South Africa Torn by AIDS Crisis

The catastrophic impact of the AIDS pandemic ravaging South Africa was highlighted in early December when former African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela joined with F.W. de Klerk, the last president of the former apartheid regime, in launching a national "HIV/AIDS Day" at a Johannesburg cathedral service on December 5. With grotesque cynicism, De Klerk, who presided over a reign of terror in the 1980s, brought together two former regime leaders to launch a national health campaign to fight HIV/AIDS. It exposed the most horrendous aspects of capitalism in South Africa.

De Klerk, the last president of the former apartheid regime, whose National Party supported the Nazis in World War II, compared the AIDS scourge to the Nazi Holocaust of the Jews. For his part, Mandela appealed for compassion for the four million South Africans infected with HIV, implicitly rebuking his successor and current ANC president, Thabo Mbeki. Mbeki’s anti-scientific diatribes have encouraged bigoted attacks on people with AIDS and provoked a furor at an international conference on AIDS that met in Durban last July.

Mbeki’s ignorant statements challenging scientific evidence that HIV causes AIDS are aimed at deflecting criticism over the refusal of his government—which includes the Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)—to allocate medical resources to combat the epidemic. Seizing on this, the National Party’s racist successor, the Democratic Alliance, campaigned for December 5 nationwide municipal elections on a promise of distributing anti-HIV drugs to pregnant women and providing a furor at an international conference on AIDS that met in Durban last July.

Mbeki’s statements cast doubt on the link between HIV and AIDS and on the need for treatment. The newly elected ANC administration opened the way for massive public health programmes under the direction of a workers state.

The gains of the Russian Revolution could only hint at what a worldwide planned economy could do. The ABCs of Communism, which some of you have read, is a book used by the Bolsheviks to train workers in literacy and the principles of communism, significantly devotes its final chapter to public health care. It makes the point that in the new dictatorship of the proletariat immediately implemented, hygienic techniques for public health, medical training and training for health care workers to control cholera and typhus. They rationalised all private hospitals, opening them to the masses for the first time.

The Bolshevik Party’s programme was committed to wiping out age-old oppression and elevating Russia out of poverty and ignorance. The Bolsheviks understood that ultimate success required the expansion of the revolution to the petty bourgeois and advanced, industrialised capitalist countries. You can’t fight cholera if you don’t have the material resources to build river dams and water purification plants. The International Communist League fights for new October Revolutions in all countries. We fight for the black centre of capitalism. We work for the unity of the black majority and the working class to overthrow capitalism and for a workers state.

The gains of the Russian Revolution and the lessons of the aborted Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, Leon Trotsky and the International Left Opposition taught that the only way forward for the oppressed masses of the economically backward and highland areas was the proletariat seizing power at the head of all the oppressed, linked through its revolutionary leadership to the proletariat in the advanced countries. This is the programme of permanent revolution. National liberation is the basic democratic right. The results achieved in the advanced countries in the last century are only realisable through the dictatorship of the proletariat and international socialist revolution.

The AIDS Epidemic and Capitalist Oppression

We are historical materialists and scientific socialists. Class struggle is the motor
Oakland — A furor against leftist protesters has been whipped up in the wake of a November 28 Berkeley demonstration against former Israeli prime minister Netanyahu. Some pro-
testors showed up when Netanyahu was scheduled to deliver a lecture at a theater near the UC Berkeley campus. Netanyahu's cancellation—announced at the time the event was scheduled to start—became the signal for a storm of accusations that the demonstrators had suppressed Netanyahu's "free speech." The same line was taken up by the Berkeley mayor and all the media, from the UC Berkeley Daily Californian to the Oakland Tribune and the UC Berkeley campus newspaper, where 12 December editorial typically declared that "about 200 demonstrators blocked" Netanyahu "from speaking at the Berkeley Community Theater."

The demonstration, called by groups as the International Action Center (associated with Workers World Party), the Middle East Children's Alliance and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination League Community was scheduled to deliver a lecture at a theater near the UC Berkeley campus. Netanyahu's cancellation—announced at the time the event was scheduled to start—became the signal for a storm of accusations that the demonstrators had suppressed Netanyahu's "free speech." The same line was taken up by the Berkeley mayor and all the media, from the UC Berkeley Daily Californian to the Oakland Tribune and the UC Berkeley campus newspaper, where 12 December editorial typically declared that "about 200 demonstrators blocked" Netanyahu "from speaking at the Berkeley Community Theater."

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1. "Israelian Repression Made in the USA" and "Defend the Palestinians." The small but vocal Spartacist contingent near the main rally was pointed for a time the only organized presence, attracting attention from demonstrators with our bullhoming and chants, some of which were joined in by other protesters.

The charge that these largely middle-aged, peaceable (and largely pacifist) protesters prevented some one thousand ticket-holders, protected by upwards of a hundred well-armed Berkeley cops, from attending the lecture is clearly absurd. This ridiculous quality was captured by the emonations of the Berkeley Conserva-
tive Foundation (the right-wing junior McCarthyites on campuses), whose wag, the California Patriot, raved breathlessly (and inaccurately): "Then without warn-
ing, three women, who according to the Daily Cal wanted to make sure Netanyahu didn't speak, broke the police bar-
rays (yellow plastic tape) and stormed the theater."

One of these three interpiden women, Barbara Lubin of the Middle East Children's Alliance, noted in an "Open Forum" piece in the Chronicle (18 December): "We demonstrators did not intend to, nor expect to, prevent the speech .... We hoped to make Netanyahu feel unwell." She concluded that "what is really going on is not an effort to preserve free speech but an attempt to stifle the free speech of anyone who would criticize Israel."

The orchestrated outré of sinkers of a set-up. There is no reason to believe Netan-
yahu ever intended to show up for the Berkeley talk. In fact, as various news reports admitted, it was Netanyahu who chose to cancel his appearance without ever arriving at the venue. That deci-
sion—and his subsequent cancellation of two other Bay Area appearances in San Mateo and Marin—undeniably had to do with Netanyahu's political ambitions in the Israeli elections, which were announced the same day as the scheduled

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CHICAGO—Over 500 people turned out in Skokie, Illinois on December 16 to protest a provocation by 20 Klansmen, many wearing hoods and robes to protest a provocation by Cook County Courthouse. Defying the Klan and the mobilization of over 200 cops and skins, over 1,000 followers were pelted with rocks by one of the racist skinheads who tried to break into the anti-Klan demonstration—hence it was characterized as an attack by the police.

