

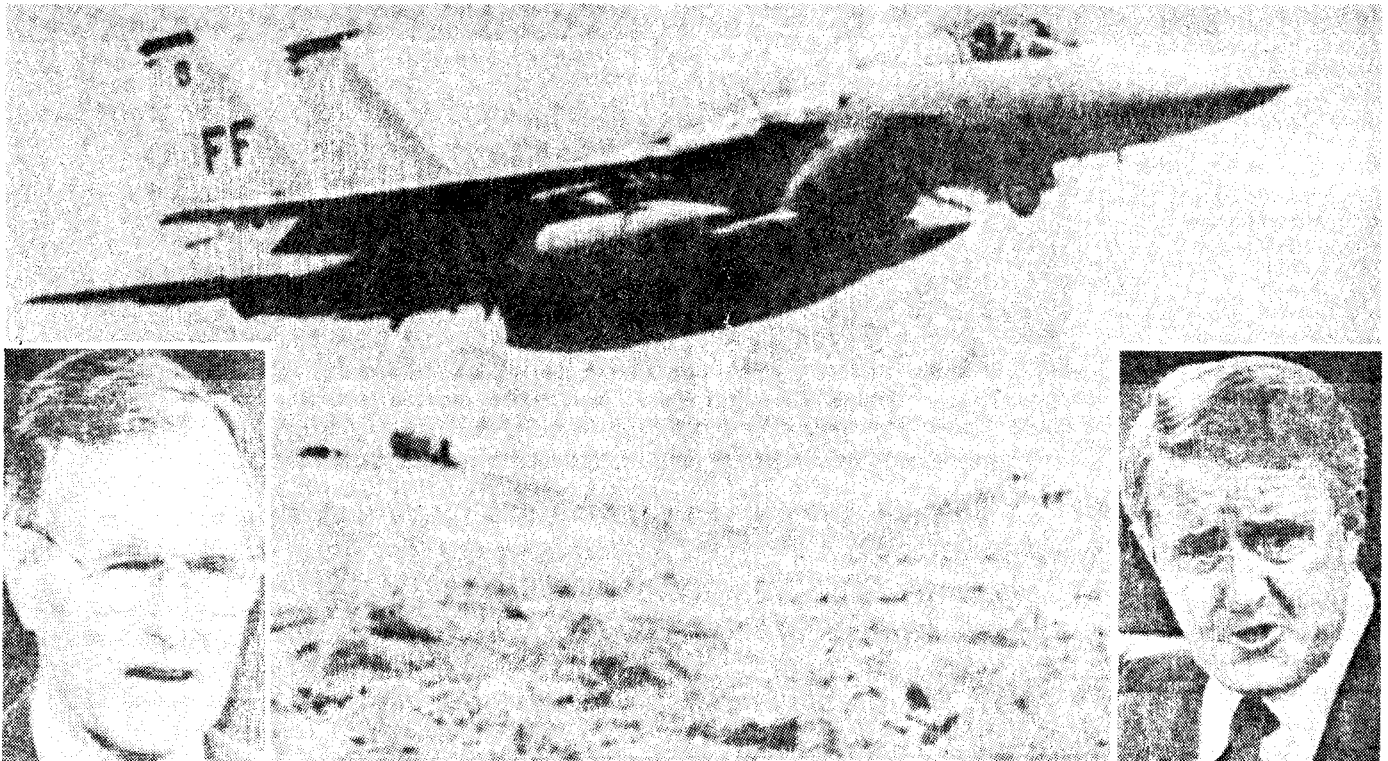
# SPARTACIST

CANADA

Fall 1990 No. 80 25¢

## Canada Joins War Moves Against Iraq

# U.S. Imperialists Out of the Persian Gulf!



Scott Applewhite/Reuter  
**U.S. F-15 over Saudi desert. Mulroney backs Bush's imperial adventure in the Near East. All imperialist troops out now!**

Toronto Sun

Boris Spremo/Toronto Star

AUGUST 26—The United States has dispatched more than 100,000 troops, 45 ships and nearly 500 planes on a war mission in the Persian Gulf. More than 30 combat ships from Britain, France and other imperialist countries are joining the armed flotilla seeking to blockade Iraq. The Mulroney government sent three aging Canadian warships out from Halifax harbor August 23. Arab states from Egypt to supposedly "radical" Syria have added their own military contingents. The war menace grows by the day, and with it a frenzied propaganda barrage in the capitalist media.

The U.S. imperialist cops of the world think they can "draw the line in the sand." But Iraq's Saddam Hussein warns that if the U.S. attacks, "there will be columns of dead bodies which may have a beginning but no end." The world working class must oppose Washington's crusade, a straight power grab for control of oil and military hegemony in the Near East. We say: *Hands off the Persian Gulf! U.S. bases, U.S. troops, U.S. fleets, all imperialist troops—get out and stay out!*

Considering the recent U.S. rape of Panama, it takes a lot  
*(continued on page 15)*

## Letter to Soviet Embassies

# For Military Defense of Iraq Against Imperialism!

*The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) sent the following letter to the Soviet Embassies in Washington and Paris and the USSR Mission to the United Nations.*

9 August 1990

Dear Ambassadors:

The American imperialists have seized upon a local disturbance in the Persian Gulf to vastly extend United States military might. In the face of this escalating imperialist provocation, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) demands that the Soviet government rescind immediately its arms embargo against Iraq. The U.S. provocation is a tripwire for world war, posing a grave danger to all humanity.

With unbridled hypocrisy and in the name of "freedom," the U.S. is seeking to assure its stranglehold over world supplies of oil. The establishment of American military bases in Saudi Arabia for the first time and a naval embargo aimed at starving Iraq into submission pose a danger not only to that volatile region but to the Soviet Union itself. The deployment of American might in the region has tightened the encirclement of the Soviet Union by the utterly hostile forces of imperialism.

In pursuit of narrow diplomatic concerns, the Soviet government previously signed a Treaty of Friendship with Saddam Hussein, the butcher of thousands of worker militants, Communist Party members, and members of the Kurdish minority. Yet now when Iraq is genuinely threatened by imperialism the Soviet government has supported United Nations sanctions against Iraq and seems willing to "cooperate" with the White House warmongers. This is a betrayal of the interests of the Soviet state and the Soviet and world working people.

The ICL (FI) believes the workers of the world are opposed to a squalid war between the reactionary sheiks and colonels over the oil fields. We have, however, great interest in the profits sweated out of oil workers from the Persian Gulf to the North Sea to the Gulf of Mexico: our interest is that this

wealth go to the working people of the world. We say: U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf! We Trotskyists, who stand in defense of the Soviet workers state against world imperialism, demand that the Soviet Union rescind its arms embargo of Iraq and send their former allies in Baghdad the weapons they need to deter Washington's oil grab.

The Soviet government fought to the end, successfully, to keep the oil fields of Baku out of the hands of the imperialists. We should make vigorous efforts in the current situation.

Fraternally,  
Helene Brosius  
International Secretary

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

## Toronto Demo Opposes U.S.-Led Invasion

Chanting "U.S., Canada: Hands Off Iraq!" and "Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!" close to 300 people rallied in Toronto on August 26 in the first major demonstration in Canada against U.S.-led war moves in the Persian Gulf. The Trotskyist League worked with Palestinian, Iraqi, Jordanian and other organizations and individuals to bring about this united-front protest against Washington's oil grab. As Canadian warships sail for the Gulf and the yellow ribbons flutter from trees, virtually the entire Canadian left has taken a dive, their "anti-imperialism" evaporating in the heat of government attempts to stir up a war fever.

Protesters defiantly chanted "Down with Bush! Down with Mulroney!" as they marched from the provincial legislature to the U.S. consulate and a nearby federal government building. Speakers from the Iraqi and Jordanian communities addressed the rally, as did Palestinian spokesman Elias Hazaneh, John Masters for the TL and left-wing Israeli lawyer Yossi Schwartz.

TL placards included: "U.S., Canada: Hands Off the Persian Gulf!" "Soviet Union: Rescind Your Arms Embargo Against Iraq!" and "For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!" To applause and cheers, the TL spokesman said: "In this country we must also above all condemn the role of our so-called 'own' government. What they are doing in the Middle East is also what they are doing to the Mohawks at Oka.... We must say: Get the troops out of Oka, get them out of the Middle East! Down with this war! U.S., Canada out of the Middle East, now!"

## SPARTACIST CANADA

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## Mulroney, Bourassa Prepare Bloody Massacre

# Mohawks Caught in Nationalist Crossfire

AUGUST 27—At press time 4,000 combat-ready soldiers backed by armored vehicles and helicopters are poised to attack the Mohawks at Oka, 30 kilometers west of Montreal. Brian Mulroney and Quebec premier Robert Bourassa have ordered the army to move in. They yearn to see Native blood spilled. With the defiant Mohawks facing the full might of the racist and vindictive capitalist state, we, with decent people everywhere, demand: Get the army and cops out, now, all of them! Hands off the Mohawks! Defend Native rights!

The last assault came on July 11 when heavily armed members of the Sûreté du Québec (provincial police) stormed the Oka roadblock manned by Mohawks of Kanesatake. "They came in to kill," said a witness to the dawn assault. "I don't know how women and children escaped" (*NOW* [Toronto], 9-15 August). Reportedly reinforced by Vietnam veterans from American border reserves, the Mohawk defenders drove off the attack after a three-hour firefight. Mohawk casualties were miraculously light, but the cops came up one short.

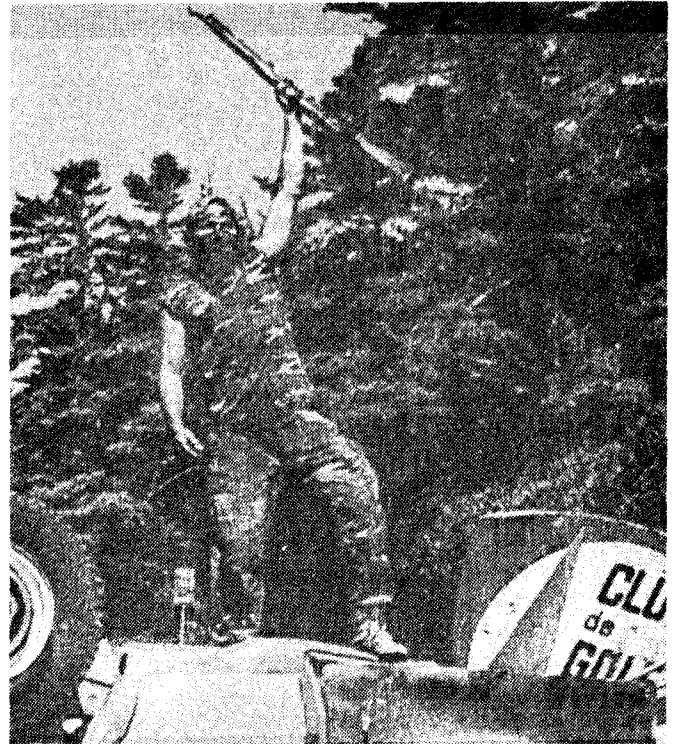
For a month the Quebec government and its Sûreté sought revenge through a deliberate policy of barbarism worthy of the Israeli Zionists' treatment of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. They tried to starve out the Mohawks, stopping food and medical supplies desperately needed by children, pregnant women, the elderly. Ambulances carrying seriously ill Native patients were halted at police lines. When one driver objected before a judge, he was told to "come back when somebody dies"!

