

For a Workers Party that Champions the Cause of All the Oppressed!



Demonstration for black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal in Philadelphia, August 12. Mobilizing the social power of the integrated labor movement is key to the struggle against racial oppression. WV Photo

Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

We print below, in slightly edited and abridged form, a presentation by Spartacist League Central Committee member Don Alexander at a November 18 SL forum in Berkeley.

Following the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union, the U.S. ruling class believes it can do *anything* to the workers, the poor, the elderly, blacks and Hispanics, without the slightest danger of social unrest. During the Reagan/Bush years, the period of the anti-Soviet war drive,

For Revolutionary Integrationism

racism became increasingly "respectable." The capitalist mouthpieces, black and white, pounded away at the "dependency" of blacks on the government and denounced "welfare cheats." Black liberals like William Julius Wilson and his book, *The Declining Significance of Race*, were hailed as truly erudite in order to justify increased

racist cutbacks and reaction. Recently, neoconservative darling Dinesh D'Souza authored a book, *The End of Racism*, which said that slavery wasn't racist. He has also advocated the abolition of not only affirmative action but the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The racist scapegoating of blacks has become the bipartisan bourgeois con-

sensus, reflected in one out of every three black youth being in jail or under the thumb of the racist judiciary system, the wholesale dismantling of welfare and job programs, the growing number of black and Latino youths gunned down by the murderous police, the malign neglect of the victims of AIDS and TB epidemics in the ghettos and barrios, and of course the attempts to roll back affirmative action—a minimal gain won through struggle

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Imperialist "Peace" Means More Bloodshed

U.S./NATO Get Your Bloody Hands Off the Balkans!

Following the imposition of an American-dictated "peace" deal on the warring nationalists in Bosnia on November 21, an occupation force of 60,000 NATO troops, including 20,000 from the U.S., is set to descend on the Balkans. The agreement was initiated by the leaders of Serbia, Croatia and the Bosnian Muslims after three weeks of strong-arm "negotiations" at a U.S. Air Force base near Dayton, Ohio.

Some 2,000 troops are now about to move in to establish the "logistical and

communications framework" for the NATO expeditionary force, joining more than 20,000 "United Nations peacekeepers" already in place. Hundreds of American soldiers are also currently stationed nearby in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. Clinton menacingly vowed to use "immediate and decisive force" in Bosnia, while his national security adviser Anthony Lake threatened, "If anybody fools with our forces, they will get hit.... They will get hit very hard."

The imperialists who today proclaim "peace" in Bosnia are the same war criminals who waged mass murder against the people of Iraq, and who perpetrated torture and massacres in the racist occupation of Somalia. Workers and the oppressed around the world must demand: All U.S., NATO and "UN" troops

get out of the Balkans—and stay out!

The U.S.-imposed pact and NATO occupation will produce yet more bloodshed, while further hardening nationalist hatreds among the South Slav peoples. The big winner is Croatia, which retains lands captured from the Serbs in last summer's military offensive and has effectively annexed large parts of the so-called "Muslim-Croat federation" in Bosnia, leaving a rump Muslim-run statelet under Croatian suzerainty. The imperialist "peace" redraws various boundaries in order to carve out geographically contiguous Muslim-Croat and Bosnian Serb republics, while the projected "unification" of Sarajevo will place about 120,000 Bosnian Serbs under Muslim control. This will engender yet more forced population trans-

fers, on top of more than *three million* refugees already displaced by "ethnic cleansing."

The civil war in the Balkans grew directly out of the imperialist-fomented counterrevolution which destroyed the Yugoslav deformed workers state, pitting the various South Slav peoples against one another in a four-year orgy of bloodletting. The International Communist League opposed all sides in this internecine warfare, while simultaneously opposing all imperialist and "UN" intervention, including the crippling economic embargo against Serbia. But with last summer's massive NATO terror-bombing of the Bosnian Serbs, preceded by a U.S./German-sponsored Croatian offensive which drove 200,000 Serbs from their homes in the Krajina region, the character of the conflict shifted to become an imperialist war against the Bosnian Serbs. The ICL held emergency protests in the U.S., Germany and elsewhere calling to defend the Bosnian Serbs against the attacks by U.S./NATO imperialism and its puppets of the Muslim-Croat alliance.

In contrast, many liberals and even self-styled socialists, like the Socialist Action group in the U.S., have enlisted in the imperialist crusade over "poor little Bosnia." Screaming for more aggressive intervention to "defend Bosnia,"

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Tenth Annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

"The labor movement must be awakened from its slumber and must be roused to the menacing significance of the attempt of the capitalists to break the morale of the working class by imprisoning its best fighters. The workers must not be allowed to forget those who lie in prison for them, but must be stirred into action in their defense.

"The International Labor Defense will take the initiative to organize a wide-spread campaign for the unconditional release of imprisoned fighters of the class struggle and will endeavor

to unite all the forces of conscious and militant labor for this fight."

—from the Resolutions of the First Conference of the International Labor Defense, 28 June 1925

This year marks the Partisan Defense Committee's tenth "Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners." Our annual Holiday Appeal fund drive sustains the monthly stipend payments to our class-war prisoners throughout the year and also provides for individual holiday gifts for prisoners and their families. In the ten years since the PDC's first Holiday Appeal, the children of some of our foremost class-war prison-



Victims of capitalist repression: Mumia Abu-Jamal, Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), Jerry Dale Lowe. Their fight is our fight!

ers—like Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal—have become young adults, while the struggle for their fathers' freedom continues.

In initiating the stipend program and annual Holiday Appeals, the PDC revived a tradition of the International Labor Defense (ILD) and its founder and early leader, James P. Cannon. The ILD, the American affiliate of the International Red Aid, was born in discussions between Cannon and Bill Haywood in Moscow in 1925. Haywood, an early Industrial Workers of the World leader, had gone into exile in Moscow after being convicted—along with thousands of other members of the IWW and the antiwar wing of the Socialist Party—for his opposition to World War I. These discussions resulted in a fusion of the internationalism of the Russian Revolution with Haywood and Cannon's shared IWW heritage of militant labor struggle and non-sectarian defense embodied in the slogan, "an injury to one is an injury to all."

The class-war prisoners who receive stipends from the PDC today are fighters against racist and capitalist oppression from many different political backgrounds. They include:

Death row political prisoner **Mumia Abu-Jamal**, a founding member and spokesman for the Philadelphia branch of the Black Panther Party, award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" and supporter of the MOVE organization. Over 800 pages of FBI files obtained under the Freedom of Information Act confirm that Jamal was a target of the FBI in collaboration with the Philly cops, because he was a powerful spokesman for the oppressed and vocal critic of racist cop terror. In the face of overwhelming evidence of Jamal's frame-up, on September 15 Judge Albert ("king of death row") Sabo turned down Jamal's motion for a new trial. Jamal's attorneys began the appeal process on October 10.

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), former Black Panther leader and victim of a racist FBI COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program) frame-up. Geronimo has spent 25 years in prison for a murder the government knows he did not commit. Former FBI agent M. Wesley Swearingen, in his recently published book, *FBI Secrets: An Agent's Exposé*, reveals that there were no less than three different sets of FBI wiretaps on the Panther offices—by the Oakland, San Francisco and Los Angeles Bureau branches—revealing that Geronimo was in Oakland at the time, 400 miles away from the scene of the murder for which he was framed and sentenced to life.

Jerry Dale Lowe, United Mine Workers (UMWA) member framed on federal charges in the shooting death of a scab contractor in Logan County, West Virginia. On September 20, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit turned down Lowe's appeal, condemning him to nearly eleven years in prison for the "crime" of defending his union.

Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (David Rice), former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. Also victims of COINTELPRO, they were framed up for an explosion in 1970 which killed a cop. Both were con-

victed on perjured testimony and sentenced to life. Poindexter is at Lino Lake, Minnesota and Mondo is at Lincoln, Nebraska.

Jaun Laaman and **Ray Luc Levasseur**, of the Ohio 7, arrested in 1984 and 1985 respectively. Radical activists, they share a history of opposition to racism and imperialism. The two were sentenced to 45 years to life under the RICO ("racketeering") conspiracy laws on allegations of attacks targeting symbols of U.S. imperialism in the late '70s and '80s. Jaun Laaman is at Leavenworth, Kansas and Ray Luc Levasseur is at Florence, Colorado, one of the high-tech "supermax" hellholes.

Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. A militant anti-racist, he was a leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson and has spent over 30 years in prison. He is currently serving a life sentence at Crescent City, California.

Over the years, we have counted among our class-war prisoners numerous members and supporters of the controversial MOVE organization. Some were imprisoned for defending their homes from cop assaults in 1977 and 1978. Many of their loved ones outside prison walls, including children, were murdered in the savage 13 May 1985 Philadelphia police bombing of their Osage Avenue home.

We send stipends to nine MOVE members who are serving sentences of 30-100 years in prisons throughout Pennsylvania: **Chuck Africa**, Graterford; **Debbie Sims Africa**, Cambridge Springs; **Delbert Orr Africa**, Dallas; **Edward Goodman Africa**, Camp Hill; **Janet Holloway Africa**, Cambridge Springs; **Janine Phillips Africa**, Cambridge Springs; **Merle Austin Africa**, Cambridge Springs; **Michael Davis Africa**, Graterford; and **William Phillips Africa**, Dallas.

Each of these class-war prisoners has fought, in his or her own way, in the interests of all of the working class—against racism, union-busting and capitalist oppression. Our duty to them now is solidarity, to take up their cases and causes, to fight for their freedom.

Jaun Laaman of the Ohio 7 recently wrote about the stipend program: "The PDC's non-sectarian political and material support helps sustain us in our daily struggles behind prison walls. Many people may not be aware that prisoners have to purchase most of their necessities (stamps, envelopes, pens, soap, toothpaste, vitamins, pay for phone calls, etc.) and at prices often higher than outside. The material support aids our lives. Probably more importantly though, is the knowledge that at least a small core of people who share our concerns and hopes for justice, freedom, peace, and a better life for our children, have not forgotten us."

We encourage WV readers to participate and be proud of your part in sending a message of solidarity from those outside prison walls to these victims of capitalist state repression. Send your Holiday Appeal contributions now. Support and build the PDC. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. Send donations to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■



TROTSKY

Capitalist Decay and the Bankruptcy of Reformism

The capitalist world today exhibits an ever wider chasm between the wealthy few and the impoverished many. Writing amid the ravages of the Great Depression of the 1930s, on the eve of World War II and the Nazi Holocaust, Leon Trotsky refuted the reformist cynics who dismissed the Marxist program of the Fourth International, founded in 1938, as "sectarian dogma." Against the liberals and social democrats

who argued that the problems of the boom-bust profit system could be rectified through piecemeal reform, Trotsky emphasized that the only road out of continued capitalist decay lay in the struggle for world socialist revolution under the leadership of an internationalist proletarian vanguard party.

In the good old days, when people referred to the crisis of Marxism they had in mind some specific proposition of Marx which had allegedly failed to withstand the test of facts: namely, the theory of the sharpening of the class struggle; the so-called "theory of impoverishment," and the so-called theory of "catastrophic collapse" of capitalism. These three principal points served as the target for bourgeois and reformist criticism. Today it is simply impossible to engage in a controversy over these issues. Who will undertake to prove that social contradictions are not sharpening but rather softening?... Those lines in *Capital* in which Marx speaks of the polarization of capitalist society, the accumulation of wealth at one pole and of poverty at the other—these lines, which have been indicted as "demagogic," now simply prove to be a picture of reality.

The old liberal democratic conception of a gradual and universal rise of prosperity, culture, peace, and liberty has suffered decisive and irreparable shipwreck. In its wake, there has been bankrupted the social reformist conception, which represented in essence only an adaptation of the ideas of liberalism to the existing working class conditions. All these theories and methods had their roots in the epoch of free trade and competition, that is to say, in the past beyond recall, a time when capitalism was still a relatively progressive system. Capitalism today is reactionary. It cannot be cured. It must be removed....

It will be recorded in the annals of history that capitalism, before sinking into the grave, made a tremendous effort at self-preservation over a protracted historical period. The bourgeoisie does not want to die. It has transformed all the energy inherited by it from the past into a violent convulsion of reaction. This is precisely the period in which we are living....

Yet the conditions which have prepared the present wave of reaction are extremely unstable, contradictory, and ephemeral, and they prepare the ground for a new offensive by the proletariat. The leadership of this offensive will justly belong to those whom the rationalists call dogmatists and sectarians. Because "dogmatists" and "sectarians" refuse to renounce the scientific method so long as nobody, absolutely nobody, has proposed anything superior in its place.

—Leon Trotsky, "Once Again on the 'Crisis of Marxism'" (March 1939)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD



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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: George Foster

EDITOR: Jan Norden

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Carla Wilson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Shauna Blythe

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Liz Gordon, Frank Hunter, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer, Marjorie Stamberg

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The closing date for news in this issue is November 28.

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1 December 1995

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Protectionism vs. Class Struggle Exchange on Boeing Strike

IAM District Lodge No. 24
Portland, Oregon

1 November 1995

Dear Editor:

During our strike rally at Boeing Portland on Saturday, October 21, I was told that someone from your newspaper wanted to interview me. We did not make connections, but I did read the article in your October 20 issue which someone left at our strike headquarters trailer.

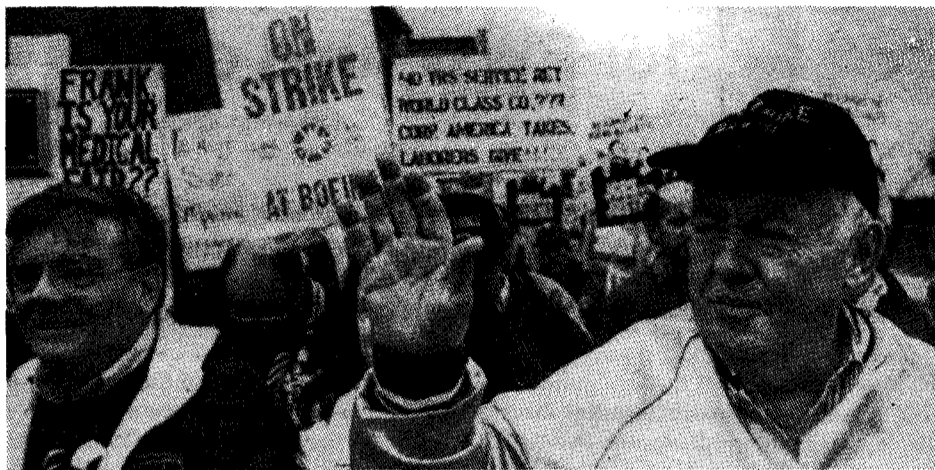
I was disappointed that the bulk of your article entitled, "Victory to the Boeing Strike!" was devoted to a strident attack on those of us fortunate enough to be in leadership positions in the Machinists Union, whom you chose to characterize as "bureaucrats," "tops," and other pejorative terms. You particularly criticize us for criticizing Boeing's off-loading of the jobs of our members to overseas subcontractors, who exploit their workers while our members' livelihood disappears.

We are used to Boeing and the rest of Corporate America preaching the virtues of free trade to us, while at the same time claiming they are being blackmailed into sending our jobs overseas in order to sell their planes. Our position is that existing trade laws prohibit the kind of "offset" demands Boeing claims it is being forced into granting to other countries. Besides, we think Boeing is pretty willingly "blackmailed" into sending its work to countries like China, where the average skilled aerospace worker earns \$50 per month.

Sure, we realize that the long-term solution to keeping multi-national corporations from playing off workers in one country against workers in other countries is to raise the wage standards in the low-wage countries. Our union has been actively engaged in meeting with union leaders representing aerospace workers around the world to shape common strategies against multi-national aerospace corporations like Boeing. Last October, Machinists Union leaders, including myself, met with other affiliates of the International Metalworkers Federation in Hamburg, Germany, to coordinate our efforts. IAM President

George Kourpias, who you excoriate in your article, is president of the Aerospace Division of the IMF, and has taken a lead role in working with unions involved in the aerospace industry around the world.