“We were scared for their safety.” Then the cops rampaged against the protesters. In all, more than 15 were arrested. George Jean Fritz and Corey Lovell were held for several days on a $5,000 bond on bogus felony “mob action” charges. In a protest letter to Cook County State’s Attorney Richard Devine, the Partisan Defense Committee demanded: Hands off the anti-Klan protesters! Drop all the charges!

The KKK cynically claimed that they were rallying in “solidarity with the Pal­estinians.” A December 15 statement issued by the Arab American Action Net­work eloquently denounced the Klan’s attempt “to portray Judaism as the com­mon enemy of the Zionists and the white supremacists,” declaring: “We Pal­estinians are offended and outraged at the way the Islamists are allowing the KKK’s racist demagogy. We condemn the KKK’s ideology of white supremacy and its history of brutal violence against religious and ethnic minorities in the United States. We condemn the KKK’s alliance with neo-Nazi groups in Europe that have historically terrorized Arab and Muslim immigrants.” At the protest, Pal­estinians stood shoulder to shoulder with young Jewish immigrants from Russia against the Klan. Demonstrators joined in shouting down a racist from the Jewish Defense League, which is tied to anti­Arab Israeli fascists, when he tried to heckle an Arab speaker.

Fascists had not dared rally in this heavily Jewish Chicago suburb since 1977, when a Nazified Klan attempt to march in the face of a promised outpour­ing of thousands of Holocaust survivors and others. The attempt was made a “きっかけ” to recruit to and incite racist terror. Ten­nessee Grand Dragon William Robert Moore was even loading a .380 semi­automatic pistol on his way to the Skokie rally and was arrested. A black woman left at the anti­fascist protest was attacked by skinheads and needed hospi­tal treatment.

Underscoring the deadly threat posed by the KKK/Nazi killers was the murder of a black Chicago worker, Henry Smith, who killed two people and wounded at least three others. On December 16, Spartan­ist League supporters carried signs reading “We Will Not Forget!” beneath a photo of Ricky Byrdsong, the black Northwestern University basketball coach shot dead by Smith on a Skokie street.

Sanitation workers in Skokie’s Public Works department, including a couple of the Klan’s lynchers protected by wall of cops at Cook County Courthouse in Skokie, December 16.

Black History and the Class Struggle No. 11 (August 1969)

Contents include:

• The 1908 Race Riot in Springfield
• Anti-Racist Protests Continue In Skokie
• Build an Interracial Revolutionary Leadership!
• A Proletarian–Centered Strategy to Fight Fascism
• Farrakhan Is Bad News for Black People
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• Black/Poor Will Starve
• Clinton Whips Up Hysteria Over “WMD Weapons”

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STOP THE KLAN! FOR A WORKERS AMERICA! Black History and the Class Struggle

Hands off the anti-Klan protest in Skokie, December 16.

Black/Chicago Sun-Times

Spartacist contingent at the Jewish protest warned: “Police Pens Are a Trap!” PL and other false leftists went through metal detectors into area penned off by cops.

Chicagoans—Over 500 people turned out in Skokie, Illinois on December 16 to protest a provocation by 20 Klansmen, many wearing hoods and robes to protest a provocation by Cook County Courthouse. Defying the city’s fomers, urge_to “ignore the Klan” and the mobilization of over 200 cops and skins’ leaders—including horne­back patrols, canines and SWAT teams—protesters forced the KKK lynchers to pack up early. Wisconsin “Grand Dragon” Michael McQueeny and his followers were pelted with snowballs and one of the racist skinheads who tried to break into the anti-Klan demonstration was acquitted with the pavement.

The Klansmen were escorted away by the cops, a police spokesman explaining, “We were responsible for their safety.” Then the cops rampaged against the protesters. In all, more than 15 were arrested. George Jean Fritz and Corey Lovell were held for several days on a $5,000 bond on bogus felony “mob action” charges. In a protest letter to Cook County State’s Attorney Richard Devine, the Partisan Defense Committee demanded: Hands off the anti-Klan protesters! Drop all the charges!

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Sanitation workers in Skokie’s Public Works department, including a couple of the Klan’s lynchers were pelted with rocks in the locker room, where they had been taken by the cops to don their robes. On Monday morning, 40 workers, (who are not unionized) refused to start work until the building had been swept for bombs. It is an outrage that the fasc­ist murderers were able to rear their heads anywhere near Chicago, a labor, black and immigrant city. When Nazis threatened Chicago’s Gay Pride Day march in 1982, the SL initiated a 3,000­strong labor/black mobilization that spiked the Nazi provocation. In another such mobilization initiated by the PDC in January 1994, 500 workers—including a hard core of Chicago Amalgamated Transit Union members—braved near­arctic weather to turn out against a Klan provocation in Springfield on Martin Luther King Day, despite overt attempts by the state AFL-CIO bureaucracy to sabotage a labor turnout.

A mass mobilization of Chicago’s inte­grated trade unions, standing at the head of blacks, Latinos, Jews and all the KKK’s intended victims, would have kept Skokie’s streets clear of the racist vermin. But the pro-capitalist labor misleaders are beholden to Chicago mayor Richard Daley’s Democratic Party which was set up to defend the Klan’s “right” to recruit from the North Shore suburbs. Toeing the line, the black establishment Chicago Defender (19
United States are seething in abuse. While the airlines have profits, the workers they exploit over. Fully agree to a large pay raise just airlines in the U.S. are in the strike by the Railway Labor Act and generally throwing a monkey maximum profits. Following the big win out maintenance rules to the letter. Three Attendants (AFA) is demanding a erupting in the ers Union (TWU), and hundreds of flights in recent weeks, ing to organize into the Transport Work­

try in 1978 was a move to break the unions, driving down wages and dramati­
children. At Continental, attendants only have to get food, stamps to support their year and some earn so little that they need time and minimum wages. Some table all air in the same boat. Ground ser­vice workers and mechanics are pushed hard to get flights in and out on time—all in the name of “our profit-sharing”—and pilots and flight attendants are likewise pressured to work overtime and cut cor­ners. In all this, the airlines seem to have co-workers stigmatize and ultimately rat on “slackers” for company discipline. The bosses tout these schemes for fos­tering “labor peace” and undercutting union organizing efforts. Pointing to last summer’s overtime ban at United, Continen­
tal crews in a 15-minute company propaganda video, “We don’t have con­
tentious labor issues,” conclud­ing: “More profit-sharing for all of us.”