Then in mid-August Quebec premier Robert Bourassa—spurred on by the Parti Québécois *indépendantistes* in the National Assembly and a racist *racaille* (mob) in the streets—called on the federal government to send in the Canadian Armed Forces. The Kahnawake reserve near Châteauguay is also under military siege. There, other Mohawks have established a blockade of the Mercier Bridge, one of the main commuter links into Montreal, in solidarity with their comrades at Oka.

The last time the army deployed in Quebec, in October 1970, Ottawa had invented an "apprehended insurrection" in the wake of two kidnappings by the Front de Libération Québécois. The entire province was placed under martial law, and left-wing nationalists and unionists were rounded up and thrown in jail.

The Mohawks at Oka set up their barricade in March, seeking to protect their historic burial ground from the proposed expansion of a private nine-hole golf course for the greedy burghers of Oka village. That they should have to do so is simply grotesque. Their stand-off against the police and their refusal to buckle beneath the state's deadly *cordon sanitaire* has inspired Native rail and road blockades across the country in pursuit of land claims and improved conditions on the destitute reserves. The response of the Department of Indian Affairs was an attempt to brand the Native Warriors

Society at Oka a "criminal organization" to whom anything can be done. The federal government has ominously authorized CN to take "whatever action is necessary" to get its trains



Hanson/Canadian Press

### Mohawk fighter resists racist Canadian state.

running again in Ontario. And in B.C. premier Vander Zalm threatened "If [the Natives] don't clear themselves off the tracks, we will." On August 21 the RCMP mauled and arrested 35 protesters who had been blocking a B.C. rail line, and when three days later 150 men, women and children set up a roadblock in protest they were viciously set upon by cops with clubs and dogs.

### Racist Mobs in Quebec Riot For Mohawk Blood

The nationalist antagonisms which surged in the wake of the collapsed Meech Lake constitutional accord have caught the Native peoples in a deadly crossfire. Tribal leaders have denounced the police raid on Oka as a reprisal by the Quebec government for the collapse of the deal which in its final days was blocked in the Manitoba Legislature by a lone Cree MLA, Elijah Harper. "We know that Bourassa was quite furious with us," remarked Konrad Sioui, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (*Globe and Mail*, 12 July).

(continued on page 4)



Dick Lock/Toronto Star

**Armed Forces  
firepower called  
in by Quebec  
government.  
Defend the  
Mohawks!**

## Mohawks...

(continued from page 3)

But Meech Lake had died under a mudslide of vicious Anglo chauvinism long before. It is an index of the depth of anti-Québécois bigotry that the bourgeois press ever so sanctimoniously claimed Elijah Harper as a virtual national hero—just two years after the cops gunned down his cousin, Native leader J.J. Harper, in the streets of Winnipeg!

As if on cue, Quebec's bourgeoisie have whipped up a racist frenzy, the inevitable result of nationalism, which fuels hatred of "other" peoples. This didn't begin with Oka. The rising nationalist tide of the last two years has been marked by grotesque racism: cop executions of black youth, anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant violence. Just days before the murderous raid on Oka, on June 30, Montreal police rioted against tens of thousands of black people celebrating at the annual Caribfête cultural festival. Two weeks later, dozens of gays were beaten with truncheons and arrested as the cops attacked a party and a sit-in protest held the next day.

Now, faced with the Mohawk barricades, Parti Québécois leader Jacques Parizeau denounces Native "blackmail" of "frightened" governments, while Liberal MNA René-Serge Larouche says he is "sickened to see a sovereign nation negotiate on bended knee with terrorists." At Châteauguay anti-Mohawk "protests" have been tinged with outright fascism. For weeks, howling white mobs of up to 5,000 organized by ex-provincial cop Yvon Poitras gathered nightly at police lines, waving the *fleur de lys* flag, chanting "Vive le Québec libre!"

### Contact the Trotskyist League

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and "Québec aux Québécois!" Under the protection of the sympathetic Sûreté, they burned Natives in effigy and screamed for blood.

On July 14 one fascist demagogue raved: "The white people of Quebec must stick together and must have pride.... White people must make sure the law is respected" (*Toronto Star*, 15 July). An objection to this tirade was met with boos and jeers. Three nights later the mob, yelling "get the n----r!", set upon a black youth. As the young man tried to defend himself, a half dozen cops pushed through the crowd...to beat up the mob's victim themselves and drag him away in handcuffs! At Châteauguay the lynch terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan have found fertile ground to crawl out of their holes to incite pogromist murder, and now they threaten to march on Labor Day in Sherbrooke. Sixty-five years ago, the Klan built its first mass base in Canada terrorizing Natives and French-speaking Catholics in Saskatchewan.

Throughout, the cops have displayed a sinister bonapartist appetite. At Oka, they ostentatiously ignored an embarrassed government's instructions to lift the food blockade. After federal RCMP units moved in to back up the Sûreté, bloody riots erupted in Châteauguay. The white mobs attacked the cops with bricks, bottles, tire irons and Molotov cocktails, enraged that the Mohawks still held the bridge. Reportedly ordered to clear the "f-----g Frenchmen" off the streets, the RCMP (with the Sûreté in tow) went berserk, firing tear gas and clubbing down anyone within reach, including small children, injuring scores of people. Between the anti-Québécois RCMP bigots and the racist mob, this was a real cesspool of racist nationalism, with the cops refusing to be reined in by their government masters.

### Apartheid Canadian-Style

The revolt of the Native peoples has once again drawn attention to their brutal oppression. Native leaders call it "Canada's apartheid." They are absolutely right. Through the reservation system Canada's racist rulers forcibly segregated Indian people on isolated, barren and unproductive reserves.

(continued on page 18)

## **NDP, Union Tops Kneel to the Bosses**

# **For a Fighting Labor Movement!**

“Spectre of ‘downward mobility’ haunts workers as job losses rise” headlined the *Globe and Mail* (11 August). In the past year alone more than 150,000 manufacturing jobs have disappeared. In Toronto the unemployment rate jumped from 3.9 to 6 percent in the month of July—and this is in the “economic heartland” of Canada. Over the past decade whole towns, organized around resource industry, were deserted as mines, mills and smelters were closed down. Now there are new euphemisms like “downward mobility” and “under-employment” to describe the conditions of life faced by hundreds of thousands of industrial workers who have been driven into the low-wage “service sector” ghetto.

The bourgeois media ballyhoos about the triumph of capitalism, while workers in East Europe are fed fantasies that every worker in North America has a good job, with a house and a two-car garage. But a young worker has little hope of even leaving home, let alone buying one. Meanwhile thousands of working-class families have joined the ranks of the homeless, living on the streets. In B.C. alone more than 70,000 people are forced to rely on food banks for survival. An estimated one in six children in Canada live in poverty.

Across the country workers know that they too could be “just a paycheck away” from the souplines and homeless shelters. There’s certainly no lack of appetite among the ranks of the labor movement for some hard struggle to defend against the wholesale assault on their jobs, their livelihoods, their families. There have been walkouts by Cape Breton and Bathurst, New Brunswick miners. In August 20,000 Canadian steel workers at Stelco and Algoma hit the bricks. In Windsor, Ontario auto workers are defending their picket lines at Wickes Manufacturing. Meanwhile contracts covering well over 300,000 steel, auto, food, telephone and public-sector workers are due to expire this year in Canada—not to mention those, like the postal workers, who have been working without any contract.

There are a lot of workers who are desperately looking for a way to fight *and win*. The obstacle is the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy who have aided and abetted the bosses’ all-sided war on labor and minorities, through a decade of giving back hard-won union gains and stabbing workers’ struggles in the back. Here’s one small recent example. On July 9, mass pickets of striking Steelworkers shut down Cominco’s Trail, B.C. smelter. The next day 100 picketers came out in defiance of a court injunction, but the union bureaucrats quickly did their job as “labor lieutenants of capital,” gutting the picket lines. Twelve days later it was all over: “Cominco’s tough stance on union contract pays off,” headlined the *Vancouver Sun*.

But it is not just the cowardly legalism of the trade-union tops, who kowtow to the bosses’ rules and shackle the unions to the capitalist state, that is abetting the defeat and destruction of the unions. No less importantly it’s their racism and poisonous nationalism. A number of manufacturing firms have used the conditions of the U.S.-Canada “free trade” agreement to move their operations to cheap labor areas in

the U.S. and Mexico. The situation cries out for united class struggle, where Canadian workers join with their class brothers and sisters in the U.S. and Mexico in common battle against their capitalist exploiters. But with their Maple Leaf flag-waving campaigns for protectionism the union bureaucrats not



Keith Gosse/Canadian Press

**Cops brutalize Newfoundland strikers, July 6. Labor’s gotta play hardball to win!**

only undermine class struggle but encourage racist hostility among the working people.

Auto workers in the U.S. and Canada are up against the Big Three auto bosses this year. But some years ago Bob White, the social-democratic darling of the media and the fake left, split the auto workers union on national lines. He cut off Canadian auto workers from the power of the battalions of black auto workers in Detroit. The auto bosses have turned the “Motor City” into a vast ghetto wasteland while White has negotiated his own sellout contracts for Canadian auto workers. Within Canada the chauvinism of the labor bureaucrats has also served to keep the working class divided. Earlier this year, Steelworkers leaders at Algoma in Sault Ste. Marie uttered not a word of protest against the vicious anti-French “English only” crusade, thus reinforcing hostility against Québécois workers. In Quebec, the labor fakers line up the combative French-speaking proletariat behind the bourgeois-nationalist labor haters of the Parti Québécois and Bloc Québécois.