Unfortunately, though most of Boeing's off-loading of work involves Asian countries, no union leaders from Asia, except for a Japanese delegation and a lone delegate from India, were present at the Hamburg IMF Aerospace Confer-



IAM president George Kourpias (left) and new AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney at November 12 Boeing strike rally, Everett, Washington. Union tops sabotage class struggle while pushing nationalist appeals to line workers up behind U.S. bosses.

ence. The fact is that most of the Asian countries where Boeing is sending our work do not allow free trade unions, which accounts for the absence of delegates from China, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc.

Our members are currently at war with a corporation that is used to ordering governments (including our own) around. It is not much help to have the alleged "workers vanguard" preaching the virtues of free trade to us. We've heard enough of that tripe from the Boeings of this world.

During the Great Depression, an economist who spoke out for the necessity of government intervention to revive the economy was told by the classical economists of the day (who also believed in "free trade") that the economy would right itself "in the long run" if govern-

ment just left things alone. John Maynard Keynes gave the proper response to his critics: "In the long run, we shall all be dead."

We in the leadership of the Machinists Union don't want to wait until our members are all dead to try to prevent their jobs from being sent overseas. A study we commissioned in preparation for this year's negotiations with Boeing predicted that, by the year 2013, four-fifths of the 500,000 current American aero-

space jobs will be shipped overseas. While that gloomy prediction may not bother the "workers vanguard," it does concern our union's leaders, all of whom came out of the shops themselves. Our members told us their number one issue was job security, and we will not ignore their concerns for themselves and their children.

In labelling us "chauvinists," you defame our members and blast the wrong target. We believe that workers around the world are equally intelligent. We also think that if Boeing is allowed to ship its technology and state-of-the-art machinery overseas, workers in low-wage countries will be capable of producing airplanes just as efficiently as American workers. It is Boeing that really displays a racist attitude, when they tell us not to worry—those Asian workers will never be able to manufacture a whole airplane without Boeing's managerial and technical expertise.

I haven't really kept up with the Marxist splinter groups in recent years. But as someone who knows a little about the historical "Spartacist League," I believe Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht would be rolling over in their graves if they knew their purported heirs were carrying the "free trade" water for the likes of Boeing. Instead of levelling your broadsides at the IAM leadership, you should try focusing your criticism on Boeing, which is determined to destroy the jobs of its American workers by exploiting the opportunities for cheap labor in countries where real workers' organizations are prohibited. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* recently reported (31 August 1995) that the pay of those \$50 per month Chinese aerospace workers was being docked if they reported making an error, causing quality problems for Boeing because inspectors didn't report their fellow workers' mistakes out of compassion. Perhaps you should be criticizing the leadership of the party-led Chinese unions.

In your article, you tell us we should have our members occupy Boeing's factories. But at the same time, you don't want us to keep the work performed in those factories from being shipped overseas because that is "protectionist poison." Just what do you propose our members do in those occupied factories when the work they have formerly done has been shipped to China?

Sincerely,
Dave Plant
Directing Business Representative

WV replies:

Dear Brother Plant:

The current strike by aerospace workers at Boeing poses fundamental questions for the political future of American labor. This is one of the few remaining American high-technology industries, one which is vital to the capitalist rulers of this country in their competition for markets worldwide. Thus the drive by the aerospace bosses to boost their profits, both through ratcheting up the exploitation of labor at home and through "outsourcing" abroad, is inextricably bound up with the present sharp rise of inter-imperialist rivalries—here centrally with Japan.

Our differences with you are not mainly about strike tactics, but about the broader political perspective from which such tactics must necessarily flow. At its core, your letter is an attack on the perspective of a struggle for socialism in America and internationally, written from the standpoint of a defense of narrow, nationalist "simple trade unionism." Our politics flow from understanding that the fundamental division

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On Reactionary Mobilizations of the Oppressed

9 November 1995

Dear Comrades,

The article "Why Did Rulers Applaud Million Man March?" in WV No. 632 (3 November) made an analogy between the march and Hindu-chauvinist BJP mobilizations in India. While I wholeheartedly agree with WV's central point, that "the Million Man March was a reactionary mobilization of the oppressed, something rarely seen in the United States," I think the BJP analogy is misleading, obscuring far more than it reveals. The Hindu-chauvinist BJP mobilizes lumpen and petty-bourgeois masses for action, often with the immediate aim of real ethnic violence against the Muslim minority. In any case, the

BJP's fascistic program represents the dominant oppressor nationalism of India. In contrast, the Million Man March was not a mobilization for race war but for reconciliation with the racist capitalist order. Its program was one of black capitalism, the program of the black petty bourgeoisie, while dishing out as a palliative anti-woman ersatz racial pride and feel-good spiritualism representing the nationalism of an oppressed minority. These distinctions are crucial. The logic of the BJP analogy is to portray Farrakhan and the Million Man March as fascistic—a position which we argue against in the same issue of WV.

Comradely,
Emily T.

For the Right of Tamil Eelam!

Sri Lanka's Bloody War on Tamil People



Tamil nationalists slaughtered by Lankan army. Sri Lanka president Kumaratunga wages war of terror against Tamil people.

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Hammer* (No. 148, November-December 1995), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/Britain*.

For 12 years, since the horrific government-instigated anti-Tamil pogroms of 1983, the island of Sri Lanka has been one of the bloodiest places in the world. Now, after a major offensive, including aerial and artillery bombardment, the army is reoccupying the town of Jaffna, which for the last five years has been the bastion of the de facto Tamil mini-state run by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The People's Alliance (PA) government, headed by President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga's populist, capitalist, Sinhala-chauvinist Sri Lanka Freedom Party, is demonstrating that it is every bit as committed to drowning the struggle of the oppressed Tamil minority in blood as the previous United National Party (UNP) governments were. We say: Army out of Jaffna! For the right of Tamil Eelam!

Despite the heavy bombardment, government spokesmen have issued claims that civilian casualties have been limited to a mere handful. In September, one day after the government imposed censorship on reports of the war, planes bombed a crowded school yard in broad

daylight, killing more than 30 children. Half a million or more refugees have fled their homes before the advancing army. The government continues to block relief supplies to Jaffna residents, who have been forced to endure an economic blockade and now face the prospect of starvation and disease. The army may have succeeded in planting their Sinhala Lion flag over Jaffna, but the only way it will hold the territory is through indiscriminate communalist slaughter.

The capture of their Jaffna bastion is a major strategic blow to the Tigers. But these ruthless and effective guerrilla rebels will remain a contending military force. Since April the "Sea Tigers," with a large component of women fighters, have destroyed more than a third of Sri Lanka's small navy, threatening fragile supply lines to the north. While the army has concentrated its troops in the Jaffna peninsula, the Tigers operate freely through wide areas of the Eastern province and government leaders continue to live in fear of suicide bombers like those who assassinated Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and UNP president Premadasa.

The People's Alliance came to power in August 1994 amid a wave of popular

anger against 17 years of bloody, corrupt UNP rule. It promised a negotiated peace in the north, abolition of the bonapartist executive presidency, ending unemployment and lowering prices for essential foodstuffs. When Kumaratunga's peace efforts, strongly opposed by both Sinhalese chauvinists and Tamil extremists, were blown out of the water this April—along with a good deal of her navy—the government turned around and negotiated a \$500 million purchase of aircraft, boats, armoured vehicles and infantry weapons. Kumaratunga's fragile eight-party coalition now faces a spiralling defence budget along with IMF/World Bank demands for further attacks on living standards.

The *Lanka Guardian* (15 October) reveals that the PA's "brains trust" was assisted, if not tutored, by a small well-knit group of NATO diplomats." Despite its populist rhetoric, the PA government is beholden to its imperialist overlords. Kumaratunga desperately hopes that victory over the LTTE and her government's anti-Tamil bloodbath will appease the reactionary forces lining up against her. She also hopes to drown mounting popular unrest against the regime's austerity measures.

President Kumaratunga is truly an heir of the Bandaranaike dynasty. Her father S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike rode to power on the basis of "Sinhala Only" chauvinism in the 1950s. This targeted Tamils and English-speaking Burghers (people of mixed European and Sinhala or Tamil stock). Moreover, it was an "anti-imperialist" measure which never prevented the elite's children (including the Bandaranaike family) from learning English. But it did cut off whole generations from the market and international communication, and fuelled the frustrated and atavistic communalism of Sinhala youth, whose revolt in the late '80s was drowned in blood. Her mother (the present prime minister) led the anti-Tamil popular front which butchered the 1971 youth uprising of the then-leftist and now extreme Sinhala-chauvinist JVP.

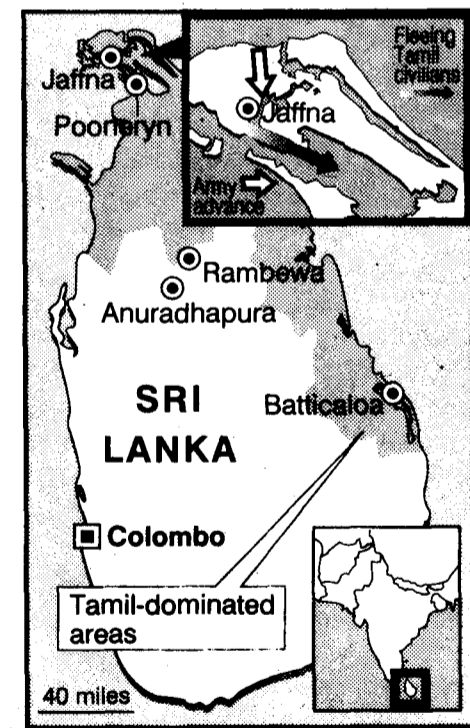
Contrary to the Sinhala-nationalist myth, Sri Lanka only truly became a "unitary state" under British colonial rule. The national and communal divisions are a direct product of British divide-and-rule policy. Since independ-

ence the drive of Sinhalese nationalism has been remorseless and bloody. A cycle of anti-Tamil communalist outbreaks culminated in the 1983 pogroms, a watershed which signalled the effective partition of the island.

The Tamils of the north and east have the right to establish an independent state of Tamil Eelam. At the same time the east has an interpenetrated population, consisting not only of Sinhalese but also of Tamil-speaking Muslims, who have asserted an identity of their own in the face of both Sinhalese Buddhist and Tamil Hindu-centred nationalism. The only equitable resolution will come through socialist revolution. Within the framework of capitalism, the contending nationalist forces will determine what constitutes the territory of Eelam through communalist bloodletting, as happened with the 1947 partition of India. This "battle for the land" is already being carried out with Tiger massacres of Sinhalese and Muslim villagers. In some places, as in the Weli Oya settlements in the northeast, the hapless and poverty-stricken Sinhalese villagers are settlers who are used to break up contiguous Tamil areas, drive Tamils from their land and shield army bases. But the massacres of unarmed villagers, women and children included, are indefensible atrocities, mirroring the worst excesses of the Sri Lankan armed forces and pogromists against Tamils.

The Tamil population of the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo, swollen with refugees, is held hostage to the warmongering and communalist hysteria. Frequent police sweeps and roundups lead to the "disappearance" of Tamil youth. Recently, police admitted that over 20 decomposing bodies, found in lakes near Colombo and other towns, were Tamils tortured to death in the headquarters of the notorious police Special Task Force.

On this island there were once fertile possibilities of joint class struggle across ethnic and religious divisions. Today the working class is battered and terrorised along communal lines. No group epitomises this tragedy more than the overwhelmingly lower-caste, mainly women workers of the upcountry tea plantations. Superexploited by state corporation, private estate and imperialist tea marketing houses, they are a prime target of



Independent graphic

the Sinhalese pogromists. The petty-bourgeois nationalists of the LTTE have no answer to their plight, except population transfers to "Tamil Eelam." Moreover, they are lumbered with the communalist leadership of the Ceylon Workers Congress, led by Thondaman, an ancient nepotistic landowner and profiteer who has served in both UNP and PA governments. In the recent period, plantation workers have carried out a series of strikes in opposition to the government's privatisation plans threatening jobs and homes. They have had to confront strikebreaking police and

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National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

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Hands Off Argentine Leftists and Worker Militants!

The following protest statements from the Grupo Espartaquista de México were distributed by the Spartacist League/Britain at a November 13 protest in London against the repression in Argentina.

The recent escalation of state repression against left and labor activists in Argentina is an attack on the entire workers movement and all those who seek to resist the Menem regime's International Monetary Fund-ordered onslaught against the working people and the poor. This witch-hunt comes in response to labor and student protests that have extended from Tierra del Fuego to the northern province of Tucumán, where on October 29 police violently repressed demonstrations against the new governor, ex-general Antonio Bussi, one of the bloodiest figures of the former military dictatorship.

In the southern province of Neuquén, on October 2 police attacked a demonstration of 500 unemployed for the "crime" of demanding that their poverty-level unemployment checks be paid. This was followed by the arrest of unemployed leader Horacio Panario, a member of the Movimiento

al Socialismo (MAS), and the threat to imprison him for up to ten years, as well as the issuing of arrest warrants against MAS members Alcides Christensen, Ruth Zurbriggen and Jorge Toledo, Movimiento Socialista de los Trabajadores (MST) members Héctor Etchebaster, Hipólito Arameda, Enrique Gómez and Jorge Chiguay, and Partido Obrero (PO) members Alberto Vidal, José Mara and Norberto Calducci. The MST local hall was raided, as were homes of individual leftists.

The protests in Neuquén are part of a series of protests by workers and the poor that have occurred in Argentina over the past years, beginning with a revolt by public workers in Santiago del Estero in late 1993, that led to the burning of government offices. In Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, after police killed the worker Víctor Choque while repressing a protest by unionists at a television factory in April, the authorities charged MAS member Oscar Martínez and other metalworkers union (UOM) activists with "inciting to violence." In the wake of worker and student protests in Córdoba in June, police arrested members of the youth group of the Partido de Trabajadores por el

Socialismo (PTS). Anti-left purges have occurred in several important factories and industries.

This crackdown comes in the context of escalating repression against unionists and leftists from Bolivia to Mexico. In addition to the state of siege decreed to crush the Bolivian general strike [see WV No. 623, 19 May 1995], in Brazil the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso called out the army to break the oil workers strike, while in Rondônia landless peasants were massacred. In Mexico the government dissolved the bus drivers union, which it saw as a

nucleus of potential militant opposition, firing all 13,000 workers and jailing their leaders. The urgent need is for internationalist struggle, extending to the powerful North American proletariat, against the brutal austerity and repression dictated by Latin American capitalist regimes and their senior partners in Washington and Wall Street.

Down with the witchhunt against left and labor activists in Argentina! Free Horacio Panario! Drop the charges against MAS, MST, PO and PTS members now! For international working-class solidarity!

Free Argentine Leftist Enrique Gorriarán!

In late October, Argentine leftist Enrique Gorriarán was violently seized by Mexican and Argentine police agents, deported from Mexico and subsequently imprisoned in Argentina's Campo de Mayo military base, where he reportedly has received death threats. Gorriarán is charged with having been a founder and leader of the Argentine Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP—People's Revolutionary Army, crushed during the Argentine junta's "dirty war" against the left in the 1970s) as well as leading a guerrilla attack against the La Tablada military

base outside Buenos Aires in 1989. He also commanded the group that carried out the 1980 execution of Nicaragua's bloody former dictator Anastasio Somoza in Paraguay. As Gorriarán pointed out in a letter to the Mexico City daily *El Financiero* (10 November), his deportation—and the participation of Argentine agents in his capture—was a blatant violation of Mexico's laws on immigration and political exile. Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México have protested this new act of repression.

Free Enrique Gorriarán now!