Yet the pro-capitalist union tops are quite proud of their record in setting up “profit-shar­ing” programs and employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs). The main selling point of an organizing brochure titled the “IAM Advantage” is: “We’ve ex­
perienced at negotiating ESOPs.” Such programs epitomize the supposed “partnership” of labor and capital reached by the trade-union bureaucracy—which means subordinating workers’ interests to the company’s bot­tom line. The labor tops have pushed one class-collaborationist scheme after another, from “profit-sharing” to no-strike pledges. In every way, they serve to tie the working class to the capitalist class enemy, all through the union tops’ support to the Democratic Party, of which they are a key component.

The labor bureaucracy is a layer which long ago separated out from the working class. In exchange for promoting “co­operation” with the employers and the capitalist government and policing the workers on their behalf, this bureaucratic layer is rewarded with privileges and perks. The truth is that the interests of the capitalists who own the means of produc­tion and the workers who have to sell their labor power to survive are diametri­
cally opposed. To unchain the power of labor, a political fight is required to oust the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats and to forge a labor leadership dedicated to class struggle against capitalism.

The 1926 Railway Labor Act is a prime illustration of the labor bureaucracy’s class-collaborationist position. A bill drafted in 1926 that year was prepared by lawyers working for the American Federation of Labor. Barred with the Patco flight attendants and one or another of the numerous craft unions in the railways, the rat barons agreed to formally recognize the unions’ right to organize while the union bureaucrats accepted the straitjacket of government control and intervention, all in the inter­ests of “class peace.” A decade later, the leadership of the newly formed ALPA succumbed to its officers for airline workers to be covered by the RLA, seeing this as a way to make the airlines recognize pilots’ union rights. Under the RLA, workers can only gain recognition under rules set and administered by the National Mediation Board, which is appointed by the U.S. president.

A national airline strike, even if it lasted but a few days, would cost U.S. corporations in practically all fields hun­dreds of millions of dollars. Precisely for that reason the labor bureaucrat immediately come up against the state. The RLA pro­hibits workers from striking when their

Airline workers throughout the United States are seething in anger after years of wage cuts, forced overtime and management abuse. While the airlines have piled up billions upon billions in profits, the workers they exploit have been two-tiered, “down­sized” and wage-gouged to the max. Now the anger is boiling over. Fully 25,000 flights at United Airlines were canceled last summer when members of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) refused to work over­time, forcing the company to agree to a large pay raise just before Labor Day and ending a chain of defeats in the industry going back to the 1981 smashing of the PATCO air traffic control­lers union. Now the five largest airlines in the U.S. are in the middle of serious labor disputes.

Effectively denied the right to strike by the Railway Labor Act (RLA), union members at the top three carriers are pressing wage demands by working to rule, refusing overtime and generally throwing a monkey wrench into the bosses’ drive to extract maximum profits. Following the big wins by the pilots, 50,000 United mechanics, ramp workers and customer service agents in the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) demanded a similar pay raise, instituting an overtime ban and carrying out maintenance rules to the letter. Three years into a ten-year contract with the company, the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) is demanding a 30 percent wage reopen­er.

At Delta, pilots are engaged in an overtime ban to win wage parity with United, a demand raised as well by pilots at American. A Delta pilot told the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) to reverse years of setbacks and win “worker ownership” at the company. The current wave of unrest in the air­line industry was sparked by the collapse of the “worker ownership” scan fossed on United workers by the leaders of ALPA and the IAM. In 1994, union leaders traded $5 billion in wage cuts and other givebacks for a share of company stock and three seats on the board of directors. Pilots and machinists took immediate pay cuts of 15 and 10 percent, respectively, with additional concessions in pension contributions and work rules. The union tops sold profit-sharing by promising that the wage cuts would be amply compensated by a future pot of gold in dividends. The illusion that the workers had a stake in increasing the bosses’ profits—and their own exploit­ation—exploded when the companies slashed profit-sharing payments by as much as one half to deal with rising fuel costs, while year-end bonuses of the CEO more than doubled.

Today, virtually every airline has a “profit-sharing” program. The message from the bosses is: You should sacrifice for the good of the company because “we” are all in the same boat. Ground ser­vice workers and mechanics are pushed hard to get flights in and out on time—all in the name of “our profit-sharing”—and pilots and flight attendants are likewise pressured to work overtime and cut cor­ners. In all this, the airlines seem to have co-workers stigmatize and ultimately rat on “slackers” for company discipline. The bosses tout these schemes for fos­tering “labor peace” and undercutting union organizing efforts. Pointing to last summer’s overtime ban at United, Continen­
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Fraud of “Worker Ownership”

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contracts expire. Instead, the National Mediation Board will "recommend" binding arbitration if a contract is not negotiated. If the board declares an impasse, the workers still cannot legally strike until their original 30-day "cooling off" period. Even then, the law allows the president to halt any walkout by creating an "emergency" national stimulant but not a settlement. Using these provisions, Clinton vetoed a 1997 strike by American Airlines pilots. After the pilots staged a sickout, Clinton submitted a new proposal that was supposed to quell the union's head as it faces a ballot with the threat of a new AAA. The RMA has also been used to keep Northwest mechanics on the job without a contract for four years.

While refusing to stop scabbing and shut down the airports during the bitter nine-week strike against Eastern Airlines in 1989, then IAM head William Winpinsinger, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, proclaimed: "We're 2000".

"The labor tops threaten the very existence of the unions they sit atop. While the IAM recently has not succeeded in bringing in 19,000 United Res­ervation and customer service agents, its members have perpetrated a spurious breakdown moves by mechanics. More than half of United's 15,000 IAM members are plow doctors. And we're the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Asso­ciation (AMFA), a craft union whose members decry the "We're pro-union, we're pro-mechanic" (Aviation Work & Space Technology, 23 Octo­ber)."