Conservative federal finance minister Michael Wilson has openly declared war on demands for higher wages as he pushes

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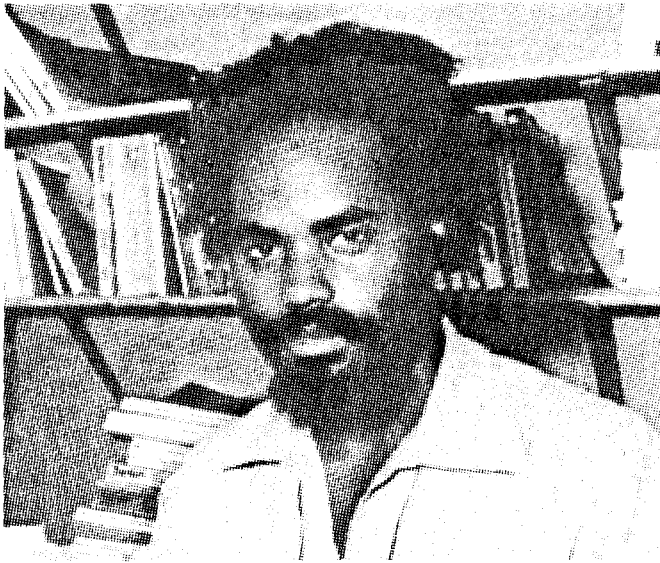


# Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

# Worldwide Campaign to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal

They came in union hats and jackets, from churches and campuses; there were families extending over three generations. Some drove hundreds of miles; others, homeless, came in off the street to give their support. They are the voiceless to whom black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal gave voice. For two and a half weeks this summer hundreds of trade unionists, socialists, students, death penalty abolitionists and civil rights activists joined together in cities around the world to demand that U.S. death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!

Protests in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Oakland were initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee to build the



Philadelphia Magazine

## Mumia Abu-Jamal, 1980.

ongoing campaign to save Jamal's life. The PDC is a class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S. In France, Britain, Germany, Canada and Australia the protests were sponsored and built by the fraternal defense organizations initiated by the sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Over 26,000 people internationally have signed statements demanding Jamal not die. Unions representing millions more have stood up against this racist "legal" lynching. Black newspapers in the U.S., Canada and Britain covered the recent rallies. The *Nation* ran a lengthy article, "The Killing of Mumia Abu-Jamal," summarized in the *Philadelphia Enquirer*. In Europe, *L'Humanité* and *l'Unità*, the newspapers of the French and Italian Communist parties, carried pieces for Jamal.

"Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!" is becoming the rallying cry of opponents of the barbaric death penalty around the world.

Symbolizing the fight against racist state repression, Jamal's case defines the legal politics of the death penalty in the 1990s. Jamal has been in the cross hairs of the Philly police for 21 years—from his days as a Black Panther Party spokesman in 1968 to his support of Philadelphia's radical black MOVE organization as a journalist known for his defense of the poor and oppressed minorities. On 9 December 1981 the police tried to kill Jamal in the streets, but failed. He was hospitalized with a bleeding stomach wound and arrested on charges of killing a cop. The prosecutor won the death sentence by convincing the nearly all-white jury that Jamal's use of the Panther slogan "Political Power Grows Out of the Barrel of a Gun" (12 years earlier) meant he deserved to die! As Mumia told the court, "I believe America has proven that quote to be true."

The cops wanted him silenced—preferably dead—and haven't given up yet. Incensed over the growing support for Jamal worldwide, the *Philadelphia Daily News* headlined an article "N.Y. Group Out to Save Cop Killer."

Then, as over 200 people crowded into Philadelphia's historic Church of the Advocate July 14 to support Jamal, the Fraternal Order of Police held a counter-demonstration outside its headquarters calling for Jamal's immediate execution. FOP president Richard Costello made clear why Philly's kill-crazy cops are so hated and feared when he labeled death penalty abolitionists who are fighting to save Jamal a "misfit terrorist group" and threatened, "If you don't like it you can join him. We'll take out the electric chair, we'll make it an electric couch."

Costello's provocation infuriated blacks and even worried the Mainline bourgeoisie who use the racist cops and black Democratic mayor Goode to keep the city's impoverished ghetto population in line. Mumia wrote from prison, referring to the grotesque 13 May 1985 police bombing of the MOVE house on Osage Avenue: "The FOP's reaction, not to be taken lightly (they are, after all, the exterminators of men, women & kids of May 13) seems to suggest I am still a thorn in their fat hides—even here, in hell."

## The Scottsboro Case of Today

The rallies for Jamal began in New York on June 28. Gene Herson, labor coordinator of the PDC, called for an international campaign like that for the Scottsboro youths, who spent five years on death row and were saved by the left-led mass protests of hundreds of thousands. Cleveland Robinson, secretary-treasurer of District 65 United Auto Workers in New York, proudly recalled his role in the Scottsboro defense:

"When I came to this country in 1944 the Scottsboro Boys were still in prison awaiting their execution. That was the first basic civil rights case I got involved in. And it so happened that at least two of them, when we succeeded

(continued on page 8)

# Toronto Protest Demands: "Jamal Must Not Die!"

A hundred trade unionists, youth, socialists and death penalty abolitionists rallied in front of the U.S. Consulate in Toronto July 4 to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The protest, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee, included unionists carrying the banners of the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto, representing 180,000 workers, and United Transportation Union Local 483.

On behalf of the Labour Council, André Kolompár, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers Toronto Local declared, "Brother Jamal's case is one that all trade unionists and all workers internationally should support and I believe will support. This trend will continue and we'll mobilize toward saving the life of Brother Jamal."

The demonstration climaxed more than a month of intense activity by PDC supporters. They brought word of Jamal's urgent case to union halls in Vancouver, where the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union Local 1, Canadian Union of Public Employees Metropolitan Vancouver District Council and Telecommunications Workers Union Local 1 went on record for Jamal.

In Toronto and Vancouver young militants petitioned in their high schools, trade unionists in their workplaces. Thousands of leaflets were distributed at the massive Toronto demonstration greeting ANC leader Nelson Mandela in June. Well-known black New Democrat, B.C. MLA Emery Barnes added his voice to Jamal's struggle as did Windsor MP Howard McCurdy.

At the rally Denise Burnett of CIUT-FM paid tribute to journalist Jamal: "Mumia was known as the 'voice of the voiceless,' so we're his voice.... And I'd like to tell you to keep it up and to participate with the Partisan Defense Committee." Sandra MacKenzie of the Coalition for the Truth About Africa, in adding her support for Jamal's fight, strongly protested the recent police attacks on and arrest of anti-racist demonstrators outside the Royal Ontario Museum. The demonstrators chanted "Hands off the Coalition! Drop the Charges Now!" Oji Adisa of the African and Caribbean Student Association recalled, as did others, the all too many who have fallen victim to police violence in the recent past: Marlon Neal, Sophia Cook, Albert Johnson, Buddy Evans.

Partisan Defense Committee spokesman Mark Lewiecki pointed out, "The real source of crime and violence is the capitalist state.... The death penalty is the state doing the job of the lynch mobs. Before 1976, who got the death penalty in Canada? It was Native Indians, it was French Canadians and immigrants." Its abolition by a slender six-vote margin is *reversible*. The racist killer cops have repeatedly campaigned to "bring back the noose," demanding "tools to finish the job."

As in Europe and the U.S., here too organized labor is coming forward for Jamal. UTU Local 483 chairman William Storrer headed up a contingent of railway unionists and



Unionists, blacks, socialists rally at U.S. Consulate, July 4.

extended greetings to the protest. Past Vice-President of the Ontario Federation of Labour John Donaldson declared: "There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that Abu-Jamal is on death row for ... his politics and his color. We gather here today to show our support and solidarity for Abu-Jamal and to demand his release. And we should condemn the death penalty as outrageous and against all decency in a modern society."

Demonstrators also welcomed the reading, in French and English, of a declaration to join the international campaign to save Jamal's life issued by the CGT, France's mass trade-union federation.

Prominent activist on behalf of Palestinian rights Yossi Schwartz addressed the demonstration, and greetings were received from Lennox Farrell of the Rally Against Apartheid. La Ligue des Droits et Libertés in Montreal forwarded a copy of their protest letter on Jamal's behalf.

Trotskyist League spokesman Miriam McDonald told demonstrators: "We're protesting the racist persecution of a courageous man, Mumia Abu-Jamal. But we've got to look at how we're going to put an end to this whole system, this whole cycle of violence and oppression.... We need a multiracial revolutionary workers party that can lead the working people to power.... In that way, through North American socialist revolution, we can stop the racist terror and oppression for good."

PDC rally chairman Peter Stevens summed up: "We're here from the labor movement, from black organizations, civil libertarians, anti-death penalty activists from all walks of life to speak with one voice in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal." Much more must be done and time is running perilously short. If we don't fight for him, his voice will be silenced forever. As the Toronto demonstrators chanted, "Labor/black action can save Jamal! Labor/black action *must* save Jamal!" ■

## Jamal...

(continued from page 6)

in releasing them out of jails, found their way in my union, District 65."

The international defense of those nine black youths helped galvanize a generation in protest against racist terror in the Jim Crow American South. But the fight for black rights was betrayed on behalf of a "popular front" for Roosevelt that extended from the racist Dixiecrats to the Communist Party.

Support for Jamal has come from American black elected officials—California Congressman Ron Dellums, New York Assemblyman Roger Green, Pennsylvania State Representative David Richardson and Chicago Alderman Danny Davis. Other speakers at the recent rallies included civil rights activists such as Oakland NAACP president William Freeman, Karima Wicks of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Rev. Paul Washington; opponents of the death penalty from the American Civil Liberties Union, National Coalition Against the Death Penalty and Pennsylvania Prison Society. Jamal's former Black Panther comrades and MOVE supporters spoke powerfully.

For many, Jamal's fight for freedom, justice and life intersected their own struggle against racism and reaction—Aboriginals in Australia, North Africans in France, blacks in Toronto and the U.S. In Germany, where fascist attacks on immigrant workers, Jews and leftists are escalating with the capitalist annexation of East Germany (DDR), demonstrations to save Jamal were held on July 3 in Hamburg and East Berlin. Support came from Holocaust survivors, from Turkish workers in West Germany and Mozambicans in the DDR, and members and leaders of the PDS, the former Stalinist ruling party of East Germany, now targets of a vicious witchhunt at the hands of Kohl's Fourth Reich.

