have themselves been the target of witch-hunting anti-communist hysteria in the Russian press, and one of their supporters was recently jailed for five months in Kazakhstan. Despite our deepgoing political differences with *Levy Avangard*, the ICL has protested this victimisation by the class enemy.

*Levy Avangard's* British patrons were submerged for decades inside the racist, pro-imperialist Labour Party as the fake-Trotskyist Militant Tendency. When they emerged some years ago, they set up the YRE as a liberal front group aimed at capitalising on anti-fascist activism among radical youth in Western Europe. But the Taaffeites remain firmly wedded to Labourite reformism, preaching economist "unite and fight" rhetoric tailored to the prejudices of backward workers and thus necessarily hostile to the fight against national, racial and sexual oppression. Not only do they refuse to raise the elementary demand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland but they have even taken to sponsoring a notoriously anti-Catholic

Loyalist killer, Billy Hutchinson. And at the Moscow meeting, a Russian Taaffeite tried to break up a discussion our comrade was having with the young women who later joined the walkout, ranting that all the ICL is "interested in is homosexuals."

Against such bigoted filth, the Trotskyist ICL stands in the tradition of Lenin's Bolshevik Party, acting as a proletarian "tribune of the people." As part of our fight against the looming danger of capitalist restoration and for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy in the former Soviet Union, when a Russian fascist group first surfaced in the late 1980s, the ICL raised the call: "Soviet Workers Must Crush Pamyat!" (WV No. 461, 23 September 1988). Three years later, we distributed over 100,000 leaflets in Russia with the call, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" And we devoted an entire issue of our Russian-language *Spartacist Bulletin* (No. 3, Spring 1992) to the struggle against anti-Semitism, women's oppression and anti-gay bigotry. It is only on the basis of an internationalist programme for proletarian state power that a new Bolshevik Party will be built in Russia as part of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International.

To those leftist youth who take the YRE's pretensions as good coin, we say: Beware "anti-racists" who embrace Russian fascists! ■

## CORRECTION

The article "General Strike Rocks Puerto Rico" (WV No. 694, 31 July) includes a quotation taken from WV No. 588 (19 November 1993) stating that we "advocate independence" for Puerto Rico but do not favor forcing that, or any other status, on the Puerto Rican people. In fact, these statements are self-contradictory. Our position was correctly expressed in the article "A Century of U.S. Imperialist Plunder" (WV No. 686, 13 March):

"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."

We do not currently *advocate* independence for Puerto Rico, not least because the vast majority of the population there is not in favor of it at this time. As the article in WV No. 694 noted, "While there is deep resentment among Puerto Ricans over their colonial oppression, most are contradicted and loath to relinquish the benefits of U.S. citizenship—such as the right to work on the mainland—and fear that independence would mean falling into the crushing immiseration typical of capitalist Caribbean states such as the Dominican Republic."

# Victory to Northwest Pilots Strike!

SEPTEMBER 7—A solid strike against Northwest Airlines by over 6,100 members of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) is now in its tenth day. The airline, the country's fourth largest, was forced to cancel its 1,700 daily flights. In many Midwestern cities, where Northwest carries upwards of three-quarters of all air traffic, the airports became empty hallways.

This strike poses a long-awaited opportunity for airline workers to reverse years of givebacks and defeats. Mechanics, baggage handlers, flight attendants and other workers at Northwest are currently engaged in their own contract negotiations. On September 3, some 2,100 pilots at Air Canada launched their first-ever strike against that company. And earlier this summer, 19,000 reservation agents and passenger service workers at United Airlines voted to join the International Association of Machinists (IAM), the largest private-sector organizing victory since 1978.

The ALPA walkout came after two years of bargaining directly overseen by anti-labor government "mediators" and the courts. The pilots are striking to do away with a two-tier wage scheme and for a 14 percent pay raise over three years to partially make up for the \$900 million in concessions—including pay cuts of over 15 percent—granted by the ALPA, IAM and Teamsters union tops in 1993 when the company pleaded bankruptcy. Since that time, Northwest profits have more than tripled, allowing the company to amass a \$3 billion surplus to hold out against a lengthy strike. Yet Northwest and the capitalist media have unleashed a torrent of strikebreaking propaganda cynically portraying the pilots as "overpaid" and greedy in an attempt to isolate them from other airline workers.

If the company can beat back the pilots, this will embolden management to go after other Northwest workers, like the flight attendants who make as little as \$12,000 a year. Last month, 27,000 Northwest mechanics, baggage handlers, ticket agents, cleaners and other workers represented by IAM District 143 voted overwhelmingly in favor of a strike after rejecting a contract proposal pushed by the IAM leadership. Likewise, 11,000

flight attendants in Teamsters Local 2000 are locked in negotiations with management over wages, benefits and working conditions. Flight attendants have joined ALPA picket lines in Chicago and several other cities to demonstrate their solidarity.

Joined by a host of Congressmen and state governors, Northwest is clamoring for President Clinton to impose a back-to-work order under the strikebreaking Railway Labor Act, as he did to stop a strike by American Airlines pilots in February 1997. While Clinton has thus far refrained from intervening in the Northwest strike, ALPA and other unions at Northwest must be prepared to defy any government strikebreaking.

But the IAM tops have themselves aided Northwest's strikebreaking efforts, criminally instructing union members to report for work—i.e., to *scab* on the strike. Even after the company laid off 27,500 mechanics and other workers, thousands of Northwest workers are still being ordered by the union bureaucrats to work behind the picket lines. This backstabbing points to the utter treachery of the pro-capitalist union misleaders, who place the capitalists' strikebreaking laws above the interests of the workers. All Northwest workers should be joining the strike lines, both to support the pilots and to advance their own demands. Picket lines mean don't cross!

