

From Perestroika to Pogroms

Bloody Nationalist Strife in USSR

JANUARY 22—In order to clamp down on the communalist slaughter raging in the Caucasian republics, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev found it necessary to send in troops. After heavy fighting against Azerbaijani nationalist partisans armed with weapons previously seized from the army, Soviet forces now occupy the capital of Baku. Mass demonstrations are continuing, led by the Azerbaijani Popular Front, which is raising the spectre of secession. Other Soviet forces are moving to gain control of the area along the Azerbaijan/Armenia border, which had become the front line in a savage civil war.

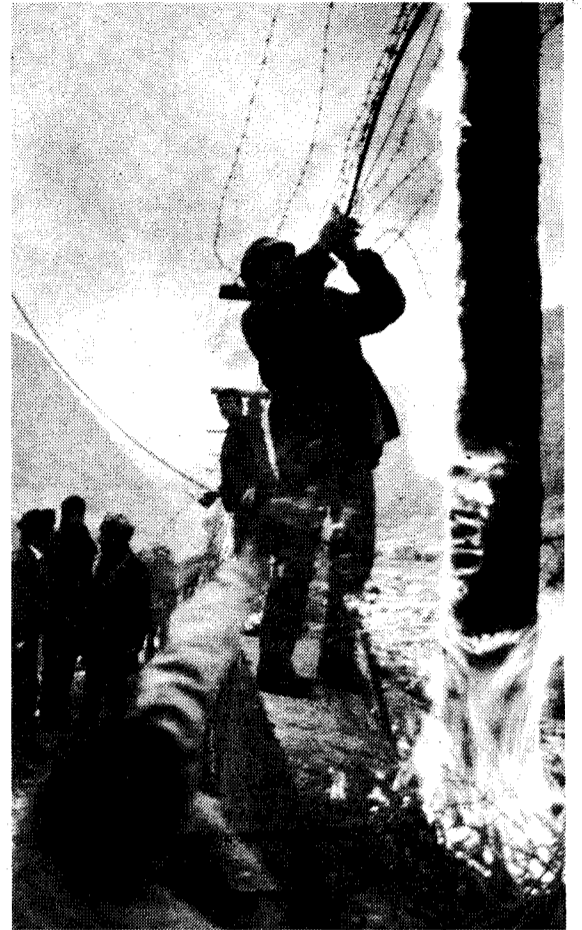
Addressing the Soviet people, Gorbachev explained: "The tragic events in Baku, the border areas of Azerbaijan and Armenia, other regions of the Caucasus have laid

bare the price of nationalist rampage, speculation on sacred national feeling. It is a crime to push people to blind enmity, to the madness of fratricidal war."

It is indeed. However, the violent nationalisms which now threaten to rip apart the Soviet Union are the product of six decades of Stalinist bureaucratic rule and have been intensified by Gorbachev's own policies.

The immediate trigger for the decision to send troops was the pogrom against the several thousand Armenians who still lived in Baku. Azeri mobs—many made up of refugees from the two-year-long blood feud—dragged people out of homes, reportedly burning them alive, beating them to death and throwing them off high balconies. Some Azerbaijanis were horrified

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Azerbaijani nationalists burn down border posts between USSR and Khomeiniite Iran.

No Sellout of the DDR—No Restoration of Capitalism!

Trotskyists to Fight in East German Elections

The Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (SAPD—Spartakist Workers Party of Germany), founded at a meeting in East Berlin on January 21, has announced that it will present candidates and participate on a Leninist program in the 6 May 1990 elections to the Volkskammer, the parliament of the German Democratic Republic (DDR). Representatives of the Spartakist-Gruppen and the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands joined in forming the SAPD for that purpose.

"With this election campaign, the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands seeks to mobilize against the sellout of the DDR, bringing to the broad masses of working people the program for political rule of workers and soldiers councils and their allies—in particular white-collar employees, pensioners, collective farmers, members of the intelligentsia, students and pupils—as well as for forging a truly internationalist Leninist party in all of Germany," a press release stated.

Among the documents upon which the party was founded are "What Do the Spartacists Want" (see WV No. 492, 29 December 1989) and the "Open Letter to All Communists" (see page 10).

Since the beginning of the year, big sections of the bourgeoisie have gone all out to provoke a crisis in the DDR: scare-mongering headlines in the Western

Spartakist Workers Party Founded

press, stepped-up pressure for reunification from the West German government, demands for unlimited penetration of capital from Frankfurt bankers, anti-Communist witchhunt propaganda in the

Leipzig demonstrations, and the first acts of violence in Berlin. The capitalists want to put a stop to the so far peaceful development of a political revolution against Stalinist bureaucratic rule.

The imperialists and their front men had expected the ruling SED (Socialist Unity Party) to simply dissolve as in Hungary or, following the Polish example, to meekly make way for a capitalist government after an expected rout in the elections scheduled for May 6. (And indeed the recent defection of the SED Dresden mayor and his group in the

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30 December 1989—Spartakist banner at Treptow Park anti-fascist demonstration: "For the Communism of Lenin-Liebkecht-Luxemburg! For a Leninist-Egalitarian Party!"

A Letter to Arprekorr

The following letter is appearing in Arbeiterpressekorrespondenz No. 20, 26 January 1990.

19 January 1990

Arbeiterpressekorrespondenz

Dear Comrades,

Shouldn't we consider, subject to profound transformations in the Soviet Union—many of which are essentially identical to those which we in the DDR face today, if we repel the current hysterical assault to drive us into the arms of the BRD—joining the Union of

Soviet Socialist Republics? If the Soviet Union, through the decisive intervention of the conscious and organized Soviet working classes, were to eradicate Stalinism, introduce multi-party democracy, maintain the collective ownership of the basic means of production, reaffirm the right of separation of nations in the union who are not carrying through capitalist counter-revolution—would we not be better off than to be thrown into the pit of imperialist capitalism with its violent economic crises, its illegalization of abortion, its underlying threat of wars for spheres of influence, a capitalism which sits astride the ruthless exploi-

tation of the Third World?

I believe that to make this possible demands far more of the Soviet Union than it does of us, but it could give us a viable economic and social way out of our present crisis, and with fundamentally more freedom than by being seized by the BRD with its capitalist instability, its *Berufsverbot* [blacklisting] and virulent nationalism and inhumanity. As things now stand, one of the revanchist ideas is to expel the Turkish population, including those born in Germany, and replace their labor with that of East Germans and *Volksdeutsche* [ethnic Germans from East Europe], while creating neocolonial spheres in which non-Aryans would labor in places like Poland or the western Ukraine "*Lebensraum*" while the Fourth Reich itself

undergoes racial purification.

Economically the DDR and the USSR, especially in the framework of federative union, could be made to fit well together; and if Kaliningrad (Königsberg) became a town in the DDR of the USSR, it could become an anti-imperialist bastion in a region of ill-advised nationalist and capitalist restorationist unrest.

The qualitative reduction of internal security forces, i.e., their elimination as organs suppressing legitimate and even intemperate internal dissent, could be a strong financial source for the selective recapitalization of the industrial base of both areas and for the ecological cleansing of noxious industrial waste.

Best greetings,
A sympathetic reader

For the Communism of Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg!

January 15 is the 71st anniversary of the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, victims of the bloody repression organized by the Social Democracy to smash the January 1919 Spartacus uprising. For decades, the Social Democrats have tried to hide their bloody crime by attempting to transform Liebknecht and Luxemburg into social-democratic reformists. But the co-founders of the Communist Party of Germany were murdered because they stood with Lenin for workers soviet power rather than bourgeois parliamentarism, as the following quotes show:

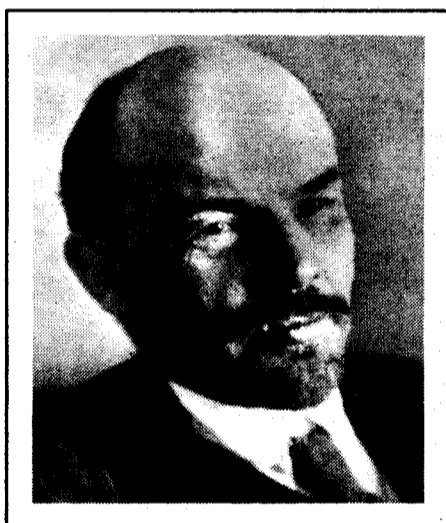
V.I. Lenin

The revolution in Germany—which is particularly important and characteristic as one of the most advanced capitalist countries—at once assumed "Soviet" forms. The whole course of the German revolution, and particularly the struggle of the Spartacists, i.e., the true and only representatives of the proletariat, against the alliance of those treacherous scoundrels, the Scheidemanns and Südekums, with the bourgeoisie—all this clearly shows how history has formulated the question in relation to Germany:

"Soviet power" or the bourgeois parliament, no matter under what signboard (such as "National" or "Constituent" Assembly) it may appear.

That is how world history has formulated the question. Now, this can and must be said without any exaggeration.

"Soviet power" is the second historical step, or stage, in the development of the proletarian dictatorship. The first step was the Paris Commune. The brilliant analysis of its nature and significance given by Marx in his *The Civil War in France* showed that the Commune had created a new type of state, a proletarian state. Every state, including the most democratic republic, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class



Progress Publishers

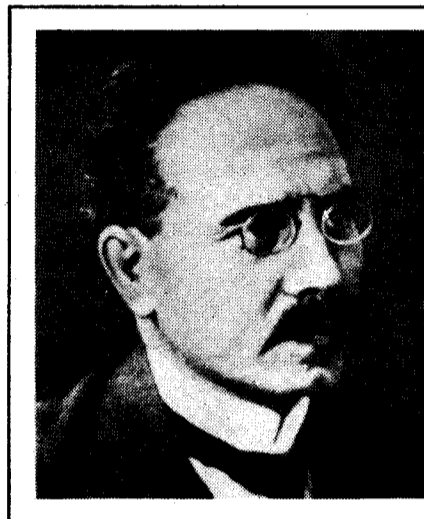
by another. The proletarian state is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat. Such suppression is necessary because of the furious, desperate resistance put up by the landowners and capitalists, by the entire bourgeoisie and all their hangers-on, by all the exploiters, who stop at nothing when their overthrow, when the expropriation of the expropriators, begins.

—"Letter to Workers of Europe and America," *Pravda*, 24 January 1919

Karl Liebknecht

Brothers, Comrades, Friends! The day on which the first Congress of Workers and Soldiers Councils meets is of historic importance. The first task of this Congress is to defend the revolution, to put down the counterrevolution.

Disarming of all generals and officers, the dissolution of the previous command, the founding of a Red Guard to carry out the social revolution. The conscription of the remnants of the counterrevolution, and that includes—I say this even though it may anger misled proletarians—the Ebert-Scheidemann government. (Stormy calls: Down with the Scheidemanns!) Because documentary evidence shows that all the threads of counterrevolution come together in the Ebert-Scheidemann regime. Yesterday Ebert demanded that his powers be further expanded. (Vigorous protests against Ebert.) Presently we have in Germany not a socialist but a capitalist republic. The socialist republic must first be brought forth by the proletariat through struggle against the current



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regime, which has become the representative of capitalism. We demand from the Congress that it take full political power into its hands for the purpose of carrying out socialism, and that it not transfer power to a National Assembly which cannot be an organ of the revolution. We demand of the Congress of the [workers and soldiers] councils that it extend its hand to our Russian brothers and request delegates from the Russians. We seek world revolution and the unity of proletarians of all countries under workers and soldiers councils.

—"To the All-German Soviet Congress," *Die Rote Fahne*, 17 December 1918

Rosa Luxemburg

Abolition of capital's domination and achievement of a socialist order: that and nothing less is the historic theme of the current revolution....

The revolution's goal clearly points out its course, and its tasks indicate the needed methods. *All power to the toiling masses, and to the workers' and soldiers' councils; safeguard the revolution's accomplishments from the enemies that lie in wait for it.* These are the guidelines for all measures of the revolutionary government.

Every step, every action of the government must point like a compass in this direction:

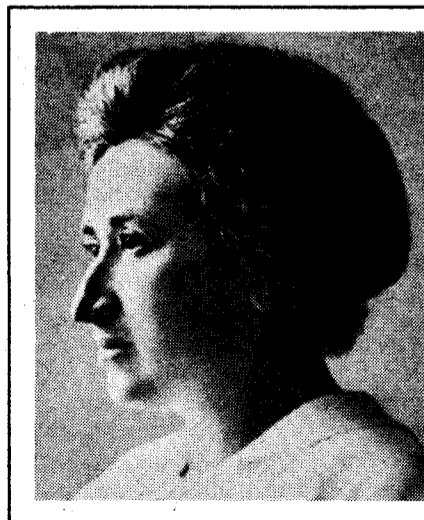
- Expand and reelect local workers' and soldiers' councils to replace the chaotic and impulsive character of their initial actions through a conscious process of understanding the revolution's goals, tasks, and course.

- Maintain representative bodies of the masses in permanent session. Real political power should be transferred from the Executive Committee of the councils, a small body, to the broader basis of the workers' and soldiers' councils.

- Immediately convoke a national parliament of the workers and soldiers in order to organize all of Germany's proletariat as a class, a solid political power, the bulwark and driving force of the revolution....

- Build a proletarian Red Guard for ongoing defense of the revolution and train a workers' militia in order to organize the entire proletariat to be on guard at all times....

- Immediately convene in Germany a world congress of workers to loudly and



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clearly proclaim the socialist and international character of the revolution, because the future of the German revolution is anchored in the International and in the world proletarian revolution.

—"The Beginning," *Die Rote Fahne*, 18 November 1918

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Polish Workers Strike Against IMF/Solidarność "Shock Treatment"

Poland's Solidarność-led government brought in the New Year by implementing an IMF-sponsored program of brutal capitalist austerity. Immediately the price of coal used for home heating shot up 600 percent, electricity 500 percent, bus and rail fares 250 percent. The price of bread and meat has almost doubled. Store shelves are barren as distributors hold off supplies until the prices go even higher, while lines at newly instituted soup kitchens have grown from a dozen to a couple of thousand.

In short, Solidarność' program of capitalist transformation means reducing Poland to the level of Pinochet's Chile, except that Polish workers have not been broken by military terror.

Welcoming Poland's "leap into the capitalist era," a *New York Times* (1 January) article fretted that the "big worry is that the Ursus tractor workers, Silesian coal miners or Nowa Huta steelworkers

will grow tired of the strong medicine." Faced with massive layoffs, spiraling inflation and 20 percent wage cuts, Polish workers have already begun to fight. This week 35,000 Silesian coal miners went on strike against government-imposed wage controls and 6,000 more are on strike at mines near the industrial city of Katowice in southern Poland.

Meanwhile, the much-publicized buy-out of the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk by a Polish American heiress fell through when the workers refused to accept her demand for a 50 cent hourly wage and a five-year strike ban!

Last November when Lech Walesa was in Washington promising good "business deals" for capitalist investors, the editor of a new Polish business magazine warned: "Our people hate Communism but when you start talking about privatization, many of them act like Communists." Although now centered on

the struggle against starvation wages, the current strikes could provide the initiative for uniting the working-class base of Solidarność with the workers of the formerly Stalinist-led unions in defense of socialized property against the gang of Solidarność leaders and Stalinist bureaucrats who are bleeding the country on behalf of the Western bankers.

The key is reviving the traditions of communist internationalism which once animated the Polish workers movement. The beginning of proletarian battles against the attempt to impose capitalist impoverishment in Poland provides an opening for re forging a revolutionary unity between the Polish workers and their comrades in East Germany who are threatened with the sellout of the DDR to the Frankfurt stock market.

In an important demonstration of fraternity, last December 3,000 people from the DDR and Poland united in Guben on

the Neisse (a town divided between the two countries after World War II) in defense of Poland's western border against the revanchist designs of the West German rulers, and to demand an end to anti-Polish discrimination in East Germany. A statement of "Internationalist Greetings to our Polish Comrades," by the recently formed Spartakist-Gruppen in the DDR condemned the chauvinist abuse of Polish workers and appealed:

"Join with us to help rid the DDR of abusive Stalinism and to help defeat those who would bring back the capitalism of Hitler's Third Reich and its successor, Kohl's Fourth Reich.... A victory of workers and soldiers soviets in Germany will immediately galvanize the workers of Poland, today faced with starvation austerity measures. Polish comrades: Revive the internationalist heritage of Rosa Luxemburg, link arms in revolutionary solidarity with your German class brothers to help carry forward this workers political revolution. Join the Spartakist-Gruppen!" ■

Boston Racist Conspiracy Explodes

BOSTON—A system of racist frame-up and cover-up spectacularly exploded when Charles Stuart jumped off the Tobin Bridge into the frigid Mystic River in Boston January 4. Stuart's suicide and his reported admission that he had murdered his pregnant wife last October exposed the grotesque lie which became the justification for a massive campaign of cop brutality against the black community.