As a class-struggle defense organization, the PDC looks not to the capitalist courts but to the power of the working class to save Jamal and smash the racist death penalty. And we have received increasing support from labor. The CGT, France's largest trade-union federation announced that it "joins the international defense campaign to demand that MUMIA ABU-JAMAL's life be spared." From Australia came a mes-

sage of support from the Firemen and Deckhands' Union. The Philadelphia chapter of the Pennsylvania Social Services Union SEIU Local 668 sent a speaker to the rally.

The Partisan Defense Committee sees itself in the tradition of the International Red Aid, formed in the early 1920s to bring assistance to workers and Communists facing counterrevolutionary terror in East Europe. Its American affiliate, the International Labor Defense, led mass demonstrations to save the anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti. PDC staff counsel Rachel Wolkenstein emphasized in Philadelphia that to save Jamal today, what's needed is "a reinvigorated working-class movement, including a black and red leadership which can fight to win, all the way to a workers government. All you union brothers and sisters here and all those people who stand with them, it means you have the power to say to this government that this man must not die—this man won't die."

### American Way of Death

Our campaign directly confronts the U.S. bourgeoisie's headlong drive for more and quicker executions—including of juveniles, mentally retarded, poor, black, Hispanic and political prisoners like Jamal. Amnesty International's three-year campaign against capital punishment has called worldwide attention to the U.S.'s adherence to this tradition of torture.

Among industrialized capitalist countries only the U.S. and South Africa retain the death penalty, a legacy of centuries of racial subjugation. But while Pretoria recently placed its executions on hold, the U.S. assembly line of death rolls on. At the London rally, Paul Trewhela, an editor of *Searchlight South Africa*, pointed out:

"If one were to join the coordinates last week linking Abu-Jamal in the death cells to Mandela in the White House, what is revealed is the social position of black people internationally on the threshold of the 21st century.... In the murder of Jamal, the executioner state seeks to dispose of the living criticism of itself. Yet the presence of Abu-Jamal on death row is the confirmation of that criticism: the victim is the criticism of the executioner. He is the point at which the system publicly declares that it needs to be superseded by another, that it has outlived itself, and that it, as a system, requires sentence of death to be pronounced upon itself so that society might live and develop. The electric chair and the chair in the President's Oval Office are constructed from the same social material."

As 2,300 await execution in America's jails, those who came out to rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal heard wrenching testimony from some who had endured the torture of sitting on death row and only years (and many appeals) later were found innocent. Patrick Croy, a Shasta-Karuk Indian who was finally acquitted of a vicious racist frame-up which stole 12 years of his life, six of them on death row, brought the Oakland crowd to its feet. And in Chicago, Darby Tillis told the rally:

"I am one of the almost 450 persons in this country who was convicted of a capital crime and later found to be innocent. I spent nine years, one month and 17 days incarcerated for a crime I did not commit. More than four years were spent on death row. Death row is a horrible shock to man. It's a place where the atmosphere is filled with death. It's a place of horror. You take one day at a time. Each day you prepare a face to face the people that you meet. You are forced to live in a world of fantasy to compensate for the real world around you. You can only

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## Urgent: Jamal Campaign Needs Funds

Join the Partisan Defense Committee campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Take Jamal's case to your unions, civil rights, campus and community organizations and mobilize them to join the fight. Contact the PDC for speakers, tapes of Jamal speaking, literature and to see the new video featuring excerpts of Jamal interviewed from death row in Huntingdon state prison.

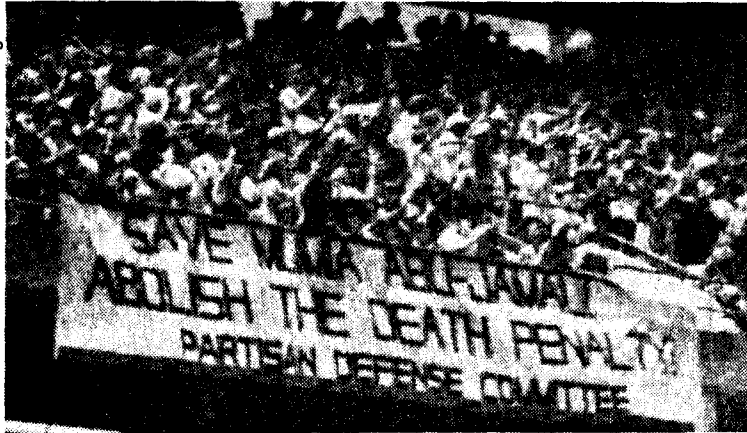
The campaign costs a lot; publicity and printing costs are massive. We are up against the legal and financial resources of the racist capitalist state. Our chances of success rest on the justice of our cause and the determined support of all who believe Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die.

**Send donations to: Partisan Defense Committee, Box 314, Station B, Toronto, Ont. M5T 2W1.**

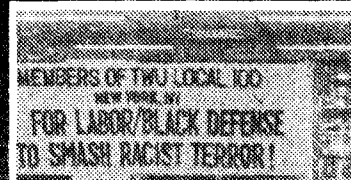
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Workers Vanguard



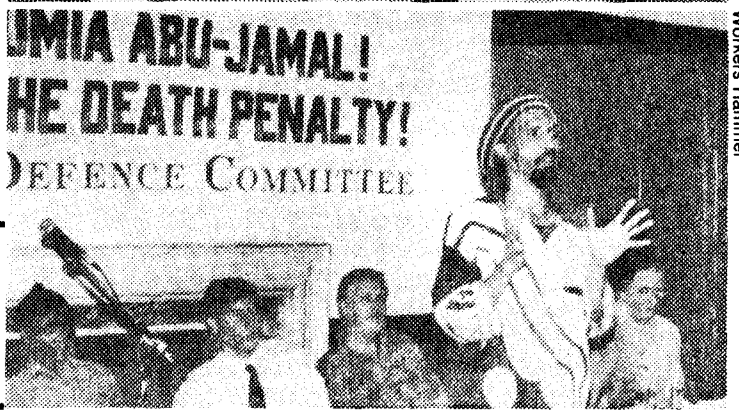
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Workers Vanguard



Le Bolchévik



Workers Hammer

**"Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!"—rallying cry for opponents of racist death penalty. Clockwise, from top left: banner at Mandela rally in Oakland, UTU railworkers contingent at Toronto demo July 4, PDC rallies in New York, London and Paris.**

see your past. You're not a participant of life. You're just an observer. All day long you're being killed with pain and loneliness and hurt."

**"A Sweet Song of Hope for Thousands on the Brink of Death"**

Emory Douglas spoke of former Black Panther Geronimo ji jaga (Pratt), himself imprisoned for 20 years and a victim of a COINTELPRO frame-up. Douglas, speaking as a representative of former Bay Area Black Panthers, broke down in tears as he remembered Jamal as a 16-year-old Panther: "It was a very rewarding experience to have worked with this young brother who worked very hard, wrote very excellently. When he went back to Philadelphia, it was like a boy that was missing." Through her own tears Jamal's wife Wadiya told how "I get bitter sometimes. And angry at him, even. Just like when someone that you love dearly dies. But just like that person that dies, they had no choice. Mumia had

no choice, he was snatched away from us."

As Cleveland Robinson said in response at the New York City rally: "So we have to understand that we now have tasks to do. I am very proud and humbled by the sister. Your husband must not and shall not die. We have got an obligation, a duty to help to bring him back to freedom."

Despite prison's cold walls, Jamal's humanity and determination to fight racist oppression are as strong as when as a 16-year-old Panther spokesman he chanted, "Power to the People!" He continues to speak out about the homeless, racist terror, brutality of American prisons and hypocrisy of America's rulers in columns carried in newspapers across the country. As he wrote from death row, "Your international voice of protest becomes a sweet song of hope for the thousands of us in the United States sitting on the brink of death. I am honored to join you, and this noble fight." Join the international campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

—Adapted from Workers Vanguard No. 508, 10 August

# Gorbachev Seals Deal With Fourth Reich

The July 16 announcement by Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and West German chancellor Helmut Kohl that a reunified Germany will be part of the anti-Soviet NATO alliance puts the final Kremlin seal of approval on the drive to a new German empire. West German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher crowed: "The message of Moscow is: Germany will come together this year." For all the hype about a "kinder, gentler" Fourth Reich of German imperialism, that message is sending chills up the spines of many people, and not only inside the Soviet Union.

With the terminal crisis of Stalinism throughout East Europe, both sides proclaim that the Cold War is over. But White House staffers declare triumphantly, "We won, you lost." If the world is leaving the postwar era, it is only to enter a prewar period. The division of Europe, registered at Yalta and Potsdam in 1945, reflected the smashing of the Nazi regime by the Red Army. An imperialist new order in Europe dominated by a reunified NATO Germany represents a big step toward World War III.

Already, the imperialist summit at Houston saw growing tensions between a declining U.S. and blocs led by resurgent Germany and Japan. And while Gorbachev rhapsodized after the agreement with Kohl about entering an epoch "of strong, prolonged peace," the Bonn chancellor declared: "Why shouldn't the Germans and the Soviet Union be the first to conclude a nonaggression pact...?" It all conjured up images of Neville Chamberlain waving the Munich agreement in 1938 and claiming to have bought "peace in our time." And the last Soviet-German "non-aggression pact" was the prelude to Hitler's Operation Barbarossa, the June 1941 assault on the USSR.

Four months ago, the Soviet president vowed that NATO membership for a reunified capitalist Germany was "absolutely out of the question." But Gorbachev seems to be a Stalinist who just can't say no. Mr. Da (Mr. Yes) claimed that the change in position was made possible by the NATO summit in London in early July where Western imperialist leaders made some "peace-loving" sounds while holding firmly to their nuclear triggers. The NATO chieftains did not even make a perfunctory pledge against a nuclear first strike—a position the Warsaw Pact has enunciated for years—but promised only to avoid nuking the Soviet Union except as a "last resort."

Gorbachev called it "Realpolitik." What NATO got in the deal was an unconditional Soviet commitment to pull all their troops out of East Germany by the end of 1994. What the Soviets got was nothing but a promise to reduce the Bund-



Kohl, Gorbachev agree to reunified imperialist Germany.

DPA

eswehr by about 100,000 men to 370,000. This was billed as a 45 percent cut in German troop strength—by including the East German army (at its former strength), which in any case is to be purged and disarmed following full reunification. Meanwhile, the NATO nuclear arsenal will remain on West German soil and German units which are part of the integrated NATO command will move up to the Polish border.