The low wages and wretched working conditions now faced by airline workers are themselves the result of the union bureaucracy's class collaborationism. In the U.S., this is centrally expressed in the AFL-CIO tops' embrace of the capitalist Democratic Party. It was Democratic president Jimmy Carter who pushed through the deregulation of the airline industry in 1978, which was proclaimed as a great "populist" reform. In the upshot, as we noted some years ago, "the airline industry has experienced union-busting, deteriorating safety conditions, *greater* monopoly and now sharply rising fares" ("Junk Bonds and Flying Jalopies," WV No. 473, 17 March 1989).

When Republican president Ronald Reagan smashed the PATCO air traffic controllers union in 1981—deploying



Flight attendants join picket line of striking Northwest pilots at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, September 4.

a scheme also devised by Democrat Carter—this opened the floodgates to union-busting and givebacks throughout the airline industry. As documented in Thomas Petzinger Jr.'s *Hard Landing* (1995), "Deregulation was a massive exercise in the redistribution of wealth." In the 1980s, notorious corporate raiders like Frank Lorenzo and Carl Icahn financed hostile takeovers of airlines with junk bonds, looted their assets, then extracted enormous concessions from airline unions to pay back the banks and bondholders. Typical of these latter-day robber barons was Northwest's Alfred Checchi, who took control of the company in 1989 in one of the last of the leveraged buyouts. Last year, Checchi ran for governor of California as a Democratic Party candidate. And a current member of the Northwest board of directors is Walter Mondale, who served as vice president under Carter.

The smashing of PATCO was carried out with the complicity of the AFL-CIO tops—including IAM president and "Democratic Socialists of America" mem-

ber William Winpisinger—who refused to call out the other airline unions in defense of the air traffic controllers. The labor bureaucrats then shoved through a series of contract settlements leading to mass layoffs and wage cuts, while workers were offered company stock in exchange. Such bogus "profit sharing" schemes are designed to convince the workers to identify their interests with the company's bottom line, reflecting the labor bureaucracy's own support to the capitalist system. As part of the 1993 union "bailout" of Northwest, representatives of ALPA, the IAM and Teamsters were even appointed to the company board of directors.

It is precisely these policies of class collaboration that stand in the way of effective struggle against the onslaught of the capitalists. The battle to defend the airline unions must be linked to the fight for a workers party and a workers government which will take transport and industry out of the hands of the profit-gouging capitalists. Victory to the Northwest and Air Canada strikes! ■

## Eco-Radicalism...

(continued from page 7)

healthy land" (quoted in Barry Commoner, *Making Peace with the Planet* [1990]). This is, of course, reactionary utopian nonsense—with an emphasis on the nonsense. I very much doubt whether most people who say these things take them seriously.

Yet in protests around tuition hikes or in opposition to U.S. imperialist militarism, we encounter young activists who subscribe to ecology radicalism to some degree. So we have to address the issues and underlying worldview. Furthermore, petty-bourgeois radicalism is extremely volatile. Yesterday's pacifist is today's terrorist. Yesterday's student vanguardist and intellectual elitist is today's workerist syndicalist. After the May 1968 general strike in France, thousands of American New Leftists who had been for student vanguardism went over to "Marxism-Leninism" as they understood it. In the face of a working-class upsurge in Mexico, for example, a lot of these anarcho-green types would become gungho for "workers power." And if we are to win some of them, we have to counterpose a scientific socialist to a reactionary utopian response to the ecological problems which do exist objectively.

The organization of industrial production under capitalism necessarily leads to the degradation of the environment because capitalist firms are motivated by maximizing short-term profits. To this end, they even *suppress* the development and application of new technology which is ecologically sounder. During the 1930s, General Motors bought up—and shut down—urban trolley and railway systems in order to increase demand for private automobiles (see "Death on the Tracks," WV No. 640, 1 March 1996). More recently, the major oil companies have blocked the development of solar energy.

In their denigration of the proletariat and their promotion of schemes to "save the environment" under the existing capitalist system, the eco-radicals help perpetuate this system in which science and technology are often used in ways destructive to humanity. The vast nuclear arsenal in the hands of U.S. imperialism poses a far greater danger to humanity than does leakage from nuclear power plants. Under capitalist rule, the fundamental irrationality of profit and market relations can render unsafe even the best-understood technology. But in opposition to eco-radicals, we are defenders of technological development and promoters of it. Even the present technology is more than adequate to provide food and shelter for everyone. Yet, as famine plagues many countries, the U.S. government is still paying farmers here *not* to grow

food. As we wrote in "Eco-Faddism and Nuclear Power" (*Young Spartacus* No. 55, June 1977), when Green radicalism first gained wide currency:

"Marxists are not insensitive to the environmental aspects of technological progress. But our concern is tempered by

our dedication to the scientific eradication of scarcity and human misery. The victorious proletarian revolution will utilize science and technology to provide the material basis for overcoming the 'human condition' of war, poverty and privation—the hallmarks of class society." ■

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million in modernizing the Flint Delphi parts plant. In turn, the UAW tops agreed to prevent any further local strikes at those factories until the national contract expires next fall.