On October 23 Stuart gained national notoriety when he reported to police he and his wife from white suburban Reading had supposedly been shot by a "tall black man with a raspy sing-song voice" in the integrated Mission Hill section of Roxbury. For the racist cops and city politicians the incident was a green light to intensify their racist dragnet against virtually all black youth.

The vicious "search and seizure" policy had come under public scrutiny as a judge had declared it unconstitutional and an outcry was raised against the wounding of Rolando Carr, a victim of the campaign to terrorize black neighborhoods. Now the cops had the pretext they wanted, and they eagerly went along with Stuart's racist ruse. Ignoring and suppressing dozens of reported inconsistencies, leads and suspicions about Stuart's conduct, they descended on Mission Hill with a vengeance.

The thugs in blue escalated their already repressive tactics to the point where more than 200 black men were being manhandled, searched, stripped in public, questioned or detained every day. Every available cop was thrown into the fictive manhunt and every black male in Mission Hill was virtually guilty until proven innocent. Many black residents reported being repeatedly set upon by cops while going about their business near their homes. In our article, "Boston's Racist 'Search on Sight' Dragnet" (WV No. 490, 24 November 1989), we erroneously repeated the news accounts of a black man shooting a pregnant woman, while denouncing the media for whipping up a racist furor in the city.

Finally the cops came up with someone they felt they could pin the heinous crime on—William Bennett, a Mission Hill resident with a "record" that includ-



Bourj/Gamma-Liaison

Boston black community outraged over racist cop dragnet and cover-up in Stuart murder case.

ed a shooting incident with a cop. Then began a campaign to prepare for the virtual legal lynching of their "prime suspect." The bipartisan reactionaries in the State House mobilized to reinstate the death penalty. Completely manufactured "evidence" was forced from intimidated "witnesses," and even then systematically misrepresented to a grand jury. Tidbits were leaked by the cops to their all-too-eager prostitutes in the press.

But the skein of lies rapidly unwound when Stuart's family members, themselves seemingly complicit in his diabolical machinations, felt compelled to come forward with evidence that Charles Stuart was a monstrous psychopath capable of murdering his pregnant wife to collect insurance money to open a restaurant.

Outrage in the black community over the racist hoax was so intense that even black misleaders who had supported the cop atrocities against black youth attended a news conference the day after the suicide to protest Flynn and his cops' handling of the investigation. On Martin Luther King's birthday black activists picketed the mayor's attendance at a civil rights breakfast and called for a boycott of the racist and complicit Boston daily

newspapers—the liberal *Globe* and the Murdoch tabloid *Herald*. Later that day a rally castigating Flynn, police chief Roache and D.A. Flanagan was held in Malcolm X Park in Roxbury.

Mayor Flynn began his career in Boston city politics as a spokesman for racist bigots in South Boston opposed to school integration, and now poses as a liberal populist. He has sought to become a national spokesman for the racist war on drugs, and was instrumental in initiating and defending the racist cop terror epitomized by the Mission Hill dragnet.

On January 5, while Flynn was going door to door in an unsuccessful effort to apologize to Mission Hill residents, his cops were up to business as usual in Egleston Square, a Hispanic neighborhood between mostly black Roxbury and mostly yuppie Jamaica Plain. This time when they began beating Hispanic youth and women, the crowd responded. Molotov cocktails were thrown at the cops and one ignited under a cop car. But outrage over vile, racist cop atrocities need not be dissipated into ultimately losing confrontations between unorganized youth and rampaging cops.

From cops and courts to politicians

and the press, the American capitalist system reeks of racism. The grotesque frame-up of William Bennett, who is still in jail for spurious unrelated charges, has highlighted the case of Albert Lewin, a black man accused of killing a cop. The prosecution of Lewin continues despite the fact that the cops have admitted the case against him is based on the purported testimony of a nonexistent witness. Meanwhile, the vile vendetta against black youth under the "search on sight" policy continues unabated.

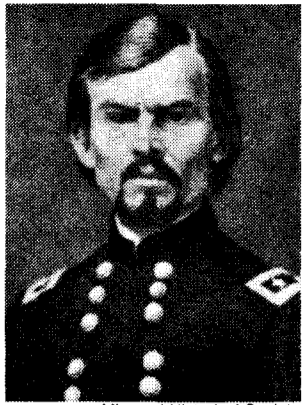
While the problems are manifestly systemic, the solutions offered by Boston's black establishment leaders are at best pathetically inadequate. Some have called for an official investigation of cop malfeasance, while state attorney general James Shannon, who already dismissed the cop policy of "search on sight" as nonexistent, attempts yet another investigative cover-up. There has even been a grotesque call to promote Deputy Superintendent William Celester, the black cop who has been in the forefront of promoting the racist and unconstitutional search policy. As an act of liberal/nationalist despair, attempts are being made to revive the discredited and misnamed Mandela initiative—an effort to "incorporate" minority voting districts into a separate and unequal bantustan.

Especially since the defeat of busing in the mid '70s, by racist mobs in the streets and liberal Congressmen in Washington, the plight of blacks in Boston is seen by many to epitomize the racism endemic in America. In this city where the industrial infrastructure has long since rotted out, the social weight of the black and Hispanic communities has indeed deteriorated. Exacerbating the racism is the existence of white communities which are as desperately poor as Roxbury and Mattapan. But the weight of minority workers has increased in such unions as the hotel workers and bus drivers. This power of labor and blacks has to be mobilized to put a halt to the racist cop "stop and search" campaign. The vicious and revolting system of black oppression has to be swept away in an integrated workers offensive to smash the vile capitalist order that promotes it. ■

Internationalist Revolutionary Fighters



War Museum and Library, Philadelphia



Missouri Historical Society

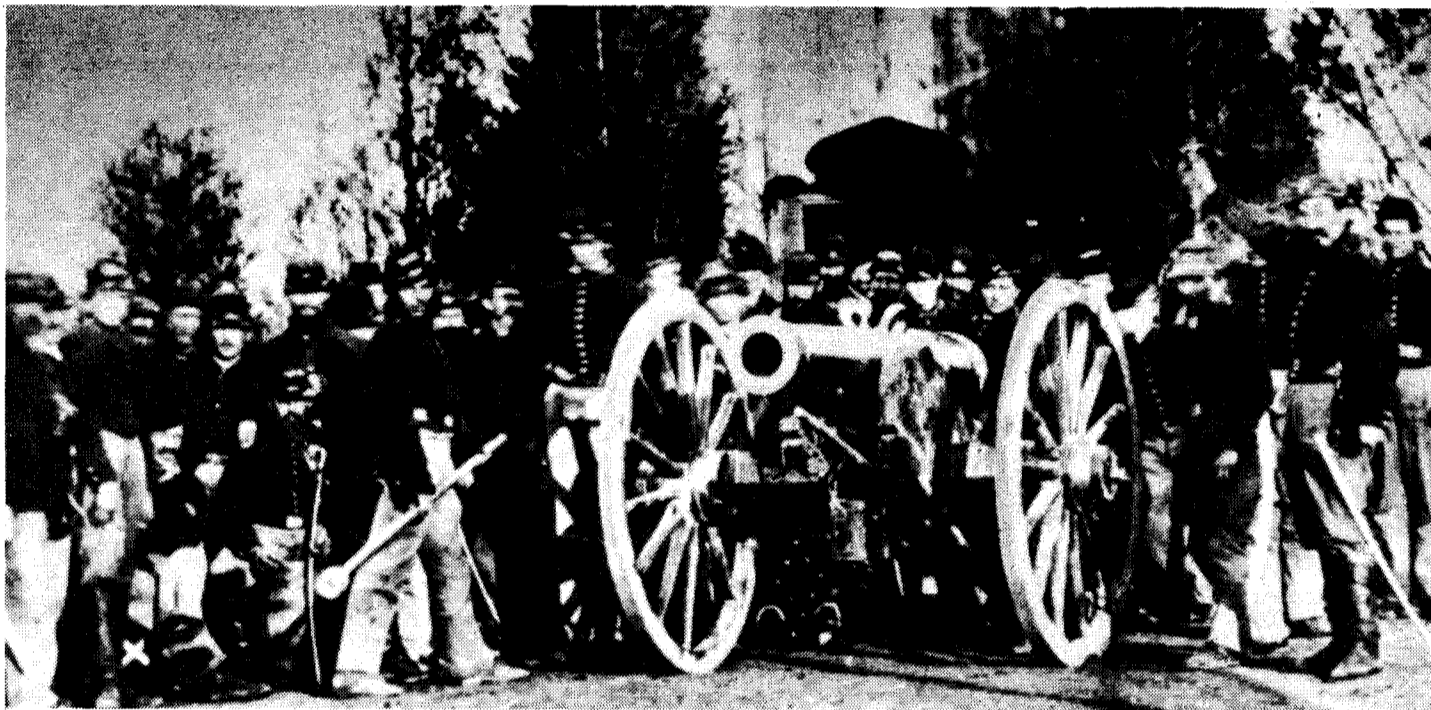


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German Red '48ers in the U.S. Civil War



Americana Image Gallery

All-German artillery unit in Union Army. Above, left to right: Union officers Carl Schurz, Franz Sigel, Joseph Weydemeyer, August Willich.

Among the nearly one million German immigrants who came to the United States in the ten years between 1844 and 1854 were several thousand "Red '48ers," political refugees who had participated in the failed German bourgeois democratic revolution of 1848. The '48ers went on to play a crucial role in American history as well. Having fought for democratic ideals against the reactionary principalities in the old country, they naturally gravitated toward the Union side in the second American Revolution, the Civil War which smashed the Southern slavocracy. As one '48er and former member of Karl Marx's Communist League, Fritz Anneck, titled his memoirs, it was "The Second Fight for Freedom."

The German immigrants brought with them to America their militant traditions and organizations, in the form of the *Turnverein*, or simply *Turner*. These "athletic clubs" with political, social and military functions were often simply direct transplants of the *Schützverein* ("rifle clubs") of 1848. The '48ers soon gained leadership of these clubs, as was clear from the platform adopted at a national convention of representatives of the 47 societies of the *Turner* held in Buffalo in 1855:

"The *Turner* are opposed to slavery; particularly they are against extension of slavery to the free territories, and regard this institution as definitely unworthy of a republic and contrary to all concepts of freedom."

—Augustus J. Prahl, "The *Turner*," in *The Forty-Eighters*, A.E. Zucker, ed., 1967

When the war broke out in April 1861, the *Turner* became mass recruiting agencies—often instant regiments—for the Union Army at a critical time when the North was desperately short of experienced soldiers. It was clear that the Germans in America were overwhelmingly pro-Union: three-fourths of the *Turner* signed up for the army of the North, and in the end over 176,000 German-born Americans fought for the Union cause. In New York alone ten solidly German regiments were raised in 1861, among them the 1st German Rifles and the Steuben regiment. Other states, including Missouri, Ohio, and Illinois, had regiments composed wholly or in part of *Turner*, often led by '48ers. Even in the slave state of Texas, the German militias refused to give up their Union flags and Confederate troops had to be sent in to suppress them.

In the first few days of the war, Washington was in danger of being isolated, as secessionist mobs in Baltimore cut the rail lines and prevented reinforcements from reaching the nation's capital. Just about the only reliable troops in Washington were two German companies. The *Wecker*, the only Republican newspaper in Baltimore at the time, founded by a '48er, related:

"When it was a question of guarding and securing the railroad line between Washington and Annapolis Junction and of protecting the rear and left flank of the Massachusetts and New York regiments, advancing from Annapolis toward the Junction in order to restore the interrupted train service, the two German *Turner* companies were the only trust-

worthy troops the Government could use for this highly dangerous and important work. These two companies marched to Annapolis Junction, cleared the environment of traitors, subdued the farmers of that region who inclined toward secession, and protected the railroad line until the Massachusetts and New York troops arrived."

Similarly in Missouri the German units were crucial in those grim early days, managing to save that state for the Union despite strong secessionist sentiment. Prahl describes how the Missouri *Turner* prepared for the war:

"The *Turner*, as early as December, 1860, had begun their preparations. Every night they practiced military drill in the *Turnhalle* and companies of *Turner* were organized as well as some other German

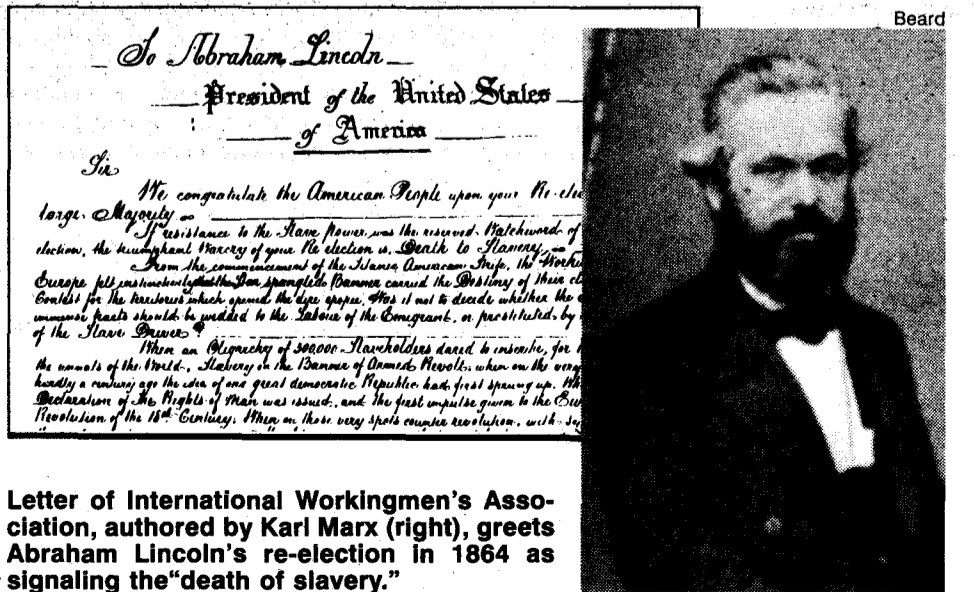
militia groups who called themselves *Schwarze Jaeger* (ambiguously termed Black Guards by the Southern sympathizers). Toward the end of April, five regiments of Union men had been formed, consisting largely of Germans. The first regiment, composed mostly of *Turner*, elected Francis Blair as their colonel; the second chose Heinrich Boernstein, editor of the *Anzeiger des Westens*; the third chose Franz Sigel, the fourth, the 'Black Guards,' Nicholas Shuettner; and the fifth C.E. Salomon. All but Blair were Forty-eighters."

At the beginning of the war, the pro-Confederacy governor massed troops in a plot to seize the vast federal arsenal in St. Louis, guarded by only 200 Union soldiers under Captain Nathaniel Lyon. In May, *Turner* regiments seized the secessionists' encampment at Camp Jackson in a surprise raid, saving St. Louis and its arsenal. Also serving as a Union officer in the St. Louis military district was Joseph Weydemeyer, a close collaborator of Karl Marx. (In 1847 Weydemeyer had been an organizer in Cologne of the Communist League, the organization for which Marx and Engels wrote the *Communist Manifesto*.) Weydemeyer supervised the building of ten forts around St. Louis, and then became the colonel of a volunteer artillery regiment tracking down Confederate guerrillas.

In July 1863, New York City was the scene of anti-draft riots by Irish immigrants, who feared their precarious social level would be threatened by an influx of black freedmen. The rampaging mob lynched blacks and burned down a black orphanage, while Irishmen in the police force did nothing to stop the rioters and in fact assisted them. It was the *Turner* who moved in to put a stop to the riot, as Germans "volunteered against the rabble...most effectively, in the Seventh Ward" (George Templeton Strong, *Diary of the Civil War* [1962]).