The Soviet people lost more than 20 million dead in repelling the Nazi invaders and liberating East Europe from the Third Reich. Such memories do not die easily. One elderly war veteran said bitterly: "I can accept that Germany should become one nation again. But why do they want to join an alliance that is opposed to us? I fear that history could repeat itself." Another Soviet citizen complained: "It's one thing to have lost the cold war. But we don't want to feel we lost the second world war as well." Mikhail Gorbachev is certainly doing everything he can to make the Soviet people feel that way.

## Bonn: "We Are the Main Money Men"

For the time being, the direct threat to the Soviet Union will come from the expansion of German capital. Justifying going it alone to work out the deal with Moscow, West German foreign minister Genscher remarked, "Anyway, the Russians know we are the main money men" (*Der Spiegel*, 16 July). But ultimately, imperialist economic aggrandizement must be defended militarily. After finally agreeing to recognize the Oder-Neisse border with Poland, and with the inclusion of all Germany in NATO, Kohl reportedly said of this "drift to the West": "Thereby a certain vacuum is created in the direction

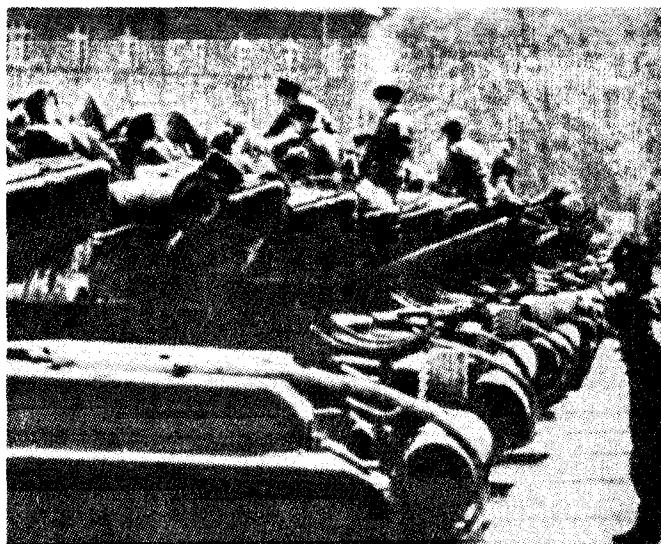
of the East." And who will fill that "vacuum"?

Not surprisingly, Germany's re-emergence as a great power has ruffled the feathers of its own allies. Thatcher cabinet member Nicholas Ridley created a diplomatic storm when he railed about a "German racket designed to take over the whole of Europe" (with the French "behaving like poodles to the Germans") and declared it was more necessary than ever for Britain to preserve the "balance of power" in Europe "with Germany so uppity." German Count Otto von Lambsdorff sneered that his fellow aristocrat in England "had not been able to get over England's defeat by the Germans in the World Cup." And Thatcher reluctantly sacked her closest adviser.

The Ridley affair caused a brouhaha for "Saying the Unsayable About the Germans" (as his 14 July *Spectator* interview was titled)—at least out in the open. But the point Kohl made by announcing the agreement with Gorbachev as a bilateral accord and not as part of the so-called "four plus two" talks (of the postwar occupying powers and the two Germanys) was lost on no one. U.S. Congressman Lee Hamilton grouched, "This makes it clearer than ever that the Germans are leading Western policy toward the Soviet Union." The unease in the White House was captured by the *New York Times* (18 July) in the piquant headline, "Bush Declares He Does Not Feel Left Out by Gorbachev and Kohl."

In the last six months the Kremlin Stalinists have presided over the reversal of the results of the Red Army's victories in World War II. In fact the deal with Kohl simply dots the i's and crosses the t's to Gorbachev's acquiescence last February to West Germany's aim of annexation of East Germany, the German Democratic Republic (DDR). Taking their cue from the Kremlin, the then-ruling PDS buckled under to Kohl's drive for currency union, paving the way for a victory for a Fourth Reich in the March 18 Volkskammer (DDR parliament) elections. PDS prime minister Modrow joined Kohl and the worst Greater German nationalists in proclaiming "*Deutschland einig Vaterland*" (Germany, single fatherland).

Now PDS chairman Gregor Gysi hails Gorbachev's latest capitulation, pointing to West Germany's renunciation of ABC (atomic, biological and chemical) weapons, the limitation on troop strength and recognition of the Polish border. These will be about as effective as the Washington and Geneva agreements in the 1920s limiting naval armaments, or the 1928



Der Spiegel

**Soviet tanks being withdrawn from East Germany. Red Army has stood on front lines against NATO imperialist alliance.**

Kellogg Pact renouncing war "as an instrument of national policy." These pieces of paper hardly prevented World War II. Nor did "treaty obligations" stop Hitler from sending the Wehrmacht into the "demilitarized" Rhineland in 1936, any more than Kohl's promise not to bring in NATO nuclear weapons will make the territory of the former DDR "denuclearized." And Hitler not only acknowledged Poland's borders, but signed a "non-aggression" agreement with Poland as early as 1933!

Gysi also appeals to black-red-gold German nationalism in pushing the PDS' call for an all-German referendum on the reunited country's affiliation to NATO. This puts him in the same camp with some of the worst revanchist forces, who want to see Germany as an independent superpower (and would hang every communist they could find). Such talk of referendums is a constant refrain from the PDS and liberal DDR nationalists like Neues Forum, who were previously pushing for a June 17 plebiscite on a DDR constitution worked out by the now-disappeared Round Table. These bankrupt Stalinists and their impotent popular-frontist fellow travelers act as though German imperialism would seriously allow its interests to be interfered with by such democratic window-dressing.

**For Revolutionary Unity of German, Polish and Soviet Workers!**

The Gorbachev-Kohl agreement came on the heels of the 28th Soviet Communist Party congress earlier in the month, where the Soviet leader got considerable flak from oldline Stalinists like Yegor Ligachev and sections of the Soviet High Command for handing East Germany over to the West. Gorbachev retorted by demanding to know if the Ligachevites were prepared to send in tanks to stop German unity. Gorbachev's rout of the "conservative" opposition freed his hands to go all the way with Kohl. Meanwhile, Russian republic head Boris Yeltsin and the Leningrad and Moscow mayors flamboyantly quit the party, raising the prospect of a deepening split in the bureaucracy.

With the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in East Europe, *(continued on page 12)*

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A Spartacist Pamphlet

**Trotskyism:  
 What It Isn't and  
 What It Is!**

February 1990 Spartacist Publishing Co. Box 1377 CPO New York NY 10116

# Leon Trotsky on the Fate of the Soviet Union

Fifty years ago, on August 20, 1940, Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the Russian Revolution and founder of the Red Army, was murdered by a Stalinist assassin in Coyoacan, Mexico. In his book *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky analyzed the bureaucratic regime of Josef Stalin as a parasitic caste resting atop the gains of the 1917 Revolution. He laid out how it would shatter, with different elements propelled into the opposing camps of revolution and reaction.

Today in the Soviet Union and throughout East Europe, the starkly posed alternatives are workers political revolution or capitalist counterrevolution. As the Stalinist bureaucracies disintegrate from the top, the working class has not yet taken a decisive role. The construction of an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard is today all the more urgent.

\* \* \* \*

Will the bureaucrats devour the workers' state, or will the working class clean up the bureaucrat? Thus stands the question upon whose decision hangs the fate of the Soviet Union. The vast majority of the Soviet workers are even now hostile to the bureaucracy. The peasant masses hate them with their healthy plebeian hatred. If in contrast to the peasants the workers have almost never come out on the road of open struggle, thus condemning the protesting villages to confusion and impotence, this is not only because of the repressions. The workers fear lest, in throwing out the bureaucracy, they will open the way for a capitalist restoration. The mutual relations between state and class are much more complicated than they are represented by the vulgar "democrats." Without a planned economy the Soviet Union would be thrown back for decades. In that sense the bureaucracy continues



no credit

to fulfill a necessary function. But it fulfills it in such a way as to prepare an explosion of the whole system which may completely sweep out the results of the revolution. The workers are realists. Without deceiving themselves with regard to the ruling caste—at least with regard to its lower tiers which stand near to them—they see in it the watchman for the time being of a certain part of their own conquests. They will inevitably drive out the dishonest, impudent and unreliable watchman as soon as they see another possibility. For this it is necessary that in the West or the East another revolutionary dawn arise.

—Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937)

## Fourth Reich...

(continued from page 11)

once again the Soviet Union finds itself isolated, encircled and endangered. But as all wings of Stalinism lie prostrate before the imperialist advance, the working class has begun to reassert itself. In East Germany, since currency union took effect July 1 there has been scarcely a day without strike action by significant sections of the DDR workers—first metal workers, then rail workers and, most recently, a strike by commercial workers against the bureaucrats-become-bosses. Poland has already witnessed one massive strike by rail workers against the pro-capitalist austerity policy, and the country seethes with social discontents.

In the Soviet Union, wracked by a deep-going social crisis, the coal miners who showed their power in last summer's strike again flexed their muscles in a one-day protest strike on July 11. Yet the miners' leaders appear to be under the sway of the pro-capitalist demagogue Yeltsin and his ilk. A statement from a leader of the Kuzbass Council of Workers Committees said the strike was to "show our support for the new leadership of the Russian Federation and for its programme of democratic reforms" (*Moscow News*, 15 July). Currently, workers' struggles in the former Soviet bloc are

headed in every conceivable direction. A clear class leadership is needed to point the way to reforging the historic revolutionary unity of the German, Polish and Soviet proletariat.

The bankruptcy of the Stalinist lie of "socialism in one country" is definitively proved, and along with it the bureaucracy whose ideology this formula embodied is going down the tubes. But authentic communism expresses the interests of the international working class, and is regenerated in every serious class battle. And from Korea and South Africa to East Europe, the class struggle is alive and well.

The spectre of a Fourth Reich brings home that time is running out for humanity. If civilization is not to be extinguished through nuclear annihilation in another world war, the working class must forge a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party capable of sweeping away the imperialist system of war and exploitation. As Trotsky wrote almost six decades ago, in his essay on "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" (October 1933): "The problem of the world revolution as well as the problem of the Soviet Union may be summed up in one and the same brief formula: *The Fourth International*." The fight of the International Communist League to reforge the Fourth International remains the key today.

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 507, 27 July

## For Proletarian Internationalism!

# Black American Trotskyist On Speaking Tour of Germany

In June, Spartacist League/U.S. Central Committee member Don Alexander gave a series of public talks in East and West Germany under the title "Rotten Capitalism in 'Free World' U.S.A." On July 24, comrade Alexander reported back to supporters of the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense who, together with LBL members from Atlanta and Chicago, donated funds for the tour.