## Wall Street Declares War on the UAW

As soon as the strike ended, GM boss John Smith, responding to Wall Street's demand that GM "inflict a crushing blow to the U.A.W.," announced a two-prong attack on the union (*New York Times*, 6 August). First he stated GM's intention to spin off its huge Delphi parts division as an "independent" operation. This immediately poses a big fight that has been brewing for some time: the defense of the 50,000 current union jobs at Delphi and the organization into the UAW of the four out of five parts plants that are currently low-wage, non-union shops.

GM then announced it was going to begin closing existing assembly plants in the U.S. and build a series of new facilities based on the "Brazil model," in which half as many workers are needed to put together cars, with whole sections like dashboards assembled in non-union parts factories. Taken together, these proposals are nothing short of a declaration of war on the UAW, one of the biggest and most important unions in the U.S. GM is out to impose on its U.S. workforce the brutal work methods it uses to hideously exploit the workers of Brazil, Mexico and other semicolonial countries, many of whom labor in non-union hellholes.

The aim of these measures was not lost on UAW members. Many workers have already said that they are saving money and gearing up for a national strike when the UAW contract with GM expires next year. The stakes in this looming battle are very large. If GM can break the back of the UAW in its North American operations, you can bet that Ford and Chrysler will follow suit. But GM and Wall Street, who have been getting their way for nearly two decades, may be seriously miscalculating the current mood of union members. Since the UPS Teamsters strike last year, it is clear that a new fighting spirit has emerged in the working class. This has been visible in a series of militant strikes flaring up across the country and in Puerto Rico.

Like the GM strike, recent strikes by Bell Atlantic and US West telephone workers and Philadelphia transit workers were marked by aggressive tactics toward would-be scabs and the companies. The evident combativity of union members poses a collision with the greedy, union-busting corporations. But it also poses a clash within the UAW and other unions with the double-dealing labor bureaucrats, who have worked hand in glove with the capitalists and the government in overseeing the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs and drastic cuts in workers' standard of living. When an army gets ready to do battle with the enemy, it is important to prepare by taking stock of its fighting capacity, especially the question of leadership.

## Mobilize Union Power!

A common theme in recent strikes has been the fight to defend decent-paying

**When GM returned stamping dies to struck Flint plant, UAW tops directed workers to cross picket lines to assist company in preparing to restart production. Picket lines mean don't cross!**



unionized jobs in the face of the deepening immiseration of the working class imposed through multi-tier wage schemes, low-paid part-time or temporary jobs with no benefits, widespread "downsizing" of the workforce and accompanying speedup. This was palpably seen in the aging GM workforce, many in their 40s and 50s, who have been forced to endure backbreaking six-day and seven-day workweeks for years and who know that if GM gets its way, when they retire their jobs will go and there will be nothing for their kids but minimum-wage service industry jobs. In the past ten years alone, Solidarity House has presided over a decline in UAW membership of more

has eliminated 125,000 jobs since 1990 as workers retire or are forced out because of the backbreaking conditions. As an increasing number of workers approach retirement age, the rate of attrition has risen from 5 percent to twice that.

When the AFL-CIO tops did nothing to stop the government's smashing of the PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981, it became open season on the unions. Throughout the 1980s and early '90s, the labor bureaucracy permitted a series of isolated strikes to end in defeat—and then declared that strikes could never be won. The proportion of private-sector workers organized in unions has plummeted to less than 10 percent. This has been

1998, fully 4 percent was the result not of increased productivity and technological improvements but of forcing increased amounts of overtime to work the hell out of those already employed. The average couple's workweek is a day and a half longer now than it was in the 1960s. The capitalists don't want to shell out the costs of medical and other benefits that would come with hiring new workers—a big reason why a large proportion of working people now have no medical insurance of any kind.

To even begin to redress these conditions poses a collision of enormous proportions with the entire capitalist class. A few figures point to the stakes involved. Unionized workers make on average \$200 a week more in wages and benefits—over \$10,000 a year—than non-union workers. An organizing drive aimed simply at bringing back into the union fold the more than four million workers lost to the unions in the past 20 years, coupled with an across-the-board wage increase to make up for the 20 percent drop in real wages, would cost the capitalist exploiters *hundreds of billions* of dollars. That helps explain why, even in the face of a sharp decline in strikes over the past two decades, corporate America devotes lavish sums of money for professional strikebreakers and anti-union "consultants." As one such, Martin Jay Levitt, wrote in his *Confessions of a Union Buster* (1993), "The war on organized labor is a \$1 billion-plus industry." And this is all in addition to the strikebreaking cops, courts and other repressive forces of the capitalist government—the executive committee for the capitalist class—which are at the disposal of the employers.

The "new" AFL-CIO bureaucracy under John Sweeney has made much of the need for a renewed effort to organize non-union workers. The recent organization of 19,000 reservation clerks and other workers at United Airlines by the International Association of Machinists was an important victory. But this stands in sharp contrast to the failure to unionize hideously exploited strawberry workers in California—an effort which the Sweeney team put forward as the centerpiece of its organizing drives. To successfully unionize these workers requires a campaign of *class struggle* against the powerful agribusiness bosses, with strikes in the fields backed up by secondary strikes and labor boycotts by other unions, especially Teamster truckers.