The hefty weight of the German presence in the Union forces could be seen in the eastern Army of the Potomac, whose XI Corps was composed of three largely German divisions led by Major General Franz Sigel, a '48er. (A division had three or four brigades, each containing four to six regiments of a thousand men each.) "I fights mit Sigel" was the proud boast of the ranks of the XI Corps, expressing admiration for the man who had led insurrectionary forces in Baden in 1848-49 against the Prussian army. To be sure, men who had fought in 1848 were no longer youngsters by 1861, but they flocked to join the fight against slavery, they filled the line, and they fought. Two of Sigel's division commanders were also German-born: '48ers Carl Schurz and Adolf von Steinwehr, who came in 1847. One of Sigel's artillery officers, Major Franz Backhoff, had also fought in the revolution in Baden, initially on the other side. When ordered to fire on insurgents by his commanding officer, Backhoff literally turned his battery of guns the other way.

The XI Corps saw bloody action at Chancellorsville and engaged Confederate troops in stiff fighting on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. Perhaps their most memorable battle came in the fall of 1863 when they were sent west to help Grant's Army of the Tennessee relieve



Letter of International Workingmen's Association, authored by Karl Marx (right), greets Abraham Lincoln's re-election in 1864 as signaling the "death of slavery."

Trotskyists in E. Germany...

(continued from page 1)

direction of social democracy is significant.) But those plans suffered a setback when 250,000 turned out for the combative anti-fascist mobilization on January 3, to repudiate the Nazi defiling of the graves of Soviet soldiers at the war memorial in Berlin's Treptow Park. The Spartakist-Gruppen and TLD initiated the call for such a united-front action as well as approaching the SED directly.

"The elections to the Volkskammer are turning into a plebiscite on the continued existence of the DDR as a workers state," noted the statement of the Spartakist Workers Party. Since the powerful Treptow demonstration against fascism and for solidarity with the Soviet Union, "the capitalists—with the Social Democratic SPD in the forefront—have escalated their raging onslaught against the social foundations of the DDR. Workers here know full well that the military presence of the Red Army has so far prevented a military intervention by NATO into East Germany, and that close political and economic cooperation of the working people of the DDR and in the Soviet Union is vital for the workers states."

A workers political revolution in East Germany would be the most powerful encouragement to similar revolutionary developments in the USSR, which is today racked by every kind of instability triggered by perestroika as the crisis of Stalinism reaches the boiling point. Genuine proletarian internationalism can save the Soviet Union and make it a



At January 14 commemoration of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, Spartakist banner warns: "From Bloodhound Noske/Ebert/Scheidemann to Brandt/Lafontaine: Social Democracy Is the Trojan Horse of Counterrevolution!" Right: SPD's gray eminence Willy Brandt.



beacon for world revolution, which is why the imperialists even more than the bureaucracy fear this prospect.

The DDR in Danger

West German capitalists are seeking to buy up valuable properties in the DDR at giveaway prices. They have insisted on eliminating even the fig leaf of a 49 percent upper limit on foreign capital in joint ventures, and now the Volkskammer has voted a constitutional amendment eliminating the requirement for the predominance of nationalized (people's) property. At the same time as Deputy Premier Christa Luft was giving Western businessmen a green light for reintroducing capitalist exploitation, the coalition government drastically raised prices on children's clothes. Finance Minister Nickel, now under investigation for misuse of state funds, has talked of raising rents.

West German chancellor Kohl is now putting the screws to East Berlin, demanding that East German prime minister Modrow's government agree to a capitalist reunification. But the Christian Democrats are still looking for some kind of federation. The Social Democrats have become the vanguard of the push for reunification, figuring that they would be the dominant party of a united Germany. The rebaptized SPD-East, which is lavishly financed by its Western big brothers, declared at its January 14 conference that its main goal was "German unity in agreement with the federal government." An enormous West German flag at the SPD demonstration in Alexanderplatz carried the slogan: "Reunification—Ban the SED."

That same day the fascist Republikaner party, meeting near Munich, declared itself the spearhead of "reunification now," while vituperating against Communists, Jewish leaders and foreign workers.

The next day, a mob invaded the headquarters of the former State Security (Stasi) in East Berlin. The right wing is seeking to exploit widespread hatred of the Stasi, whose brutal methods escalated in the last years of Honecker's rule. This extended to the factories, where there were many who drew a second paycheck every month for spying on their fellow workers. The government reported to the Round Table meeting with opposition parties on January 15 that the Stasi had employed 85,000 people and more than 100,000 collaborators, and consumed 3.6 billion marks, 1.5 percent of the entire state budget. The dead weight of the secret police needed to defend bureaucratic rule is a far greater burden on the economy than the comparatively minor privileges enjoyed by the upper layer of bureaucrats.

The Spartakist Workers Party of Germany seeks to forge a Leninist-

egalitarian party, against the abusive Stalinist system—from Stalin to Ulbricht and Honecker. Sections of the East German working class are manifestly demoralized after the revelation of their leaders' betrayals. But there is a militant section of the proletariat that wants to fight to defend its gains.

The SAPD press statement concludes: "The DDR is in danger. The leadership of the SED-PDS (Socialist Unity Party-Party of Democratic Socialism) capitulates before the social-democratic offensive and debates its own dissolution. There are only two ways out of this crisis: either capitalist restoration in the DDR or the clear revolutionary perspective of a genuine workers democracy, i.e., the building of workers and soldiers soviets which take political power into their own hands. This is the central point in the political program of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany." ■



January 15 trashing of headquarters of hated Stasi in East Berlin, part of a campaign of right-wing provocations.

In calling to honor Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg on Sunday, January 14, the Spartakist-Gruppen and Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands raised the following slogans:

- For a Leninist-egalitarian party! Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky!
- Stop the Nazis through workers united-front action!
- Full citizenship rights for foreign workers!
- Down with NATO! Defend the DDR and Soviet Union!
- For a planned economy under a government of workers and soldiers councils!
- No sellout of the DDR! For a red soviet Germany in a socialist Europe!

the besieged Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga. The breakthrough came after Schurz's and Steinwehr's divisions attacked the Confederate stronghold on Lookout Mountain at dawn:

"They scrambled up a zigzagging path along the eastern face of Lookout Mountain under heavy artillery fire from the summit. By noon they were close to the peak and exchanging fire with the Confederate rifle pits. The climax was a bayonet charge by the men... up a steep 200-foot incline strewn with boulders, which broke over the crest of Lookout and drove the enemy off the mountain."

—Richard O'Connor, *The German-Americans* (1968)

This "battle above the clouds," which inspired many military muralists, opened the way for the assault on Missionary Ridge by "mostly German regiments from Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Ohio and Wisconsin" led by Brigadier General August Willich. Willich was a "Red '48er" who had commanded the radical forces in the Baden campaign with Frederick Engels as his adjutant. Under intense fire, Willich is said to have told himself, "I am going forward, even if I am court-martialed for it." He ordered his nine regiments up the ridge without waiting for orders, leading to a quick

victory which surprised Grant. The Union armies could now begin their march to Atlanta and the sea.

Thus the Germans provided not only bodies to fill the line but experienced military leadership, a commodity in short supply on the Union side at the outset of the war because so many talented officers in the U.S. army had defected to the Confederacy. Three of the relatively small number of major generals under Grant, who was the only lieutenant general, were '48ers—Sigel, Schurz and Peter Joseph Osterhaus, as were a majority of the nine Germans who were brigadier generals. Many colonels were also '48ers, who gained prominence for their combat leadership. All in all there were some 500 German officers from major to general. The non-commissioned German officers, being "well-trained and well-disciplined," likewise played an invaluable role. As one tribute noted: "he steadied the whole line, and gave it an example of soldierly excellence in every particular" (J.G. Rosengarten, *The German Soldier in the Wars of the United States* [1886]).

The '48ers drew strength from the influential pen of Karl Marx and Frederick

Engels, whose articles in the New York *Herald Tribune* and elsewhere provided detailed political and military analysis of, in their words, the "first grand war of contemporaneous history." Under Marx's leadership, the First International rallied the European working class behind the Union cause, and this contribution was graciously acknowledged by the government of Abraham Lincoln.

Despite all these contributions, because the Germans came here not speaking English, they faced great hardship and were poorly rewarded for their valor in the war. They suffered a very high death rate in civilian life, not as a result of malice or lynchings, but simply from indifference and incomprehension on the part of their English-speaking neighbors. It did get malicious in 1917 when the U.S. entered World War I on the British side against Germany: the German Americans were not enthusiastic about fighting in what they rightly regarded as a purely inter-imperialist war, and they were subjected to a wave of chauvinism. O'Connor writes: "Overnight...everything German was stigmatized, sauerkraut converted into 'Liberty Cabbage,' the frankfurter into the hot dog, the windows of shops

bearing German names smashed by 'patriotic' mobs, the bearers of German or German-sounding names hounded and often made the victim of mob violence."

This reactionary crusade was also partially directed at Jews, who were known to be disproportionately represented in the antiwar socialist movement. The Ku Klux Klan, which was reborn in the 1915 lynching of Jewish businessman Leo Frank, mushroomed in the post-World War I witchhunt against the "red menace." For the German Americans, it culminated in the 1936 execution of Bruno Hauptmann, framed for the kidnapping/murder of the Lindbergh baby. In World War II, when the popular-front line that U.S. imperialism was fighting a "war against fascism" played on widespread disgust for Nazism among the American population, German Americans enlisted in the U.S. army and fought ferociously. But this is only a postscript to the main point.

The German revolutionists of 1848 played a great and powerful role in the American Civil War against slavery. Militant German working people today should know this—it's part of their history, and ours. ■

Young Spartacus

A Chicago College Student Sees It Firsthand—

The Political Revolution in East Germany

I had been a member of the revolutionary Spartacus Youth Club a scant three months when the opportunity arose for me to go to East Germany, where I found myself in the midst of the unfolding workers political revolution against Stalinist bureaucratic rule. I worked with the Trotskyist League of Germany (TLD), helping to distribute its newspaper *Spartakist* and the daily broadsheet *Arprekorr* (Workers Press Correspondence).

In the United States I am frequently confronted with questions about the dramatic political developments in East Germany, often accompanied by the sneering remark, "Haven't you heard? Communism is dead." This couldn't be farther from the truth. Though there are forces in East Germany calling for a capitalist reunification of the country (through counterrevolution in the East), the vast bulk of the East German working people correctly see capitalism as a threat to the gains they have made through nationalized industry and centralized economic planning. It was the Red Army's victory over the Nazis that paved the way for these gains and the formation of the German Democratic Republic (DDR), a workers state deformed by bureaucratic Stalinism. With Stalinism in a state of terminal crisis, masses of workers are seeking authentic communism, not a sell-out to the West German bankers.



East Berlin, January 3—A quarter of a million people turn out for united-front demonstration against fascist desecration of Soviet war memorial.

This is shown by the mobs of people buying revolutionary Trotskyist literature on the streets. In a period of ten days we sold over 14,000 copies of the weekly *Spartakist* as well as 244,000 copies of the daily *Arprekorr*. On my first distribu-

tion I was dropped off near the Brandenburg Gate in East Berlin with a few bundles of literature. I was shocked to find myself soon surrounded by a crowd of people all wanting the TLD press. At one point a man approached me and said something in a derisive tone. Another man leapt to my defense shaking his fist in the air and shouting, "Spartakist! Spartakist, ja!" After demonstratively embracing one of my comrades, he took a stack of papers to hand out.

The name "Spartakist" is full of meaning for the German working class. During the failed German Revolution of 1918-19, Spartacus League leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered by the leaders of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), a party which to this day defends the profit system by word and deed. Standing on the revolutionary traditions of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, the TLD is building Spartakist-Gruppen in the DDR.

The Spartakist-Gruppen stand for the defense of the DDR against West German imperialism. They call for the formation of workers soviets (councils) throughout Germany to carry out the proletarian political revolution in the East and the socialist revolution in the West, and they raise the internationalist slogan: "For a Red Germany in a Socialist Europe!" They call for "full citizenship rights for foreign workers" and have distributed solidarity greetings to Polish, Vietnamese and Mozambican workers as well as to Soviet soldiers and officers stationed in the DDR.

One morning two of us took a luggage cart laden with boxes of leaflets into a neighborhood populated mainly by Soviet troops and their families. We stood not far from the entrance of a Soviet base, under the watchful eye of a Red Army guard. Most of the soldiers were already familiar with our literature. Some smiled and said, "Ah, Spartakist..." Nearly all

accepted a stack to distribute among their friends and comrades. We later learned of another instance in which the base commander himself took an entire boxful of leaflets to make sure everyone on the base received a copy.

On December 28 the DDR news media announced that a Soviet war memorial at Treptow Park in East Berlin had been defaced by neo-Nazis. The TLD and the Spartakist-Gruppen immediately issued a call for a mass united-front anti-fascist mobilization on January 3. The call was picked up by DDR radio, and various left and anti-fascist organizations were invited to participate. Tens of thousands of leaflets went out. Finally, the ruling SED (Communist party) itself issued a call for a "fighting mobilization" at the same time and place as that proposed by the TLD/Spartakist-Gruppen.

When I arrived at Treptow on the evening of January 3, traffic was nearly gridlocked and both sides of the road were choked with people heading into the park. After I had squeezed through an arch leading into the park, there were people as far as I could see, all surging toward the Memorial to Fallen Soviet Heroes, an angular, megalithic structure bearing a hammer and sickle on its stone surface. Along the path I noticed a smaller sculpture of a kneeling woman, mother to the Soviets whose lives were lost in the battles which liberated Germany from the obscene grip of Hitler's Nazi tyranny. The figure was now covered with flowers and wreaths, with hundreds of candles burning at its base.

Among the banners visible in the crowd were those of the TLD: "For United Workers Militias Under the Control of Workers and Soldiers Councils!" "Workers and Soldiers Councils to Power! For a Leninist-Egalitarian Party!" and "Down with NATO! Defend the Soviet Union!"

I returned to the area of the arch to

NEUES DEUTSCHLAND
SOZIALISTISCHE TAGESZEITUNG

—3 January 1990

AN ALLE BÜRGER

**Kommt zur
Demonstration gegen rechts!**

HEUTE UM 18 UHR

in der Anlage
des Treptower Ehrenmals

Es häufen sich die neofaschistischen Aktivitäten in unserer Republik. Tief betroffen sind wir über die Schändung des Treptower Ehrenmals für die im zweiten Weltkrieg gefallenen Sowjetsoldaten. Das geschah im Herzen der Stadt, von der Hitlerfaschismus und zweiter Weltkrieg ausgingen.

**Wir brauchen Einheitsfront
gegen rechts!**

Laßt unser Land nicht zur Heimstatt
der Neofaschisten werden!

Zur Demonstration haben aufgerufen:
SED-PDS, Komitee der Antifaschistischen
Widerstandskämpfer, Gesellschaft für
DSF, Vertreter der Initiativen „Für unser
Land“ und „Vereinigte Linke“, die
Führungsgremien von DBD, LDPP
und NDPD, die Gründungsgruppe
der „NELKEN“, Spartakist-Gruppen
und die Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands,
SEW und SDAJ sowie viele andere
antifaschistische und demokratische
Bewegungen aus beiden Teilen Berlins.



Front-page announcement in SED's *Neues Deutschland* lists Spartakist-Gruppen and TLD among groups calling for united-front demonstration.

Protesting Nazi Desecration of Treptow War Memorial

Letter to Commander of Soviet Forces in Germany

When the hideous Nazi defacing of the Soviet war memorial in Berlin's Treptow Park was discovered on December 28, the Spartakist-Gruppen and Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands immediately condemned this provocation in a letter to the commander of Soviet armed forces in Germany. This was followed by the call for the united-front action which was taken up by the SED-PDS (Socialist Unity Party of Germany—Party of Democratic Socialism), resulting in the 250,000-strong anti-fascist mobilization on January 3 (see our last issue).

28 December 1989

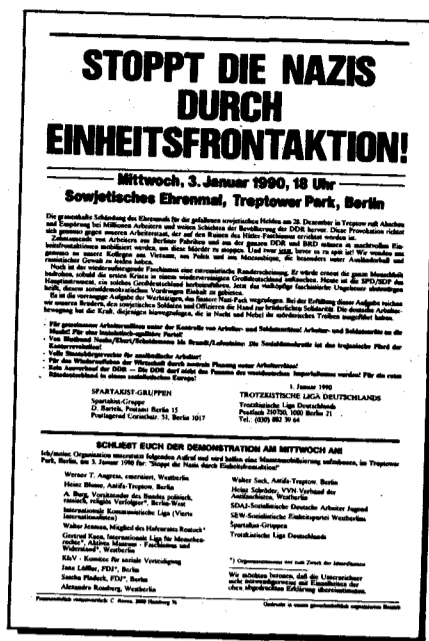
General of the Army B.V. Snetkov
Commander in Chief
Group of Soviet Forces in Germany
Zossen-Wünsdorf

Dear Comrade General,

The vile Nazi desecration of the Memorial to Fallen Soviet Heroes in Treptow provokes disgust and outrage among millions of workers and broad layers of the population of the DDR. This provocation is directed as well at our workers state, which was built on the ruins of Hitler fascism.