Divisions along craft lines, and between union workers and supposed craft professionals like air traffic controllers and particularly the pilots who are both service veterans and capitalists, is overwhelming white, feed into the bosses' incessant attempts to pit one sec­tion against another. The pilots' strike is a tool for breaking labor. Other labor tools help promote such divi­sions by ordering union members to cross picket lines of other striking workers. Pay scales for similar work differ widely from one company to another and one worker to another, with pervasive two-tier schemes mandating that new hires get paid far less. At TWA, it takes 20 years for flight attendants to reach top pay, and some earn half what Delta attendants earn while working more days. Equal pay for equal work! Airline work­ers need a single industrial union of all workers at all airline companies, from baggage handlers to pilots. An injury to one is an injury to all.

With different sectors often organized into different unions, airline workers are faced with a constant jurisdictional structure, allowing management to "arbitrate" worker complaints in order to discipline and fire workers. As it stands, too many such complaints often pit white pilots against black or Hispanic ramp workers. This system not only fosters division and division within the workforce but encourages the racist discrimination that is rampant in the industry. One flight supervisor at Newark Airport reportedly allows only whites to work at one gate, which he calls the "white worker" gate. Lead workers who ask for extra help are more likely to receive it than black or Hispanic leads. At San Francisco Airport, Northwest Airlines was slapped with a federal Equal Employment Opportunity lawsuit last year by a Filipino mechanic who had been driven out by a campaign of racist harassment which culminated in a noise being brought against his locker.

Profiteering and Capitalist Anarchy

It was Democrats like Ted Kennedy and then-president Jimmy Carter who unleashed the war on the airline unions with his 1974 "inovice law." Carter's trip through the mid-1980s the airlines with their big labor unions. Carter's whole-sal­ing of 12,000 PATCO strikers could have been beaten back by labor. For that, it was necessary to shut down the airports. But Winpinsinger and the rest of the AFL-CIO leadership instead called for an impotent, losing consumer boycott. Union members marched in the hundreds of thousands in Washington, D.C. and other cities, only to be told that "solidar­ity" meant "vote Democrat."

The AFL-CIO's "victory" in electing Clinton in 1992 didn't change anything. Not only has the Democratic White House kept the hand of the state on the necks of labor, it has deepened the deregulatory measures that have made air travel not just an exercise in mas­sive inconvenience but a life-threatening nightmare. Thus the administration this past summer began eliminating flight lines. Carter's and Reagan's general deregulation of the airline industry are having second thoughts, reflected in a recent Indepen­dent (4 December 2000) headline. They conclude that "a new system of regulation is required."

"Until recently the FAA pushed a plan called Land and Hold Short Operation (LAHSO), which required pilots to use intersecting runways simultaneously, stopping short to avoid collisions, adding unnecessary uncertainty and the most dan­gerous moment of a flight, the landing.

"AFL-CIO pilots made short shrift of this insanity by simply refusing to carry out LAHSO. At the same time, the FAA rou­tinely grants some 300 safety waivers a year to airlines. After the 1997 crash of TWA Flight 800, reportedly due to a gas explosion in a fuel tank, a FAA study found that most fuel tanks are danger­ously hot 30 percent of the time. The solution is simple, and employed on mil­itary aircraft: to avoid the accumulation of explosive gases by filling up the empty part of the tank with fuel or an inert (non­flammable) gas. But instead of ordering immediate corrections, the FAA recom­mended better maintenance and ... another study!"

"Airline maintenance managers con­stantly push to have defective aircraft signed off and returned to service, a prac­tice in which a substantial number of the crashes of Alaska Airlines 261 near Los Angeles last January, in which all 88 peo­ple aboard were killed, was thought to be caused by a jackscrew that had worn out because the airline had used the wrong screw. The FAA had even inspected the jackscrew within the recom­mended time limit. Alaska Air was already under federal investigation for falsifying its records to indicate that repairs had been done when they had not. One mechanic at American told Work­ers Vanguard that union members contin­ually battle with managers who want to "solve" interlocked faults by just chang­ing a part and sending a plane back into service without thorough testing. Safe, quality work is further undermined by the large carriers' increasing reliance on smaller, outside maintenance companies hiring inexperienced, underpaid mechan­ics who don't have the union protection that's needed to stand up to bosses who try to cut corners. The airlines all must organize these unorganized work­ers! Union safety committees must have the right to stop any unsafe procedures.

With the air traffic control system already stretched far beyond capacity and saddled with dangerously outdated computer equipment, there are increasing calls, spearheaded by some of the largest airlines, for privatization of the system. A New York Times (26 December 2000) headline asks: "Can Capitalism Redefine Flights and Delays at La Guardia?" In Britain, where privatization of the rail­roads has been a horror story of derail­ments and deadly accidents, even sectors of the bourgeoisie are having second thoughts, reflected in a recent Indepen­dent (4 December 2000) article titled "The "Capitalism Case for Renationalising the Railways."

While deregulation has been a disaster for those who work and have the power to refuse the solution is not some sort of scheme for re-regulation by the capitalist state. The choice of the air transport today is an example of the anarchy and decay that reigns in capitalist production in gen­eral. The airline industry is inherently international and centralized. The mas­sive waste, danger and inefficiency of the airline industry under capitalist rules is the solution to centralized economic planning, but that will only come about when the ruling class as a whole has been expunged under a workers government. ■

The treachery of its "democratic" Labor tops' refusal to shut down the airports in 1981 PATCO strike allowed union to be smashed.

trappings, which periodically allow work­ing people to choose which capitalist profit to be the boss, the state is essentially an executive committee of the bourgeoisie as a whole, whose courts, cops, courts and cops enforce the class interests of the capitalists. Writing over a century ago, Karl Marx explained in The Communist Manifesto (1848) that "At the same pace at which the progress of modern industry developed, widened, intensified the class antagonism between capital and labour, the state power as­sumed an ever more active part and became the driver of the national power of capital over land and over a part of the population organized for social enslavement, of an engine of class war.