Yet Sweeney & Co. have relied on



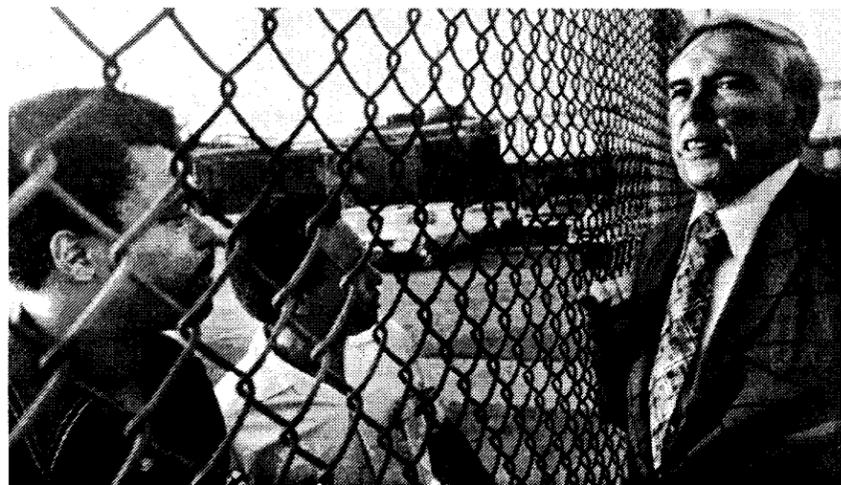
**Growing pro-union sentiment is reflected in recent vote by 19,000 United Airlines workers to join IAM, the largest private-sector organizing victory in 20 years.**

than a quarter of a million. A former GM worker voiced the sentiment motivating the Flint strikers: "I either stand now and strike or there may be no tomorrow."

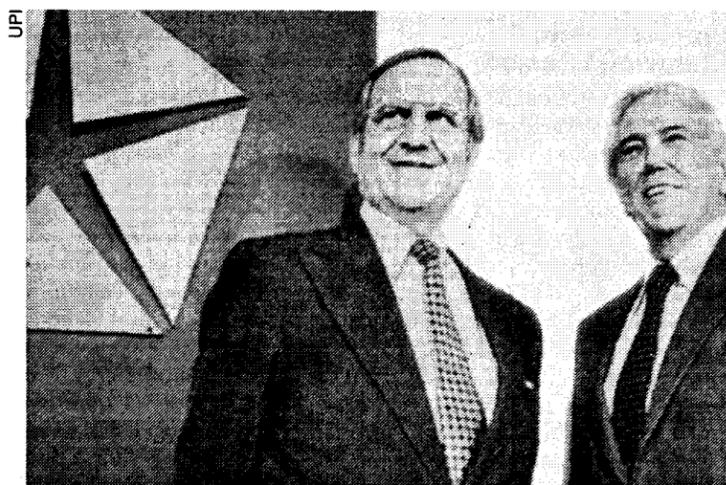
Throughout the strike, bourgeois press and TV news crews scoured the country looking for anti-union sentiment among the 200,000 GM workers who had been laid off, but they found only solid support for the union's cause. Such local strikes have become key to the defense of jobs for all GM workers, because Solidarity House refuses to call out the union nationally to combat attacks on jobs and working conditions. There have been 19 such strikes against GM since 1990, and they have managed to stop some threatened factory closures. Blocked by these actions and by provisions in union contracts against closing plants, GM has relied instead on a war of attrition to regain market share lost to its rivals. With the collusion of the UAW misleaders, GM

accompanied by a deep cut in real wages, amounting to some 20 percent over the last 20 years. The loss of unionized industrial jobs has been most heavily felt among the black population, traditionally the "last hired and first fired." In turn, the downward pressure on wages has been augmented by the axing of welfare and other social programs, an anti-working-class attack which particularly devastated the ghetto and barrio poor, creating a vast pool of millions to compete for low-wage jobs or to be forced into slave-labor "workfare" schemes. Even among unionized workers, real wages have fallen by 7.6 percent just since 1994.

This has led to a massive redistribution of income in favor of an already wealthy handful, while working families have to work ever-longer hours to make ends meet. This situation is captured in the fact that of the 5.4 percent growth registered by the U.S. economy in the first quarter of



**UAW bureaucrat Doug Fraser helped break series of wildcat strikes at Detroit Chrysler plants in 1973, was later rewarded by Chrysler CEO Lee Iacocca (near right) with appointment to board of directors.**



(continued from page 13)

legalistic appeals to government labor boards, moralistic pleas to supermarket chains and supposed "organizing" rallies promoting Democratic Party politicians. In the upshot, the strawberry workers have been subjected to terror by the agribusiness bosses, who have imposed their own company union on the largely immigrant workers. Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy has devoted considerable resources to "organizing" prison guards and cops—the paid racist, strikebreaking thugs of the capitalist state.

Many "left" critics of the AFL-CIO tops complain that the bureaucrats are not committing enough funds to union organizing. But the problem is not primarily one of money. What is posed is a political question. To take on and roll back the war on organized labor requires a leadership with the understanding that the interests of labor and capital are *counterposed*, that any serious mobilization of union power threatens the capitalists and will bring the working class into a head-on confrontation with the bourgeois state, whether under a Republican or Democratic administration, and that the working class must therefore vigilantly guard its independence—organizational and political—from the bourgeoisie, its state and its political parties.

All of this is flatly counterposed to the AFL-CIO bureaucracy's political support to the racist, capitalist Democratic Party—and through it to the bourgeois order and the bourgeois state. The union tops make a principle of bowing to the bosses' "legality," which is an elaborate set of laws devised by the ruling class precisely to protect its property and class rule *against* the working class. These labor traitors literally act as the bourgeoisie's political police within the labor movement, from disbanding mass pickets to preventing strikes. The UAW misleaders' acquiescence to binding arbitration goes to the core of the labor bureaucracy's legalism. Far from being "neutral," arbitration is a crucial weapon of the exploiters, designed to weaken and demobilize the power of labor. If the employers have not wielded this weapon much until recently, it was because they saw an opportunity to instead simply crush every outbreak of labor struggle through brute union-busting. Faced with a solid shut-down of its operations around the country, GM turned to the courts to break the union's struggle.