"Child Abuse" Witchhunt in Washington State

Recent soothing media reports to the contrary, the monstrous "Satanic ritual" sex witchhunts which punctuated the 1980s of Reagan reaction have not gone away. Many of the earlier victims of the anti-day-care hysteria, like Kelly Michaels of New Jersey and Robert Kelly Jr. of Edenton, North Carolina, have had their trumped-up convictions overturned, as a layer of the bourgeoisie seeks to inject an element of sanity into public life. But now a frightening new witchhunt is racking the small town of Wenatchee, Washington, recalling the bizarre and hideous episodes which a decade ago wrecked people's lives from Jordan, Minnesota, to Malden, Massachusetts, and most infamously in the six-year-long California McMartin Preschool trial.

The McMartin trial was rife with dark tales of sexual abuse, weird rituals and animal slaughter. Lurid fantasies raged in the media and the courtroom, as young children were pressured into telling "yucky secrets" by therapists who claimed others had already "confessed"—yet in the end, the defendants were found not guilty.

Now this horror has struck Wenatchee, population 24,000, in the apple-growing Cascades foothills of Washington State. For the past two years, the town has been terrorized by an out-of-control investigator and his allies in "Child Protective Services." Since January 1994, when "sex crime" investigator Detective Robert Perez was appointed, scores of townspeople have been arrested and tried on child-molestation charges and their children seized, almost all based on charges by Perez's 11-year-old foster daughter. During one drive around town, Perez's foster daughter pointed to 23 different places where she was supposedly attacked, ultimately naming over 80 adults; as a result, one woman alone was charged with 3,200 counts of child abuse. Over 20 of the accused are now in jail. It is telling that many of those in prison are poor and functionally illiterate, and that no one who has hired private lawyers and fought the charges has been imprisoned.

The hysteria now focuses on the trial

Ominous and Demented

of the town's Pentecostal pastor, Robert Roberson, and his wife Connie, accused of leading ritual sacrifices and "orgies" in which as many as 50 children at a time were sexually assaulted by adults—after which, supposedly, they all had hot cocoa and cookies. In an ominous display of force, last spring a SWAT team surrounded the church and dragged away the minister in handcuffs. His wife Connie was arrested and their four-year-old daughter Rebekah was seized by "Child Protective Services" and given intense "recovered-memory therapy." The Robersons, imprisoned for four and a half months before trial, have not seen or spoken to Rebekah since the arrest. As the trial opened on November 20, defense attorneys pointed out that the Robersons were targeted solely because they had helped others caught up in the witchhunt.

Recently, prosecutors lost their two key witnesses: one admitted to falsely charging her own foster father as a rapist, while Perez's foster daughter has entered a psychiatric hospital and won't testify. Now the prosecution has "discovered" two new witnesses. After four intensive, untaped interrogations, Rebekah's "child protectors" claim she too was molested by her parents. And the new star "witness" is a "repeat sex offender" whose first-degree rape charge was reduced to assault in exchange for testimony that "Pastor Roberson had stripped and raped children on stage during services" (*Wall Street Journal*, 8 November)!

In the poisonous atmosphere of the demented witchhunts of the past decade, where science—especially evolution—is denigrated and belief is encouraged in everything from angels and Elvis sightings to aliens from outer space (the latter touted by a Harvard professor!), anything resembling a fair trial for those targeted by the "sex crimes" hysteria is impossible. These witchhunts both destroy the innocent and may very well let those genuinely guilty of

crimes escape notice.

While the Clinton White House occasionally strikes a pose as rectifiers of the bubbling social pathology of the "Reagan years," it caters to the reactionary forces of Christian fundamentalism, while Hillary Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno push their own, liberal version of the "child abuse" hysteria. The federal/state network of "child abuse" agencies, a bureaucratic monster which perpetuates witchhunts, is still in place. The laws established by the federal 1974 Mondale Act reward informants with immunity from prosecution, while punishing with criminal penalties teachers and others who "fail to report" suspected child abuse. The predictable result, as a professor of child psychiatry put it, has been "overreporting of even the most absurd and impossible accu-

sations" ("Modern Witch Hunt—Child Abuse Charges," *Wall Street Journal*, 22 February 1993).

Congressional reactionaries like Jesse Helms and the pompous Newt Gingrich, and Clinton as well, all embrace "family values," the code word for continued oppression of women. Reinforcing the institution of the family—where the vast majority of real abuse of children takes place—is seen by all wings of the bourgeoisie as the most effective way to keep an increasingly disenchanted population in line.

Meanwhile, this government intensifies its terrible crimes against the poor and especially against children, consciously condemning an entire generation of minority and poor kids to misery, increasing homelessness, disease and ignorance. These witchhunts against "child abuse" serve to distract from the fact that the biggest abusers of children in America reside in the Fortune 500's capitalist enclaves and the White House. ■

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Boeing...

(continued from page 3)

in society is between two hostile classes, the capitalists and the workers, whose interests are irreconcilable. You are for keeping the struggle of the workers limited to national-centered unionism, which necessarily allies them with their class enemy in the name of American competitiveness against imperialist rivals. Your refrain about "American jobs" is really camouflage for this class-collaborationist program of "Keeping America Number One."

The labor bureaucracy is the top layer of the unions which long ago separated itself from its working-class base, and which sees the world through the same lens as the capitalists and their government. The purpose of these top union officials is to ensure the subordination of the workers to the national interests of the enemy class. This collaboration with the capitalist rulers is codified in the labor bureaucrats' fealty to the Democratic Party—and it has led to an unending string of defeats for organized labor.

We are without exception opposed to protectionism in the imperialist countries; but neither are we partisans of "free trade." We are fully aware that companies like Boeing which today demand free access to foreign markets do so for one reason: increased profits. Their mechanism for this is the super-exploitation of cheap, unorganized labor abroad and often, concomitantly, access to an increased pool of buyers for goods. This "offloading" of jobs is not simply corporate policy but is intrinsic to capitalism. Thus it is often the case that these two supposedly counterposed "wings" of the capitalists, the protectionists and the "free traders," turn out to be one and the same corporation. General Motors, for example, squeals for protection from "unfair" Japanese trade practices, only to then appear in China in the garb of a "free market" buccaneer.

The trade-union misleadership is in a bloc with those imperialists who demand that Washington provide protection from "unfair competition." It was all too symptomatic when last year Clinton's White House appointed International Association of Machinists (IAM) president Kourpias to the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. This is a government agency whose task (as described by the IAM's own *Machinist*) is to "stimulate the U.S. economy by pinpointing investment opportunities in developing countries"—i.e., to further the profits of American companies like Boeing, at the expense of their capitalist rivals and out of the hides of working people abroad.

The labor bureaucrats demand that the U.S. government carry out the very same trade practices for which they condemn other governments. Last year, the AFL-CIO tops applauded loudly when Clinton tried to pressure Japan into buying more cellular phones and other American-made goods. In economic terms this amounts to "offloading" Japanese jobs to the United States. And Clinton here was acting in the name of opening up



UAW
Democratic president Roosevelt sent troops to smash strike at North American Aviation in Inglewood, California, June 1941. FDR declared "national emergency" as U.S. geared up for war against Japan.

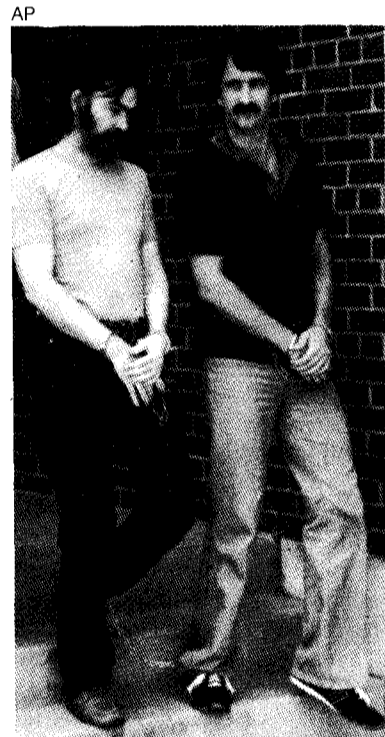
the Japanese market to "free trade."

It is not a big step from complaining that "they" are stealing "our" jobs to the demonization of "them" as the enemy. In the end, trade wars lead to shooting wars, the ultimate means for rival capitalist states to secure a monopoly of foreign markets and spheres of exploitation. That, writ large, is the essence of imperialist capitalism in the 20th century. Its price is millions of corpses.

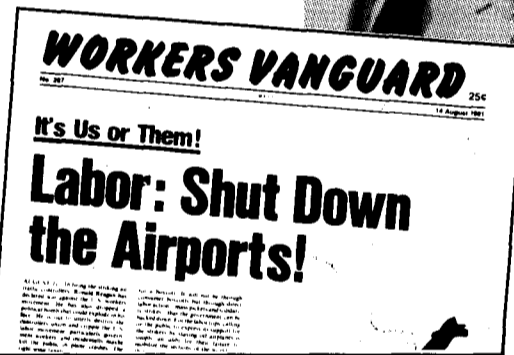
This was shown clearly in the case of

the U.S. and Britain resorted to economic warfare by cutting oil shipments to Japan in July 1941 (five months before Pearl Harbor). Washington thus provoked Japan into war, and then ended it with one of the most cold-blooded atrocities in modern times: the A-bombing of the defenseless civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

For decades now, the AFL-CIO leadership has agitated for trade protectionism, especially against Japan and other



AP
Merkle Press
Leaders of 1981 air traffic controllers strike hauled off in chains. IAM chief William Wimpisinger (right) knifed PATCO strike, refusing to call out Machinists to shut down the airports.



World War II in the Pacific. With the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s, trade barriers were thrown up against the Japanese "trade menace," as it was then called. Most damaging to Japan was the prohibitive Smoot-Hawley tariff in the U.S. and protectionism in the Asian colonies of the European imperialist powers. So Japanese imperialism retaliated with the brutal military occupation and colonial exploitation of Manchuria, China and other regions. To counter Japanese moves in the Far East,

East Asian countries. In so doing they appeal to blatant chauvinism and "yellow peril" racism, including evoking the old World War II battle cry, "Remember Pearl Harbor." Such nationalist rhetoric played a big role in the defeat of the recent Bridgestone-Firestone strike, during which various Rubber Workers officials raved that "It's America against Japan" and talked of "another sneak attack."

You couch your own call for protectionism as an attack on "cheap labor" abroad. First of all, "cheap labor" also exists in this country—indeed, the U.S. union movement exists in large part because at one time low-paid workers (notably including black workers and immigrants) poured into its ranks. Today, the attitude of the AFL-CIO to such workers is far worse than "benign neglect." Many of the union tops openly support racist anti-immigration laws. Many more have sought to "protect" their dues base by agreeing to "cheap labor" in the existing unions via the two-tier wage system. Thus your statement that "the long-term solution to keeping multinational corporations from playing off workers in one country against workers in other countries is to raise the wage standards in the low-wage countries" has to be taken not with a grain of salt but with several tons.

You raise the call for "free" trade unions in such countries, notably China. This has long been the rallying cry of the various "free labor institutes" like the American Institute for Free Labor Development and the Asian-American Free Labor Institute which, in conjoint operation with the CIA, promote pro-capitalist "company unions." Beginning in post-WW II Europe, then in Latin America and South Korea and most recently in East Europe and the ex-USSR, the activities of the "AFL-CIA"—as it is known to millions of workers abroad—have often been carried out in league with military dictatorships and outright fascists. These operations are seen, with justice, by class-conscious workers as a Trojan horse for American imperialism. And they have been a key weapon in suppressing and subverting the struggles of workers in those countries for higher wages and better working conditions.

Today, the IAM leadership has placed itself at the center of an anti-Communist campaign against "totalitarianism" in China. This dovetails all too neatly with the counterrevolutionary designs of U.S. imperialism. As Trotskyists, we recognize China as a bureaucratically deformed workers state, in which capitalism has been overthrown while the working class is denied political rule by the suffocating monopoly of a parasitic Stalinist caste. The workers there must chart a struggle to maintain the gains of the 1949 social revolution against the party bureaucrats (many of whom are either now capitalists or are preparing to be so upon the triumph of counter-revolution). That requires proletarian political revolution led by a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party. The course toward counterrevolution in China championed by the American labor bureaucracy is the diametric opposite of this. Not only would the restoration of capitalism in the most populous country on the planet mean even more "cheapening of labor," it would necessarily bring to white heat the rivalries over the spoils between U.S. and Japanese imperialism.

You state that the number one issue in the present strike is job security. But the IAM tops explicitly pose this as a defense of "American interests" against working people abroad—e.g., "U.S. aerospace giants don't seem concerned about giving it all away. They feed the Asian tiger, and the competition gains" (*IAM Journal*, cited in *Washington Post*, 26 November). Closer to home, the American labor misleadership has accepted the loss of millions of union jobs in recent decades, leading to the precipitous decline of organized labor.

In your concluding sentence, you argue against factory occupations by Boeing workers, implying that such militant tactics could only lead to their work being shipped out to China. Today's union bureaucracy is for "informational" picket lines, impotent consumer boycotts, moral-witness "protests" at stockholder meetings...just about anything except the kind of hard class struggle that is necessary to win even in defensive battles. Militant mass pickets, factory occupations, strikes against suppliers of struck plants, against the plants where materials are produced, against the companies which transport the goods—these are all shunned because they are "illegal." So strong are the bureaucrats' ties to the capitalist order that they have renounced the very means by which unions were built in this country. Those unions were forged in opposition to the bosses' cops and courts. Leaders, then, went to prison and died for the union cause. Strikes were virtual wars. But today's union "leaders" abandon militants like mine worker Jerry Dale Lowe and Teamster Jesse Acuna, jailed for their courageous defense of their unions.

The class collaborationism of the union officialdom has sapped the organized strength of the working class. Nor is that all. The savage attacks on the living standards of working people and on the very ability of the poor and helpless to

Spartacist Events

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BOSTON

Saturday, 2 p.m. Next class, December 2: *The Fight for a Revolutionary Party*; Boston University, CLA (College of Liberal Arts) Room 418, 725 Commonwealth Avenue For more information: (617) 666-9453

NEW YORK CITY

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SAN FRANCISCO

Saturdays, 3 p.m. Next classes, December 2: *Marx's View of Economics*; December 16: *The State: Lessons of the Paris Commune of 1871*; call for location For more information: (510) 839-0851

SANTA CRUZ

Tuesday, 7 p.m. Next class, December 5: *Capitalism, Socialism and Communism*; UC Santa Cruz, Student Center For more information: (510) 839-0851

Trotskyist League Classes

VANCOUVER

Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Next class, December 7: *The Bolshevik Revolution*; Britannia Community Centre, Room L4, 1661 Napier (off Commercial Drive) For more information: (604) 687-0353

Strikers Reject Sellout Deal

Boeing Workers: Win This Strike— Occupy the Plants!

NOVEMBER 24—Chanting “No give-backs, no way!” and “Stop Boeing greed,” Boeing strikers defied the company, federal mediators and the arrogant leadership of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) with over 60 percent voting down a miserable contract this week. This was the first time Boeing Machinists had ever rejected a strike settlement, a stinging repudiation of the union tops who had unanimously recommended the contract. Workers were furious that the IAM bureaucrats tried to stick them with a deal that was substantially the same as one that had been soundly rejected before their strike began over six weeks ago.

A 17-year-seniority precision assembler told *Workers Vanguard* that when the contract was brought before a union meeting at the Boeing plant outside Portland, Oregon, “a lot of the members wanted to just burn it.” It is a measure of the bankruptcy of the U.S. labor bureaucracy that they tried to ram a give-back contract down the throats of workers at this aerospace giant rolling in money. Boeing profits are pouring in at \$300 million per quarter and existing orders amount to over \$80 billion. During the strike, Singapore Airlines agreed to pay almost \$13 billion for a batch of new 777 jets, and Boeing executives haughtily awarded themselves millions of dollars in bonuses just before the contract vote.

Workers were outraged at the proposed copayments for medical care, one-shot bonuses aimed at sweetening a wage freeze for the next two years, and especially the prospect of continued job losses. But the IAM International and



Strike rally at Gresham, Oregon Boeing plant, October 21.