It is necessary to shatter this engine of class despotism as a weapon over a workers' revolu­tion and the creation of a workers state that expurgates the bosses and runs industry and transport in the service of those who labor. Like a myriad of other anti­union tools, the RLA will be smashed in the course of class struggle. Down with the RLA! Break with the Dem­ocrats! No war party to fight for a workers government!

For an Industrial Union of All Airline Workers!

It took hard and bitter struggles to build the IAM, particularly in the case of the industrial unions which were an enormous step forward over the old, hideously divided craft unions. The treachery of this "democratic" labor movement threatens the very existence of the unions they sit atop. While the IAM recently has not succeeded in bringing in 19,000 United Res-
imperialist bloodsuckers could be pressured to shift their priorities and be more humane, then all will be solved. But the drive to war and plunder—to acquire new markets, raw materials and cheap labour with the aim of amassing profits—is inherent to the capitalist system in this epoch. The AIDS pandemic also exposes the lie of "nation-building" rhetoric; it obviously cannot be solved within the borders of one country. The self-interests of the petty bourgeoisie and the interests of the capitalist class work in concert to further enrich the imperialists. And the imperialists and the bourgeois-nationalist ANC are happy to maintain apartheid to continue to enrich themselves.

Only world socialist revolution can tear the means of production out of the hands of the great imperialists and those of the petty bourgeoisie. It can usher in an egalitarian socialist society. Then all the positive gains of modern science and technology can be put at the service of humanity. Only the socialist revolution can solve the AIDS pandemic in Africa, as in the rest of the world. And this solution will be based on the eradication of all forms of oppression, including the oppression and exploitation of black labour, extraction of huge profits for the imperialists and the subjugation of the masses of Africa under a capitalist system.

Let us give a few facts up front about HIV and AIDS. You cannot get AIDS from mosquitoes or through casual contact with infected persons. The only known mode of transmission is sexual intercourse, through blood transfusions, needle sticks and the sharing of hypodermic needles, or from mother to child at birth or through breast milk. Because blood transmission is most efficient, sexually transmitted diseases that cause open sores on the penis or vaginal or anal passages increase the possibility of transmission, as do sexual practices that might tear the anal or vaginal walls. One of the reasons that AIDS has spread so fast in southern Africa is that untreated sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis, gonorrhea and pelvic infections are widespread. People may have the virus for many years without any symptoms. But eventually the virus will suppress the person's natural defences against infections, called the immune system, and the person will develop AIDS. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome—that is, they will develop life-threatening illnesses that almost never appear in healthy people with normal immune systems. In Africa, where people are already weakened by many untreated diseases and malnutrition, the virus devours what's left of the already weakened immune system more rapidly.

HIV/AIDS is still spreading exponentially worldwide. In Africa, it was initially spread by those who travel a lot for a living such as airline workers, truck drivers, seamen and soldiers and spread rapidly among professionals such as teachers and doctors. Now, infection has become rampant especially in poorer areas and population groups. Less developed countries account for 95 percent of known cases and 70 percent are in Africa. Twenty-four million HIV-infected people live in southern Africa. Predictions of rates of increase must be continually revised upwards. The report of the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS that came out in June predicted that half of current 15-year-olds in South Africa and Zimbabwe may die of AIDS. By 2005, up to two-thirds of youth will die of AIDS. The rising number of orphans throughout southern Africa means there are a growing number of households headed by children. It's difficult to get accurate statistical surveys, which are basic to public health care and would inform development of a cure, because people avoid getting tested for fear of persecution. The vast majority of youth do not even know they are HIV-positive. Also some say, "Why get tested? There is no treatment available."

More than with any other disease in modern history, every step in the search to control and cure HIV/AIDS has been hampered by the profit-driven capitalist system and all the backward, repressive, racist and anti-woman ideological crap that comes with it. This epidemic has arisen and is spreading in the epoch of capitalism's decline. The optimism of the scientific revolution that accompanied the rise of the capitalist class has long been on the decline, exemplified by the resurgence of religious fundamentalism, superstitions, prejudices and obscurantism. Even in the most advanced industrial countries, people with AIDS continue to be viciously stereotyped, ostracized and stigmatized. These prejudices are compounded many times over in Africa and other countries of the so-called "Third World" like India. And because it is a sexually transmitted disease, the special oppression that women suffer under capitalism creates a major obstacle to a cure. All the guilt, shame and repressive taboos about sex that are designed to subjugate women via bourgeois morality also play a major role in sabotaging a scientific response to AIDS.
But they are most worried that the South
cerned that the disease is beginning to
good always comes of bad—wiping out
within a couple of
African government may choose to spend
money on health care for people who, as
are sent to war-tom African countries to
the U.S. bourgeoisie's concern for health
and
are continually
coming to power because they counted
health care workers who deny women abortions
and blaming them for their illness. In
Health care workers who reflect the anti-
socialists celebrated Mandela and the ANC
rights in the constitution, but the ANC
counted on Mandela's moral authority to sup-
press the just aspirations of the horribly
masses. Therefore the ANC must lie and rationalise
their attacks on the working class in service
to their capitalist masters.

The neo-apartheid capitalist regime
administered by the ANC, COSATU and the
SACP—what we call a "nationalist popular front"—speeds up privatisations and
retracements and is expanding the
repressive state apparatus. From their
golf clubs and African fashion shows, the
government bureaucrats and new entre-
prenuers—substractors for the capitalist-
Executive reports that the days of
"toy-i-loying" [the defiant dance of
women] have stopped coming to the clinics
with their male partners, the fact that the
vaginal openings are
and mental damage that accompanies
such mutilation, these women are much
more susceptible to HIV infection.

The ANC health minister, Thabane-
di Msimang, has pronounced that it is
unwise to spend money on AZT for HIV-
positive pregnant women (which has
proved to protect the fetus against infec-
tion) because these women will only
create more orphans as a burden on the
state. The message here to AIDS sufferers
is as bad today as a century ago; 10,000
mainly young men and women die every
year from TB, which continues to be stig-
nalised as a disease of "fast living, hard
drinking and smoking."