So strong are the bureaucrats' ties to the capitalist order that they have renounced the very means by which the industrial unions were built in the 1930s. That was a convulsive struggle, including three citywide general strikes in 1934, mass sit-down strikes in Flint in 1937 which organized GM, and secondary labor boycotts and solidarity strikes. This massive upheaval was accompanied by an unprecedented radicalization of the U.S. proletariat. The 1934 Minneapolis strikes, which laid the basis for transforming the Teamsters into the huge industrial union it is today through subsequent campaigns to organize over-the-road drivers, were led by Trotskyist militants who understood that the workers' interests could only be advanced through a policy of class struggle whose aim was the overthrow of the entire capitalist system.

### Protectionism: Chauvinist Poison

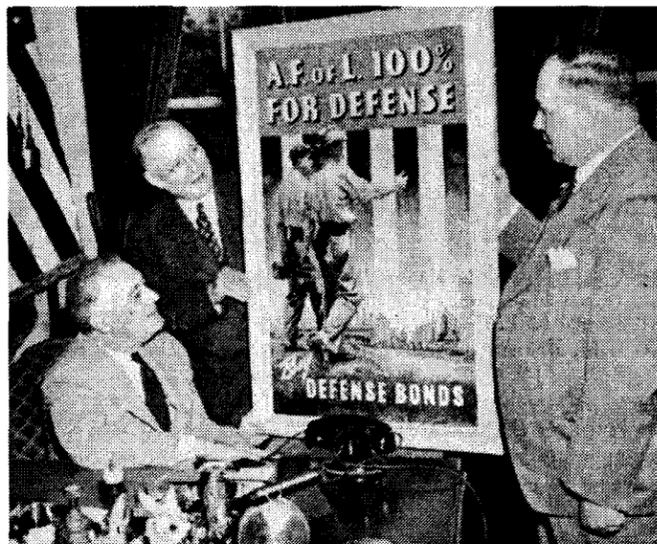
After living through years of "downsizing," workers are displaying a determination for defending their jobs and keeping open the plants in which they work. But the UAW bureaucracy is opposed to any struggle which would challenge GM's "right" to squeeze every cent of profit it can out of the workforce. With its long history of collaborating with management, Solidarity House fosters the illusion that the union and management can simply sit down together and bargain for a role in determining how and where GM invests in new plant and equipment. This demand is clearly utopian because it

denies the fundamental conflict of class interests between capital and labor. Stopping GM's union-busting scheme to restructure its North American operations is not going to be done through negotiating in GM's boardrooms. It's going to mean serious class struggle every step of the way.

As one Wall Street analyst dryly remarked, "In a capitalist society, the owners decide where the capital goes" (*Detroit News*, 30 July). And that means capital goes where profits and dividends can be maximized, to semicolonial countries like Mexico and to non-union plants in the South. The working class will control investment when it controls industry—when the means of production are expropriated from the bourgeoisie and organized in a planned, collectivized economy under a workers state. And that will take a socialist revolution.

Behind the UAW bureaucracy's talk about "investing in America" is its deep-seated loyalty to the American *bourgeoisie*. The poisonous, flag-waving protectionism expressed in calls for import quotas and chauvinist tirades against "foreign workers stealing American jobs" is aimed at bolstering the interests of U.S. imperialism against its rivals. This goes hand in hand with the labor bureaucracy's support for the Democratic Party. The UAW journal *Solidarity* (March/April 1998) enthusiastically promotes unannounced Democratic presidential contender Richard Gephardt, who is a virulent, Japan-bashing protectionist.

Any serious struggle against the far-flung GM empire necessarily entails a perspective of class-struggle solidarity with workers in other countries, including solidarity strikes, labor boycotts of scab goods and other actions in support of struggles for union recognition. The



AFL-CIO

**AFL leaders William Green and George Meany with Democratic president Roosevelt (sitting). AFL and CIO tops backed anti-labor "New Deal" administration, enforced no-strike pledge to support U.S. imperialism in World War II.**

need for such proletarian internationalist solidarity was concretely demonstrated in the Flint strike, which shut down not only GM's U.S. plants but those in Canada and Mexico as well.

The UAW tops and the Sweeney AFL-CIO leadership occasionally mouth pious phrases of concern over the low wages paid to workers in Third World countries. But their protectionist strategy is *counterposed* to the fight for international labor solidarity. Nor does it defend the jobs of unionized workers in the U.S. As the *New York Times* (26 August) reported, Yokich himself made this clear when he said in response to the Delphi announcement "that some changes in production processes were inevitable.... Even if jobs are created at non-union supplier factories in the United States, he said, 'It's still an American job, isn't it?'" In other words, says Yokich, the American capitalists can grind the living hell out of the workers, as long as they "put America first"!

While the labor bureaucrats scream about shipping jobs abroad, for years they have allowed the bosses to ship jobs to low-wage, non-union plants in the American South. The union misleaders refuse to touch this question not only because of their devotion to the profits of the companies, but because it would mean actively taking on the question of racial discrimination against black workers. Organizing the "open shop" South necessarily and directly poses the need to mobilize labor

**Vance International union-busting thugs. Capitalists spend over \$1 billion a year on private strikebreaking armies and anti-union "consultants."**



Morris/Washington Post

to defeat the racist, union-hating lynchers of the Ku Klux Klan, who would be unleashed by the capitalists to suppress multiracial labor struggle. The Klan and the people behind them have always understood that unions *mean* racial integration.