WV Photo

their loyalists in the local unions have done everything in their power to divert workers' anger away from Boeing and into reactionary calls for “American work for American workers.” This protectionist drivel is particularly aimed at Japanese and Chinese workers. It is deadly poison which feeds a long history of anti-Asian racism on the West Coast. And it fits right in with the U.S. rulers' anti-Communist drive to open China

to unbridled capitalist exploitation and “free market” misery.

At root, the IAM bureaucrats, like their counterparts in the UAW, seek to discipline the membership of the unions in order to “make U.S. companies competitive again.” IAM chief George Kourpias dreams of standing at the center of a tripartite alliance with the corporations and their government, like his fellow social democrats in Europe, arguing: “If

we are going to become competitive as a nation, we have to have more labor-management cooperation.... It is ludicrous to think that we can compete without government involvement” (*Industry Week*, 5 July 1993).

Kourpias' class-collaborationist program dovetails with Boeing's campaign of labor-management “cooperation,” “World Class” training and increased productivity, which has meant massive layoffs in the plants. Kourpias, like the rest of the AFL-CIO officialdom, is committed to defense of the profit system, expressed through the bureaucracy's complete loyalty to the capitalist Democratic Party. Boeing strikers have to oust these labor cops for the bosses and forge the kind of class-struggle leadership that can win. One striking Machinist told WV:

“We've already lost 29,000 Machinists over the course of the last six years. It's like a slow train getting ready to crash, and you have to decide if you're going to do something to stop it. We have to go back to those tactics when workers had to use force to defend their jobs.”

Boeing strikers must appeal to the 22,000 engineers organized in the Seattle Professional Engineering Employees Association (SPEEA) to stop crossing IAM picket lines. Even as SPEEA's contract expires next month, its leaders are helping Boeing to defeat the IAM strike by keeping the engineers at work. What's needed are mass pickets that seal off the plants, combined with plant occupations that ensure the Boeing bosses are unable to move a single plane. Teamsters, rail workers, all transport workers should be called on to “hot cargo” all supplies to Boeing. *Victory to the Boeing strike!* ■



no credit

Ronald Reagan entertaining former AFL-CIO head Lane Kirkland. Union tops act as “labor” front men for CIA in pushing anti-Communist “company unions” overseas.

live, the slashing of health care at all levels, the McJobs and empty futures of youth, the rampant racist attacks and massive incarceration of blacks (a social agenda neatly fitting with that of the Ku Klux Klan) are, no less, the products of this treacherous collaboration. Those you defend, with the bosses, have made this bed. Others, however, must sleep in it.

It was the destruction in 1981 of the PATCO air traffic controllers union—unchallenged by the rest of the labor movement and above all by the IAM tops who pushed a toothless consumer boycott—that cleared the path for the current onslaught against the unions. The smashing of PATCO was not preordained. We note you do not respond to the charge in our article that the IAM bureaucrats' refusal to organize *strike action to shut down the airports* was key to permitting this historic defeat. Six years later the IAM leadership, among others, saw to it that the Eastern strike went down to defeat by refusing to organize solidarity strike action.

We well understand that defense of the livelihoods of working people against powerful capitalist corporations like Boeing is no easy task. A militant

workers movement is going to come up against the full arsenal of the ruling class, from anti-strike propaganda in the press to naked repression. But it is necessary to fight, and to remove the roadblocks to class struggle. That means a political battle to oust the “labor lieutenants of capital,” in the apt phrase of the early American Marxist Daniel De Leon.

Two possible roads lie before the working class. There is the bureaucracy's acquiescence to what is possible and “practical” under capitalism, which over the last two decades and more has led to disaster. Or there is the revolutionary strategy proposed by us Marxists. In the course of sharp class struggles and through patient education, the workers will become imbued with the consciousness of their historic interests as a class fighting for itself and for all the oppressed.

Finally, we were bemused by your reference to Luxemburg and Liebknecht, who died fighting the chauvinism of “their” bosses in the interests of the international working class. These revolutionaries were executed at the behest of the German social democrats in the

service of their imperialist masters. It was Liebknecht who, in the face of rampant chauvinist hysteria amid World War I, proclaimed, “The main enemy is at home!” And it was Luxemburg who in 1916 denounced the workers' misleadings of her time:

“In view of the betrayal of the goals and interests of the working class by the official representatives of the socialist parties in the leading countries; in view of their turn from the ground of the proletariat International to the ground of bourgeois imperialist politics, it is a vital necessity for socialism to create a new workers' International which in all countries would assume the role of directing and uniting the revolutionary class struggle against imperialism.”

That is the Rosa Luxemburg that we find in history.

In today's post-Soviet world of heightened imperialist rivalry, the road of the labor bureaucracy leads inexorably toward World War III. The struggle for the political independence of the unions

from the capitalist state—itsself a recognition of the counterposed interests of capital and labor—requires a *political* expression. That means a workers party based on the theory of the class struggle, a party whose purpose is not to provide an electoral shill for the Democrats but to give conscious leadership to the struggle of the workers, not only to improve their present conditions but to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery. This must be an *international* fight. Our watchword is not the deadly dangerous trap of “defending American jobs” against foreign competition, but the words which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels inscribed on their banner nearly 150 years ago: “Workers of the world, unite.” We look forward to the further permeation of these views through the Boeing workers.

Sincerely,
Ed Clarkson
for *Workers Vanguard*

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Young Spartacus

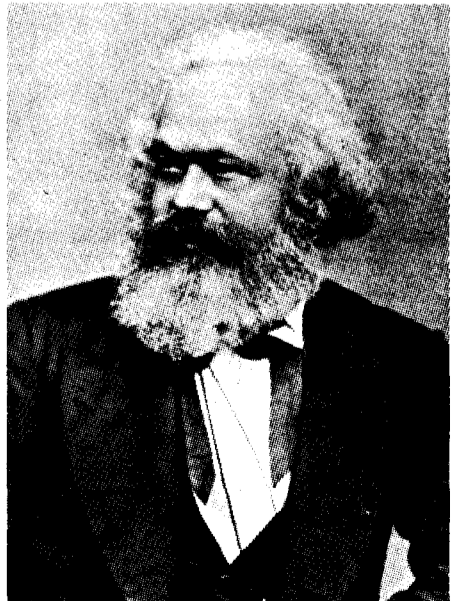
Young Spartacus is pleased to publish the following presentation by comrade Al Nelson of the Spartacist League Central Committee to the San Francisco Bay Area and Eugene, Oregon Spartacus Youth Clubs last month.

The first sentence of the founding document of the Fourth International, written by Leon Trotsky, who was the co-leader of the Russian Revolution with Lenin, reads, "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat." Writing on the eve of the slaughter of World War II, the second inter-imperialist war, which ended with the dropping of two atomic bombs by U.S. imperialism that destroyed two whole Japanese cities, Trotsky said that, "The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only 'ripened'; they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a social revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind."

The construction of revolutionary leadership capable of leading the working class internationally—that's what we mean by the "party question." Without a revolutionary party no socialist revolution can succeed, no matter how favorable the circumstances. Until the working class solves the problem of creating the revolutionary party as the conscious expression of the historic process, the issue remains undecided. For Marxists, therefore, it is the most important question of all—the question of the party.

Everywhere you look today you can see the effects of the absence of revolutionary leadership. There's Louis Farrakhan's Million Man March, which is both a perverted response to rising black oppression and also very similar in its reactionary patriarchal ideology to the very large and mainly white male Christian "Promise Keepers," currently holding mass meetings around the country. Or look at the very important Detroit newspaper strike. The workers have shown no lack of combativity and courage yet have been systematically betrayed and demobilized by a treacherous union bureaucracy that fundamentally believes in the interests of U.S. capitalism and knows that strikes are not in the interest of capitalism.

Or look at South Africa. If you read *Workers Vanguard*, it's clear that we aim to construct a section of the International Communist League, a Trotskyist party, in South Africa. Reports of the various comrades who have been traveling through in the last couple of years have had the same theme: the extreme con-



Karl Marx

Mayall/Progress

The Fight for a Leninist Vanguard Party



V.I. Lenin at founding conference of the Communist International, March 1919.

tradition between revolutionary-minded workers who yearn for fundamental social changes that can only be brought about by social revolution and the leaders of their parties and trade unions who say, "No, no, revolution is not necessary, nor is it possible; we can accomplish our goals gradually by supporting the African National Congress." Meanwhile the ANC's real goal is to stabilize South Africa politically so that foreign capital can exploit black South African labor even more intensely than has been the case in the past.

Stalinism finally succeeded in destroying the Soviet Union and ushering in capitalist counterrevolution in the land of the first workers revolution, a historic defeat for the world proletariat. No longer having a common enemy, the major imperialist powers are drifting apart like great tectonic plates as they seek to divide up the world into competing trade blocs. We've had two inter-imperialist world wars that prove that trade wars lead inevitably to shooting wars for the redivision of the world markets.

Why the Working Class Is Key

Only the industrial proletariat, led by Bolshevik-type vanguard parties, can

prevent another world war by destroying the rule of capital once and for all. So what does it actually mean when we say that the revolutionary party is the "conscious expression of the historic process"? The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was written in 1848 by two young revolutionists named Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. They were, respectively, 29 and 27 years old at the time—just to give a little perspective. With the addition of an updating of the *Manifesto*, written by Trotsky in 1937, many of the *Manifesto's* most important sections read as though they were written yesterday.

Its fundamental propositions can be summarized in brief as follows: in every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange and the social organization following from it form the basis upon which the political and intellectual history of that epoch is built up. In other words, consciousness is formed in an environment of social institutions created and controlled by the ruling class of that period.

The whole history of mankind, from the period of slavery through feudalism through the emergence of capitalism, has been a history of class struggles—contests between exploiting and exploited,

ruling and oppressed classes. As a propertied new class arising initially in the Middle Ages, the nascent bourgeoisie was able to develop its own economy, its own culture, religion, schools and so on, i.e., its own social institutions expressing its own social consciousness, *within* feudal society itself. The bourgeois class was able to develop organically within the feudal order. It was driven to overthrow the feudal political system and its social order only when the institutions of the old regime—the monarchy, the nobility, the church—prevented the natural expansion of the institutions of capital. The famous "Rights of Man," one of the main documents coming out of the great French Revolution of 1789, meant at that time the rights of the capitalist class to buy and sell all property, including land, as opposed to the hereditary rights of the old feudal order. It was an assertion of a new property-owning class for which competition was the driving force.

But the proletariat is not a propertied class, and therefore it is not able to construct the institutions of a new society within the framework of capitalism. All it possesses is its labor power which it must sell piecemeal to the owners of industry in order not to starve. With all other productive classes driven out, the proletariat is the special and essential product of capitalism. So society has been split into two great and hostile camps: the working class and the bourgeoisie. They are the main forces in modern society.

Capitalism has concentrated workers in large factories and created great urban concentrations. In so doing it has created the instrument of its own destruction as an exploiting class. The working class cannot therefore emancipate itself from the yoke of capitalist exploitation without at the same time emancipating society at large from all exploitation, all class distinctions. This is what Marx referred to as the materialist conception of history.

Socialist Consciousness vs. Trade-Union Consciousness

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. But the history of all countries has shown that the working class, exclusively by its own effort and day-to-day experiences, is not able spontaneously to develop a consciousness any higher than trade-union consciousness, the need to unite in unions for economic struggle against the employers and the government. But trade-union consciousness is bourgeois consciousness. Unionism in and of itself does not challenge the capitalist mode of production but only seeks to better the immediate conditions and wages of the workers in struggles with individual employers.

Revolutionary class consciousness, represented by the theories of scientific socialism, has to be brought into the working class from the outside through the instrumentality of a revolutionary party which embodies a higher consciousness of these historically necessary tasks than the working class possesses itself. That is the only way the struggles of the workers become *class struggle*, when the most advanced workers become conscious of themselves as a single class whose actions are directed against the *entire* class of capitalists and their government.

The founders of Marxism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and their followers



BBC Hulton

Soldiers declare support for Bolsheviks on eve of 1917 October Revolution. Splitting the army was key to working-class seizure of power.

like Plekhanov, Lenin and Trotsky, in fact most of the Bolshevik leadership, all came from the educated classes. As such they were the bearers of scientific socialism into the workers movement because they were educated and were able to study history and study economics and put together the understanding of historical materialism. These revolutionists were the instruments for bringing the theories of scientific socialism into the working class from the outside.

As long as the working class is not mobilized by a party based on revolutionary theory, its consciousness remains determined by bourgeois ideology and culture, leading it to see capitalist society as fixed and not open to fundamental change by workers revolution. This "false consciousness," as Marx called it, is what we see and confront every day, all over the world. Furthermore, the working class is not some uniform average but is itself very stratified, ranging from very advanced, knowledgeable workers to the most backward layers, blinded by racism, ethnic hatreds and general social piggishness. For the working class to move from an existence as a class in itself—that is to say, simply defined objectively by its relationship to the means of production—to a class for itself—one that is fully conscious of its historic task to overthrow the capitalist order—requires revolutionary leadership.

These are the classic Marxist propositions that Lenin argues for in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902) against a current then called Economism. The Economists belittled the role of the conscious factor. Instead they projected class consciousness arising "organically" and "spontaneously" out of the day-to-day economic struggles of the workers. This infatuation with spontaneity was paralleled by a movement to criticize the revolutionary principles of Marxism as dogmatic and obsolete. Essentially, Lenin said, these

socialists are adapting bourgeois criticisms of Marxism in order to transform the struggle for social reforms into a struggle for social revolution. In practice this meant tailing and seeking to pressure the bourgeois liberals while limiting the struggle of the workers to union struggles.

Lenin made a particularly powerful argument against the Economists that is fully applicable today, especially in the United States. For socialists to adapt to the existing trade-union consciousness of the workers keeps the workers in a lower state of consciousness insufficient for revolutionary activity and results. Whether intended or not, this adaptation strengthens the authority of the existing union bureaucracy and thereby strengthens the influence of bourgeois ideology upon the working class. In other words, if you don't break out of the framework of simple trade unionism, you simply reinforce the authority of the treacherous misleaders of the trade-union bureaucracy.

This basic lesson is not remote in time, by the way. It is, for example, at the heart of our criticism of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) in the current *Workers Vanguard* regarding their role in the recent newspaper strike in Detroit. They formed an ad hoc committee external to the union which based itself purely on a call for more militant strike tactics: mass picketing, defying injunctions, etc. That's all very fine; these are necessary tactics. But the RWL omits completely any *political* characterization of the union bureaucracy and any *political* explanation of why the union misleaders were consciously and deliberately seeking to defuse the militancy of the workers and to wear them down and suffocate them with legal restrictions. Therefore the RWL never raised the workers' consciousness above union consciousness and actually sowed

Gubb/JB Pictures



For South Africa's oppressed black masses, the red flag of communism continues to be a symbol of the fight for freedom and social equality. Build a Bolshevik party to lead international proletarian revolution!

illusions that a new leadership simply has to be "more militant."

But in many unions the existing bureaucratic leaderships were the militants of yesterday. Look at the president of the Teamsters union, Ron Carey. He's supported by an outfit called the TDU, Teamsters for a Democratic Union, which is an organization created by the International Socialists a long time ago. Or in the mine workers union, the Trumka leadership was hailed by all manner of fake socialists as representing a new, more militant leadership. And now he's got miners—who used to know how to deal very effectively with strike-breakers—out on the tracks holding hands, singing, "We Shall Overcome." Disgusting.

And the reason that these militants of yesterday become the careerists of today is because they share and have never broken from the same pro-capitalist outlook of their predecessors. So for the RWL or anyone else to simply keep their criticisms of a given strike on the level of strike tactics and not characterize politically the existing leadership retards and damages the consciousness of the workers. Nothing is learned out of these defeated strikes except demoralization and cynicism.