Thousands of Red Army soldiers are buried here who died in liberating Berlin—and mankind—from genocidal Hitler fascism. These are our fallen comrades too. In memory of the 20 million Soviet dead in the fight to smash the Third Reich, of six million Jews who died in the Holocaust, class-conscious German workers vow to prevent the rise of a Fourth Reich. Today neo-Nazis seek to spearhead political reunification with capitalist West Germany. While the capitalists seek to buy the DDR and the Social Democrats offer smooth words, neo-Nazis direct their racist terror against foreign workers, seeking to whip up a witchhunt against Communists. Tens of thousands of workers from Berlin factories and throughout the DDR and BRD must be mobilized in powerful united-front action to crush these killers, now before it is too late!

And they urgently want to smash the fascists, just as, we are sure, tens of thousands of Leningrad and Moscow workers would like to mobilize against the Pamyat blackshirts, whose anti-Semitic Great Russian chauvinism is a threat to the multinational Soviet Union.



Spartakist-Gruppen, TLD call: "Stop the Nazis Through United-Front Action!"

We internationalists must combat nationalist chauvinism against Polish, Vietnamese, Mozambican and other foreign workers. We warn that those

who call for violence are doing the work of the imperialists, who at all costs want to undermine the peaceful development of the political revolution unfolding in the DDR.

As East German working people seek to rid this land of those abuses of Stalinism, the Soviet Army has refused to be used by those who would have staged a bloodbath. We recognize, too, that in standing at your posts, far from home, on guard against NATO imperialist threats, you are a bulwark against those who dream of a new fascist nightmare.

It is above all the task of the working people to sweep away the sinister Nazi pack. In carrying out this mission, we extend the hand of fraternal solidarity to our brother Soviet soldiers and officers. The German workers movement has the strength to sweep away those who carried out their murderous work under the cover of night and fog.

Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands
Spartakist-Gruppen

cc: Mikhail Gorbachev
CC CPSU
Supreme Soviet

sell papers, which nearly everyone who streamed past me attempted to buy. A little later on, after Renate Dahlhaus of the TLD had addressed the rally, a polarization was evident in the crowd. Renate stressed the vital necessity of a workers united front to stop the fascists, but also denounced the SED as incompetent to lead the fight against Nazism and the counterrevolutionary designs of the West German capitalists. Now half of those who passed me were angry, one even spitting at my feet. Yet there were others who were glad to have heard the program of Trotskyism perhaps for the first time in their lives. Some stopped to buy additional copies of *Arprekorr*, or to show their approval by offering me food or beer. Altogether we sold about 35,000 pieces of literature at this single demonstration.

Returning to Chicago, I saw that American newspapers like the *Tribune* and *Sun-Times* denounced the January 3 mobilization as a demagogic "exaggera-

tion" of the Nazi threat. How many lives must be lost before the lesson is learned that the fascist scum must be smashed in the egg! A good dose of the "spirit of January 3" is needed right here in Segregation City, where black families who cross the color line in housing are terrorized with burning crosses and firebombs. Not so long ago the Holocaust Memorial in Skokie was vandalized, and Jewish-owned businesses were attacked by Nazis. Last March Klansman David Duke held a race-terrorist convention right in the Bismarck Hotel, and the Labor Black Struggle League and Partisan Defense Committee organized a spirited united-front protest. A union-centered mobilization of tens of thousands—blacks, whites, Hispanics, Jews, Catholics, gays—to stop this Klan/Nazi/skinhead threat would both save lives and help roll back the capitalist offensives in this country against the working people and the poor. And that's no exaggeration.

—January 1990

PDC Greetings to Treptow Anti-Fascist Demonstration

Comrades!

The Partisan Defense Committee salutes you as you gather to answer the vile desecration of the Treptow Soviet war memorial by honoring fallen comrades and rededicating the fight against fascism for which they died.

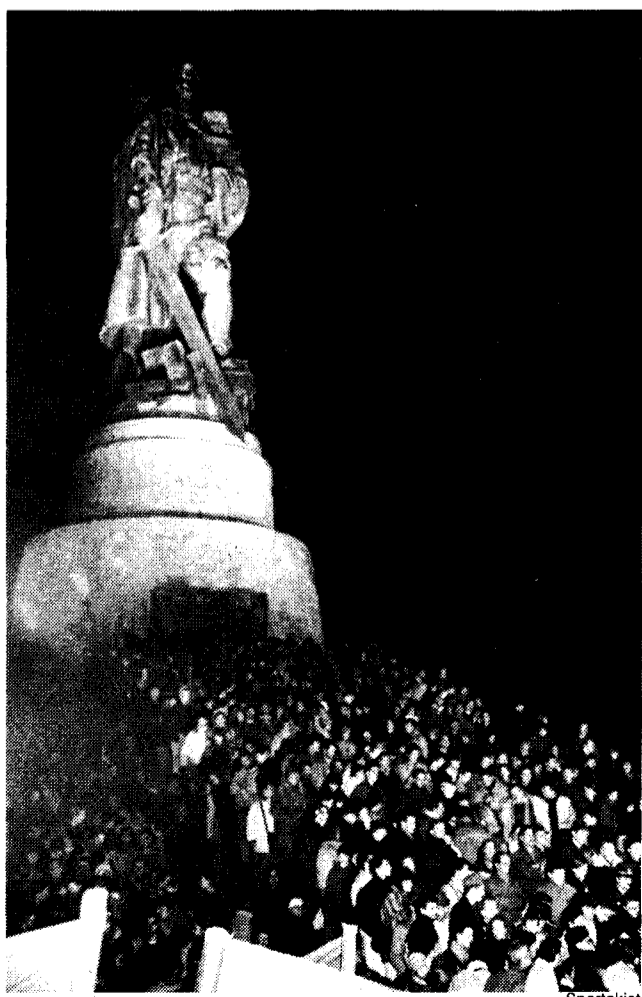
Our own direct experience in the United States has led to the organization of a conscious layer of anti-fascist fighters, defeating the Nazis/Ku Klux Klan first in Detroit in 1979, then San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and in 1989, Atlanta, Georgia.

Our strategy throughout was based on one simple lesson gained from the workers' own experience: that the power of the multiracial, multinational labor move-

ment must be organized in a workers united front to stop the fascists in their tracks!

Comrades: what are we if we don't remember our dead? If we don't respond to deadly fascist threats? In the tradition of the International Red Aid of the early Communist International we salute your effort today. We extend the hand of international proletarian solidarity as we did to the striking British coal miners five years ago and last year to the heroic citizens of Jalalabad who held firm against the bloody U.S.-backed Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

Your struggle today can deal a mighty blow to the forces of capitalist reaction who threaten all of your most precious achievements.



Spartacist

Spartacist Forums

For the Communism of
Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht!
For a Red Germany
in a Socialist Europe!

Eyewitness accounts of the unfolding political revolution in East Germany

CHICAGO

Sat., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m.

Blackstone Hotel, Regency Room
636 S. Michigan

For more information: (312) 663-0715

BERKELEY

Sat., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m.

126 Barrows, UC Berkeley

For more information: (415) 839-0851

SAN FRANCISCO

Thurs., Feb. 1, 6:00 p.m.

B112 Student Union
San Francisco State University

For more information: (415) 863-6963

MADISON

Sat., Feb. 3, 2:00 p.m.

See "Today in the Union" for room
University of Wisconsin

For more information: (312) 663-0715

CLEVELAND

Wed., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m.

University Center 368
2121 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland State University

For more information: (216) 781-7500

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thurs., Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m.

Blackburn Room 148
Howard University

For more information: (202) 636-3537



Spartakist-Gruppen banner: "For a Red Soviet Germany in a Socialist Europe!"

Spartakist

Spartakist-Gruppen, TLD Commemorate "Three L's"

Forward to Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet Power

A public meeting of the *Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands* and the *Spartakist-Gruppen* honoring Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg, the "Three L's" of Bolshevism, was held on the afternoon of January 14 at the culture center of the VEB *Elektrokohle* factory in Berlin. We print below excerpts from the presentations and some remarks from the discussion.

Renate Dahlhaus, for the TLD

Germany is split by a class divide, and as long as West German imperialism exists, it will continually attempt to turn the DDR into a colony, and to oppress the working class here in the East and turn it into slaves. And naturally, it won't stop here, it's going for Poland and at-

Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht can be criticized for having split too late. And that, I believe, is an important lesson as well for all the comrades inside and outside of the SED [Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the ruling party in the DDR], who always accuse us of splitting. Often it is too late to split. But it is necessary to split in order to forge the revolutionary nucleus of the working class which is capable of leading the workers party to victory.

When today Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht are commemorated in the name of "freedom for those who think differently," as democrats and liberals, this is fundamentally wrong. No one should forget that their struggle was in-

and second, making it possible to transfer profits. In a government statement, Prime Minister Modrow said that "labor forces" would be "set free" in the course of economic reforms. That means there will be unemployment.

As to the problem of capital investment in state-owned enterprises, now even the fig leaf of 49 percent participation has been dropped—i.e., there will be no upper limit. And this was approved with a large majority by the *Volkskammer* [DDR parliament]. Thus, we must emphasize, the course has been quite unambiguously set toward capitalist restoration. On Thursday evening, German nationalists tore up the state flag in front of the *Volkskammer*. The Modrow

factories that must be answered by the plant management. I jotted down one of these questions: Who is it, after all, who has empowered the general directors and directors to sell off property belonging to the people at giveaway prices? Well, our answer to this question is: They're *our* enterprises, built with *our* labor. And accordingly, all those working in these plants must themselves decide on all important questions. That is the essential cornerstone of our political program. Decision-making must rest with those who produce value.

That is why we say: Organize, create for yourselves organs of political power. Nothing other than this lies behind our slogan for workers and soldiers councils to power. A first key task of these councils is the demand to open the books. That means that the present economic situation of the enterprises must be revealed to the working people. Put an end to the secret negotiations behind the backs of the workers. Read our "Open Letter" and you will think of other questions—they were only supposed to be suggestions, since each one of you naturally knows best what the crucial issues are. That's clear, we can't know that. But in any case, and that is our political program, we're for unlimited confidence in the intelligence and judgment of the workers. And I say it again, quite clearly, and you can write it down: the course of the present government is dangerous and undermines the foundations of the workers state.

On January 3, there was an anti-fascist united-front action, "Stop the Nazis," which we initiated. Such a united-front action in Lenin's sense is not a political non-aggression pact, but rather each political grouping preserves its own independence. It is, so to speak, a fighting unity, according to the principle "march separately, strike together." One could also formulate this another way: complete freedom of criticism, complete unity of action. This is what our speakers at Treptow put forward, and many people didn't like it, as could be seen.

But it must be stated that for the first time in the history of the DDR, there was a left opposition to the SED-PDS, to the Nelken [Carnations, a new left-wing party], to the United Left, and there is also supposed to be a group seeking to

continued on page 11



Spartakist

Trotskyist spokesman Renate Dahlhaus (lower right) addresses January 3 mobilization against fascism. TLD's newspaper warns: "No Sellout of the DDR!"



tacking the Soviet Union, at the heart of the Revolution which taught us that imperialism can be defeated.

Therefore it is important to understand the teachings of Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Lenin. For German communists it has a special meaning that they were murdered as Spartacists, and thereby the most revolutionary and intelligent leaders were taken from the working class in Germany. This was a heavy blow for us internationally, since the next possibility for a German revolution, in 1923, didn't have the tempered leadership necessary to turn the battle into a victory.

Instead there was a weak CP. Rosa

separable from the Russian Revolution and proletarian internationalism.

G. Melt, for the Spartakist-Gruppen

Those of you who have watched TV or read the papers know that as of tomorrow there are going to be price increases, in the case of children's clothing up to 150 percent, and one has to realize that this is only the beginning. Changes in local transit costs, rents, services and other basic commodities are already under discussion. It must also be noted that there has been a constitutional amendment and bills will be introduced, first, to guarantee protection of capital,

cabinet stands powerless in the face of this reunification hysteria. And it is powerless because the economic line of the Modrow regime objectively plays into the hands of these forces, whether the government likes it or not.

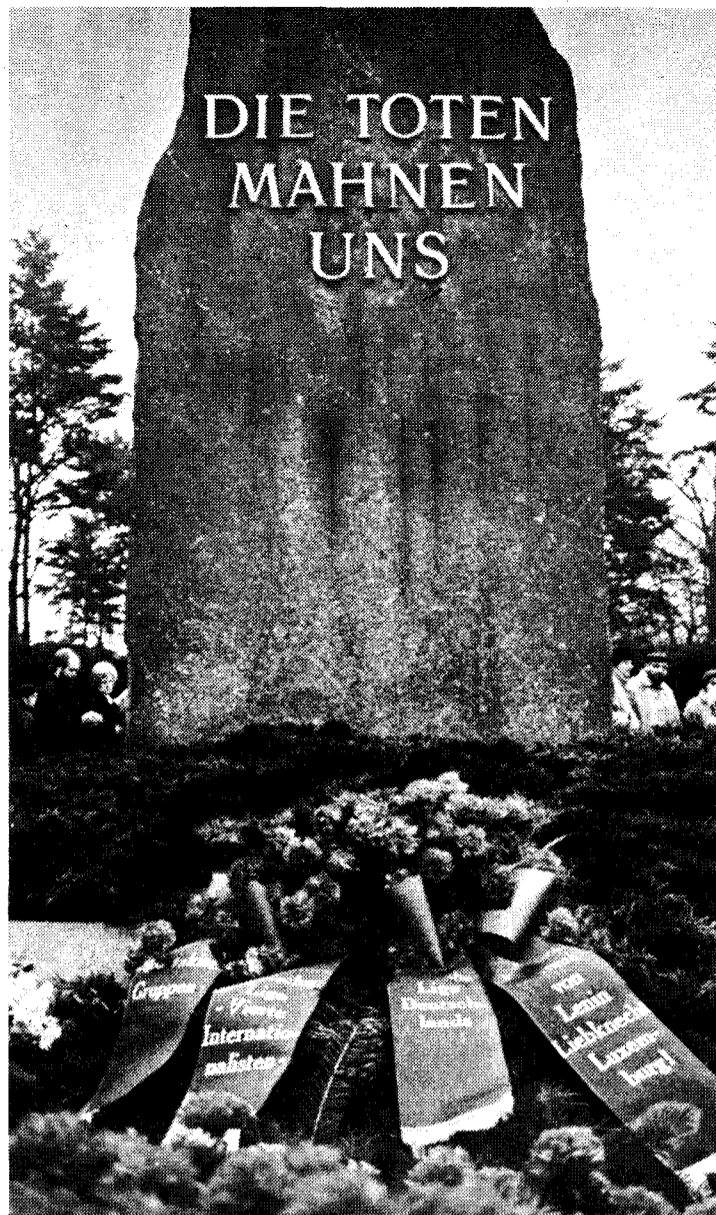
In our *Arbeiterpressekorespondenz* of 12 January 1990, we formulated an "Open Letter to All Communists," inside and outside the SED-PDS. We conceived of this letter as a suggestion containing concrete offers for united-front actions. In it we have a major point, alongside others, directed against a sellout of the DDR. Thus we suggest a number of concrete questions for workers in the

HONOR LENIN, LIEBKNECHT, LUXEMBURG

Berlin, 14 January 1990



East Berlin—Spartakist-Gruppen banner declares: "Defend Foreign Workers! Full Citizenship Rights, East and West!" Right: TLD/Spartakist-Gruppen wreath at gravesite of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in Berlin-Friedrichsfelde. Memorial states: "The Dead Admonish Us."



Spartakist Photos

For the second time in two weeks, more than a quarter million people came out in East Berlin in the name of socialism and for the DDR (East Germany). On January 3 there was the mass antifascist united-front demonstration at the Soviet war memorial in Treptow Park. And on January 14, an equally large crowd went to Friedrichsfelde Cemetery to honor Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, on the 71st anniversary of their deaths. For the first time in years, this was no Stalin-style parade before party and state leaders. It took over three and a half hours for the crowd to file past the graves of the co-founders of the Communist Party of Germany.