At the same time, the "America first" chauvinism pushed by Yokich & Co. also serves to fuel the capitalist rulers' attacks on Hispanic, Asian and other immigrant workers in the U.S. The fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants is a crucial part of mobilizing the power of labor in struggle against capitalist exploitation. As we note in the International Communist League's "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

"Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poor and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of

economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard."

### Labor Lieutenants of U.S. Imperialism

The current UAW tops are directly descended from the social-democratic Reuther machine which ran the UAW beginning in 1946. In the 1930s, Reuther was one of a host of union activists, including Communist Party (CP) supporters, who worked to channel the labor upsurge into support for Democratic president Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" administration. Portrayed as a "friend of labor," the Roosevelt government enacted the Wagner Act and other measures which, in the guise of legalizing unions, were in reality aimed at curtailing class struggle and subordinating the unions to the capitalist state.

Along with the rest of the CIO and AFL leadership, Reuther supported a no-strike pledge and compulsory arbitration to back U.S. imperialism in World War II. Following the war, the biggest strike wave in U.S. history broke out in

1945-46. Shortly afterwards, Reuther helped launch the Cold War purges which drove militants out of the unions. The anti-Communist witchhunt was codified in the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, which also banned secondary strikes and other militant tactics which had been key to the union's very formation. The merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955 took place on the basis of the purges, which destroyed whole unions, and of a program of subordinating the labor movement to the legal straitjacket drawn up by the capitalists and their government.

By the early 1970s, UAW officials like Doug Fraser were themselves leading goon squads to break wildcat strikes by auto workers in Detroit. For his efforts on behalf of the auto bosses, Fraser was later rewarded with a seat on Chrysler's board of directors. This is emblematic of the UAW tops' program of subordinating the interests of auto workers to the capitalist drive for profits, from union-management "productivity" committees to "profit-sharing" schemes aimed at convincing workers that they have a stake in their own exploitation. Far from securing jobs, such measures help fuel the job-slashing offensive. Thanks to Ford's "cordial relations" with the UAW bureaucracy—which last authorized a strike against Ford in 1986—the company has managed to largely do away with its unionized parts operations and increase its profit margin and market share at GM's expense, impelling the latter to go after even more UAW jobs.

Abroad, the labor bureaucracy's support to U.S. imperialism has meant collaborating with the CIA in subverting Communist-led unions in West Europe after World War II and in suppressing militant unions in Third World police states like South Korea. Thus, the AFL-CIO tops helped create the low-wage, non-union havens for imperialist investment overseas which they now decry. Leon Trotsky, who with V.I. Lenin stood at the head of the Bolshevik Party which led the workers of Russia to power in the October Revolution of 1917, explained the root cause of the union tops' fealty to the imperialist rulers in his 1940 article, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay":

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

### Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!

It is a measure of the threadbare "socialist" credentials of reformist groups like the Communist Party, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Socialist Action that not one of them denounces the UAW bureaucracy's support to protectionism or the Democratic Party. What all of these groups have in common is their rejection of a revolutionary perspective. Instead, accepting the framework of capitalist rule, they seek at best to pressure the bourgeoisie to alleviate the conditions of exploitation and oppression.

While intoning that "we must seriously challenge class collaboration," CP

# Harlem...

(continued from page 16)

police barricades. And the criminalization of blacks was precisely the point Giuliani wanted to drive home.

Having failed to provoke the crowd, the cops are frustrated because they only bagged one arrest and now say they will review videotapes to get others. The Giuliani administration is also threatening to charge Khalid Muhammad with "inciting to riot." A black pastor at Harlem's Canaan Baptist Church aptly responded, "Then Mr. Giuliani should be indicted for the police riot on the Brooklyn Bridge of which he was a part a few years ago."

In September 1992, Giuliani stood at the head of a racist mobilization by thousands of cops outside City Hall demanding more police power. After he finished his speech, 10,000 white cops broke through barricades to storm City Hall, then occupied by black Democrat David Dinkins. They later took over the Brooklyn Bridge and rampaged through lower Manhattan, punching reporters, insulting black elected officials and terrorizing women and minority youth.

The following year, Giuliani took office. The cops were given a green light to run roughshod over the ghetto and

barrio poor. The number of people killed by cops on the street or in police custody jumped by 50 percent in the first year of his reign. Now, Giuliani is waging a wholesale assault on such democratic rights as freedom of speech and assembly for whole layers of the population. Again playing the race card, his attempt to ban the "Million Youth March" was aimed at further strengthening the forces of repressive "law and order."

And bigoted demagogue Khalid Muhammad gave Giuliani the perfect target. As we wrote last issue:

"While we defend the right of the 'Million Youth March' to march down Harlem's Malcolm X Boulevard, we emphatically warn that Khalid Muhammad is a poisonous messenger of racial hatred. When it comes to fomenting race war, Muhammad is a fitting analogue to the racist Republican mayor.... Diverting the justified outrage of black youth against conditions of horrendous oppression into racist bigotry against Jews, Asians and others, Muhammad stokes the flames of right-wing reaction whose first targets will be black people."