Socialist consciousness therefore does not simply grow out of the economic struggle. In reality they exist side by

side. This requires on the part of the intellectuals that they leave their class and come all the way over to the side of the proletarian party, where their intellectual skills are most valuable.

The 1903 Split Between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks

This period from 1899 to 1902 was the beginning of Lenin's campaign to build a centralized party based on a comprehensive political program. His desire for a narrower definition of membership was motivated in those early days by a general desire to exclude opportunists and to weed out dilettantes who had been attracted to the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party because of its very loose circle nature.

Later, in 1903 a split took place over Lenin's insistence on an organizational rule that party membership be limited to those who are willing to actually participate in an organization of the party, as opposed to the much looser criteria advanced by the right wing of the party of someone who merely renders personal assistance to the party—basically describing a kind of a sympathizer. Lenin wanted members who were going to devote their lives to the cause of proletarian revolution.

This split was the origin of the Bolshevik (Russian for "majority") faction and the Mensheviks ("minority"). While



Vezenberg and Co.

Lenin (seated at center) with other leaders of Russian Social Democracy in 1897. The future Menshevik Julius Martov is seated far right.

side. The role of the revolutionary party is to saturate the working class with the consciousness of its social position and historic tasks in order to mobilize its most advanced layers in a revolutionary assault on the capitalist system itself. Against the attempt to degrade revolutionary Marxism, Lenin called for the building of a new kind of party, a combat party composed entirely of professional revolutionists. Such a party was not counterposed to the unions. The unions, he said, should be the mass organizations—a kind of united front of the mass of the workers—seeking to build as broadly as possible, to unite the greatest number of workers in defensive struggles against the employers.

But to build the kind of highly disciplined, professional organization necessary to lead the proletariat in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism required that the party recruit only the most advanced workers, who would then be systematically trained in all the necessary intellectual skills to be effective organizers and agitators able to travel broadly and organize other units of the party. In this party, he said, there shall be no distinctions between worker-Bolsheviks and the revolutionary intel-

lectuals. This requires on the part of the intellectuals that they leave their class and come all the way over to the side of the proletarian party, where their intellectual skills are most valuable.

the split corresponded roughly to a left and right wing, the clarifying issues did not occur until later. It is a commonplace error to state that in 1902-1903 Lenin was fully conscious that his conception of the party was a definite break from social democracy and that Bolshevism began after the split in 1903. In fact, the forming of the Iskra group in 1900 (around the newspaper of the same name), of which Lenin was the organizer, was the coming together of some of the older Russian Marxists, like George Plekhanov and Vera Zasulich, with younger members like Lenin, as a revolutionary grouping within Social Democracy to defend and restore the basic revolutionary principles of Marxism. The period from the forming of the Iskra group to the final split with Mensheviks and the founding of the Bolshevik Party as such in 1912 marked the transformation of the Bolshevik faction from a revolutionary social-democratic one into an embryonic communist organization.

When reading *What Is To Be Done?*, it's not immediately obvious that until the February Revolution in 1917 Russia was ruled by the Romanov absolutist

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Vanguard Party...

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monarchy, and all Marxists agreed that the immediate tasks were essentially democratic, the overthrow of tsarism. However, there was an assumption on the part of the Menshevik right wing that this necessarily meant an extended period of capitalism. Basically, this rejected a revolutionary proletarian perspective in favor of a parliamentary opposition in a capitalist government.

Lenin agreed that overthrowing tsarism was the immediate task. But he vehemently disagreed with the perspective that the Marxists should form a bloc with the liberal bourgeoisie. What he posited was an alliance between the revolutionary proletariat and the poor peasantry. As opposed to the Mensheviks, he was trying to draw a class line between the proletariat, and the toiling classes in general, and the capitalist class. However, this theory that Lenin called "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" was essentially flawed in the sense that it posited a dictatorship, a state power, of two classes, one of which—the peasantry—is a property-owning class. But it did serve his main purpose of drawing a line against the Mensheviks and their purely democratic perspective. So that was the framework in which these arguments took place.

Lenin's perspective was that the overthrow of tsarism in Russia by the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry would serve as a spark for proletarian revolution in the more advanced countries, where the situation was much more ripe for socialist revolution. He saw the democratic revolution in Russia leading rather immediately to socialist revolution in West Europe, especially in Germany.

In this period up through 1912, Lenin's consistently revolutionary thrust frequently led him to break with opportunism well before he had generalized it theoretically or internationally. Until 1912, the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks were sometimes forced to exist as factions in the same party. While building his Bolshevik faction in a very disciplined manner, Lenin had not yet broken in principle with Karl Kautsky's conception of "the party of the whole class." This conception meant that the movement should not be split and that all shades of difference, including opportunism, could exist in one party. Karl Kautsky was the pre-eminent leader of German Social Democracy at the time. The German party was far and away the largest party in Europe. Lenin greatly respected Kautsky, and in fact in *What Is To Be Done?* you'll find Lenin quoting Kautsky on the basic propositions of Marxism.

War and Revolution

It was not until the outbreak of the first interimperialist war in 1914 and the total political collapse of the Socialist



Russian troops killed during World War I imperialist slaughter. Collapse of social-democratic parties in orgy of national chauvinism led Lenin to call for a new, Communist International.

(Second) International that Lenin began to realize in hindsight the implications and effects of his earlier course. With the start of World War I, the parliamentary fraction of the German Social Democratic Party, on August 4, 1914, voted unanimously in favor of war credits for the government, supporting the German bourgeoisie in the war. This act had an absolutely shocking impact upon the revolutionists in the Second International. Lenin at first refused to believe the report.

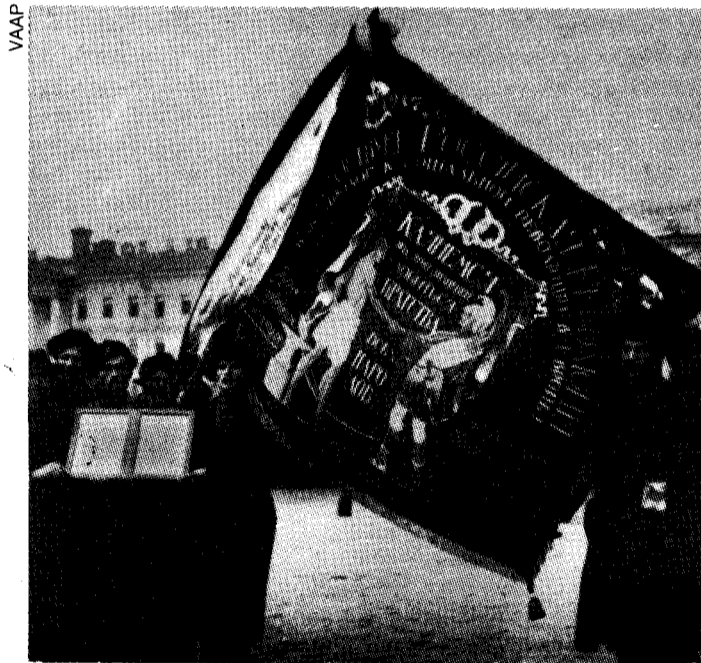
But this single event was to transform Lenin from the left-wing leader of Russian Social Democracy and an embryonic communist into the founding leader of the world communist movement. Following the collapse of the German party, all the other socialist parties in Europe collapsed in the same orgy of social-chauvinism, each one urging the working class in each country to support the war aims of their own ruling class, totally ignoring their historical opposition to imperialist war. World War I was the most horrible slaughter yet seen on the face of the earth. Millions of the working class of each country were killed. German workers killing French and English workers and Russian workers and vice versa, all being urged on to fight for their respective fatherlands. It was a shocking betrayal of fundamental socialist principles.

Lenin's basic policy toward the war and the international socialist movement was developed within a few weeks. His policy had three elements: 1) Socialists must stand for the defeat, above all, of their own bourgeois state. 2) The war demonstrated that capitalism in the imperialist epoch threatened to destroy civilization itself. Socialists therefore must work to transform the imperialist war into revolutionary civil war, into proletarian revolution. 3) The Second International has been destroyed by social-chauvinism. A new revolutionary international must be built through a complete split with the opportunists in the socialist movement. These principles, these three policies remained central to Lenin's activities right up to the Russian Revolution of October 25, 1917.

Lenin understood that he was advocating splitting the international workers movement into two antagonistic parties: one revolutionary, the other reformist. While in 1903 he had split Russian Social Democracy before it had acquired a mass base, he did not at that time fully realize what he had done. Previously, he saw it as a split of proletarian socialism from petty-bourgeois democracy, i.e., that the influence for opportunism was coming from *outside* the party. Understanding the material basis for opportunism *within* social democracy was one of the main conclusions of his book, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, written in 1916. It is in this period, from 1914 to 1917, that Leninism arose as a qualitative extension of Marxism.

Examining the total collapse of the German Social Democratic Party, Lenin

Bolsheviks opposed narrow economism, fought to win Russian workers to revolutionary internationalism. Banner of "Red Putilov" factory workers being presented to army regiment reads: "Long Live All-Russian Revolution as Prologue to Social Revolution in Europe."



came to understand that the source of opportunism came from within the German party itself. Its top leadership was based on a labor aristocracy—a privileged layer that was enjoying the benefits of imperialist exploitation of colonies all around the world. The political outlook of the party leadership had become totally bourgeoisified as a result of their social position in German society.

Now Lenin realized that in practice his Bolshevik organization had in fact *not* been built according to the Kautskyan formula. The selecting, testing and training of Bolshevik cadre was fundamentally different than the social-democratic model of Germany. In 1912 they had completely broken politically and organizationally from the Russian opportunists, the Mensheviks—two and a half years before the outbreak of the war. Lenin now took the Bolshevik Party as a model for the new Third International that he was calling for. Following the victory of the Russian Revolution, the Third, Communist International was founded in 1919. All over the world, including in

the United States, the Socialist parties split and the left wings founded new Communist parties, organized on the principles, program and practices of the Russian Bolsheviks. That is our model and ultimately where we come from.

The 1917 Russian Revolution

To see in reality the crucial role of leadership and the role of the revolutionary party, you should examine the course of the Russian Revolution between February and October 1917. Trotsky made the statement that the leadership is to the party what the party is to the class. Many years later Trotsky looked back to 1917 and asked, could the Russian Revolution have happened without Lenin? And he said, I would have to say "no."

There was considerable confusion and disorientation in the Bolshevik Party itself at the outbreak of the February Revolution when the tsar abdicated and a capitalist Provisional Government was formed. Side by side with that government were the *soviets* ("soviet" is the Russian word for workers council). These were mass organizations which sprang up in the 1905 Revolution. Delegates to the soviets were elected from the factories and ranks of the army.

So between February 1917 and the October insurrection, Lenin waged a furious political struggle on several fronts simultaneously. On the one hand, to expose and defeat the authority of the petty-bourgeois parties, the Mensheviks and the peasant-based Social Revolutionaries, who in the beginning had a majority in the soviets. On the other, struggling within his own party against a persistent right wing that was adapting to the opportunist parties who in turn supported the capitalist government. Trotsky said that it was only Lenin's far-

sightedness and his considerable authority with the party cadre that enabled the Bolsheviks to seize the moment and lead the insurrection.

In a revolutionary situation, the consciousness of the workers goes through very rapid changes from day to day, and often even the Bolsheviks lagged behind. But finally there comes a time that Trotsky refers to as the revolutionary moment, when the working class has rejected by experience all other possibilities and now has come to be fully conscious that there is no other, lesser course: We must take the power ourselves! Now they looked to the Bolsheviks to lead them.

The other prerequisite for a successful insurrection is the temporary exhaustion and confusion of the ruling class itself and a situation where it is denied the instruments of its own state power, essentially the army. You can't have an insurrection while the powers of the capitalist state remain intact. The capitalist state, as explained by Lenin, is the special bodies of armed men whose purpose is

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to defend the property forms of capitalism. The state, any state, is an instrument of coercion of one class over another. So you cannot have an insurrection without being able to split the army and take away the power of the bourgeoisie to militarily crush the revolution.

By early October 1917, all of these factors came together. The army garrisons in Petrograd refused to take orders from the Provisional Government. They would only take orders from the soviets. Thus the insurrection itself, and the seizure of power, was extraordinarily bloodless.

But as Trotsky says, woe unto any party that flinches at this moment and begins to overestimate the forces of the bourgeoisie or simultaneously underestimates the revolutionary capacity of the working class at the crucial moment. This is what led to the failure of the German Revolution in October 1923, and that failure closed the door for extending the revolution to industrialized Germany and opened the door for German fascism. A frightened ruling class is a very dangerous opponent. Having almost had their power taken away from them, they were going to see that that was not going to happen again. They started financing fascist thugs to break up first the Communist Party and then the labor unions. Then they went after the Jews.

The failure of the German Revolution also ended the revolutionary period that had begun in Russia in October 1917 and left the economically devastated and exhausted young Soviet Republic completely isolated. Lenin and Trotsky knew that for the revolution to survive in backward Russia it must immediately extend to industrialized Western Europe. That was the basic understanding of classical Marxism: You cannot have a revolution remain isolated in one country, especially a backward one; you will be attacked immediately by the other imperialist powers. Therefore, you must take the revolution into the camp of the imperialists.

The closing of that door to Germany demoralized the Russian workers and sections of the Communist Party itself, resulting in a political counterrevolution led by Stalin and his faction in 1924 against the program and leadership of the October Revolution.

Democratic Centralism

The organizational practice of a Leninist party is based on the principle of democratic centralism, which means full freedom in internal discussion, complete discipline and unity in action. As Trotsky put it, without inner democracy, no revolutionary education. Without discipline, no revolutionary action. I couldn't do any better than to read a section from our founding documents to describe the basic conceptions of democratic centralism:

"The Spartacist League takes its organizational forms and practices from the evolved institutions and experiences of the Leninist movement, and seeks to function according to the best traditions of Leninism. We seek to make use of the widest amount of internal democracy and discussion which is compatible with functioning in an effective and disciplined way. Unlike many organizations, which give only lip service to the idea of factional democracy, the SL recognizes that the right to factions is basic and that factional struggle is not only educational but is, in cases of sharp difference, the only way in which the party can arrive at the correct political line....

"The SL must be primarily an action organization, not a discussion group. Once a position is arrived at, it may always be overturned by a higher body or later reversal, but until then it must be carried out."

Or, as James Cannon put it, "Only a self-acting and critical minded membership is capable of forging and consolidating



During East German upheaval of 1989-90, Spartacists fought against Stalinist sellout of the deformed workers state to capitalism. Banner reads: "For a Leninist-Egalitarian Party!"

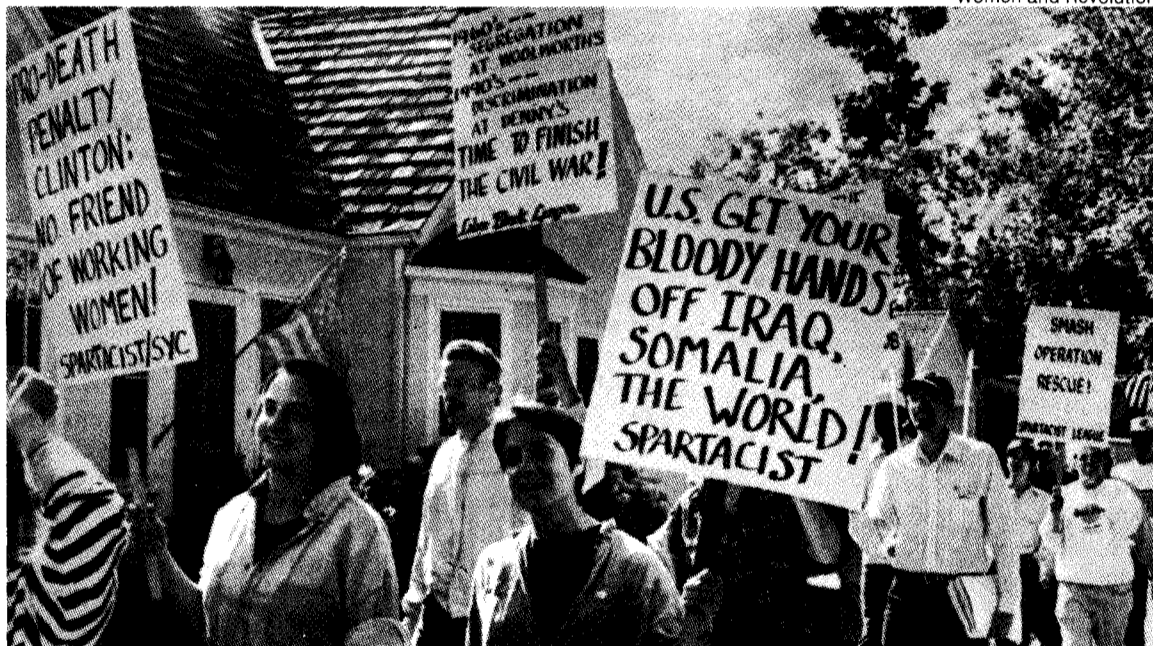
the revolutionary party and of solving its problems by collective discussion and decision. A loosely knit, heterogeneous, undisciplined, untrained organization is utterly incapable."