The SED-PDS had issued a call to come to Friedrichsfelde to show support for "democratic socialism, the social interests of the working people, independence of the DDR," and against "neofascism, right-radicalism, nationalism, hostility to foreigners" and "economic sellout of the DDR." The SED call was later joined by the FDJ (Free German Youth), the Socialist Youth League, the

Marxist Student League, Die Nelken (Carnations) and other left groups. A counterdemonstration by the Social Democrats, now formally called the SPD like their West German big brothers, was held at Alexanderplatz, which drew some 30,000.

Taking up an early Communist tradition, the Spartakist-Gruppen and the Trotskistische Liga Deutschlands called upon supporters to come to Friedrichsfelde to honor Luxemburg, Liebknecht and Lenin, the "Three L's" of Bolshevism. *Spartakist/Arbeiterpressekorrespondenz* (10 January) noted that "In the SED-PDS call, Karl and Rosa are described as 'prominent leaders of the German Social Democrats and Communists.' This is closely related to the SED's current view, equating Liebknecht and Luxemburg with Kautsky and Bernstein. This ignores the fact that the Communists were murdered by officers who had been brought in by Social Democrat Gustav Noske to suppress the Spartakus uprising in January 1919."

Early on the 14th a Spartakist delega-

tion laid a wreath at the Rosa Luxemburg memorial on the Landwehr Canal in West Berlin. Outside the memorial in East Berlin, our Trotskyist banners were prominently displayed, calling for "A Red Soviet Germany in a Socialist Europe!" "Defend Foreign Workers! Full Citizenship Rights, East and West!" and declaring "From the Bloodhound Noske/Ebert/Scheidemann to Brandt/Lafontaine: Social Democracy Is the Trojan Horse of Counterrevolution." As we addressed the crowd with a bullhorn, it often turned into a dialogue. Tens of thousands of copies of Spartakist literature were sold and distributed, notably Friday's *Arprekorr* with an "Open Letter to All Communists" (see page 10), and the latest *Spartakist* with the headline "No Sellout of the DDR!"

That afternoon, the Spartakist-Gruppen and TLD held a public meeting at the culture center of the VEB Elektrokohle plant. Following the speeches and a rich discussion period (see "Forward to Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet Power"), money was collected for the Lenin-

Liebknecht-Luxemburg Fund and people signed up as members of the Spartakist-Gruppen. They proudly received the first membership cards, bright red and bearing a quote from Rosa on how German workers learned about soviets from the Russian Revolution. Also on the 14th, a Spartacist delegation officially participated in the Luxemburg-Liebknecht demonstration of about 15,000 in Schwerin, in the north of the DDR.

The impact of the Spartacist presence was considerable. Altogether more than 40,000 pieces of literature were sold and distributed. The evening DDR-TV news program, "Aktuelle Kamera," prominently showed the laying of the wreath from the Spartakist-Gruppen, TLD and International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). And the next day our participation was reported in *Neues Deutschland*, *Berliner Zeitung* and *Junge Welt*. The latter noted that the Trotskyists "warned against a shortsighted sellout of the DDR to the West German industrialists," adding that "they received approving applause." ■

West Berlin—Revolutionaries from East and West Germany gather at Landwehr Canal, where the body of Rosa Luxemburg was found.



ARBEITERPRESSEKORRESPONDENZ

SPARTAKIST

Nr. 17 Mittwoch, 10. Januar 1990 5 Pfennig



Auftrag der Spartakist-Gruppen und TLD Ehrt Lenin, Liebknecht, Luxemburg!

Am 14. Januar 1919 wurden in Berlin Karl Liebknecht und Rosa Luxemburg von Noske-Offizieren ermordet. Am 21. Januar 1924 starb Vladimir Iljitsch Lenin in Gorki bei Moskau.

Am Samstag, den 14. Januar wird um 14 Uhr eine Gedenkveranstaltung an der Gedenkstätte in Berlin-Friedrichsfelde geben, in Ehren der revolutionären Arbeiterführer Liebknecht und Luxemburg, zum 71. Jahrestag ihres Mordes. Anknüpfend an die frühe kommunistische Tradition werden Spartakist-Gruppen und Trotskistische Liga Deutschlands, Liebknecht und auch Lenin in unsere Achtung erwachen. Wir fordern alle auf, die "Drei L's" des Bolschewismus ehren wollen, sich am angegebenen Termin zu sammeln und an der offiziellen Spartakist-Veranstaltung teilzunehmen.

In Auftrag der SED-PDS werden Karl und Rosa als hervorragende Führer der deutschen Sozialdemokraten und Kommunisten bezeichnet. Dies hängt eng mit der deutlichen Aufforderung der SED zusammen, Liebknecht und Luxemburg mit Kautsky und Bernstein gleichzusetzen. Dabei wird verschwiegen, daß es gerade die von Sozialdemokraten Gustav Noske eingeschickten Offiziere waren, die diese Kommunisten umbrachten um den Spartakus-Aufstand im Januar 1919 zu unterdrücken. Noske (Ebert mußte die Blutschuld sein) handelte im Auftrag der Regierung des Sozialdemokraten Friedrich Ebert, der 1918 bestimme: "Ich habe die Revolution wie die Sünde!"

Jahresbedingung haben die Führer der Sozialdemokratie sich bemüht, ihr Überleben, des das Gebotnis der Weimarer Republik war, zu verwirklichen. Zu diesem Zweck haben sie alles darangesetzt, unsere revolutionären Märtyrer in sozialdemokratische Reformen umzuwandeln. Stalin, dem wir der proletarischen Revolution genauso hänge war, hat diese sozialdemokratische Luxemburg-Revolutionäre Ebert und Große zu betreiben. Wir Spartakisten, die wir im Geiste Lenins und Trotskis für den Kommunismus kämpfen, stehen für das revolutionäre Erbe der zwei Mitbegründer der

Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands.

Sozialdemokraten, sind auch innerhalb der SED-PDS, sprechen von "unbilligen Warnungen" Rosa Luxemburg (siehe auch Kautsky und Bernstein) vor der Möglichkeit einer diktatorisch-terroristischen Entwicklung in der Sowjetunion, nicht unter der stalinistischen Bürokratie, sondern nur Zitate Lenins! Dabei betrafen sie sich auf eine Selbst, die sie im Einklang verfallt, ohne jedes Zögern zu genauem Bericht über die Ereignisse in Russland, und die sie niemals veröffentlichte. Sie lassen dabei außer acht, daß Rosa beim Gründungsparteitag der KPD am 11. Dezember erklärte: "Wir sollen es nie vergessen, wenn man uns mit den Verhandlungen gegen die russischen Bolschewisten konfrontiert, darauf zu antworten: Wo habt ihr das ABC Eurer heutigen Revolution gelernt? Von den Russen habe ich's gelernt, die Fortgesetzt auf S.2"

Spartakist-Veranstaltung

Es lebe der Kommunismus von Lenin, Luxemburg, Liebknecht!

Redner: G. Meil und Renata Dathhaus
Sonntag, 14. Januar 1990
Kulturhaus VEB Elektrokohle
Herzbergstraße 128-139
Berlin 1130
geöffnet von 11 bis 16 Uhr
Veranstaltung um 13 Uhr

East German youth at Spartakist-Gruppen recruitment table.

Spartakist Photos



Open Letter to All Communists

The following Open Letter by the Spartakist-Gruppen and the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands is translated from Spartakist/Arbeiterpressekorrespondenz No. 18 (12 January).

In full consciousness of the present real danger from right-radical forces along with the massive anti-communist hate campaign in the bourgeois media of West Germany, fanned by the SPD, and the threatened sellout of the DDR to the Deutsche Bank and its likes, we are suggesting an action program to all communists inside and outside the SED-PDS:

Fight Fascism!

In the spirit of proletarian internationalism, for reliable protection of the memorial cemeteries of slain Soviet soldiers, of anti-fascist resistance fighters and Jewish citizens, we propose joint patrols by soldiers of the Red Army, the NVA [DDR army], members of the Volkspolizei [People's Police], VP auxiliaries and workers defense groups from the factories.

The preferred target of the anti-communist hate propaganda of the neo-Nazis are above all workers who have immigrated [to the DDR]. It is the duty of all workers to defend our foreign colleagues. Against Nazi terror we mobilize workers united fronts in East and West, faithful to Lenin's principle: March separately, strike together!

To guarantee protection of our workers state and of the property of the people, defense groups should be formed within the factories, made up of disciplined and experienced colleagues, including many members and reorganized units of the fighting groups of the working class. The working class must take up the battle against fascism in organized fashion, to crush it in the egg when it is still weak. This is why we advance the slogan: For joint workers militias under the control of workers and soldiers councils!

Against the Sellout of the DDR!

The present business situation of individual plants and institutions must be revealed by the directors and managers responsible. Clear and direct answers must be given the workers to such questions as:

- Who is it that is empowering the general directors/directors to sell the people's property at giveaway prices?

Reprint from Arprekorr

- How large is the influence of and investment of capital already in the plants?
- Are layoffs being carried out or planned?
- Are new privileges planned for certain layers?
- Who is attempting to institute an illegal practice of SPD-style *Berufsverbote* [blacklisting] now in the DDR as well, mainly directed against members of the SED-PDS?
- Will there be social cutbacks, i.e., e.g., wage cuts?
- Will the year's maternity leave exist in the future as well?

The policies of Modrow's governmental coalition are aimed at giving capital a green light with the aid of amending the

ram, Braun, etc., in order to work together against the sellout.

Workers and Soldiers Councils to Power!

The SED-PDS now proposes forming plant councils "before capital comes" (*Neues Deutschland*, 11 January). The Spartakists call for forming workers and soldiers councils to prevent capital from coming! The reintroduction of capitalist exploitation endangers every worker and the existence of the DDR. To defend our social gains and to open the way to socialism we must replace the arbitrary rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy with revolutionary soviet rule, throughout Germany.

The workers must take into their own hands control of the enterprises and institutions by forming councils [soviets].



Der Spiegel

constitution and laws, in order to legalize the notorious "joint ventures" with Western firms, to permit protection of capital and transfer of profits. This is a direct attack on the right to work and endangers socially justified subsidies. The explosion of prices and rents will above all hit single women, pensioners and others with low incomes.

This pro-capital, anti-worker market economy policy must be resolutely fought! We propose that worker delegations from DDR factories visit their West German class brothers at Siemens, Os-

In these councils, in which all currents within the working class are represented, free and open debates will take place on all pending problems. They thereby directly represent the interests of all workers, and the delegates can be recalled at any time. Such councils must look after the overall interests of society—for example, the control of prices as well—and thus they constitute the most democratic form of government; a million times more democratic than any bourgeois parliamentarianism can ever be.

Revolutionary workers councils would fight for free round-the-clock day care for children, and also to enable full participation by women in social and political life. Workers and soldiers councils are the firm guarantee of the defense of socialized ownership of the means of production. Central planning of the economy can fully develop its enormous advantages only in connection with workers democracy.

For Full Citizenship Rights for All Foreign Colleagues Working in the DDR and for Their Families!

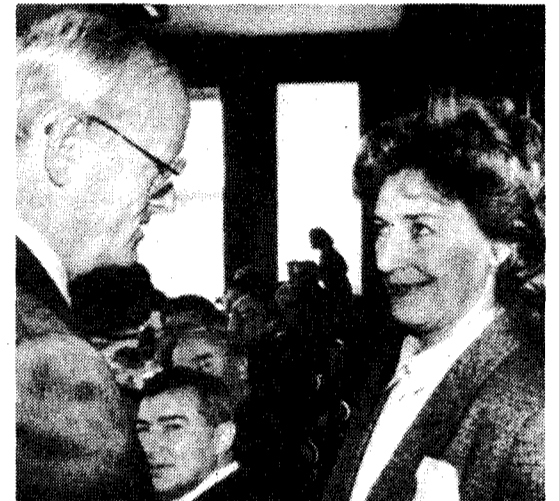
The acts of discrimination that have recently been increasing against our colleagues from Poland, Vietnam, Mozambique, etc. must be stopped at once! Everyone who works and lives here, whatever their nationality, must have the same rights as any DDR citizen. Of course the families of soldiers of the Red Army and Soviet women living here must also have full enjoyment of the social gains.

In order to prevent speculation, restrictions on purchases directed against our class brothers are an inappropriate means, since they only fan nationalism. In our opinion, appropriate customs controls offer adequate protection against trading with state-subsidized commo-

ties. Committees of working people in each residential area should ensure that prices are not raised, that a stop is put to speculation and thus everyone can shop without discrimination.

The fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrant workers, in the East and West, will help to overcome the division of the working class in the BRD between German and Turkish workers. It is precisely the Turkish workers who in West Germany stand in the front lines of the class struggle. Our class brothers in the Federal Republic and also in West Berlin must help us prevent the sellout of the DDR.

On 3 January 1990, some 250,000 Berliners said with their powerful united-front action at the Soviet memorial in Treptow: Never Again Fascism! In fighting for a German republic of soviets Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were also fighting against the counterrevolution, which utilized the fig leaf of "parliamentary democracy." It is high



Reuters

Auto workers in Karl-Marx-Stadt (left). DDR economics minister Christa Luft offering up East German factories to Volkswagen boss Carl Hahn.

time to transform Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht's revolutionary program for soviet rule into reality. Necessary for this is the forging of a new revolutionary party. It is in this sense that we link up with the revolutionary traditions of the international workers movement to honor on 14 January 1990 the three great leaders of the Russian and German revolutions.

The mass demonstration in Treptow also honored the Red Army that freed Europe from Nazism. Honoring the Three L's in January pays tribute to the revolutionary ties between the Russian and German revolutions. Despite all the talk of "disarmament," imperialist militarism has today lost nothing of its desire for booty, as the provocations in the Caribbean and the massive military maneuvers west of the Elbe demonstrate. And in the BRD the gigantic weapons company MBB-Daimler Benz was formed. We stand resolutely for defense of the DDR and the USSR against NATO imperialism. We fight for a red soviet Germany in a socialist Europe!

Against the military threat by German imperialism and NATO, a soviet government would turn to the workers of the East, in particular to those of the Soviet Union, as well as to the workers of the West.

Independent of existing political differences on many questions, we call upon all those who share our deep concern and wish jointly with us to defend the social gains of the DDR, to agree on and carry out actions with us. Whoever fails to defend what has already been won can win no new victories. But to win new victories it is necessary to forge a new communist party in the spirit of Lenin and Trotsky.

Spartakist-Gruppen
Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands
11 January 1990

"Stop the Sellout of the DDR!"

The following article is translated from Spartakist No. 67 (17 January), the newspaper of the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands.

On Friday, January 12, the Volkskammer decided, with only two abstentions, to adopt SED economic minister Christa Luft's proposed amendments to the constitution to allow foreign capitalist investment. Private capital will now be allowed in mining, energy, agricultural and industrial production, banking and insurance, transport, telephone and postal service. The Modrow government also announced huge price increases, beginning with children's clothes and shoes. It is no accident that on the same day Modrow met with West German finance minister and CSU chairman Theodor ("Reunification in 1937 Borders") Waigel. Simultaneously, by demanding world market prices for Soviet oil, Gorbachev is pushing

the DDR into the arms of the Frankfurt stock market.

Modrow and other SED tops pay lip service to "No Sellout" while hanging out the "For Sale" sign. But it is the working people of the DDR, including immigrant workers, who have created the wealth. Who gave the bureaucrats, who mismanaged the economy for over 40 years, the right to sell it now? Workers, on guard! Demand that factory directors open the books. The Social Democrats and the West German union federation are trying to export class-collaborationist plant councils so DDR workers can "co-determine" their own exploitation. The Spartacists say: Form factory councils as organs of workers control in the plants. Forward to a government of workers and soldiers councils! For common planning leading to economic integration between the DDR and the Soviet Union, thereby defending against the capitalist attack.

Where Does the Money Come From

The following statement was published in Spartakist (No. 67, 17 January), the newspaper of the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands.

Recently we have been bringing out *Arbeiterpressekorrespondenz* almost daily. This is really costing a lot of money, approximately DM17,000 a week. We also hope to be able to publish a weekly in the DDR shortly.