Muhammad and his minions used the platform of the "Million Youth March" to spew racist filth, railing against Jews as "the bloodsuckers of the black community." In truth, it is Muhammad and his ilk, like his former mentor, Nation of Islam head Louis Farrakhan, who them-

selves aspire to be the bloodsuckers of the black community. While talking of "black empowerment," they seek to carve out a niche for themselves as the sole exploiters of the black ghetto masses. This illusory program of "black capitalism" is premised both on the benevolent acquiescence of the white power structure and on the maintenance of racist segregation.

Muhammad's incitements to race war are a deadly danger to the ghetto youth and others whom he would readily sacrifice to further his own ends. As the cops waded into the "Million Youth March," Muhammad tried to incite the crowd to "take their guns away and use their guns in self-defense" (*New York Times*, 7 September). Minutes after setting up hundreds of black youth for murderous attack by racist cops itching for a bloodbath, he drove off in his white Mercedes. As one black woman from Brooklyn's Crown Heights ghetto pointed out, "Giuliani and Khalid are in concert, in my opinion. They need one another" (*New York Times*, 7 September). Giuliani, however, is backed by the forces of state power in his bid to foment race war.

The chilling display of racist police terror on the streets of Harlem on September 5 was meant as a message not only to blacks but to all working people and the

poor that they had better "stay in line"—or else. Helping to enforce this message are the job-trusting labor bureaucrats who refuse to lift a finger to oppose the increasing devastation of the inner cities. Instead of mobilizing New York's powerful integrated unions, the pro-capitalist labor tops line up behind Giuliani.

The way out is through the road of class struggle, mobilizing the multiracial proletariat to put an end to this capitalist system which is rooted in racial oppression and enforced by the cops, courts and other repressive agencies of the capitalist state. This is the perspective advanced by the Labor Black Leagues, initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, in the introduction to their program, "What We Stand For" (*Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 13, February 1996):

"Full equality can only come through the struggle for revolutionary integration, to free black people from grinding capitalist oppression through mobilizing the social power of the multiracial working class and establishing a socialist society where those who labor rule. There is no other road to black freedom or proletarian emancipation. Getting there is a question of leadership. The Labor Black Leagues are multiracial organizations of militant workers and youth fighting for revolutionary integration: for black liberation through socialist revolution!" ■

national chairman Gus Hall in the same breath calls for "defeat of the ultra-right in the 1998 elections" (*People's Weekly World*, 8 August). Such "fight the right" rhetoric has always been a code phrase for support to the Democrats as a "lesser evil." In fact, the CP has been steeped in class collaboration for more than 60 years. The CP played an instrumental role in channeling the burgeoning radicalization of the 1930s away from the fight for an independent political expression of the labor movement—a workers party—and into the arms of the anti-labor "New Deal coalition."

Despite its "fight for communism" rhetoric, the Progressive Labor Party (PL) embraces the CP's history of Stalinist treachery. PL alternates between "revolutionary" bombast and a search for a "center-left coalition" with "progressive" aspirants to the trade-union bureaucracy. At the same time, PL's brand of idiot ultraleftism leads them to dismiss the unions as institutions no different than the church and the army. Last year, PL went so far as to denounce the UPS strike as a feud between different wings of the ruling class and vituperated that the strike's success was a victory for fascism!

And while the ISO mildly criticizes the UAW tops for its "jointness" programs with management at the shopfloor level, it covers for the bureaucracy's broader class-collaborationist program. At bottom, the social-democratic ISO shares the UAW bureaucracy's view of the supposed "neutrality" of the capitalist state. Thus for years the ISO has trumpeted the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, which

orchestrated the government takeover of that union in the late 1980s. For its part, *Socialist Action* (August 1998) criticizes Solidarity House for having "full confidence in corporate America's legal system," yet counterposes as a "militant" alternative former Teamsters president Ron Carey, who was installed in office by the Justice Department. Now the same capitalist state which oversaw Carey's installation has not only ousted him from the presidency but decreed his expulsion from the union. This is the bitter fruit of inviting the class enemy into the labor movement.

David North's Socialist Equality Party (SEP) postures as opponents of the "class collaboration and nationalism" of the UAW bureaucracy in a 16 June statement on the GM strike. But this is a complete fraud. Behind the Northites' "leftist" stance lies their very right-wing attack on the unions, which they have written off as not being any kind of working-class organization. During the 1994-95 UAW Caterpillar strike, this outfit *defended scabbing* by arguing that the union members who crossed the picket lines were not "anti-union" but "simply recognized the futility of the policies being pursued by the UAW" (*International Workers Bulletin*, 18 December 1995). Echoing the bourgeoisie's hatred for the existing mass organizations of the working class, the SEP's call for "an independent political party of the working class" is a cynical sham.

In contrast, the Spartacist League fights to build a workers party whose aim is to make the working class conscious of its historic interest in fighting to abolish

this entire racist profit system. A workers party will be built not in *counterposition* to the trade unions, which are organizations for economic defense of the working class, but in the crucible of big class battles, which will result in the fight for a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions. The U.S. is the only industrial country in the world where the workers have not historically had their own independent political party reflecting in some way the conflicting interests of capital and labor, not even one akin to the reformist West European social-democratic parties.

This backward political consciousness is in large measure the result of the calculated use of racism—as, earlier, religion—to divide the working class. Rooted in the brutal segregation of the black masses at the bottom of American society, the color bar has served to obscure and reinforce the fundamental division in capitalism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The fight for labor's emancipation from capitalist wage slavery can only go forward if the multiracial proletariat takes up the struggle against racial oppression. At the same time, black workers are a strategic component of the working class. Combined with their double oppression as workers and blacks in racist American society, this will impel them to play a leading role in the socialist revolution in this country.