Comrade Alexander spoke in Berlin, Bernburg, Halle, Eggesin and Rostock, East Germany (DDR) and Hamburg, West Germany. Opening the forums, he told the participants about the LBL militants who supported the tour out of concern over the direction of events in East Europe:

"These revolutionary workers don't buy the lie that U.S. and world imperialism are bringing 'democracy' to Eastern Europe or anywhere else. Class-conscious U.S. workers know that U.S. imperialism wants to enslave the working people and dark-skinned toilers throughout the world. There are workers who are conscious of the enormous stakes in the struggle against the capitalist reunification of Germany."

In organizing this series of forums our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) were able to deepen their work of fighting to build a Leninist-egalitarian party which can lead the defensive struggles against the drive to a Fourth Reich of German imperialism. Foreign workers, students and women's groups, who had displayed the leaflet for the tour on their literature tables and in their clubs, came out to hear Alexander's compelling description of the hellish conditions of life in racist, capitalist America.

Many members of the PDS, remnants of the former Stalinist SED which ran the DDR for 40 years, and other left organizations in their orbit also attended. In the discussion periods there was much political debate between the Trotskyist program of revolutionary internationalism and the defeatist politics of these groups, who sell the lie that working-class struggle in the West is impossible, while they look to the SPD, the treacherous running dogs of capitalist counterrevolution, or Mikhail Gorbachev's "market economy" reforms in the Soviet Union as the "answer" for workers in East Germany who are already beginning to experience the brutal realities of capitalist exploitation.

The following are excerpts from comrade Alexander's report to the LBL. A slightly longer version was published in *Workers Vanguard* No. 508, 10 August.

\* \* \* \*

We have a point in the program of the Labor Black League to support the revolutionary struggles of working people internationally. This trip materialized that demand. The short period of time was packed with a lot of talks, from the 10th of June through the 21st. This occurred two weeks before the currency changed, in which the D-mark replaced the East

German mark.

This was a very successful series of forums. Over 200 people attended and 80 percent were from other organizations. A lot of people came out, very curious about a communist organization that really had a program for world revolution.

The first meeting in Berlin was very interesting. Over 50 non-members came. It was very multinational. A Lebanese Communist Party member got up and had questions about



Spartakist

**Mozambican workers join Spartakist Workers Party May Day contingent in East Berlin. Banner calls for full citizenship rights for immigrant workers.**

"why do you attack pacifism?" There were some Iranian leftists in the audience, there were a couple of members of the British centrist group Workers Power. There were some members of the PDS, the Stalinist organization.

An older guy got up and said, "Look, this meeting is taking place in a very serious moment in history. Many of my best friends are quitting the Communist Party. The first people who quit were the careerists but now the serious people are quitting. My party has been telling me to read Bernstein and Kautsky, and that's not going to cut it. Most of us, we're worried, what are we going to be faced with tomorrow."

With capitalist unification looming—unemployment, layoffs, childcare facilities being eliminated, women being driven out of the workforce and back to the kitchen—there was discussion centered around how to fight against the imperialist campaign of seizing the DDR by the throat.

The next city we went to was Bernburg, southwest of Berlin. This meeting was organized at a youth club. It attracted a lot of members of the PDS and the leadership of the PDS from the Leipzig area, an hour and a half away. A lot of young

(continued on page 14)



## Black American Trotskyist...

(continued from page 13)

people, a lot of women, actually a lot of women at all of these forums.

We had our LBL pictures up of different demonstrations. People took a very real interest in learning a little about class struggle in the capitalist West. There were a number of Mozambican workers who wanted to talk to the wee hours of the morning, "What is racism like in America?" "How do blacks and whites live? Do they live in the same neighborhoods?" "What's the school system like?" "How much do you get paid?"

After that we went to Halle, which is very near Bernburg. It seems the people in the south are much more beaten down. We had a very successful meeting, a lot of members of the PDS. They were older members and they had a little dinner for us afterwards. Most of the DDR left groups came out: Communist Platform, the KPD, which is supposed to be the new Communist Party, the United Left and Neues Forum. They were very anti-working-class! One PDS woman articulated these sentiments saying, "The working class cannot stop this capitalist counterrevolution. The intellectuals can!"

So it afforded great opportunity for our comrades to engage in some good political combat. A lot of these groups cannot conceive of the working class rising up against the capitalist exploiters in Europe, the USA. Stalinist politics, the utopian theory of socialism in one country, is what they are taught to believe—which means socialism in no other country, it means denunciation of international revolution. We had that argument time and time again against their popular-frontist program.

After Halle, we went way up north, several hours' drive to Eggesin. We were dog-tired because Halle was very intense, because there was a lot of discussion afterwards. This was a 10

a.m. meeting on Sunday. When we got there, an hour before, here were Vietnamese and Mozambican workers in front of the hall, waiting impatiently for us to get out of the car. They formed a line to shake our hands. They were genuinely moved that an internationalist revolutionary organization sent an American communist this great distance to address their struggle.

A couple of Mozambican workers spoke at the meeting. One of them said, "We are young, we think this meeting is very important, we don't know a lot about politics but we think that these attacks on the DDR mean more hardships for us here and for our brothers and sisters back home." These are young guys, ten Mozambicans, and about eight Vietnamese workers who smiled when we talked about how we hailed the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam.

Next, Rostock. The Stalinists were aggressive, younger, cocksure: "the working class has to go through the experience of capitalism, we need to develop a left theory, Leninism-Bolshevism is elitist, we need unity of the left." We had a lengthy debate on the question of Trotskyism vs. Stalinism.

Every place we went, people wanted to read Trotsky because Trotsky is not published in [East] Germany. And that is a really big barrier to winning over a lot of people, because they can't see the genuine revolutionary alternative to Stalinism.

In this particular series of meetings I think one thing that really stands out is that our party, the Spartakist Workers Party in Germany, have been the only ones swimming against the stream, have opposed capitalist reunification from day one, have held demonstrations against the attacks and deportation of foreign-born workers.

I know I'm leaving out a lot. It was a very successful forum which resulted in some recruits to our party. People here in the LBL made it possible. And you better know that it made an impact upon a very key section of the East German working class and the left. ■

## Labor...

(continued from page 5)

through the GST, a regressive tax that's part of the all-sided campaign to drive down living standards. (And this is in addition to ever-escalating "sin" taxes on alcohol and cigarettes under which working people have to pay through the nose to get a smoke or a drink.) The Canadian Labour Congress leaders are blowing hot air about organizing "national days of action against specific parts of the Tory/big business agenda." But their idea of "fighting the GST," for example, is to link arms with the likes of the labor-hating, racist populists of the Reform Party.

The Tory government is on the ropes, scoring a miserable 14 percent in the approval rating polls—the lowest ever recorded in Canadian history. With the government hated and ineffectual, rocking from scandal to crisis and back again, now is the perfect time for some hard class struggle. The trade union bureaucrats' answer is "Vote NDP." Meanwhile these right-wing social democrats see their electoral fortunes in dispelling any illusion that an NDP government would in any way be beholden to the interests of the labor movement.

Certainly where the NDP has held power provincially they have more than proven their capacity to act as the strikebreakers on behalf of the bosses. Today, these guys aren't even

pretending to be a working-class alternative to the Tory and Liberal parties of capital. Yet virtually all of those who claim to be leftists in Canada call for working people to vote for the NDP as an "alternative." Not us Trotskyists.

The strength of the labor movement lies in its numbers, its militancy, its organization and discipline and its relation to the decisive means of production in capitalist society. Labor's weapons are inherent in its collective organization: the picket line, solidarity strikes, hot cargoing, etc. The bosses are winning because the power of labor has not been brought to bear. On the contrary the rulers, abetted by the labor tops and the NDP, preserve *their* power by setting whites against blacks, Asians, Native Indians and other minorities, English against Québécois workers, Canadian against American workers, ad nauseam.

What is desperately needed is an internationalist, class-struggle leadership of the labor movement, one that can unite all of the working people, the exploited and oppressed in common battle against their common enemies. It is the urgent task of class-conscious workers to construct the revolutionary workers party that can wrest the productive wealth of North America out of the hands of the greedy, rapacious capitalists and place in the hands of the working people the power to build a planned, socialist economy that will ensure equality and abundance for all. ■

## Persian Gulf...

(continued from page 1)

of chutzpah for Bush & Co. to condemn anyone for "naked aggression." But after Hussein's successful invasion of neighboring Kuwait, they're calling the Iraqi leader a "madman," even a "Hitler" with maniacal expansionist ambitions. A media crescendo built up the "danger" that he might try to invade that pillar of Western "democracy" in the Near East, Saudi Arabia, where the ruling family revels in the public sport of executing women, Christians, Jews, Shi'ites, alcoholics, adulterers and Mormons. Instead *the U.S.* has invaded Saudi Arabia, making clear they're in for the long haul. And now they're trying to whip up popular support to defend the sultans' coffers, and the Seven Sisters oil cartel.

### Gorbachev's Treachery

It's being billed as "the first post-Cold War war." No longer is the Russian bear seen lurking behind every "regional conflict." Instead Bush's national security advisor Brent Scowcroft talks of the "emergence of a new world order," with the Russians following the American lead in the United Nations to punish "aggressors" (*New York Times*, 26 August).

The U.S. drive to war in the Gulf is a direct fruit of Soviet capitulation to imperialism in world affairs. What is this "new world order"? Where is the abatement of exploitation and of the threat of nuclear war? Washington's Near East power grab looks very much like the same, old, dirty imperialist banditry. The U.S. rulers are striving to reassert themselves as a super imperial power (à la the British Empire on which the sun has long since set)—except they have a vastly weakened domestic economic base and powerful rivals in Japan and Germany. They are seeking permanent military hegemony in the region in order to manipulate oil prices to the advantage of a section of their ruling class, and whoever gets in their way had better watch out. And Gorbachev has given them a green light for their military adventures.

First, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze signed a joint statement with American Secretary of State Baker condemning the Iraqi invasion. Then Moscow stated its readiness to participate in a naval blockade. But the imperialist rampage in the Persian Gulf poses a serious danger to the USSR as well—not to mention the rest of the world. Instead of cooperating with the White House warmongers, the Soviet Union should rescind its arms embargo of Iraq and send its former allies in Baghdad what weapons they need to deter Washington's oil grab.

Meanwhile, the Zionist rulers of Israel gloat over Arabs killing Arabs, while presenting themselves as the strong military arm with which Western imperialism can "punish" Saddam Hussein. But Bush hasn't taken up the offer (so far), and the Israelis are worried that the Americans' new-found Arab allies might mean an end to their "special relationship" with the U.S. Already this year, for the first time ever, the U.S. government has reduced its aid to Israel.