This money, from the dwindling reserves of the International Communist League, has been built up over a number of years through high pledges from the wages of very advanced workers in ten countries. These contributions vary according to the level of the wages received by the workers in the various countries. Members in West Germany have paid the most per capita, but members of the ICL from France and the USA, from Canada and Australia, have also made their contribution. The British comrades are too poor and the Japanese and Italian comrades too few, but nevertheless they too have helped out. And even those comrades from countries like Mexico and Lanka and elsewhere in South Asia who have received financial support from the ICL have helped as much as they could. Sometimes, when a comrade's frugal grandmother dies, we receive a portion of the inheritance as a windfall. That's where our money comes from.

The sociology of our finances is just as one would expect. Our international organization numbers fewer than a thousand people on the entire planet, and they all work for a living. From countries with a high wage level, with older and

Statement of the International Secretariat of the ICL and the Central Committee of the TLD

more numerous comrades, we receive a surplus. On the other hand our international organization provides modest subsidies to our smaller sections, which have younger comrades with less professional experience and a lower wage level; in doing so we don't want to create a fool's paradise but rather to further their growth.

Since the days of the New Left, university administrations in the U.S., i.e., in the final analysis state authorities, have offered to pay for (radical) student activities. We have successfully fought against accepting even one cent of this government-sponsored financial support.

It is in this spirit and in accord with this program that we do our work in the DDR. We don't want even a pfennig of subsidy from anyone except from those who are in some way in serious agreement with our program.

Therefore the working people from the BRD or DDR who pay one or two marks to read our press are indispensable for the continued appearance of our publications. At the moment the class consciousness of the West German proletariat is at an ebb, which is no doubt discouraging for militants in the DDR. Militancy has its ebb and flood tides. Large-scale economic struggles are on the agenda in the BRD this year; the stance of workers in the West toward the DDR will perhaps be completely different then.

And of course when some major action

is projected or some new major development in the world comes up, we run fund drives. The Partisan Defense Committee, a non-sectarian organization for legal and social defense associated with the ICL, received, particularly from unions with a significant black membership, \$42,000 in donations for the series of rallies against the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan that we recently mounted in the U.S. Before this, during the 1984 miners strike in Britain, the PDC raised \$23,000 in donations from the labor movement all across America and internationally in support of this hard-fought but unfortunately defeated battle against the evil prime minister Thatcher.

More recently we raised \$50,000 from left communists and militant defenders of women's rights around the world, money the Afghan government used to assist the victims of the heavy fighting around Jalalabad, a battle that stopped the counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan cold. The PDC campaigns, being public in nature, are also heavily audited, showing to all that the money does go for the purposes intended.

And now from the entire world, in accordance with their means, radical socialists and communists are sending in money directly to our political organization through the Lenin-Liebknicht-Luxemburg Fund to support the work of our comrades in the East German political revolution. But these donations basi-

cally have come from older, now-retired people or from others sympathizing with communism, whose financial resources are largely depleted. In general these fund-raising campaigns are undertaken for a very specific aim and as urgent circumstance demands, and are not the basis for the regular political work of our international organization or its sections.

The genuine Trotskyists of the world have done everything in their power to defend the DDR against capitalist absorption and the USSR against imperialist provocations. At present we appear rightly in the DDR as those who express the hopes of millions of workers and sections of the intelligentsia and who counter their fears. Our international organization, the ICL, will continue trying to help, and it will help. But bringing out our press in all Germany is essentially the responsibility of those who support the founding of a Spartakist Workers Party of Germany that will emerge from the Spartakist-Gruppen, the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands and others supporting the fundamental program of our political grouping.

The fate of the unfolding German workers political revolution hangs in the balance. Contributions from internationalists are urgently needed to carry forward the critical intervention of conscious Leninists. Make donations payable/send to: Spartacist, Box 1377 GPO, NY, NY 10116 (earmark "Lenin-Liebknicht-Luxemburg Fund" or "3-L's Fund").

Three L's...

(continued from page 8)

found a KPD in the DDR—a left opposition to all these groups that clearly and unambiguously takes its stand in public.

What is this, anyway, the Left Opposition? What have we Trotskyists undertaken against Stalinism? What is Stalinism anyway? In the DDR press there have been a lot of articles lately dealing with Stalinism, and it's clear there's a lot of confusion, for common to all these articles is that they miss the essence of Stalinism.

Now, the first clear warning against a possible degeneration of a workers state can be found already in Frederick Engels. In his preface to the 1891 edition of *The Civil War in France* he formulates it roughly in this way: the working class must, if it is to seize political power, on the one hand smash the old bourgeois state machinery, but on the other hand it must defend itself against its own deputies and officials, so as not to lose again the political power it has just won.

Today with the knowledge of past history, one must say that Engels was unfortunately correct in this warning. It became evident that under capitalist conditions a workers aristocracy or workers bureaucracy would arise. But it also became evident that in a workers state a bureaucratic layer can arise that illegally usurps political power.

After the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, successfully carried out the October Revolution, the fledgling Soviet state was subjected to an imperialist war of aggression and a bloody civil war that claimed numerous victims. In his famous "April Theses," Lenin agreed with Trotsky's position and argued that in a country as backward as Russia, with strong feudal structures, it was possible to transform the bourgeois-democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class directly into socialist revolution.

But the reserves of the Russian Revolu-

tion were not to be found in Russia itself, but in the internationalist aid of other proletarians, and therefore ultimately in the extension of the revolution to the West. The Bolsheviks had particular expectations and particular hopes in the German working class. This was where Marxism had come from, and there was a long tradition in the German workers movement. The October Revolution had begun in effect under the slogan, "Russia is the spark, Germany will be the flame."

But the German Revolution of 1918 was drowned in blood by the rightist Social Democratic leadership. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered because they had come out for a German soviet republic.

In the meantime, civil war continued to rage in the Soviet Union. From a handful of Red Guards, Trotsky forged the Red Army and was its recognized leader. Partly, a very hard regime was necessary at this time in order to escape from the deadly encirclement. However, the Civil War also decimated the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves. It's clear that the party of 1923 was not the party

of 1917. More than 95 percent of the party members had joined only after the October Revolution.

Many party functionaries were used to commanding and ordering from the time of the Civil War. That was correct and necessary during the Civil War, but times had changed, it was now peacetime. So an army of administrators had formed within the party. Stalin became the advocate of these bureaucrats' interests. And in many respects he was an ideal advocate—energetic, wily, sly, and an old Bolshevik.

In addition, Stalin held in his hands several key positions. He was, firstly, People's Commissar for Nationalities, which is important in a multinational state like the Soviet Union. Moreover, he was commissar for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, a member of the Politburo and, since April 1922, general secretary of the party. Lenin, once he recovered from his first stroke, had clearly seen the immense danger emanating from the party bureaucracy.

In December 1922, Lenin launched his first blow against Stalin and his faction.

He criticized Stalin first of all over persecution of the national minority in Georgia. He attacked Stalin on the question of the monopoly of foreign trade. On January 23, he presented a proposal for the reorganization of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, further elaborated in "Better Fewer But Better" (March 1923).

To be sure, Stalin is not named in this article, but the direction of the attack was utterly clear. Stalin knew well what this language meant, and he also knew that he was dealing with a powerful opponent. On 25 December [1922] or 4 January 1923, Lenin dictated his letter to the Central Committee, frequently referred to as his political testament, in which he demanded Stalin's removal. On March 6, Lenin went so far as to break off all comradely and personal relations with Stalin.

But Lenin and Trotsky intended to launch the decisive blow jointly against the triumvirate (Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev, who led the party during Lenin's illness and after his death) at the

continued on page 12

Films Art et Science



Leon Trotsky, co-leader of the Bolshevik Revolution, speaks at a May Day rally in Red Square, Moscow, in the early 1920s. Banner salutes workers struggling against the old world of capitalist exploitation.

USSR...

(continued from page 1)

at the violence and risked their own lives to hide Armenian friends and neighbors from the blood-crazed mobs. The newspaper of the Soviet Communist Youth, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, reports that at the initiative of the Azerbaijan Komsomol, Azeri veterans of the Afghan war patrolled Armenian neighborhoods to prevent further pogroms.

The atrocities are by no means on one side alone. Armenian partisans, using helicopter gunships seized from the Soviet Army, have strafed Azerbaijani villages. The Moscow newspaper *Izvestia* reported that 3,000 Armenians attacked a village in Nakhichevan, an Azerbaijani enclave wedged between Armenia and Iran.

The decision to send troops won wide approval among the Soviet people. "Gorbachev had a responsibility to save lives," said a woman factory worker in Byelorussia (*New York Times*, 18 January). However, the Gorbachev regime has also encouraged pacifistic attitudes to justify its withdrawal from Afghanistan, where the Soviet Army was fighting a progressive war against imperialist-armed tribalists and Islamic fanatics. Thus many Russian parents protested against sending their sons to restore civil peace in the Caucasus. In response, the Soviet government halted calling up army reservists and announced that only regular military and police forces would be used in the



Soviet troops enter Baku as bloody communalist warfare rages in Caucasus.

operation.

While spokesmen for the Azerbaijani Popular Front threaten Gorbachev with a "new Afghanistan," the Soviet Army certainly has the power to control the region. But it cannot prevent small-group terrorism nor police every area where Armenians and Azeris are bent on killing one another. And what happens when the state of emergency is relaxed? The liberal Stalinist regime of Mikhail Gorbachev has no political an-

swer to the "nationalist rampage" and "fratricidal war" he condemns.

The Baku pogrom took place just after Gorbachev got back from Vilnius, where he appealed to Lithuanian nationalists not to secede from the USSR. The sending of troops into Azerbaijan has for the moment overshadowed the Lithuania crisis. Yet the secession of this Baltic republic would have grave consequences for the future of the Soviet Union. It would enormously embolden Western

Three L's...

(continued from page 11)

party congress in April 1923. This was only prevented by the last stroke, which Lenin suffered in March 1923.

I don't want to enter into historical speculation now. Perhaps it wasn't quite right that Trotsky didn't carry out the attack alone at this party congress. But one has to consider that he was still hoping for Lenin's recovery, and believed that a joint effort would be more effective. But as I said, no historical speculations, we have to stick to the facts.

From now on, the efforts of the triumvirate, that is to say the troika, were aimed at suffocating internal party democracy and removing leadership of the party from control by the members. Moreover, the bureaucratic outgrowths were extended to the entire state apparatus. The soviet system was smashed.

There was a further historical circumstance which enabled the Stalin faction to extraordinarily consolidate its power. In the spring of 1923, a revolutionary

situation had arisen again in Germany. The KPD [Communist Party of Germany] was supported by a majority of the German working class and had the possibility of taking political power, that literally lay in the streets. But the then party leadership around Brandler was too hesitant, and additionally received very contradictory instructions from the Comintern leadership, then under the influence of Stalin and Zinoviev.

Once again, a great historical chance was not utilized. The German Revolution of 1923 failed to take place, at least not in a positive sense. The upshot was that the working class in the Soviet Union, greatly decimated and also demoralized after the previous Civil War, still stood alone. The hoped-for and longed-for expansion of the revolution to the West did not take place. In addition there were the conditions I already indicated inside the party, and naturally Lenin's far too early death. All this made it possible for this bureaucratic layer to illegally usurp power in the party and state.

In 1924, Stalin and Bukharin, with whom he had in the meantime allied himself, set about elaborating the pro-

gram of "socialism in one country." This was a theory counterposed to the line of Lenin and Trotsky. It was the Trotskyists who resolutely fought the Stalinist bureaucracy since the early '20s. The Left Opposition, i.e., the Trotskyists, stood first of all for internationalism and for industrialization. They also defended the workers state against imperialist attacks, even after Trotsky's murder in 1940 in Mexican exile.

Well, this is precisely the tradition which we follow: we stand for the defense of the workers states. We also say: return to the road of Lenin, Trotsky, Liebknecht and Luxemburg. These names stand for soviet rule, that is, for a republic of workers councils.

At this point, I must of course add that we can't resolve the problems of the DDR inside the DDR itself. On the one hand, it is necessary to ally with the working class of West Berlin and the Federal Republic [West Germany]. That is why we say, for example: NARVA workers, speak with your class brothers at Osram, carry out combative joint actions against the sellout of the DDR, for if this sellout occurs, it will threaten jobs in the West as well.

Never forget to stand shoulder to shoulder with the other plants, with your colleagues of Elektrokohle, of October 7th, of Bergmann-Borsig, for they can be the next ones to be fired. Act together with your Vietnamese, Polish and Mozambican fellow workers. And also think of this: a soviet republic in all of Germany has been on the agenda for over 70 years, and will also provide a genuine revolutionary perspective for the working class in the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc.

In order to make this program of Lenin and Liebknecht and Luxemburg into reality, we need a new revolutionary party as the German section of the international communist movement.

The SED is not reformable, because these bureaucratic structures, formed in the years 1923-24, were transmitted directly to this party. They still have the program of socialism in one country, overlaid with the programmatic confusion in recent attempts to expand the program. But we also believe that many members of this party, as well as many former members who left the party for good reason, can be won to a genuine revolutionary perspective. This is why we

imperialism in its drive to break up the USSR and turn the remnants into neocolonies of Wall Street and the Frankfurt banks. The rabid anti-Communist Pat Buchanan, who enjoys defending Nazi war criminals, wrote gleefully a few weeks ago: "Is 1990 the year the Soviet Union breaks apart?"

Both Gorbachev and the Lithuanian nationalists of Sajudis are now posing secession as simply the exercise of national self-determination formally guaranteed in the founding 1924 constitution of the USSR. (This right was incorporated as the result of the dying Lenin's last struggle against Stalin's Great Russian chauvinism.) But the overriding goal of the Baltic nationalists is not independence but unity with the capitalist "free world." While screaming about the sacred cause of "independence," they are talking about forming a "Baltoscandia"—a union of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia with the capitalist countries of Scandinavia. And they expect generous aid from the coffers of Western imperialism. Under the guise of national liberation, the Lithuanian Sajudis and the Latvian and Estonian Popular Fronts are driving toward *social counterrevolution*.

The rise of reactionary nationalism is by no means limited to the periphery of the USSR. Ukrainian nationalism is stirring behind the revived Eastern Rite Catholic church. The most dangerous nationalism of all for the future of the Soviet Union is that of the dominant Russian people. And here we have seen the growth of the fascist Pamyat (Memory) and other Great Russian chau-

wrote the "Open Letter to All Communists," among other reasons.

We call on all who are in programmatic agreement with us to join with us, become members of the Spartakist-Gruppen, and together with us spread and advocate this program. It is in the tradition of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, that our slogan "For a Red Soviet Germany in a Socialist Europe" must be understood. It also depends, in conclusion, on us in the DDR learning to overcome our national blinders, that we learn again to think internationally.

DISCUSSION

The following remarks were made by a participant in the meeting.

I do not belong to the Spartakist-Gruppen, I still belong to the SED-PDS, and nevertheless I would like to make it possible to speak here. The demand has been raised, correctly, for a red soviet Germany. I don't want to—historically, I agree, the demand is right. I stress this because I am of the opinion that we must first give a new meaning to the word communism.

Since 1976, our citizens—to the extent they have attended higher educational establishments, which was after all obligatory—have become familiar with the presentation of communism in the [SED] program of 1976. We see every hour, every minute what that party program led to and what communism is. I see it as a very big question to develop a theory which is comprehensible for the workers, with which our workers can identify.

Karl Marx once said, in the *Manifesto*, that the working class in its revolutionary struggle had nothing to lose but its chains. Yes, in 1848 and for many years afterwards that was right. But the working class in the DDR has much to lose. And I am of the opinion that this is a situation which we must pay attention to in all these matters when we talk of a red soviet Germany, of workers and soldiers councils.

Perhaps we must have here our theoretical beginning, and perhaps the Spartakist-Gruppen in the DDR will have their own field in this area, in order—perhaps through the Spartakist-Gruppen—to form a new, truly communist party in the DDR. ■

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vinist outfits spewing out anti-Semitic filth as they scapegoat the Jews for the economic disaster of perestroika (restructuring). Last week Pamyat-type stormtroopers forced their way into the Moscow headquarters of the Writers Union and disrupted a meeting of anti-fascist intellectuals.

Why have violent and reactionary nationalist movements erupted under Gorbachev? Soviet spokesmen used to proudly point to Baku as a cosmopolitan multinational city. The large and thriving Armenian community—over 10 percent of the population—lived without fear of violence from their Azeri neighbors. There was a fair degree of intermarriage. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of Azeris lived peacefully in the Armenian republic. In the Baltic republics, anti-Soviet nationalism seemed limited to an extremist fringe. And Pamyat was viewed as a small group of backward-looking fanatics, not to be taken seriously.