The history of the American working class is one of convulsive class battles. And if the proletariat is to defend its livelihood and organizations in the face of the bourgeoisie's rapacity, there will

be a series of such battles ahead. But union struggles alone are not enough to prevail against capital. In his 1865 pamphlet, *Wages, Price and Profit*, Karl Marx defended the need for trade-union struggle against the constant attacks of the capitalists, whose general tendency is "to push the *value of labour* more or less to its *minimum limit*." At the same time, he warned:

"The working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these everyday struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerrilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative motto*, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!' they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary watchword*, 'Abolition of the wages system!'"

The present labor officialdom does not even call for a fair day's wage. In the course of the class battles to come, a new leadership of the labor movement must come forward based on a program of militant struggle against the entire capitalist system. Out of such struggles will be forged a revolutionary workers party based on the Marxist understanding that the capitalist profit system must be rooted out and replaced by workers rule. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## In Wake of Solid Strike For a Class-Struggle Fight Against GM Job Slashing!

The 54-day walkout at two General Motors plants in Flint, Michigan was the longest and most effective strike against the automaker since 1970. As 9,200 members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Locals 651 and 659 took to the picket lines, production ground to a standstill at 27 of GM's 29 assembly facilities in North America. This was the costliest walkout ever not only for GM, the world's largest corporation, but for the American bourgeoisie as a whole. By the time the strike ended, GM had lost some \$12 billion in sales and \$3 billion in profits.

The ruling class was taken aback by this demonstration of labor power. In the midst of the GM strike, the *New York Times* (19 July) commented: "That labor can still muster so much muscle comes in a way as a surprise after decades during which the percentage of American workers belonging to unions has plunged and unions have been on the defensive because of downsizing, deregulation and competition from imports." The bourgeoisie had come to believe that it would face no challenge as it gorged itself on fabulous profits derived from ratcheting up the rate of exploitation, busting unions, slashing jobs and wages and destroying even the most minimal social programs for the impoverished and unemployed, particularly the ghetto masses. After trumpeting the supposed "death of communism" and even the end of class struggle, the American ruling class was caught off guard last year by the widespread popularity and solidity of the Teamsters

### No to Class Collaboration—Break with the Democrats!



Hugh Grannum  
UAW president Stephen Yokich, left, with GM chief John Smith. Workers' determination to fight job cuts, seen in Flint strike, is undermined by UAW tops' push for "partnership" with capitalists.



strike against UPS, which broke the nearly 20-year pattern of crushing defeats for labor.

By the mere fact of withdrawing their labor power, GM workers demonstrated the potential power of the working class that lies in its numbers, organization and discipline, and most decisively in the fact that it is labor that makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society. But the Flint strike also showed how the power of labor is sapped and undermined by the labor bureaucracy, which preaches an identity of interests between the workers

and their capitalist exploiters. When GM lodged a court suit against the union—the first since the 1937 Flint sitdown strikes which laid the basis for the UAW—the Solidarity House bureaucracy under UAW president Stephen Yokich voluntarily acquiesced to government arbitration. With the company throwing down the gauntlet, the last thing the UAW tops had in mind was waging a hard class battle to defeat GM. And when it looked like the arbitrator would, not surprisingly, rule against the union and outlaw the strike, the UAW tops panicked and

pushed through a settlement.

In the upshot, the strike ended effectively in a standoff. GM had intended to inflict a crippling blow on the union. That it failed was evident in a complaint by a spokesman for Wall Street's Paine Webber that "the market expected GM to deliver a knockout blow, and they didn't." The company agreed to keep open, at least until January 2000, the stamping plant in Flint and two plants in Dayton, Ohio which had been threatened with closure and renewed its promise to invest \$180

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## Racist Attack on "Million Youth March"

# Giuliani's Cops Lay Siege to Harlem

After a federal court rebuffed his attempts to ban the "Million Youth March," on September 5 New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani laid siege to black Harlem with an occupation army of thousands of cops. Police poured into the area on horseback and motorcycles, as other cops lined the rooftops. Subway stops were closed throughout the neighborhood and barricades blocked virtually every street leading to the rally site, while police helicopters hovered overhead. Describing the scene, an 81-year-old Harlem resident said, "It's like a damn slave plantation." Blocked even from getting to their jobs or homes, many called it the "Million Cop March."

Giuliani was itching for a bloodbath—and he almost got it. At 3:55 p.m., five minutes before the court-ordered end of the rally, dozens of riot-clad cops assembled in back of the stage at 118th Street. Five minutes later, a police helicopter buzzed the crowd, followed by a second

chopper a minute later. Following this cue, the cops stormed the stage. As they disconnected the sound system and pushed people from the stage, the cops were pelted with garbage and bottles. A phalanx of cops on motorcycles and horseback waited to charge. Dean Meminger, a black correspondent for New York's NY 1 television news channel who was visibly terrified, reported to viewers: "it almost looked like a police state."

Following the calculated cop rampage he had masterminded, Giuliani ranted contemptuously: "They had their free-speech right. When it got to 4:01 p.m., it was over." From the outset, the racist mayor had seized upon the call for a "Million Youth March" by anti-Semitic demagogue Khallid Muhammad as an opportunity to further trample on and terrorize the city's black population. "They treat us like we're all criminals," said one black man who was turned back by

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Funches/NY Post  
Cops attack platform at "Million Youth March" as part of racist occupation of Harlem.