Basically, democratic centralism is a simple principle. If there are disputes or differences in the party, they are discussed and debated up through the national conference, which is the highest body of the organization. But after a decision is reached by majority vote, the minority is bound by that decision in the

ization parallel to the adult party itself. And they do so in a way where they're not surrounded by 20-year members of the party, which makes youth feel like they're the dumbest guys in the room, but amongst their peers. This encourages the fullest kind of critical discussion to take place. This is how you build critical thinking and higher consciousness.

Bolshevism vs. Bureaucratism

Social-democratic organizations, because they do not have a perspective of



Spartacist supporters defend abortion clinics in San Jose, California. The Spartacist League and Spartacist Youth Clubs struggle for a Leninist party which will be a tribune of all the oppressed. Join us!

public actions of the party, including in its press. This does *not* mean that you have to abandon or give up your opinions. That was the bureaucratic and destructive practice instituted by Stalinism. They called this practice "criticism, self-criticism," culminating in the concept of unanimity. What it really meant was that if you came up on the wrong side of a question, that wrong side being decided by the leadership, you were required to stand up before the membership and criticize yourself for holding the wrong views. In other words, you had to get up and explain what kind of a bad person you were, some sort of petty-bourgeois dilettante or whatever.

But this kind of false confession, this abdication of one's views, simply guts you as a revolutionist. And that mechanism selected people out. What remained were those that learned to live within the framework of a bureaucratic organization where they were expected not to do their own thinking. Whereas we value the critical thinking of our own membership, and encourage it.

In fact that's the fundamental reason for the creation of a separate youth organization, so that it can be a training ground for the party, learning how to build a local, learning how to run local executive committees, how to be sales directors and organizers and writers and put out a paper and run a whole national organ-

the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, but rather seek to pressure its so-called liberal wing, denounce Leninist democratic centralism as being the forerunner of Stalinist bureaucratism. That's the standard anti-Communist syllogism, which you hear all the time now since the bankruptcy of Stalinism caused the collapse of the Soviet Union: Stalinist bureaucratism flowed from Leninist democratic centralism.

Anybody can say almost anything they want in a social-democratic organization, reflecting their completely heterogeneous political composition. Except, there *is* a party line. It is carried in the newspaper and someone creates it, generally the ruling clique of the moment, which tends to change without any particular democratic discussions. Centrist and social-democratic organizations are always in practice bureaucratic organizations. Centrist is defined as that current which exists between the poles of revolution and reformism. Even in the most left-sounding of the centrist groups there is a conflict between their stated aims—their paper positions—and their real practice.

Another definition of centrism is: revolutionary in words, opportunist in deeds. In fact this contradiction is the source of all bureaucratism. The Stalinists, from 1924 until the 1989-91 collapse of bureaucratic rule, were a living

lie. They published the *Collected Works* of Lenin while seeking to conciliate imperialism by preventing workers revolutions. That profound contradiction was the basis for the police state and for the bureaucratism.

The understanding that the consciousness of the revolutionary party is higher than the consciousness of the working class means that we do not go outside the party seeking to mobilize more backward workers to pressure the party internally. Many years ago, we wrote "that the fundamental principle for communists is that one struggles among one's comrades to gain a majority for one's program, and that anyone who seeks to mobilize backward forces and alien class elements from outside a revolutionary Marxist organization in order to struggle for ascendancy inside that organization is no communist." Building and maintaining the party requires the highest level of conscious effort.

To ensure the revolutionary integrity of the whole party, the leadership must scrupulously guard the rights of all comrades or groupings in the party who have differences with the party. After all, they may be right. We were a left-wing opposition known as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the Socialist Workers Party in the early 1960s. The SWP greatly abused our democratic rights. They kept us from doing public work in arenas of our differences. They kept us off the leading bodies of the party, they denied our right to exist as a faction in

Women and Revolution

the party, and we constantly struggled to simply exist as an organized group trying to bring our views to the party members.

So we learned from this experience, being on the short end of a very bureaucratic stick, and that reflects itself in our organizational rules and guidelines where the rights of factions are codified, the right to proportional representation on leading bodies if the differences are not resolved at a national conference. Once during a debate in the New York local of the Socialist Workers Party, the national secretary, Farrell Dobbs, looked at me, a young supporter of the RT, and said, "The majority is the party!" And that was dead wrong, that was a fundamentally bureaucratic statement. The party is both the majority and the minority.

So we learned from this negative experience. We also understood that these departures from the norms of Leninism were because the SWP had lost its revolutionary perspective and was very rapidly moving toward reformism. They no longer required the practices necessary for a revolutionary party.

I welcome those of you who are joining the youth club this weekend. It is the first important step toward devoting your life to the cause of the proletariat. There is no higher form of service to humanity. ■

Black Freedom...

(continued from page 1)

during the civil rights movement. This racist nightmare called America, land of the exploitation of the many by the few, is one big jail where lynch law is administered by racist killer cops. That is an everyday reality.

There are lying, pseudoscientific books like *The Bell Curve* proclaiming the genetic inferiority of black people, which try to justify white supremacy as a matter of innate abilities. We say that racism—the system of beliefs based upon the doctrine of biological “superiority” and “inferiority” of races—developed with capitalism and can only be ended with the overthrow of capitalism. We have to start doing some of the things that the bosses tell us not to do. We have to fight the class war of the capitalists with our own class war against the exploiters—nothing less will win. We must forge an internationalist revolutionary workers vanguard party with our class brothers and sisters from Mexico to Japan to South Africa. The fight for black liberation is tied up with the fight for world revolution to put the murderous racist exploiters out of business once and for all.

When the exploiters start saying nice things about you, it's time to sober up. They don't give out praise lightly, and when they do it's because they can see new ways to tighten the noose around our necks. There is an African proverb which I have remembered over many years: “If you don't know where you are going, any road can take you there.” Almost a million men rallying for “atonement” in Washington, D.C. was not “one magnificent day,” like the *Wall Street Journal*—the organ of finance capital—said. At a time when the racist rulers are seizing us by the throats, cutting us up, and wiping their feet all over us, the march for “atonement” forgave the capitalist oppressors for beating us down.

I think we'll be seeing some books on this “Million Man March.” I can see it now: *Reflections of a Black FBI Agent, Lessons for the Day*, with a foreword written by Strom Thurmond, “The Meaning of Negro Responsibility in the Era of Downsizing.” The Million Man March dressed up an oppressed black constituency with the conservative trappings of anti-woman “family values” and segregationist bigotry. Many black workers and youth, with no interest in Farrakhan per se, grabbed hold of the march like a drowning man reaches for straw. Despite the hugs, the back-slapping and the emotional highs following the march, its political character, regardless of what was in the minds of the participants, was to blame black people for the brutal racist oppression of the capitalist parasites. It was a trap for labor and blacks.

Historically, black people have fought for integration into American society. But in times of unrelenting, unchallenged racial oppression, many blacks have turned inward in despair toward dead-end separatism. You hear a lot of talk about “role models.” Well, here's a role model: the “Grand Army of Black Men,” about 200,000 strong—free and slave—that fought in the Union Army during the Civil War and turned the tide against the slaveholders on behalf of black men, women and children. They fought for social revolution. But the black freedmen were cut down with the defeat of the post-Civil War Radical Reconstruction period. The Northern capitalists betrayed the promise of black equality. “Black codes” were enacted to control black labor, backed up by poisonous segregation and enforced by thousands of lynchings.

Only the Klan and their capitalist masters benefit from an impoverished black



Jon Levy

Chain gangs return to Alabama as racist ruling class intensifies brutal state repression particularly targeting black youth.

population walled off from its objective allies—working people of all races who are ground down by the same enemy and with whom we must join in common struggle. Today there's a lot of talk about how segregation is a blessing in disguise, how black people can be separate and equal, how all we have to do is engage in a little bit of self-help and pool our resources to eliminate racial oppression. Do not believe this. This is a concession to the exploiters, a renunciation of the struggle to overthrow the race-haters and tyrants. It accepts the caste arrangements imposed by the white ruling class, resulting in permanent subordination in this racist hell.

We fight for black liberation through socialist revolution. Our perspective of revolutionary integrationism guides our practical work, from our successful labor/black mobilizations that have swept Klan and skinhead murderers off the street, to our labor-centered campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal—to stop racist “legal” lynching—to our struggle to mobilize the integrated labor movement to fight racist police murder. Revolutionary integrationism is a program for a fighting labor movement that champions the cause of all of the oppressed, which requires a revolutionary workers party fighting for an egalitarian socialist America. Black oppression is rooted in the bedrock of American capitalism. Because of their position as the most oppressed and most conscious section of the working class, black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming revolution.

On the other side are the liberal integrationists, who appeal to the moral conscience of the bloody, criminal white ruling class to live up to their “democratic ideals,” which consist of the “right” to exploit, humiliate, dehumanize and terrorize the working class and the poor. The liberals want to ensure that the struggle for black freedom stays within the bounds of capitalism. When they speak of “integration,” they mean that we've got to go slow, and not too many of you—don't “tip the balance” too far. Tied to capitalism, the liberals necessarily capitulate to white racist reaction.

Why the Racist Rulers Hailed Farrakhan's March

Today Clinton and Gingrich are ripping to shreds the meager social welfare programs that do exist. But it is the two pillars of Democratic Party liberalism—the labor bureaucracy and the black elected officials—which have made the working class and poor vulnerable to the ever more savage attacks against them. The capitalist class knows what it wants: unbridled exploitation, leaving welfare mothers and their children to starve, driving down the standard of living of

workers, smashing all of the gains of workers and the oppressed.

The capitalists loudly denounced the O.J. Simpson verdict, where the integrated jury rejected the evident police and prosecution lies and frame-up. And they have been working overtime to defuse the international movement to free Mumia Abu-Jamal which has so far stopped them from killing Mumia. The ruling class recognizes the *potential* of this movement to mobilize tens of thousands of workers and youth against the whole rotten structure of racist capitalism. In contrast, they praised the Million Man March called by the pseudo-nationalist demagogue Farrakhan and built by black misleaders like Jesse Jackson and Ben Chavis, along with various labor traitors.

Unlike most of the left, the Spartacist League told the truth about this march: that it was a reactionary, poisonous mobilization, sexually exclusionist, segregationist and directly opposed to the fight for black liberation. It was an accommodation to and acceptance of the racist status quo. Also, a key component of the march was voter registration, to remind Clinton, who spat upon blacks during the last elections, that they could deliver the votes to one or both of the property parties of racist American capitalism.



Sinister demagogue Louis Farrakhan, surrounded by “Fruit of Islam” guards, addresses Million Man March.

Farrakhan's Degrading Pledge for Black Men

I pledge that from this day forward I will strive to love my brother as I love myself.

I from this day forward will strive to improve myself spiritually, morally, mentally, socially, politically, and economically for the benefit of myself, my family and my people.

I pledge that I will strive to build businesses, build houses, build hospitals, build factories, and enter into international trade for the good of myself, my family and my people.

I pledge to support Black news-

The truth is that we don't have anything to atone for. The criminals are the racist rulers who can't provide jobs, education and health care; who are putting an entire generation of young blacks in jail and on chain gangs; who want to kill Mumia; who have framed and jailed Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) for 25 years; who bombed the Philly MOVE commune; who killed millions abroad—from dropping atomic bombs on the Japanese, to slaughtering Vietnamese, to the butchery of Iraqis led by Colin Powell. Farrakhan invited this mass murderer to address this march. Well, we're not surprised. After all, he had Klansman Tom Metzger sitting in his meeting ten years ago.

Today there is a greater gulf between rich and poor in the United States than in any other Western industrial country. This is also reflected among blacks. Today 20 percent of black families earn almost half of all black income, which is greater than the income inequality among whites. This is the black middle class created by Johnson's “War on Poverty” as a buffer against unrest exemplified by the 1960s ghetto upheavals. This layer was the main beneficiary of the civil rights movement, although they continue to endure the daily humiliation of racism and are watching the openings which they were afforded slam shut for their children. This is the intended audience for the demagoguery of Farrakhan, the man who wanted Malcolm X dead. It is interesting to note that 40 percent of participants in the Million Man March had annual incomes of over \$50,000.

Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam want to join the big shots, to become brokers for the bourgeoisie. They target the Korean and Arab shopkeepers so that they can corner the segregated ghetto market. For Farrakhan & Co., the ghetto masses are a source of embarrassment and a big weight “holding down the race” (them) from upward mobility. Their battle cry is “black capitalism”—and their favorite song is “don't make waves, make money.”

In capitalist society, the petty bourgeoisie, the middle class, has no independent class position and is the transmission belt for capitalist ideology. Increasing numbers of the black petty bourgeoisie have embraced conservative ideology, joining with white racist suburbanites in keeping the black poor from their neighborhoods, like in New Orleans, supporting the racist “war on drugs” and backing increased police-state powers. Over the years, black

papers, Black radio, Black TV stations and other forms of Black media.

I pledge from this day forward not to abuse my wife or my children in any way.

I pledge not to use the “b-word” toward any woman.

I pledge not to poison my body with drugs or other substances destructive to my body and health.

I pledge that from this day forward I will never raise my hand with a knife or a gun to beat, cut or shoot any member of my family or any human being except in self-defense.



Bettmann Archive



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Historical Pictures Service

Heroes of the fight against slavery: Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass. Militant Abolitionists linked battle for black freedom with the cause of women's rights.

Democratic Party mayors, front men for capitalist rule, have carried out vicious attacks against blacks and working people.

John Lewis, black Democrat, ex-civil rights activist in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), supported Clinton's draconian "crime bill." This is a good example of what I'm talking about, because these types agree with the ideological campaign of the white ruling class—that violent crime equals young blacks—which has filtered down into the black working class. Their message is that they have made it the hard way, they're the "role model," and if you don't make something of your life, it's your fault.

American capitalism has written off working-class and minority youth. Since this country's rulers cannot employ the millions of jobless in a way that produces adequate profits, in their view whole layers of the minority poor are just a surplus population. There's a lot of talk about the "black community," which is increasingly unreal since the ghettos are huge pockets of urban misery occupied by the police. Today, the call for more cops has a resonance among black workers. But the cops are not neutral; they are armed thugs at the core of the capitalist state, protecting the property of the rich.

Today the impotent black reformist and pseudo-nationalist misleadership requires new methods of deception to deflect the anger of the black masses away from the racist capitalist oppressors. Jesse Jackson, "Mr. Fireman," always on the scene to snuff out any militant struggle, is today regarded as the foremost spokesman for old-fashioned "welfare state liberalism." Yet more than any other black leader, Jackson helped create the political climate which allows the Republican right to dominate the Washington scene. During the 1970s, Jackson's Operation Push in Chicago, which was funded by major corporations like Coca-Cola, pushed the fraud of "black capitalism" and lectured impoverished ghetto youth to "pull themselves up by the bootstraps."