A few months ago there was a worldwide outcry when Hussein vowed to retaliate against an Israeli attack by "scorch[ing] half of Israel" with chemical weapons. But when an Israeli cabinet minister said in early August that they had enough C-arms to devastate Iraq, and they began handing out gas masks in Tel Aviv—not a peep from the press. Israeli publicist Y. Melman suggested in the 6 August *New York Times* that his country might nuke Baghdad. Prime Minister Shamir says,

"we're dealing with a madman." He should talk. For some time, the Zionist madmen have been looking forward to a Near East war to drive Palestinians out of the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Hussein's takeover of Kuwait could serve as the pretext for genocidal attacks on the Palestinians. *Israel out of the Occupied Territories!*

The howl coming out of Washington over "hostages"—coming from the people who organized the KAL 007 spy



Dennis Brack/Black Star

**U.S. 82nd Airborne arrives in Saudi Arabia, part of largest U.S. overseas deployment since Vietnam.**

provocation against the Soviet Union, cynically sending 200-plus innocent civilians to their death—is worse than hypocritical. By threatening to starve out Iraq and bomb it back to the Stone Age, it is the Pentagon warmongers that have put U.S. and other Western citizens in Iraq and Kuwait at risk. At the same time Hussein's use of foreign nationals as "human shields" for likely military targets is not only inhumane but stupid as it cuts across mobilizing working people in the West against their own imperialist rulers.

### Saddam Hussein's Rational Ripoff

"We are talking about oil. Got it? Oil, vital American interests," a "senior American official" confided to the *New York Times* (4 August). Since the 1970s Western financial capitals have been worried about a world economic collapse triggered by war over the Persian Gulf oil fields. Wall Street financier-turned-novelist Paul Erdman wrote *The Crash of '79* in which the Shah of Iran tries to take over OPEC and the Gulf oil fields, with the result that "Persian oil crude would be twenty-five dollars a barrel," a price that would "break the backs of the Western economies." The day after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Persian crude went to \$24.75. By late August it was above \$30.

As Bush marches American soldiers off to war, stock markets from Wall Street to Tokyo have been plunging. Even

(continued on page 16)

## Persian Gulf...

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bourgeois commentators have noted that the U.S. economy is in such a weakened state that a major oil shock could tip the scales into a serious recession, if it hasn't already.

Memories of the 1970s, when OPEC sent Western economies reeling by jacking up the price of oil several-fold, are still fresh. In contrast, "the 1980's were kind to oil importers," noted the *New York Times* (2 August). This was in good part due to the war between Iran and Iraq, which forced both countries to pump oil like mad to pay for their ruinous eight-year slaughter, thereby undermining the OPEC cartel. Now Hussein, facing tens of billions of dollars debt, saw a way to reinflate the price of oil by enforcing OPEC discipline at gunpoint. From the Iraqi standpoint, seizure of Kuwait was not madness but rational greed.

Now the media are trying to whip up sympathy among North American and European working people for "poor little Kuwait." An artificial enclave of oil-fed prosperity, Kuwait has only 800,000 citizens, who were ruled by a monarchy which exploited the labor of a million-plus "foreigners," mainly poor Arabs and Asians, who toiled in the oil fields. With such a small population base, billions in oil profits gave Kuwait one of the highest per capita incomes in the world—even the democratic "opposition" came to their demonstrations in Mercedes and live in air-conditioned luxury.

As for Saudi Arabia, it is, as the *Times'* Thomas Friedman put it, "more of a company than a country." A company, moreover, run by medieval Islamic fanatics. Some years ago, the North American public was sickened by a TV dramatization, "Death of a Princess," showing the public decapitation of a young woman in the Saudi royal family for adultery.

Ba'athist Iraq is in its own way just as barbaric. While spouting "radical" Arab nationalist rhetoric, Saddam Hussein has killed thousands of leftists, worker militants and members of the Kurdish minority. A special target of Ba'athist police-state terror has been the once-strong Iraqi Communist Party with its base among Kurdish oil workers. It is now reported that Iraqi Communists captured in Kuwait are being deported to Baghdad where they face execution.

But with his call for a "comprehensive peace settlement" involving an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait in exchange for American withdrawal from Saudi Arabia and Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories, Hussein has struck a chord among the Palestinians and other oppressed peoples of the Near East. Massive pro-Iraq demonstrations have swept Jordan as well as the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Many thousands of Palestinians and other Arabs have volunteered to fight for Iraq against imperialist invasion.

Yet for the Palestinian and other oppressed peoples of the Near East there is only one way forward—the perspective of permanent revolution. That is, internationalist proletarian revolution which overthrows the Zionist rulers of Israel along with the oppressive and exploitive Arab regimes of the sheiks, colonels and emirs, who have all repeatedly trampled on and opposed the Palestinians' just struggle for national rights. National and social emancipation for both the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples can only be achieved in the framework of a socialist federation of the Near East.

Meanwhile the Canadian government plays its usual role as Washington's loyal junior partner. Canada already has troops

in the Near East, serving as one-way border guards for the Zionists in the Sinai and Golan Heights. In 1985 then Israeli foreign minister Shamir declared, "Canada is considered by us one of the most friendly countries in the world." He asked Ottawa to send more troops as Israel launched its "iron fist" against the Palestinian intifada.

Canada's role internationally has always been to help police the imperialist status quo, first for the British and today for the U.S. From joining the 1918 invasion by 14 countries against the fledgling Soviet workers state to shipping 22,000 troops to Korea to help crush social revolution in the early 1950s, Ottawa has been up to its neck in counterrevolutionary wars. Diefenbaker, Pearson and Trudeau all backed the French and U.S. imperialists' rape of Vietnam to the hilt, while Canadian corporations raked in \$1 million a day supplying the U.S. war machine with, among other things, napalm.

Ottawa's facade as a "neutral mediator" also provides useful cover for the war aims of its senior partner in the White House. When they get in trouble they can always call in Canadian "peacekeeping" troops. This time Mulroney dropped even the "peacekeeping" pretense, to the chagrin of Liberal and NDP spokesmen who wanted the ships to stay in Halifax until they were given a U.N. imprimatur.

But whether the Canadian troops wear the U.N.'s blue helmets or not, the NDP is four-square behind their mobilization on behalf of American imperialism. Alberta NDP MP Ross Harvey joined with far right-wing Tory David Kilgour and the even further right Reform Party to denounce 500 Arab Canadians who said they planned to join the Iraqi army, saying "any Canadian who takes up arms against Canada or its allies should be prosecuted" (*Vancouver Province*, 19 August). Their warmongering campaign sets up Arab immigrants and refugees for state persecution and racist attack on the streets.

### Down With the U.S. War Drive!

Today George Bush thinks he's riding high, but remember how Jimmy Carter's presidency sank in the sands of the Iranian desert a decade back. The same polls that give Bush a near 80 percent approval rating show four of five Americans don't want Washington to initiate hostilities. A section of the Pentagon establishment, backed by the likes of Alexander Haig, urge a lightning military strike against Hussein, fearing a drawn-out war would engender mass opposition back home.

Bush has put a hundred thousand American 18-year-olds in 45 degree heat in the Saudi desert, with no booze, no women and for who knows how long. The Iraqi army has nearly a million soldiers, battle-hardened from eight years of trench warfare in the squalid border war with Iran. The entire U.S. army is actually *smaller*, and hasn't whipped anything more serious than Panama and Grenada in decades. Saddam Hussein may be isolated, apparently abandoned to his fate by the Soviet Union, but he's not the type to beg forgiveness on bended knee. If the bodybags start coming back to Washington in the thousands, Bush had better watch out: today's fragile mood of imperialist triumphalism will quickly shatter.

The workers of North America and the world have no interest in a squalid war over the oil fields. We have great interest in the profits sweated out of the workers from the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Mexico: our interest is that this wealth go to the working people of the world. Furthermore, the burning of hydrocarbons has serious environmental consequences. Only a worldwide socialist system can ensure the rational use of fossil fuels for the benefit of humanity. ■

# Canadian CP in the Camp of Imperialism

In its 13 August *Canadian Tribune* editorial "Containing Saddam," the Communist Party of Canada openly supports the imperialist blockade of Iraq, demanding that "world pressure must mount on Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, and all economic measures [be] taken to condemn such aggression." But the CP crawls even lower before the imperialists' hue and cry. Like some born-again Maoists, the CP equates the Soviet Union and Yankee imperialism, denouncing Iraq's "two superpower friends" whose "big power politics" set "the example...that led the Saddam Hussein government to think it could act with impunity in the Persian Gulf." In fact they first point the finger at the USSR, for supplying Iraq with arms during the squalid Iran-Iraq war. In stark counterposition, the International Communist League wrote in a letter to Soviet ambassadors (see page 2): "We Trotskyists, who stand in defense of the Soviet workers state against world imperialism, demand that the Soviet Union rescind its arms embargo of Iraq and send their former allies in Baghdad the weapons they need to deter Washington's oil grab."

The CP editorialists seek to cover themselves by stating: "The greatest crime in the invasion of Kuwait is giving George Bush a pretext for military intervention in the Middle East." But the imperialists don't need a "pretext" for aggression. Certainly many CPers remember the "Gulf of Tonkin" in 1964 where the U.S. simply *manufactured* an "incident" to send 500,000 troops to crush the workers and peasants of Vietnam. By the CP's logic, when the Soviets rightfully intervened in Afghanistan against CIA-backed Islamic reaction, it supplied the U.S. with the "pretext" to provide millions in aid to their cutthroats to skin school teachers alive. And if, as the CP writes, "Nothing can justify the use of military force in the settling of interstate conflicts," does the CP now say that women and besieged leftist reformers should have been left to their grisly fate at the hands of the *mujahedin*?

The CP's line is the cringing refrain of opponents of *any* anti-imperialist or anti-capitalist struggle. This was at bottom the argument of J. V. Stalin who destroyed the internationalist Bolshevik Party of Lenin in the name of building "socialism in one country" which required, above all, accommodating imperialism so there would be no "pretext" for intervention. Thus the CPs internationally, including the Canadian party once Stalin's man Tim Buck got his grip on it, were transformed from revolutionary organizations seeking the destruction of capitalism through proletarian revolution into mere pressure groups upon their "own" ruling class. But the imperialists were not and cannot be bought off.

Gorbachev's "new thinking," which has meant one capitulation after another, has only *increased* the danger to the USSR and all humanity. Despite the CP's wishful thinking that "the world shows signs of being a different place," here's the U.S. trying to grab the oil in the Persian Gulf, assembling its largest military force in 25 years mere hundreds of miles from the USSR!