Apartheid Crimes and
Conspiracy Theories

The first recorded cases of AIDS in
South Africa were white homosexuals in
the 1950s. Considering there were no medical records kept for blacks, coloureds and Indians, it is impossible to trace cases of AIDS in this country. The apartheid regime's campa-
igns against AIDS in the '80s included putting stickers on taxis from Jo'burg to
Soweto that said, "You can't get AIDS from swimming pools"—not exactly a
relevant issue for the apartheid townships. The campaign used a drawing of a
supposedly "neutral coloured" yellow head. But for black women whose main
occupation was as domestic servants, the yellow head lacked the rubber wash-
glove belonging to the hated "maidam." During the early '90s, the Nationalist Party put up posters in Soweto with crude depictions of black men, women and children, and ANC leaders were bringing AIDS into South Africa.

AIDS conspiracy theories are widely held here. There is an understandable mistrust of so-called "Western medicine" and white doctors who historically abused, neglected, poisoned and experimented
on black people, and not just here. In the U.S., in the infamous Tuskegee experi-
ments (400 Southern black men with syphilis were left untreated for over 30
continued on page 8

Emergency room in Soweto's Baragwanath Hospital, 1991. Today this
decaying hospital serves 3.5 million black people.

The ANC was recently on its knees eulogising the filthy rich Randlord Harry
Oppenheimer, one of the latter-day archi-
tects of the brutal repressive capitalist system. A short time later, South Africa became the last country in the world to switch to the modern injected tuberculosis vac-
cine. Oppenheimer probably knew a lot
about TB since it flourished in his con-
gestured hostels for migrant workers. Now
new tuberculosis is on the rise again because it can thrive in the weakened immune systems of people with AIDS. The mine and factory owners who condemned black workers to squalid, congested 
housing used to complain that blacks were biologically susceptible to TB; therefore, TB was "treated" by sending sick, used-
up black workers to the rural bantustans to die. The TB death rate in South Africa is as bad today as a century ago; 10,000
mainly young men and women die every
year from TB, which continues to be stig-
nalised as a disease of "fast living, hard
drinking and smoking."
years and allowed to die to see its effect on their mortality rate—and on the children. Under apartheid, young women in Botswana were sterilised and given injections of the contraceptive Depo-Provera, at that time banned in the U.S. and other countries. South African women were forced into sterilisation, and their children were forcibly taken from them. Meanwhile, Afrikaner women were told to "make Babies, not Moho." The apartheid regime feared that a large population would overwhelm the white minority, so it used the so-called "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" to ensure that women and children would not reproduce.

Union Tops, Fake Lefts Front for ANC
In South Africa, health care in rural areas is often a container car or a van that arrives at a hospital a couple of times a year. When a woman speaks, there is a cholera outbreak in KwaZulu-Natal not far from Durban, which has been out of control for two months. Over 20 people have died so far; more than 2,000 people have been hospitalised. Every day there are new reports, and many more go unreported because people have not gone to clinics for treatment. Cholera is an example of a completely understood disease that is totally preventable and treatable, but it has not been overcome by people's efforts.

Unemployment is at 50 percent or higher, and latest reports are that the gap between wealthy and poor is increasing. It's election time, so Mbeki has been double-talking about providing some token amount of free electricity, while always calling to get rid of the so-called freeloaders. This is happening while fuel wood is diminishing. Rural labourers are still paid in kind—for black and coloured workers in the Western Cape's money.

ANC government fired 6,000 nurses after 1995 wildcat strike. Strikers carry signs reading "Away with Mandela," denounced ANC leader as "driver of gravy train" for aspiring black capitalists.

South Africa... (continued from page 7)

ANC government fired 6,000 nurses after 1995 wildcat strike. Strikers carry signs reading "Away with Mandela," denounced ANC leader as "driver of gravy train" for aspiring black capitalists.

The workers in power would try him and many other apartheid murderers for their crimes.

With all the stigmas attached to AIDS, mothers are afraid to admit they are HIV positive. How about everybody else truckers, prostitutes, miners? Do they deserve it? How about the rich and powerful, the white population lives in a much more expensive black nurse had, she was always under the direction of white nurses, often young women who were incompetently trained in backwater Calvinist Dutch Reformed pietist areas. The police were turned on them in Soweto and Durban.

Back when the apartheid government decided to forcibly move the first black nurses from the all-black Baragwanath Hospital because of a supposed "shortage of nurses," the black nurses protested because the white hospital was at 50 percent capacity and Bara was over 100 percent. In 1985, hospital workers at Baragwanath went out on strike. Student nurses were assaulted by security guards, 700

HIV/AIDS drugs so far. As soon as we have a cure, we will be able to conquer the disease. Meanwhile, those already infected continue to suffer miserable deaths. The fake left—from the International Socialist Movement and Keep Left (a group buried inside the SACPF linked to the U.S. International Socialist Organisation) to WITVL [Workers International Vanguard League] and WOSA [Workers Organisation for Socialist Action]—also echo the moralism, and deflect all criticism away from the nationalists by appealing to the multinational drug companies and the World Bank. At the 26 September protests here in Joburg in conjunction with the protests in Prague at the IMF/World Bank meeting, the fake left channelled the anger of the protesters into begging the imperialists to "cancel the debt."

Militant South African workers, like the workers at the Volkswagen plant in Uitenhage, are looking for an alternative to the class-collaborationist national popular front. However, the South African proletariat cannot go forward on a narrow trade-union programme which accepts capitalism. The proletariat must take up the fight for permanent revolution by building a Leninist vanguard party, based on the most advanced layers, that will be a tribune of all the people, that will defend the Gugu Dlamini and all the oppressed.

Free, Quality Health Care for All
Under the ANC regime, hospitals have been closed in the name of reducing duplicate services segregated under apartheid. General Hospital outside Johannesburg was shut down. In Johannesburg, Hillbrow Hospital stands empty for years while the AIDS epidemic grows among the destitute immigrant population of the area and patients are turned away three times from Joburg Hospital and outside Chris Hani Bara admitting area waiting for beds. Retrenchments and privatisation is causing ward closings and cutbacks. The 26-year-old singer and star of the widely acclaimed movie Sarafina, Wendy Mseleku, recently died after being turned away three times from public hospitals for lack of beds. In large parts of rural areas, where health care is in the hands of nurses, many of these nurses are the same young women who are being devastated by the disease.