But the apparent stability of Brezhnev's Soviet Union was illusory. Decades of Stalinist police-state rule trampled underfoot legitimate national grievances and rights while also suppressing the open, violent expression of nationalist hatreds and rivalries. All this came to the surface when Gorbachev loosened the political controls. However, perestroika has greatly fueled and intensified pre-existing national antagonisms. Political liberalization was tied to a program which encouraged economic competition and self-interest, and degraded the socialist principles of equality, internationalism and working-class solidarity.

The Gorbachev regime makes no attempt to appeal to Armenian and Azer-

but the latest round in the ancient blood feud between the traditionally Christian Armenians and Islamic, Turkic-speaking Azeris. The immediate trigger was mass Armenian agitation to change the status of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region, a mountainous enclave of 100,000 inhabitants—75 percent of them Armenian—within the boundaries and under the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijan republic. Nagorno-Karabakh was not an isolated territorial dispute but a symptom and symbol of resurgent Armenian nationalism. Armenian bureaucrats and intellectuals, the elite of a relatively economically advanced region of the USSR, saw themselves as the favored children of perestroika. When the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict exploded two years ago, we pointed out that "the Armenian bureaucracy and intelligentsia are pushing themselves forward at the expense of poorer, more culturally backward Azerbaijan" (WV No. 450, 8 April 1988).

Azerbaijanis reacted with a bloody pogrom against Armenians in the city of Sumgait, near Baku, in February 1988. Since then terror and counter-terror have driven 600,000 Armenians and Azeris from their homes, producing a mass of vengeful refugees on both sides. In the Azeris' eyes, the Armenians are favored by the Russians, fellow Christians who have historically regarded themselves protectors of the Armenians against the infidel Turk. Azerbaijani nationalists now look to Iran, where a majority of Azeris live, as their protector. Khomeini's picture is carried in their demonstrations, and the Baku pogromists chanted "Islamic Republic" along with "Down with Armenians!" And now the Azerbaijani



Der Spiegel
Mass coal miners strike rally in Siberia last July. Soviet working class is resisting disastrous effects of perestroika.

where Solidarność' program of capitalist restoration is driving the economy down to a Third World level.

When the Gorbachev "reformers" came to power, they branded the long Brezhnev regime as the "era of stagnation" and promised a new era of "socialist renewal." Now, after five years of perestroika, the Soviet Union has become a seething cauldron of economic discontent and national passions. A sense of bitterness and frustration, of despair and impotence is openly expressed by the prominent Gorbachevite publicist Alexander Bovin:

"Gorbachev faces an almost impossible dilemma. The sentiment for leaving the union outright has grown, and not only in the Baltic states. On the other hand, a man in Gorbachev's position cannot simply preside over the disassembly of the country, as we know it. What does he do? You tell me. Buy time any way he can—but what else?... No one sees a way out."

—Washington Post, 7 January

Bovin's plaintive cry—"No one sees a way out"—testifies to the total political bankruptcy of Stalinist bureaucratic rule in the Soviet Union.

There is a way out. It is returning to the proletarian internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky. As a first step, class-conscious workers and socialist intellectuals must smash the Pamyat fascists in the streets and root out all manifestations of Russian chauvinism and anti-Semitism. By combatting the chauvinists among the dominant Russian nationality, patriotic Soviet workers will gain the moral and political authority to counter the other reactionary nationalisms which now threaten to rip apart the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In the Baltics, roughly half the population of the Latvian and Estonian republics—and a majority of the proletariat—is

made up of Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Jews, ethnic Siberians and other Soviet peoples. These Russian-speaking workers have organized themselves into the "Internationalist Movement" to combat Baltic nationalism and defend their democratic rights. Yet in the absence of a genuinely internationalist program, this movement could easily fall prey to Russian nationalism, which cannot appeal to Latvian and Estonian workers, whose grandparents were staunchly pro-Bolshevik.

Communism has much to offer the Azeris and other traditionally Islamic and Turkic-speaking peoples in the Soviet Union—economic and social modernization, and not least the liberation and equality of women. A truly internationalist, all-out effort to crush feudal reaction in Afghanistan would have made the USSR into a beacon for social progress in the East. Under a Leninist leadership, instead of the Soviet Azeris being drawn into the orbit of Khomeiniite Iran, the nationally oppressed Azeris of Iran would be drawn toward Soviet power. The program of an independent Soviet Azerbaijan, uniting this Turkic people on both sides of the Araks River, would go a long way toward resolving on a progressive basis the national question in the Caucasus.

It is necessary to reforge in the Soviet Union an authentically Bolshevik party to lead the workers in sweeping out the Stalinist bureaucracy, establishing a regime based on soviet democracy, a planned, egalitarian economy, equality between peoples, and proletarian internationalism. Only such a program can liberate the creative energies of all Soviet peoples, overcoming the fratricidal national conflicts now raging in Gorbachev's Russia. ■



Niedenthal/Time
Anti-Soviet Lithuanian nationalists demonstrate on January 10, the day before Gorbachev arrived in Vilnius. Under cover of the right to national self-determination, Baltic nationalists are pushing toward capitalist restoration.

baijani workers against the petty-bourgeois agitators of genocide. And in the Baltics, as elsewhere, the whole thrust of perestroika has been to benefit intellectuals, technocrats and petty entrepreneurs—the social base of the nationalist movement—at the expense of the workers and collective farmers. Hence, the Gorbachevite Stalinists cannot unite Russian-speaking workers with their Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian class brothers on an egalitarian socialist program.

Working-class resistance to the ravages of perestroika is growing. Siberian coal miners are threatening further strikes. The most hated class of people in the Soviet Union are the petty capitalist entrepreneurs spawned by the economic "liberalization." The situation is crying out for the building of a genuinely communist party which can unite and mobilize the Soviet working class against the forces of murderous nationalism and capitalist restoration.

Perestroika Fuels Reactionary Nationalisms

The Western media present the communalist civil war in the Caucasus as

enclave of Nakhichevan has proclaimed its independence from the USSR and desire to be part of Iran.

Even more so than in the Caucasus, the resurgence of reactionary nationalism in the Baltic is directly tied to Gorbachev's market-oriented economic program. Like Armenia, the Baltic republics are a relatively advanced region that was slated to be in the vanguard of perestroika. Just as Armenian nationalists look down on Azeris, so Baltic nationalists look down on Russians. They think they will have a bright economic future as the Eastern fringe of the European Common Market.

In his debate with Lithuanian nationalists, Gorbachev accepted their framework. He only argued that an independent Lithuanian economy could not withstand competition in the world market. "You get independence—and switch to world prices—and you'll end up in the soup in no time," the Soviet leader told a crowd in Vilnius. "No, we won't!" people shouted back (*Baltimore Sun*, 12 January). Many Lithuanians foolishly believe they will be generously treated by the Western powers for helping break up the Soviet Union. Lithuanians would do well to look at neighboring Poland,

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Glory...

(continued from page 16)

Kansas, who went on to head the 2nd South Carolina Colored Volunteers in the Sea Islands off South Carolina and Georgia.

The Sea Islands were the scene of an early and rare Union victory in the war, when in November 1861 units seized Beaufort, South Carolina and established the Union Army's Department of the South. It was here that the "Gideon's Band" of New England abolitionists established the famous Port Royal experiment, organizing the society of thousands of liberated slaves along the coast. Heading the Union Army forces was General David Hunter, who demanded authority to arm the freed slaves who were flocking to the Union lines. For months Hunter battled Lincoln and the War Department. Even after Congress finally authorized the War Department to raise black regiments in July 1862, Lincoln at first refused to permit blacks to enter the war as anything other than laborers. The story of the South Carolina regiments, made up of former slaves known as "contrabands," is told in the history of their abolitionist commander, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment*.

"Men of Color, To Arms!"

Glory opens with the bloody slaughter at Antietam in September 1862. There were no black troops there, only grave-diggers and labor battalions. It was the victory of Union forces at Antietam that encouraged Lincoln to set forth the Emancipation Proclamation, to go into effect on 1 January 1863. Despite the continuing capitulation to the existence of slavery in the border states, there was no doubt that the "abolition war" had begun. As Douglass had been urging, finally the Union would "unchain against her foes, her powerful black hand."

On the heels of the Emancipation Proclamation, the abolitionists stepped up the campaign to enroll black troops in the Union Army. By the end of the war over 15 percent of the entire population of Northern blacks had volunteered. The honor of fielding the first black regiment was to go to Massachusetts, whose governor, the abolitionist John Andrew, petitioned the War Department for authorization in January 1863. Frederick Douglass, in "Men of Color, To Arms!", his famous call to black freedmen in the North, appealed for recruits for the Massachusetts 54th. His sons, Lewis and Charles, were among the first to join the regiment.

In *Glory*, the central characters represent the wide layer of blacks who filled the ranks: Morgan Freeman plays John Rawlins, a gravedigger who becomes a sergeant in the 54th; Andre Braugher is



Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, commander of the Massachusetts 54th.

Eakins Press

Shaw's childhood friend and intellectual Thomas Searle; Jihmi Kennedy plays Sharts, a South Carolina field hand; and Denzel Washington plays Trip, an angry and rebellious escaped slave. The officer corps of the black regiments was recruited with sharp political consciousness. Many, like Colonel Shaw, were the sons of prominent abolitionists, men who backed the true opening shot of the Civil War—John Brown's 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry.

In the opening battle scenes at Antietam, and later at Fort Wagner, *Glory* captures the carnage of the Civil War, where concentrated troops were slaughtered by massed firepower. As in all wars, the generals were fighting with the tactics of the last one. On the eve of the Civil War the rifle was transformed into a weapon of mass killing, with the introduction of the minié ball which enabled unskilled riflemen to rapidly load and accurately fire.

Shaw leaves the battle of Antietam slightly injured, and is soon offered the command of the 54th by Governor Andrew. In the film, Matthew Broderick captures both the hesitancy Shaw actually felt about assuming the command, and his subsequent development as an officer. *Glory* shows the coalescing of the 54th at camp in Readville, Massachusetts. In one moving scene, following the Confederacy's proclamation that both black troops and their white officers would face execution if captured, Shaw finds not one man has opted to leave the regiment.

In another scene (which actually took place later in South Carolina), the troops find out that the government has reversed its commitment to pay blacks equally with white troops, instead cutting their pay almost to half. Led by Trip, the

regiment rebels, refusing to accept their pay (a protest which went on for 18 months, as the 54th received nothing except their original bounty of \$50 upon joining). Shaw refuses to accept pay for himself and his officers, as long as the regiment refuses theirs.

Even as the Union Army battled the slavocracy, it was rife with the racism of American society. Of 180,000 black troops, only 90 served as officers—and those were appointed in defiance of the War Department. *Glory* shows the struggle of black regiments for decent clothing and equipment, and the disproportionate discipline meted out to black troops. In one scene, Trip is flogged for "deserting" camp in search of shoes. Even the hard-nosed Irish drill sergeant is taken aback when he exposes the years of scars on Trip's back. Denzel Washington said that the whipping scene shocked the cast as they saw "a very basic nightmare in American history" (*New York Times*, 28 December 1989). Burchard, the author of *One Gallant Rush* and a consultant on the film, may be correct when he doubts that Shaw would have allowed the whipping.

Total War

When the 54th sails south to join Hunter's command at Beaufort, South Carolina, they arrive just as a raiding party of the 2nd South Carolina Colored troops is returning. Under the command of Kansas Jayhawker James Montgomery, the raid was guided by the famed conductor on the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman. Montgomery and Tubman were employing a policy of *total war* to break the economic power and morale of the slavocracy. This was later to become the hallmark of General Sherman's march through Georgia and Sheridan's devastation of the Shenandoah Valley. When a Mississippi planter rode up on a mule and complained to one of Grant's commanders that Union troops had robbed him of all his possessions, the general replied: "Well, those men didn't belong to my division at all, because if they were my men they wouldn't have left you that mule" (quoted in James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* [1988]).

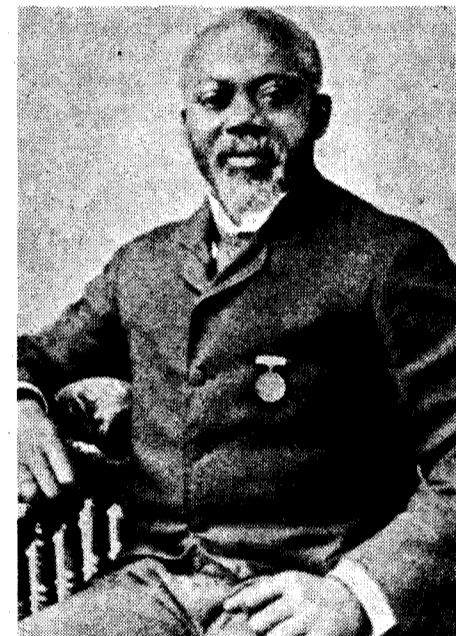
One of the 54th's first actions is depicted in *Glory*, as Shaw and his men join Montgomery in a raid on the town of Darien, Georgia. In the film Shaw angrily protests, as he actually did, the looting and burning of the town. Shaw and the Boston abolitionists were furious at the "border war" tactics that Montgomery employed, and they protested vigorously. Shaw was worried that news of the raids would "produce a reaction against arming the Negroes" in the North and provoke retaliation by the enemy against black troops.

While overwhelmingly accurate, *Glory* does misfire on some of the history of the black regiments and their officers. *Glory* fabricates an assault in Darien by

one of Montgomery's soldiers on a white woman, and the shooting of the soldier by Montgomery. The same scene disparages the South Carolina "contrabands" as wild and undisciplined marauders compared to the disciplined and dignified men of the Massachusetts 54th. Montgomery, fresh from the Kansas front, represented a different wing of the abolitionist movement, one frequently at odds with the New England abolitionists represented in the Department of the South by Shaw and Higginson. Dudley Taylor Cornish noted in his early work *The Sable Arm, Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865*: "Higginson, the romantic, had raised money to send Sharps rifles to Kansas in the fifties. Montgomery, the realist, had used them."

The 54th in Action

Glory does justice to the heroic 54th, particularly in the inspiring battle scenes, first on James Island and finally in the assault on Fort Wagner. In strikingly realistic battle scenes, but without appeals to pacifism, *Glory* shows what the Civil War was all about. On 16 July 1863 the 54th was employed in a feint on the Confederate position on James Island, below Charleston harbor. Under assault by a superior enemy force, the 54th held its ground, saving the 10th Connecticut from being cut off. A white soldier in the 10th wrote home: "But for the bravery of three companies of the Massachusetts



Association for the Study of Negro Life and History
Sergeant William H. Carney won Congressional Medal of Honor for planting flag of the 54th at Fort Wagner.

Fifty-fourth (colored), our whole regiment would have been captured.... They fought like heroes" (Joseph Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*).

Two days after the engagement on James Island the 54th was chosen to lead the assault on Fort Wagner. Although they had gone for two days without rest or food, nothing could have stopped the men of the 54th from taking their place of honor. Fort Wagner was a heavily protected installation which guarded the batteries at Charleston harbor. In preparation for the assault, dozens of Union ships bombarded the fort. At sunset on July 18, the Union troops formed up on the beach, with 600 men of the Massa-



In *Glory*, men of the 54th rip up their pay slips after U.S. government reneges on the promise of equal pay for black and white soldiers.

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Company Thugs Gun Down West Virginia Miners

Pittston Miners: Rip Up Trumka's Sellout!

JANUARY 22—For ten months the miners of Virginia, Kentucky and West Virginia have been on the front line of the class war, battling for their union and for all working people. The 1,900 strikers, members of the United Mine Workers (UMW), have stood solid in the face of Pittston's hired thugs, an army of Virginia state troopers who have made almost 3,000 arrests, and coal company judges who have handed down \$64 million in fines. Now, on January 16 three union pickets at another company, Regency Industries in Northfork Hollow, West Virginia, were shot in the back by company gun thugs. UMW brother John McCoy was killed fighting for his union.

But UMW president Richard Trumka is trying to sell a contract which threatens everything the Pittston strikers have fought for. Why do you think they're keeping the terms secret from the miners? This will open the floodgates to a coal company offensive against the health and pension funds and industry-wide bargaining, endangering the very existence of the union. Miners: Burn the sellout! Take the strike out of the stranglehold of the Trumka bureaucracy with elected strike committees that will use labor's muscle to win.