Ben Chavis, the former NAACP head, cut a deal with the racist management of Denny's restaurants during our fight against their mistreatment of blacks. The pro-capitalist misleaders exploit the despair, frustration and anger among blacks, who face a relentless, genocidal drive against them, in order to chain black working people to the class enemy.

These misleaders cynically bemoan the statistics about how many black men are in jail, how they are an endangered species, but support the "war on drugs" which has intensified racist state repression.

Many participated in the Million Man March not because they believe in Farrakhan's vicious anti-Semitism, immigrant-bashing and anti-gay bigotry. Not because they believe in a racially segregated black capitalism. Not because they want to work with the police or be cops in the housing projects like the



Labor Defender

Mass mobilizations were key in saving Scottsboro Boys, framed up on charges of raping white women, from "legal" lynching in 1930s.

Nation of Islam. But in the aftermath of the march, deadly illusions are increasingly being pushed that the cops are on our side, that black youth should work with the police. This is called "community organizing." You try telling that to the family and friends of 28-year-old William Hankston Jr., a black man shot recently in the back of the head by a black cop in San Francisco while he was riding away on a bike.

The Heirs of Booker T. Washington

There is an example of masses of blacks mobilized behind reactionary goals in the past: the Marcus Garvey "back to Africa" movement in the post-World War I period. Fueled by racist violence and mass unemployment following the war, millions of black people looked to Garvey out of despair as a way out of this racist hell.

Some supporters of the Million Man March say: "What's wrong with engaging in a little bit of self-help, what's wrong with pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps?" What's wrong is that the vast majority of black people don't have boots to pull themselves up with. This talk about self-help, which echoes the racist rulers, has historically been pushed by spokesmen for black capitalism, from Booker T. Washington and his National Negro Business League to Marcus Garvey, who was Washington's disciple and whose Black Star shipping lines and Negro Factories Corporation were schemes to line the pockets of a few at the expense of the masses.

Booker T. Washington rose to prominence at the end of the last century on the ruins of Reconstruction, and preached segregation and black capitalism. In his famous address in Atlanta in 1898, he said that blacks and whites could be as separate as the five fingers of the hand in matters social. In other words, blacks should adjust to their second-class status. White capitalists ate this up. While paying tribute to Washington, the liberal W.E.B. Du Bois in *Souls of Black Folks* argued against Washington's "gospel of work and money" and his support for the disenfranchisement of the black

masses. Though representative of a layer of black intellectuals who had an elitist conception of the "talented tenth" of blacks naturally leading the rest, Du Bois' conception of training black leadership to fight the caste system was an attack on segregation.

The issue is not the value of individual efforts per se to ameliorate the plight of black people. The burning task is to get at the material roots of black oppression, which is capitalism—a system that puts nothing before profits. We in the Spartacist League, the U.S. section of the International Communist League, struggle to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party that combats segregation, that struggles for jobs for all through a shorter workweek without a cut in pay, that fights for free, quality integrated education and housing. We stand for full citizenship rights for immigrants, which is key, because the anti-immigrant racists behind racist Prop. 187 and "English only" bigotry are the same racists who are destroying the remnants of affirmative action. This fight is inseparable from united class struggle to abolish capitalism and establish a workers government. The massive false consciousness of black workers who supported a march for "atonement" is a product of the bankruptcy of labor and black leadership, which has collaborated with the capitalist enemy to keep us down.

Black Women and Revolutionary Struggle

The exclusion of women was a neon sign of the reactionary nature of this march. A few black women were cynically added to the speaker's platform, but the message was: stay at home, pray,

take care of the children, and stand behind the man. Feminist Angela Davis denounced the march, but offers no answers since for decades she has supported the so-called lesser-evil Democratic Party.

In a recent *New York Times Magazine* (12 November) piece titled, "A Manifesto of Sorts for a Black Feminist Movement," Kristal Zook showed where feminism—which claims that the main division of society is between men and women, not exploiters and exploited—leads. While correctly opposing the march as a "seductive mask for old-fashioned sexism," she wants to retry the 1930s Scottsboro case—nine black youths framed up on charges of raping two white women in Alabama—marking that with all the hype about endangered black males, "black women are left without a way to talk about how some of the Scottsboro 'boys'...actually did commit acts of violence and murder against their girlfriends." This trash is similar to the filth peddled by white feminist Susan Brownmiller years ago in her book, *Against Her Will*, where she tried to justify the lynching of 14-year-old Chicago black youth Emmett Till, who was accused of whistling at a white woman in Money, Mississippi in 1955.

For communists, the degree of progress of women mirrors the progress or lack thereof of society as a whole. Women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the patriarchal family, which is a key prop for the maintenance of the bourgeois order. This oppression must be uprooted through socialist revolution. At bottom, feminism of all hues preaches class collaboration, the union of women of all classes. This is counterposed to a fight to wipe out all forms of social oppression through the elimination of capitalist ownership of the means of production.

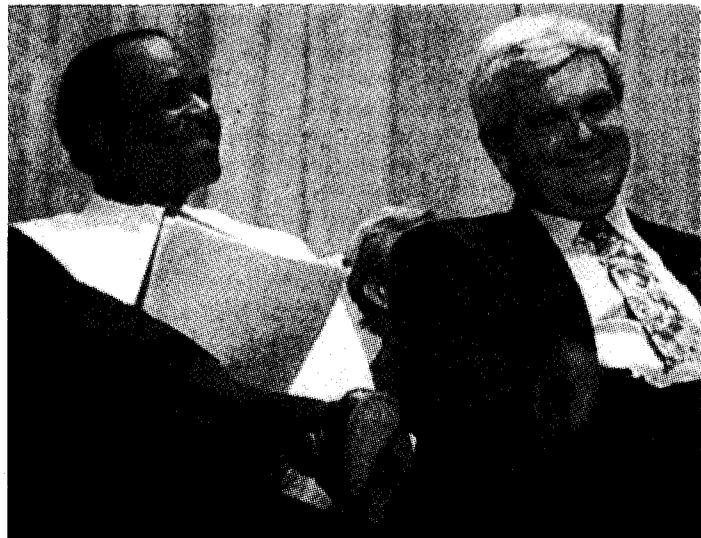
The fight against racial and sexual oppression, the defense of democratic rights for gays, the fight against the triple oppression of black working women, are critical to revitalizing the labor movement, to transforming the unions into instruments of class struggle. The radical Abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who was a militant fighter for women's rights up to the last days of his life, proclaimed that "Right is of no sex—Truth is of no color." The program of trying to reform the racist status quo necessarily leads to lining up with the ruling class in the oppression of women and to pitting sections of the oppressed against each other.

Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam, opposed the right of women to have an abortion, warning about the "tricks the devils are using," particularly in relation to birth control. He contended that black women were created by god to serve their husbands and sons, saying, "The woman is man's field to produce his nation." Farrakhan didn't need any encouragement from "Operation Rescue" when he wrote, "When the Black woman kills her unborn child, she is murdering the advancement of her nation."

The Million Man March was not the first attempt to exclude black women from having their voices heard. The organizers of the 1963 March on Washington, which Malcolm X rightfully denounced as the "Farce on Washington," tried to keep militant black women from speaking. Only at the last minute, as a result of challenges from women in SNCC, were they allowed to speak. During the civil rights and "black power" movements, black women were systematically prevented from assuming top leadership positions. Ella Baker, who helped establish SNCC and was a leading activist in M.L. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), was relegated to secretarial positions. What she had to say is very revealing:

"There would never be any role for me in a leadership capacity with SCLC. Why? First, I'm a woman. Also, I'm not

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Reuters

D.C. mayor Marion Barry with right-wing Republican Newt Gingrich. Black misleaders join in pushing racist, bipartisan "war on drugs."

Black Freedom...

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a minister. And second...I knew that my penchant for speaking honestly...would not be well tolerated. The combination of the basic attitude of men, and especially ministers, as to what the role of women in their church setups is—that of taking orders, not providing leadership—and the...ego problems involved in having to feel that here is someone who...had more information about a lot of things than they possessed at that time.... This would never have lent itself to my being a leader in the movement there."

—Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter* (1984)

It was hell, too, for many white women in SDS, Students for a Democratic Society, which was a petty-bourgeois New Left organization.

Stokely Carmichael (now Kwame Ture), as a leader of SNCC argued that the position of women in the movement was "prone." He's still trying to live that down. Cultural nationalist Ron Karenga of United Slaves (US), whose organization killed Black Panthers at the time and who now supports the march in D.C., said: "What makes a woman appealing is femininity, and she can't be feminine without being submissive." In the mid-'70s, Karenga did time in San Luis Obispo prison for allegedly torturing women in his organization.

Amiri Baraka, Karenga's sidekick in the 1960s, stated that black females had to internalize "submitting to their natural roles by studying their attitudes toward their 'man, house and children'." Baraka opposed the Million Man March; however, he opposed the exclusion of women on narrow tactical grounds, stating that "I won't go to war and leave half the army home." But it isn't merely a matter of "half the army" being left at home. Militant black women will be among the leaders and generals of the future revolutionary party and proletarian army if we are to succeed in sweeping away capitalist rule.

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The Labor Black Leagues stand for mobilizing minorities and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. The LBLs are fraternally allied to the Spartacist League, and are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

There is a crisis of leadership today. Black misleaders and the union bureaucracy are wedded to either pro-capitalist racist Democratic Party liberalism or do-nothing dead-end black separatism. The Labor Black Leagues are multiracial organizations of militant workers and youth fighting for revolutionary integrationism: for black freedom through socialist revolution.

For more information write:

CHICAGO

Box 6938
Chicago, IL
60680

NEW YORK

Box 3238,
Church St. Station
New York, NY 10008

OAKLAND

Box 751
Oakland, CA
94604



WV Photo

Labor Black League joins protest against cop killing of black union member in Oakland, California.

From Abolitionist Harriet Tubman—who led a battle during the Civil War—to the civil rights movement, black women have been in the front lines of the struggle for black freedom. Now you have a lot of talk accusing black women of lapping up all of the gravy of affirmative action and taking well-paid jobs from black men. There's this one guy named Claude Anderson, who recently wrote a book, *Black Labor, White Wealth*, which paints a rosy picture of black women under slavery, saying that they had it so good. These are vicious lies that serve the interests of the male-chauvinist, racist bourgeoisie.

Increasingly, we have witnessed the growth of all-black-male schools, and some "Afrocentric" nationalists have called for replacing welfare programs for black women with programs for black men. Farrakhan's opposition to welfare coincides with the racist rulers' drive to teach black women "abstinence" and submission to the head of the household. Pushing the drive for "workfare," they paint black women, particularly single mothers, as "immoral," "promiscuous,"

not good mothers. And Gingrich is proposing that their children be put in orphanages. Moreover, there exists the "Promise Keepers" movement, a white Christian reactionary crusade promoting male hegemony. The proliferation of all-male groups is part of the drive to reverse the minimal gains of women and to keep them "in their place," that is, barefoot and pregnant. Its most murderous expression has been the terrorist bombings of abortion clinics and the murder of clinic workers and doctors.

The Struggle for Revolutionary Leadership

The multiracial working class must answer the murderous violence of the woman-haters through mass mobilizations relying on our own independently organized strength. We fight for organizing the unorganized, many of whom are women workers, especially Latino and black women; for jobs for all; for free, quality 24-hour childcare; for free abortion on demand and defense of the clinics against anti-abortion terror; for free medical care; for equal pay for equal

work. We oppose gun control: the right to bear arms is a great equalizer.

The Spartacist League and Labor Black League, which is an anti-racist, anti-capitalist organization in political solidarity with the SL, fight to unchain labor/black power, to change this racist capitalist system from top to bottom. The reformists, the nationalists, seek to hold the masses in check. Farrakhan's black capitalist schemes and the pro-Democratic Party liberals like Jesse Jackson both represent dead ends.

We have big tasks. U.S. imperialism has been the main international support for South African apartheid, Salvadoran death squads, the Saudi Arabian slave-owning royal family and other bloody crooks in the business of suppressing the workers and the oppressed. Revolutionary black workers and youth, along with Latino, white and Asian workers, men and women, fighting in the spirit of the black men who fought in the Union Army to bury slavery, will be a critical part of a multiracial class-struggle workers party that buries this obsolete system of capitalist wage slavery. ■

Sri Lanka...

(continued from page 4)

government-sponsored vigilante mobs. Meanwhile there have been a succession of strikes and occupations, including by women textile and Free Trade Zone workers. In September, railway workers shut down the entire railway network for a day.

The government has announced a wage freeze, compelled workers to give up a day's pay for the war effort and established special police units to suppress workers struggles. The war on the Tamils and the plight of workers, Tamil and Sinhalese alike, is a product of betrayals perpetrated by the established leaders of the working class. Just as they joined the anti-Tamil, Sinhala-chauvinist popular-front government of Mrs. Bandaranaike in the 1960s, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the Communist

Party serve in today's PA government. The Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP), a split from the LSSP and the official section of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat in Sri Lanka, has a sordid history of class collaboration. Recently NSSP leader Karunaratne called on the Sinhala-communist JVP to support "Tamil-speaking regiments" in the army! In fact this demand is raised by certain Tamil quisling groups who actively work with the army in hunting down and killing LTTE supporters.

The Revolutionary Communist League, Lankan section of David North's "International Committee of the Fourth International," while on this occasion raising the demand for the immediate withdrawal of the Sri Lankan troops from the north and east of the island, deny that the Leninist recognition of the right of national self-determination is valid today for the Tamils or any oppressed nation, thus giving backhanded support to "unitary" Sri Lanka. Despite the longstanding links between various left and ostensibly Trotskyist groups in Britain and Lanka, when more than 12,000 Tamils, many of them refugees, marched through the centre of London on 18 November in a militant protest against the onslaught on Jaffna, the only British group in attendance was the Spartacist League.

During WW II, the Ceylonese Trotskyists took the lead in establishing the Bolshevik Leninist Party of India. Then, with Tamil working people of the island and south India serving as a vital bridge, the struggles of the Tamil and Sinhalese working class could have been the catalyst for revolutionary mobilisations throughout India. Today the island is a microcosm of the Indian subcontinent, a

prison house of national, caste, sexual oppressions and indescribable exploitation of workers and agrarian toilers. The task throughout the subcontinent must be to build revolutionary working-class parties to lead the working class and its allies in socialist revolution. For the right of Tamil Eelam! For federated workers republics of Eelam and Lanka, part of a socialist federation of South Asia! ■

Balkans...

(continued from page 1)

they have acted as "left" advisers and cheerleaders for the warmongers in Washington and other NATO capitals. Now they've got what they asked for, as yet more imperialist troops prepare to pour into the Balkans.

Leaders of the Bosnian Serbs initially refused to sign the Dayton accord, denouncing the dispatch of NATO troops as an "imperialist occupation." But they were bullied into submission by Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic, who is acting at Washington's behest in exchange for an end to UN economic sanctions. Meanwhile, up to 3,000 troops from Yeltsin's Russia, which has posed as the big-power champion of Serbia while acting as the "soft cop" for Western imperialism, are set to join the NATO forces based in Tuzla, under U.S. command.

Under the U.S.-engineered partition, tens of thousands of heavily armed NATO soldiers with helicopter support will patrol a narrow buffer zone between the two sides. Meanwhile, the contending nationalist forces will retain their own armies. With national bitterness on

all sides, even in the face of widespread war-weariness, the U.S./NATO intervention could turn into a bloody quagmire for the imperialists.

Whatever the immediate outcome of this attempt to impose a U.S. diktat on the contending Balkan nationalists, it will only lay the basis for future wars. Imperialism cannot bring "peace" because it is based on the exploitation and oppression of the workers of the world, leading to a mad competition for profits among the big powers. Lasting peace and national equality for all the peoples of the region can only come through proletarian revolutions leading to a socialist federation of the Balkans, as part of a socialist united states of Europe.