Nurses and health care workers were among the first targets of the ANC's anti-working-class program. In 1996, the Mandela government was to decree free health care for all children under the age of six at local clinics and hospitals. As we wrote at the time, that was a cynical lie. No additional funds were allocated to hire more nurses and other health care workers. There was no equipment or medicines. When nurses went on strike, the SACPF/COSATU bureaucrats called the nurses' action "counterrevolutionary." Isolated by COSATU, the strike eventually ended, and 6,000 nurses were dismissed by the provincial government of the Eastern Cape, headed at that time by Raymond Mphola of the SACPF.

Black nurses and student nurses have been in the forefront of protests for decent health care for decades. Health care was totally segregated under apartheid—white hospitals were built in urban areas, and no hospitals were built in the rural areas where the majority of the black population lives. It is true that much experience a black nurse had, she was always under the direction of white nurses, often young women who were incompetently trained in backwater Calvinist Dutch Reformed pietist schools. In the 1950s, black nurses were at the centre of protests against carrying passbooks, since they were almost the only black working women in urban areas. The police were turned on them in Soweto and Durban.
Today Chris Hani Bara services a population of 3.5 million blacks. The hospital is threatened with being replaced by non-union contract labour, and some have been arrested and are in custody. He said that on average, two-third of the people coming into the Casualty Unit have symptoms of full-blown AIDS. Many come in with ritual cuts on their bodies administered by inyanga and sangomas (traditional healers). Doctors must treat people who are suffering from self-induced vomiting caused by herbs and from repeated vomiting. They are the only casual patients.

Anti-retroviral drugs have extended the lives of those who can afford them, mainly in the advanced capitalist countries. The pharmaceutical companies make more profits on chronic illnesses like diabetes or AIDS which require a continual variety of medications and procedures and have no cure, so they have a marketing policy of pumping out copy-cat anti-retroviral drugs rather than engaging in long-term genuine research with high returns. Now, most countries have been tricked because basic research for vaccines just does not turn a fast buck. Profits have driven the government to take limited handouts of drugs from different charitable sources.

Sign in Kenya. Supernaturalists discourage people with AIDS from seeking treatment while leading to horrific attacks on HIV-positive women as witches.

AIDS. They are the only “health care” many people ever see. People are poisoned, murdered and stripped by these “healers,” who encourage the revival of witchcraft, beliefs which have caused most killings of old rural women. In fact, to be a woman and old is suspect in conditions where life is normally cut short by violence and “inexplicable” deaths from preventable diseases. The Gauteng Health Department funds an Education for the Traditional Healers Organisation. Since bloodletting through razor cuts to communicate with ancestors is a common care for witchcraft, the ANC “educates” these healers to use different razors for each client. Democratic South Africa, through down-town Johannesburg feature banners reading, “One Man, One Razor.” Beside their role in curbing ignorance, these traditional healers are part of the repressive political structure that runs from the church to the Sangoma’s straight up to CONTRELESA, the House ofTraditional Leaders, which is officially part of the bourgeois state.

These bastions of reaction, former apartheid bantustan collaborators, are symmetrical remnants of the bourgeois society. Throughout southern Africa, they fight tooth and nail to deny women abor-tion and property ownership. They are courted by the ANC just as they were courted by the original colonial bourgeois state. The apartheid apparatus of much of KwaZulu-Natal, the epicenter of the epidemic in South Africa, and many parts of the most impoverished Eastern Cape. bourgeois-nationalist ideology has always relegated women to being baby-makers. The capitalist men are the enemies of women’s liberation.

We fight for women’s liberation through socialisation, beginning of class society thousands of years ago, the institution of the family has been the fundamental source of oppression. The capitalist men are the enemies of women’s liberation.

In the Cape, bourgeois-nationalist ideology has always relegated women to being baby-makers. The capitalist men are the enemies of women’s liberation.

We fight for women’s liberation through socialisation, beginning of class society thousands of...
South Africa...

(continued from page 9)

had to fight their way into the political organisations. Tseko Simon Nkoli, a young gay COAS [Congress of South African Students] and ANC activist, was arrested in 1984 for speaking out in defence of the massive stay away strikes that fall. He was kept in detention for 16 months and then brought to trial as part of the world-famous Delmas treason trial which started in 1985, along with Mosiuoa Patrick “Terror” Lekota and Topo Molefe [a communist minister of defence and premier of North West Province]. He had to argue against the anti-gay bigots of the ANC who wanted to throw him out of the case. On 30 November 1991, Simon Nkoli died of AIDS.

In at least 30 African countries it is illegal for a man to have sex with another man. In South Africa, the constitution, on paper, opposes discrimination based on sexual orientation. However, when Mbeki launched his so-called research panel, he motivated questioning the connection of HIV and AIDS by saying, “Are you aware, whereas in the West, HIV and AIDS is said to be largely homosexually transmitted, in Africa, including our country, it is transmitted heterosexually?” So instead of scientific investigation and understanding, there is vilification and prejudice. HIV/AIDS is not a “homosexualization” or a “heterosexual disease.” HIV is a virus. Mugabe of Zimbabwe has called homosexuals as “decadent” and “worse than beasts.” Until 1989 in Zimbabwe, putting AIDS as cause of death on a death certificate is a criminal offense. The heads of doctors in Zambia, Namibia, Kenya and Swaziland have all made public their contempt for homosexuals, citing both “African traditions” and “biblical teachings.” This

Profilers...

(continued from page 12)

drug trade, and they’re not run by West Indian immigrants!

Today, Jackson, Sharpton & Co. decried the war on drugs as a war on the black middle-class, industrial complex. What has tripled the prison population in the last 20 years to exceed two million men and women—is no more than 60 percent of them black or Hispanic—is the racist “war on drugs.” Most people are caught in the drug offenses in the U.S. than the total prison population of all of West Europe. When that war was launched in the 1980s, the black Democrats weren’t merely its foot soldiers but its propagandists and recruiting sergeants. Under the Reagan and Bush administrations, prominent Democrats like Harlem Congressman Charles Rangel baited the Democrats for losing the war on drugs. Jackson cynically played down the KKTK terror, proclaiming in 1996, “Ropes never killed as many of our young people as the numbers of drugs.” Sharpton’s fabulous anti-drug vigilante gangs in New York City ghettoes are auxiliaries to the racist cops.