Even as the Pittston strikers wait to see the contract, the coal bosses unleashed deadly terror in Northfork Hollow. The company took the mine non-union five months ago, locking out the union men and refusing to pay medical benefits and back wages. Miners were picketing on January 16 when suddenly there was a fusillade of automatic weapons fire. "It sounded like World War I out there," said one witness. Three pickets fell, shot in the back.

A member of the "Daughters of Mother Jones," the wife of a Pittston striker,

told WV: "It was planned—they fully intended to kill all three of those men.... We lost a strong union man." John McCoy had been active in the A.T. Massey strike. But the only response of the UMW tops to the murder was to express their "faith" in the state police and West Virginia governor Gaston Caperton.

The Pittston sellout comes straight from Bush's Labor Department in a deal cooked up on New Year's Eve. Three weeks later the details are still being kept from the miners, but the capitalist press is already gloating. The *Wall Street Journal* (2 January) calls it "the death knell" for industrywide bargaining in coal. The Trumka bureaucracy has betrayed the most deeply felt demand of the strikers: the protection of their health and pension funds. For the first time in 40 years, a coal company will escape paying into the fund which provides desperately needed medical care for 125,000 retired UMW miners.

Miners are being told to trade their medical care for the fraud of a government "commission" to study the health and pension funds. If this settlement goes through, it will set a precedent that threatens the whole fund. But this massive assault on health care won't go down lightly in an industry where lung disease claims the lives of 4,000 workers every year.

Miners from Pennsylvania to Alabama have demonstrated what's needed, from the 50,000-strong national wildcat strikes in June and July to the stunning occupation of Pittston's Moss No. 3 processing plant in September. From the beginning of the strike last April, Pittston miners inspired labor across the country—40,000 unionists have journeyed to Camp Solidarity in southwest Virginia to back the strike.

When UMW District 28 president

Cindy Reiman/Impact Visuals



Miners inside Moss No. 3 plant in September. Occupation shut down Pittston's scab operations.

Cecil Roberts ran a write-in campaign against a local state representative, the father of a coal company judge, Roberts was elected by a huge margin. But far from breaking with their phony "friends of labor" in the Democratic Party, Roberts and the Trumka bureaucracy have throttled every attempt to extend the strike. Not one train of scab coal has been stopped at the port of Hampton Roads, Virginia, and orders went out from AFL-CIO headquarters to cross miners' picket lines at steel plants in the Midwest.

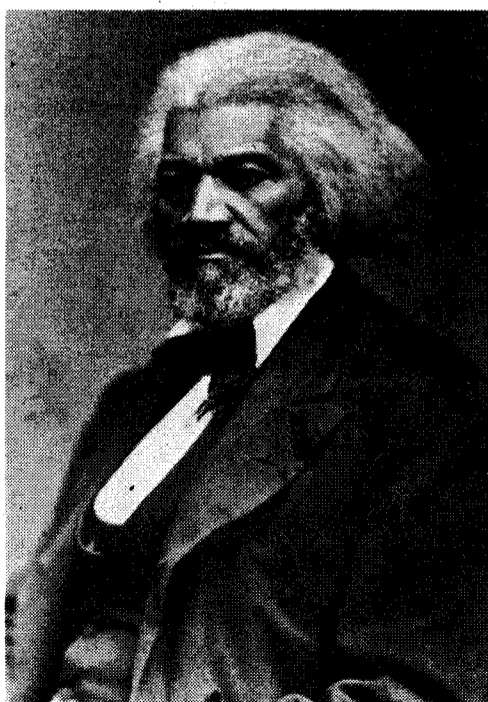
The UMW, which is about to celebrate the 100th anniversary of its founding, used to be known as the "shock troops of American labor." But after being saddled by Labor Department "reformers" from Arnold Miller to Richard Trumka, the UMW has been decimated. Today there are only 60,000 working miners in the UMW. Less than one-third of U.S. coal mined is union. Miners desperately need a class-struggle leadership that will bring out labor's power, defying the bosses' "rules" and leading the fight for a workers party. ■

chusetts 54th in the vanguard. Shaw sought the lead, and told his troops: "The eyes of thousands will look on what you do tonight."

The 54th marched into Fort Wagner's guns, which exacted a horrible toll. Shaw was killed as he led his men up the ramparts; so many of the 54th's officers fell that Emilio, the most junior captain, had to assume command. The regiment held its position on the edge of the fort for three deadly hours. All told 247 men, 40 percent of the regiment, were killed or wounded in the assault. Following Union regiments were also wiped out. Harriet Tubman described the battle:

"And then we saw the lightning, and that was the guns; and then we heard the thunder, and that was the big guns; and then we heard the rain falling, and that was the drops of blood falling; and when we came to get in the crops, it was dead men that we reaped."

In their racist hatred for Shaw and the Massachusetts 54th, the enemy stripped the young colonel's body and, in the words of Confederate officials, "buried him with his niggers." When Union troops sought to retrieve Shaw's body, his father insisted that the enemy's unintended honor be left alone: "We hold that a soldier's most appropriate burial-place is on the field where he has fallen" (Luis F. Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment* [1969]).



Frederick Douglass House
Revolutionary abolitionist Frederick Douglass campaigned for blacks to join the Union Army.

Like the heroism shown by black fighters at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend, the actions of the Massachusetts 54th at Fort Wagner resounded across

MEN OF COLOR
To Arms! To Arms!
NOW OR NEVER
THREE YEARS' SERVICE!
BATTLES OF LIBERTY AND THE UNION
FAIL NOW, & OUR RACE IS DOOMED
SILENCE THE TONGUE OF CALUMNY
VALOR AND HEROISM
PORT HUDSON AND MILLIKEN'S BEND,
ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVES
OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY HAS COME
MEN OF COLOR BROTHERS AND FATHERS!
WE APPEAL TO YOU!
STRIKE NOW!

the country; the floodgates were open for massive recruitment of black troops. By the end of the war, 186,000 had served in 167 regiments; more than 123,000

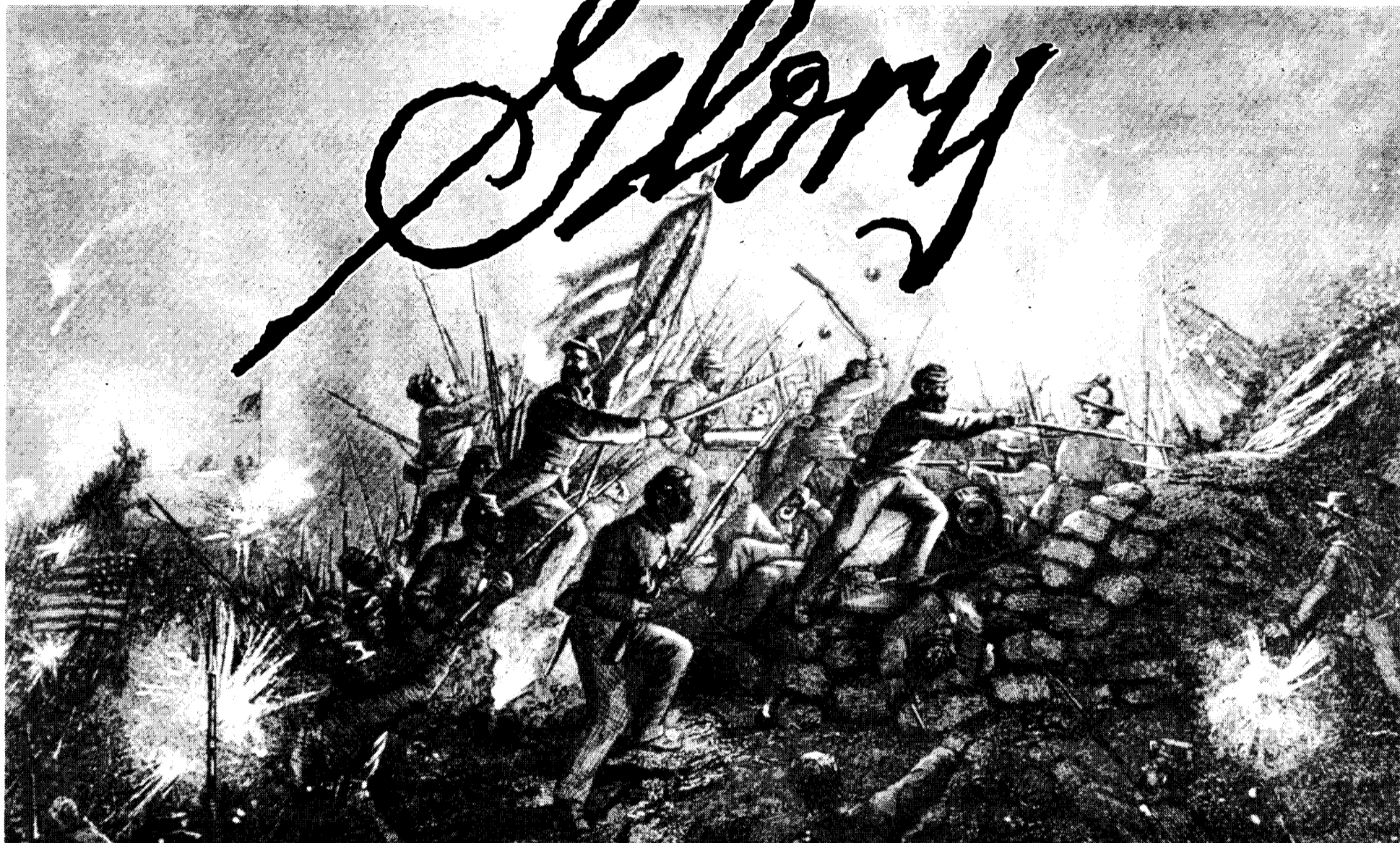
were under arms at one point. It was the black troops that turned the tide of the war. At the mustering-out speech of Higginson's regiment, one of its officers pointed to the debt owed the 54th:

"Near you rest the bones of Colonel Shaw, buried by an enemy's hand, in the same grave with his black soldiers, who fell at his side; where, in future, your children's children will come on pilgrimages to do homage to the ashes of those that fell in this glorious struggle."

The sacrifices of the hundreds of thousands of black and white Union soldiers who fell in the Civil War ushered in the most democratic period blacks have ever known in this country. Black rights were enforced in the Reconstruction South at riflepoint by the interracial Union Army. But the economic power of the former slavocracy was never destroyed. In a dozen years, signaled by the Compromise of 1877, ascendant Northern capitalism abandoned the freedmen, making peace with Southern landowners and destroying the gains that blacks had paid for in blood. The planters re-established their power, exploiting black labor in a sharecropping system enforced by vicious Jim Crow segregation. To complete the unfinished tasks of the Civil War, to pay homage to the fight of the men of *Glory*, will take a third American revolution, a proletarian revolution led by the multiracial American working class. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Black Soldiers Fight for Freedom



The Massachusetts 54th, most celebrated black regiment in the Civil War, leading assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina, July 1863.

Library of Congress

A Review by Francis Daly

It is certainly rare for the power of a social revolution to come through in a Hollywood movie. But that is what you see in *Glory*, the moving story of the first Northern regiment of black troops in the Civil War, the Massachusetts 54th. As the "New South" celebrates racist reaction with the 50th anniversary of *Gone With the Wind*, today's fighters for black freedom can see in *Glory* a truthful and inspiring account of the men whose actions transformed the American Civil War.

The film illuminates one of the blank pages of official American history—that black soldiers played a *decisive* role in the Union victory. "I don't want Americans to think that blacks went from slave ships to Martin Luther King," said *Glory*'s producer Freddie Fields. "They contributed to American history greatly, yet few know it."

Glory is based on the hundreds of letters of the commanding officer of the 54th, Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, and two books: *Lay This Laurel*, by Lincoln Kirstein, which tells the story of the 54th and the monument on the Boston Common by sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens erected in their honor; and *One Gallant Rush*, Peter Burchard's history of Shaw and the regiment, from its formation through the assault on Fort Wagner, a key Confederate bastion protecting the batteries guarding the Charleston harbor. It is the movie's accuracy which gives it its power, as director Edward Zwick lets history show the revolutionary force unleashed as blacks were finally

able to take up arms in the fight for freedom. It is the story of heroic fighters in a war against oppression.

For an "Abolition War"

At the outset, the "War of the Rebellion" was being fought only to "preserve the Union" (and fought badly by incompetent and politically unreliable Union Army generals). In opposition to Lincoln, abolitionists sought to transform the war into a *war of emancipation*. The great abolitionist leader and former slave Frederick Douglass hammered away that a

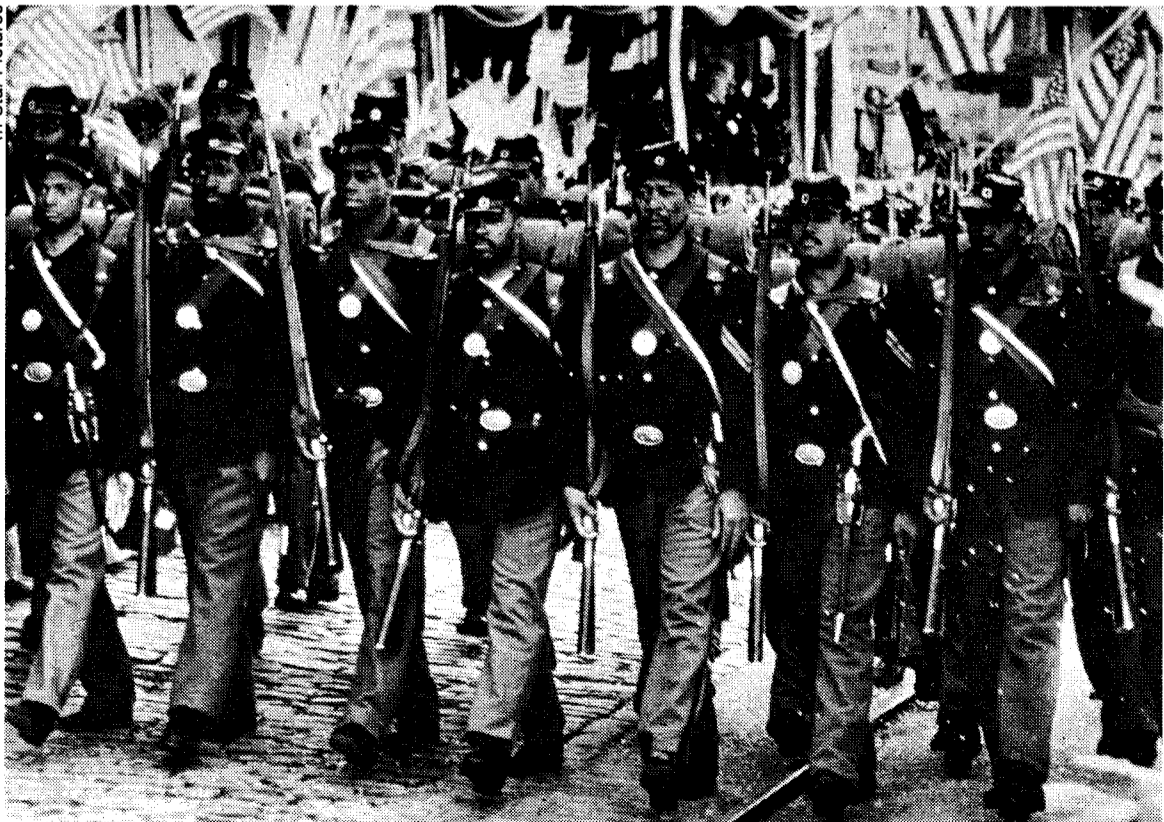
Northern victory against the slavocracy was dependent on an all-out battle to smash the slave system at its root. Douglass thundered: "*Let the slaves and free colored people be called into service, and formed into a liberating army, to march into the South and raise the banner of Emancipation among the slaves.*"

For over a year, Lincoln's endless compromises with the border states, and his generals' failure to meet the Confederate army in the field, had led to disaster. Despite the policy of Lincoln and the War Department, General John

Phelps raised three regiments of "Native Guards" in Louisiana. In Kansas, the Jayhawkers—"free-soilers"—had engaged in a border war with Missouri slaveholders, a dress rehearsal for the Civil War. With the onset of the war, the free-soilers were more than willing to arm black soldiers. One Jayhawker told the slaveholders that if they "objected to being killed by Negroes...let them lay down their arms'." One of these Jayhawkers was James Montgomery, a former lieutenant of John Brown in bloody

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Tri-Star Pictures



Scene in *Glory* shows black soldiers of the 54th parading through Boston on their way to the South.