Washington wants to show that it still calls the shots in NATO and has the military might and will to bully the world's peoples into submission. Today there is a temporary convergence of interests over the Balkans between the U.S. and West European (centrally German) imperialists. But in the long run these rivals will necessarily clash. The bloody Balkan conflict, intersecting growing inter-imperialist rivalries in the post-Soviet world, is stark testimony to the urgent need to resolve the crisis of worldwide proletarian leadership by building Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties, part of a reborn Fourth International, which can overthrow the imperialist butchers through world socialist revolution.

Here in the imperialist "belly of the beast," the working class and oppressed must above all else oppose the bloody designs of our "own" capitalist rulers. *U.S. get your bloody hands off the Balkans!* ■

Spartacist League Public Offices

—MARXIST LITERATURE—

Bay Area

Thurs.: 5:30-8:00 p.m., Sat.: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor (near 17th Street)
Oakland, California Phone: (510) 839-0851

Chicago

Tues.: 5:00-9:00 p.m., Sat.: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
161 W. Harrison St., 10th Floor
Chicago, Illinois Phone: (312) 663-0715

New York City

Tues.: 6:30-9:00 p.m., Sat.: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
41 Warren St. (one block below
Chambers St. near Church St.)
New York, NY Phone: (212) 267-1025

NYC Labor...

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with welfare recipients forced into "workfare." It could not be clearer that the fates of the unionized city workforce and the ghetto and barrio poor are inextricably linked. Nor could it be clearer that any serious attempt to beat back the assault on the unions and social services will mean a political struggle to get rid of the bought-and-paid-for labor traitors. An angry clerical aide at the Department of Health captured it when she said that City Hall and the union tops had become "just one big clique." Indeed, the current deal was reportedly cooked up in "cozy personal and phone chats" between Hill and Feldman and Giuliani's labor commissioner (and fellow ex-prosecutor) Randy Levine (*Village Voice*, 24 October).

As we wrote when Giuliani announced his last round of budget cuts earlier this year, "under a class-struggle leadership, strike action by transit, hospital and other city workers could galvanize the deep anger of the working class and minority poor" (WV No. 617, 24 February). And there's plenty of anger out there. A week before the new contract was announced, subway and bus fares



NYC mayor Giuliani congratulates AFSCME head Stanley Hill (right) after union misleaders agree to wage freeze, layoffs.

were jacked up by 20 percent, to \$1.50, infuriating millions of working people. Meanwhile, massive speedup and cutbacks in maintenance have made the deteriorating subway system increasingly dangerous and dirty for transit workers and riders alike. Public transport is a basic necessity of life in NYC and should be free. We say: Rip out the turnstiles!

But far from seeking to fight the fare hike, the leadership of the powerful and integrated Transport Workers Union re-

fuses to lift a finger even to defend its members in the face of layoffs, speedup, management harassment and forced overtime. Faced with the loss of his dues base, public hospital workers Local 420 head James Butler was one of the few officials to come out against the new contract. But all Butler could do was plead for more "understanding" for his dilemma from Stanley Hill and pray that "God will tell him to redo the contract."

The labor bureaucrats are adamantly opposed to mobilizing their membership

in struggle because that would upset their cozy ties to the capitalist Democratic Party, which from the NYC City Council right up to the White House works hand in hand with the Republicans in the war against workers and minorities. A succession of Democratic Party mayors, from Abe Beame to Ed Koch to David Dinkins, presided over the loss of 400,000 manufacturing jobs while adding thousands of cops to the payroll. The current offensive against the poor was inaugurated under Clinton's vow to "end welfare as we know it." Yet reformist darling Dennis Rivera, head of hospital workers Local 1199, recently brought out some 20,000 union members—not to fight the health care cuts, but to cheer Hillary Clinton and boost her husband's '96 presidential campaign.

Labor will either champion the cause of all the oppressed or be strangled along with them. What's needed is a class-struggle leadership in the unions prepared to take on the Wall Street bloodsuckers. And that means breaking with the partner parties of capitalism and forging a revolutionary workers party committed to sweeping away this system of racism and poverty and replacing it with a planned, socialist economy to rebuild the cities and provide jobs, housing and education for all. ■

France...

(continued from page 16)

in the mass turnout on Saturday, November 25, when tens of thousands demonstrated in Paris against increasing attacks on abortion rights. The current wave of worker and student protests is particularly significant, coming as it does in the context of a concerted campaign by the regime to defuse working-class discontent by channeling it into anti-"immigrant" racism (in France, "immigrant" is used to refer to everyone of North African or African descent, even French citizens). In the past few months, Chirac has seized on a series of bombings as a pretext to launch "Operation Vigipirate," calling in the army to terrorize the urban ghettos.

As we noted last issue, the French ruling class sees in the current unrest the spectre of another May '68, when a wave of militant student protests set the stage for a general strike by the workers which brought the country to the verge of revolution. It was only thanks to the betrayal of the PCF, then the dominant force in the workers movement, that a decisive showdown was averted. In a leaflet distributed to protesting students last week, the Jeunesse Spartaciste, youth group of the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), section of the International Communist League, pointed to the need to link their struggles with that of the working class and emphasized the urgency of forging an internationalist workers party based on a revolutionary program:

"In the name of a racist and chauvinist 'sacred union,' the government wants to prepare the population for arbitrary police repression in order to shove its reactionary social measures down the throats of students, youth as a whole, workers, and all sectors of the population oppressed by capitalism. Down with Vigipirate! Stop the charter flights and deportations! Defend the right of asylum! Down with the racist quotas in the universities! Cops out of the ghetto suburbs! Down with the hunt for clandestine immigrants! Smash the fascists before they smash us! For worker/immigrant defense squads based on the factories! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families! Down with the racist Bayrou circular [expelling girls who wear the Islamic headscarf from public schools]!...

"What is necessary today is a revolutionary program that links the struggle of the youth for the right to a job, housing and wages—to a decent life—to the struggle of the proletariat to end this capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. We, Jeunesse Spartaciste, fight for free, quality education for all, without any race or class discrimination. We want the proletariat to have access to culture, for working-class youth to have full access to the universities....

"The student mobilizations must link up with those of the working class. To start with, the students in struggle must massively participate in the November 24 demonstration. First, because the working class is under attack by the very same austerity policy the students are victims of, and second, because the working class, because of its position in production, is the only class with the social power to paralyze and overthrow the system....

"For a May '68 that goes all the way!
For a revolutionary workers government
to expropriate the bourgeoisie!"

The present attacks by the right-wing Chirac government come on top of 14 years of betrayal under the previous government of "socialist" president Mitterrand, supported by both the PS and PCF. Today, years of service by the social-democratic and ex-Stalinist trade-union tops as a component of Mitterrand's popular front have generated a wellspring of defiance and scorn toward them by the ranks, undercutting their ability to rein in class struggle. Fearful of unleashing a strike movement that could get out of control, the reformist bureaucrats have carefully refrained from calling out the core of the industrial proletariat, including strategic bastions like the steel workers.

Behind the shameless support by the CFDT tops for Chirac's vicious anti-working-class attacks is the fact that the government is offering them a role as favored interlocutors with the *patronat* (bosses). The government's "reform" of the social welfare system aims not only to cut benefits but to reorganize the system of joint union-management ("parity") committees which have nominal control over the enormous social services fund. This class-collaborationist scheme was set up following World War II as a means of integrating the trade-union leadership into the state apparatus. For example, two-thirds of the committees managing public health insurance are controlled by the FO bureaucracy (including its "far left" component, notably Pierre Lambert's Parti des Travailleurs). As part of his proposed "reform," Juppé announced that trade-union representatives on these committees would henceforth be chosen by the government, successfully playing off one greedy band of trade-union bureaucrats against another.

The dissension within the union bureaucracy is the mirror image of the vacillation and confusion among their masters in the bourgeoisie. The Chirac regime has alternately threatened anti-working-class attacks and then backed down. This is because the bourgeoisie, while setting the stage for a major confrontation with the working class, is

acutely aware that this regime has a narrow base of support and that the proletariat has not been vanquished on the field of class battle. Moreover, the capitalists' loyal servants in the union bureaucracy, particularly in the CGT, are only a shadow of their former selves, and may not be able to contain deep-going working-class unrest. The government is caught in a bind: if it grants concessions to defuse the wave of protest, that may well encourage further expectations and rounds of struggle.

Social situations like that in France today, in which the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are locked in sharp confrontation, with neither side capable of striking the decisive blow, provide a fertile terrain for the fascists, who can appear before the frightened petty bourgeoisie as offering a "radical" way out of the impasse. Jean-Marie Le Pen's fascist National Front was made respectable by the racist campaign of police terror against "immigrants," which was launched by Mitterrand and enormously stepped up by Chirac. While the bourgeoisie is presently keeping these racist vermin in reserve, they could very well unleash

them if mounting class struggle becomes uncontrollable. The LTF has fought for mass worker/immigrant mobilizations to drive the fascist scum off the streets.

At the Paris demonstrations, many workers chanted, "Chirac, Juppé, Resign!" But the question is: What would they be replaced with? Within the parliamentary framework, the answer could well be a more right-wing regime unequivocally committed to anti-working-class attacks. But the PCF and the PS, followed by their "far left" waterboys like the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and Lutte Ouvrière, have no other perspective than seeking to cobble together a new popular-front coalition, whose purpose would be to channel working-class struggle onto the parliamentary plane. As we wrote last issue:

"The lesson of May '68 is the necessity to go forward to socialist revolution and a workers government to expropriate the capitalist class. The bourgeoisie will not fall of its own accord—it must be thrown out. But this requires the forging of a revolutionary party like Lenin's Bolsheviks, with deep roots in the working class."

—"France in Turmoil,"
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International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Correspondence for:	Address to:
Spartacist League of Australia	Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473 Sydney, NSW, 2001, Australia
Spartacist League/Britain	Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041 London NW5 3EU, England
Trotskyist League of Canada/ Ligue trotskyste du Canada	Trotskyist League, Box 7198, Station A Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1X8, Canada
Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands	SpAD, Postfach 5 55 10127 Berlin, Germany
Ligue trotskyste de France	Le Bolchévik, BP 135-10 75463 Paris Cedex 10, France
Spartacist Group India/Lanka	write to Spartacist, New York
Dublin Spartacist Group	PO Box 2944, Dublin 1 Republic of Ireland
Lega trotskista d'Italia	Walter Fidacaro C.P. 1591, 20101 Milano, Italy
Spartacist Group Japan	Spartacist Group Japan PO Box 49, Akabane Yubinkyoku Kita-ku, Tokyo 115, Japan
Grupo Espartaquista de México	P. Linares, Apdo. Postal 453 06002 México 1, D.F., Mexico
Spartakusowska Grupa Polski	Platforma Spartakusowców Skrytka Poczтовая 148 02-588 Warszawa 48, Poland
Spartacist League/U.S.	Spartacist League, Box 1377 GPO New York, NY 10116, USA
Spartacist/Moscow	121019 Moscow g-19 A/Ya 19, Russia

Fraternal

Luta Metalúrgica (Brazil)	Av. Lucas Evangelista no. 418 s/306 CEP 27295-320 Volta Redonda, RJ, Brazil
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WORKERS VANGUARD

Workers, Students Take to the Streets

Strikes Paralyze Chirac's France

NOVEMBER 28—For the second time in less than a week, a general strike today by French public sector workers—teachers, transport, hospital, public utilities employees and others—virtually shut down the country in protest against the government's planned attacks on the public health and pension system. Contingents of workers from auto and other heavy industrial plants joined the demonstrations in many cities both days, and today's march in Paris also included a contingent of miners as well as a significant turnout of private-sector workers.

At the same time, a nationwide walk-out by railway workers which began on Friday continues to paralyze the entire rail system. Cheers erupted from the sidewalks today as a huge contingent of rail workers marched by. Subway service in the capital was also shut down both today and Friday.

Today's demonstration in Paris, called by both the FO and CGT trade-union federations, drew upwards of 60,000 workers. On Friday, in a CGT-sponsored protest, the wide avenues of the capital were filled by more than 100,000 workers, with some contingents singing the international workers anthem, the *Internationale*. A one-day printers strike that day stopped publication of national newspapers, while virtually all air flights were canceled.

There is evident desire at the base for united struggle against the government's attacks. Although the social-democratic FO and CFDT trade-union federation leaders refused to endorse Friday's general strike call, significant sections of those federations in fact supported the CGT demonstration. FO rail, postal and bank workers organized contingents for



Duvignau/Reuters

the Paris demonstration, as did the CFDT civil servants and metal workers. When CFDT leader Nicole Notat, who had endorsed Chirac's "reform" of social services as "necessary," showed up at the rally, she was unceremoniously driven out by her own members, who seized anything they could get their hands on to throw at her.

The workers strikes are the backbone of a series of protests against right-wing president Jacques Chirac and his prime

minister Alain Juppé, who have already set a record for unpopularity in the 37-year history of the Fifth Republic. A wave of student protests and campus occupations, demanding increased funding and more teachers, quickly spread from Rouen last month to 40 universities throughout the country. On November 21, more than 100,000 university and high-school students turned out in Paris and other cities for a national "day of action."



Reuters

Left: Workers demonstrate in Bordeaux, November 24, as part of nationwide one-day general strike in public sector. Above: Students in Paris demonstrate against education cuts, November 21.

Significantly, the CGT supported last week's student mobilization, and all the major union federations organized contingents for Saturday's demonstration for women's rights. The student leaders, primarily members of the Communist Party (PCF) and Socialist Party (PS), have sought to limit the campus protests to student-centered reformist demands.

The growing politicization of broad sections of French society was reflected

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Union Tops Push Wage Freeze, Layoffs, Hospital Closures

NYC Labor: Defeat Giuliani's War on Unions, Poor!

Republican mayor Rudolph Giuliani and New York City's municipal union chiefs shook hands and grinned as they announced a new five-year contract on November 17. But the ranks of city labor are seething with anger. You know it's bad when even the haughty *New York Times* declaims in a headline, "Union Members Express Dismay at Terms." An executive board member of AFSCME clerical workers union Local 1549 called it "a slap in the face, totally." "Absolute extortion," fumed one teacher.

The deal being pushed by AFSCME District Council 37 president Stanley Hill, chief negotiator for 130,000 city workers, United Federation of Teachers

(UFT) president Sandra Feldman and other union misleaders calls for a two-year wage freeze across the board and millions of dollars in givebacks. Feldman called the deal a "contract for these times," sneeringly dismissing protests from her members, who have to try to teach in miserably overcrowded classrooms often with no supplies other than what they pay for out of their own pockets. A sham "job security" clause does not even pretend to cover public hospital workers. No accident, because the labor traitors have given the green light to Giuliani's plan to shut down or "privatize" what's left of the municipal hospital system. They're cutting the throats of mil-

lions of NYC minorities and poor as well as of their own members.

The union bureaucrats are acting as henchmen for Wall Street's drive to slash social services and union jobs. Their pledge of "labor peace," gloats the *Times* (19 November), gives Rudy the Slasher free rein "to pursue the items at the top of his agenda: eliminating the Board of Education and shrinking its budget, removing tens of thousands of people from the welfare rolls and putting the rest to work cleaning the city, cutting the city's Medicaid spending and selling the public hospitals to the private sector."

Giuliani wasted no time in dusting off his scheme, torpedoed after a public

outcry two years ago, to dismantle the Department of AIDS Services, the sole lifeline for thousands of AIDS patients. And even as homeless shelters are already filled to capacity even before winter has set in, Governor Pataki is demanding that the homeless be charged "rent" to get into the city's decrepit facilities as they try to escape the cold and the cops who kick them out of the parks and subway stations and off the streets.

With the acquiescence of the union misleaders, Giuliani has slashed 17,000 city workers from the payroll over the past couple of years while replacing many of the jobs at a fraction of the pay

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