The SL calls for an end to laws against sexual relations, reiterating the demands an affirmation of its right to be gay. We fight to forge a program for police reform, to retrieve the authority of the racist forces of capitalist repression. On the eve of the “Redeem the Dream Rally,” Sharpton met with Janet Reno to demand government appoint an “overseer” of the NOPD and that it voids funds from police departments which practice “racial profiling.” Of course, this would mean that not a single police department would be left in the country. What Sharpton is really preaching is the liberal lie that it’s all a matter of cleaning out a few bad apples from the police force. On October 31, a New Jersey superior court judge tossed out the indictments against 43 police involved in the 1998 Turnpike shooting. Eight months earlier, an Albany court acquitted Diangelo’s assailant. In the eyes of the capitalist ruling class, these racist killers committed no crime: they were doing exactly what they hired, trained and paid to do. There will be no end to police brutality short of the destruction of the system capitalist oppression, the state, in which the cops “serve and protect” as armed guard dogs. We fight to forge the all-racial and all-class party necessary to lead the working class to power, smashing the capitalist state and redrawing the map of the world. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution!
oppressed Kurdish people, but also of Türkische Arbeitsfront in Berlin. The imperialist lies are exposed by the prisoners in the Bayrollergrund prison building. The Turkish government's lies. The 5 December 23 march in Berlin. Kurdish working-class solidarity hunger strikers, which went to great lengths to save human rights.

December 23 protest in Berlin. The solidarity hunger strikers, which went to great lengths to save human rights.

We appeal to organizations like the militant DHKP-C wanted to keep the penal system as is and mobilize the multiethnic proletariat in Germany, most of whom are denied citizenship even if they have lived there all their lives, face daily discrimination, racist state terror, deportations and mass murder. The Turkish government's lies. The 5 December 23 march in Berlin. Kurdish working-class solidarity hunger strikers, which went to great lengths to save human rights.

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“Racial Profiling”: Business as Usual in Racist America

New Jersey

From Birmingham to Buffalo, Los Angeles to New York, stopping, frisking, beating, shooting and choking black men and women for “driving while black,” “walking while black” and even “breathing while black” are standard police procedures. Over the past couple of years, however, with the ghettos and barrios simmering over a series of high-profile racist atrocities, capitalist politicians—not only liberal Democrats but a wide swath of Republicans as well—have suddenly “discovered” and taken to hypocratically denouncing “racial profiling.”

When three New Jersey state troopers pumped eleven bullets into a van carrying four unarmed black and Hispanic students on their way to college basketball tryouts in October 1998, state officials feverishly denied what every black person knew—that driving on the New Jersey Turnpike meant cop harassment, arrest or worse. Meanwhile, these same officials were busy concealing evidence of just how routinely black and Hispanic motorists were singled out. Some 91,000 pages of recently released state documents revealed that black or Hispanic drivers accounted for at least eight of ten auto searches carried out on the Turnpike over the past decade. For his role in the cover-up, state attorney general Peter Verniero was rewarded by Republican governor Christine Whitman with appointment to the state Supreme Court. A couple of years earlier, Whitman got in on the action herself, frisking a black man who had been arbitrarily stopped by state cops and then released after she got her vile photo-op.

For black Democrats like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson and the reformists who trail behind them, the answer to racist cop terror has been appeals to the Clinton administration and Janet Reno’s Justice Department to oversee city and state police forces. But as the saying goes, “The fish stinks from the head.” Amid the recent investigation of the New Jersey state troopers, a New York Times (29 November 2000) article reported: “Though states like New Jersey have been the most egregious offenders, the textbook on singling out minority drivers was written by the federal government” as part of the “war on drugs.”

In 1986, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) launched “Operation Pipeline,” entailing police departments across the country to search for alleged drug traffickers on major highways. Since then the DEA and the Department of Transportation have financed a battery of programs instructing the police on the supposed ethnic and racial characteristics of “narcotics organizations.” Smacking of “Jewish parasites,” the DEA singled out people with dreadlocks and asserted that Latinos and West Indians dominated the drug trade. The Mafia and the CIA dominate

Massacre of Leftist Prisoners in Turkey

On December 19, Turkish troops, gendarmes and police units launched a bloody attack on 28 prisons at which over a thousand Turkish and Kurdish leftists were on a hunger strike, killing scores of prisoners and injuring many more. The hunger strike started on October 20 in protest against the government’s planned transfer of prisoners from the old, dormitory-style prisons—in which leftist prisoners had some group solidarity and protection—to the new “F-type” isolation prisons where they are likely to be cruelly tortured and killed with impunity by prison guards, essentially buried alive. Although the government recently announced an amnesty law to reduce Turkey’s growing prison population, it doesn’t apply to leftist political prisoners. The prisoners demanded the abolition of Turkey’s anti-terror law and the closure of the state security prisons. On November 19, one hundred of the prisoners decided to go on a death fast, refusing even to drink anything except water.

In its murderous attack, cynically code-named “Operation Return to Life,” the government arrayed helicopters, tanks and bulldozers against the cell blocks of leftist prisoners. In the attack on the Bayramapa prison in Istanbul, so much tear gas was fired that it affected journalists three kilometers [two miles] away from the site! The military fired automatic rifles at the prisoners and launched tear gas, smoke bombs and gas grenades into the cells.

In cities throughout Turkey, thousands demonstrated to show their solidarity with the prisoners. The police brutally waded into these protests, arresting many people. Prisoners’ family members, demanding to know what was happening to their relatives were arrested and brutally beaten up. The Turkish police are notoriously infested with the fascistic terrorist Grey Wolves, a group openly linked to the ruling party, the MHP [Nationalist Action Party]. These protests, in defiance of the right-wing police state and in open solidarity with leftist political prisoners, are a significant development.

At the time of the Turkish government’s arrest of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan in February 1999, the country was swept by huge chauvinist demonstrations, emboldening the Grey Wolves. But the Grey Wolves are not only deadly enemies of the continued on page 10

For International Protest!

We publish below an article written by our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany.

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5 JANUARY 2001

New York