For decades, CPers who had given up on the possibility of workers revolution at home and settled for popular-front appeals to the "good graces" of the "progressive" Canadian

## EDITORIAL

### Containing Saddam

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq is being condemned by world public opinion and rightfully so. Nothing can justify the use of military force in the settling of interstate conflicts. That there were serious emerging differences between Iraq and Kuwait there is no doubt, but the way of big power politics must be abandoned.

It has been the example of just such politics that led the Saddam Hussein government to think it could act with impunity in the Persian Gulf. Iraq has long basked in the support of its two superpower friends. The Soviet Union had supplied Iraq with arms throughout the long and bloody Iran-Iraq war. Wash- backed the lat- rshins patrolled

CANADIAN  
**TRIBUNE**

**CP press (13 August) supports blockade of Iraq, equates USSR with U.S. imperialism.**

rulers, consoled themselves that at least they were in some way defending "socialism" in Russia. But today the *Tribune* is grotesquely equating the USSR with American imperialism.

As we noted last issue in "End of the Line for Canadian CP," the CP is "again taking their cue from the Kremlin where Gorbachev's seemingly endless appetites to appease imperialism are being translated internationally into 'unity' (read: capitulation) of the Communist parties with pro-imperialist social democracy.... By dumping all the old phrasology and any attachment, however remote, to the defense of the Soviet Union, [CP leader] Hewison & Co. are looking to find comfortable niches in the labor bureaucracy and the lower rungs of the parliamentary apparatus of the capitalist state." We pointed out that "even if they achieve some success as social democrats, this will mean serving not only the Canadian bourgeoisie but also necessarily—despite their anti-Yankee rhetoric—its senior partners in Wall Street and Washington." Even without such "success," that's what's come to pass. The Communist Party is no place for a communist. ■

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## Mohawks...

(continued from page 4)

The "Indian Act" of 1876 codified this oppression. In the words of a government report of the day, Canada's "Indian" legislation was designed to keep Native people "in a condition of tutelage and treated as wards or children of the State."

Parallels with South African bantustans are not coincidental. In fact the Nationalist Party architects of apartheid explicitly patterned their racist system on Canada's. When South African officials came here in the 1940s, they found a pass law system in place, whereby Natives were forbidden to set foot outside of the reserves without the permission of the justly hated government Indian Agents. And this system, imposed after the brutal suppression of the 1885 Riel Rebellion, wasn't revoked until the 1950s.

Through hundreds of amendments over the years, the "Indian Act" came to regiment every aspect of life. Sale of ammunition and liquor were banned; traditional dances and ceremonies were made illegal. Natives couldn't vote. Later, under a government scheme called "enfranchisement," Natives could only vote if they ceded their rights and benefits secured through treaties. Few Natives bought this forced assimilation attempt. It was not until 1960 that Native people got the unconditional right to vote, with no strings attached.

Set down in swampland, bush and Prairie waste, the reserves are dead-end dumping grounds. A quarter of reservation houses have no central heating; a third have no toilets. Five families are often forced to share a single unit. At Lynn Lake in Manitoba, a whole community was left to live in plastic tents on the edge of town for 20 years after their homes were bulldozed to make way for a mining development in the late 1950s. In 1960, infant mortality among the Native peoples was over 60 per 1,000, and it remains at Third World levels.

Visiting the Osnaburgh reserve in Northern Ontario in August, South African archbishop Desmond Tutu remarked that the despair and misery he saw there "struck him between the eyes and in the solar plexus" (*Globe and Mail*, 15 August). Unemployment on many reserves runs at 90 percent—and 97 percent for women. Canada's Native peoples have the highest suicide rate in the world. After a hydro project flooded much of their land, 20 members of the Cross Lake Cree band in Manitoba died by their own hand.

With their traditional hunting and fishing livelihoods destroyed—most recently, by the seal hunt ban, NATO pilot training and deadly pollution—and with small chance of finding a job in the cities, despair is endemic, along with its handmaiden, senseless violence. At Osnaburgh, of a population of 700, 80 have died in the last ten years, most of them violently. Native people are special targets for arrest and police brutality. Of prison inmates in Canada 12 percent—fully 60 percent in Saskatchewan—are Native, victims of the same racist "justice" system that framed Donald Marshall and stole eleven years of his life for a murder he did not commit.

For daring to defend their rights, arms in hand, against the murderous capitalist state, the bourgeois press has ranted and railed about Native "violence." This is obscene. We are for the right of the population to bear arms. The Canadian rulers, who scream in horror over the Mohawks having guns, have sought to preserve their monopoly of arms through some of the most viciously restrictive gun control legislation in the world. We unconditionally defend Natives against a ruling class which has carried out a campaign of genocide against them. In Newfoundland the British colonials hunted down the Beothuk "for sport"—and exterminated them to the last man, woman and child.

The reserve at Oka is one of the oldest in Canada, dating from the French colonial power. Yet their land claims against

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the federal government have been repeatedly rejected. Because they are defending their land now against those who want to turn their historic burial ground into a golf course, a massive military operation has been mounted against them. As the army daily moves closer, an all-out bloodbath is threatened. This spring the RCMP and U.S. state troopers invaded the St. Regis-Akwesasne reserve, against the existence of casinos and high-stakes bingo. This has been the source of an intra-tribal dispute on the reserve which should be settled *internally*. The cops and army should get out and stay out of the reserves! Native peoples should have the right to conduct their own affairs on their land, which is not to say that all Native leaders conduct "good" government. There have been many cases of corrupt Native bureaucrats who have run the reserves for their own financial gain or other advantage.

When the cops attacked the Kanesatake Mohawks in July, many remembered what happened when the FBI invaded the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota in the early 1970s. The government agents acted like war criminals, conducting an invasion of someone else's territory. American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier who had, with others, defended his people, fled to Canada in hopes of escaping the cops' murderous vendetta. But in 1977 the Canadian government deported him to the U.S., and to this day he languishes in prison. Free Leonard Peltier!

The Native peoples have been viciously abused for centuries. We demand that whatever residual rights they have been able to maintain be respected (like their right to fish salmon on the West Coast out of season) and that all treaties be honored. Given the change in the relationship of forces since these treaties were signed some may need to be renegotiated but that must be based on the Natives' full agreement. In some cases Native land claims have run up against socially useful developments like railways, hydroelectric projects and oil pipelines. The Native peoples should receive generous compensation for any deprivation of land or disruption of activity, based on completely consensual agreement.

### For Socialist Egalitarianism!

Seeking to address their desperate situation some Native leaders speak in terms of "sovereignty" and "self-determination." But the possibility of the formation of a Native nation or nations was long ago foreclosed when the Indians' tribal societies came face to face with the advance of capitalism. "Self-determination" is therefore a utopian and potentially dangerous illusion. Today, perhaps a million Native people including Dene and Inuit remain, scattered in isolated pockets over the vast surface of Canada.

While on the one hand claiming that the Native peoples are demanding control of Canada "lock, stock and barrel," the federal and provincial governments have suddenly declared their willingness to "negotiate" land claims and "self-government." This suggests that a section of the ruling class seeks to impose a "bantustan solution" to deepen and finalize the marginalization of Native peoples. Unlike the liberals, social democrats and the bulk of the left in this country, we do not hide the fact that the granting of even massive land claims will not alleviate the hideous oppression facing Native peoples.

As we wrote in 1975:

"Capitalism confronts the Indians...only with the prospects of either oppressive urban lumpenization or the abomin-

able reservation, with its squalor, cultural deprivation, high infant mortality, chronic alcoholism, and rampant teenage suicide. Only the destruction of capitalism through proletarian revolution and the inauguration of the era of socialist development can insure the all-sided voluntary integration of the American Indian into society on the basis of the fullest equality and meet the special needs created by well over a century of injustice and oppression."

—"Marxism and the American Indian Question,"  
*Young Spartacus* No. 31, January 1975

On July 29, Trotskyist League supporters joined with 2,000, including blacks and East Indians, who converged on Oka in a demonstration in defense of the Mohawks endorsed by the Quebec Teachers Federation and Confederation of National Trade Unions and the Metro Toronto Labour Council. The power of organized labor must be mobilized in action on behalf of the Native peoples and against the fascist KKK scum. A concerted effort rallying to the defense of the besieged Mohawks by the labor movement would be a big blow against both the Anglo and Quebec chauvinists.

The Mohawks in particular, whose sons for generations have worked high steel on construction sites across North America, are a living bridge between the reservations and proletarian power. We believe that many Native militants will find in the revolutionary party a genuine tribune of all the oppressed, their best hope for a decent future. As much as any other exploited sector of the population, the Native people have a vital interest in destroying capitalism and replacing it with the rule of the working class. Forward to North American Socialist Revolution! ■

## Trotskyist League Events

### Vancouver

#### Forum:

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**Speaker:** Joseph Seymour, Spartacist League/U.S.  
Central Committee

**Date:** September 28, 7:30 p.m.  
For location call (604) 255-0636

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**Imperialist Troops  
Out of the Middle East!** Wed., Sept. 12

**Racism and Capitalism  
In North America** Wed., Sept. 26

**Stalinism in Collapse:  
The Trotskyist Alternative** Wed., Oct. 10

**South Africa: Smash Apartheid!  
For Workers Revolution!** Wed., Oct. 24

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# Quebec Left Mired in Nationalism

Two decades ago Quebec's labor leaders, seeking to keep a lid on the most combative section of the North American working class, talked a lot about socialism, even about revolution. Meanwhile their acolytes in the Quebec left conjured up visions of an "independent socialist" state on the banks of the St. Lawrence. When the labor tops channeled workers' struggles into the arms of bourgeois nationalism, most of the left followed them. And today the bulk of the Quebec left simply cheers on the rise of right-wing nationalism—at home and abroad.

"Fight for Independence Now!" reads the banner headline on a June supplement to *Combat Socialiste*, newspaper of Gauche Socialiste (GS), Quebec supporters of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat. Parading as a "radical" wing of the nationalist movement, GS chastizes the fanatically anti-labor Parti Québécois for opposing "any perspective of mass mobilization" to win independence. Claiming the PQ and Bourassa's Liberals are trying to "derail" nationalist struggle, GS raises the call for a "constituent assembly"—as if Quebec were a Third World country ruled by a military junta or autocracy, where such a bourgeois-democratic demand might be necessary to rally the masses toward revolution. A unilateral declaration of independence, claims GS, is "the only means for Quebec to really engage on the road to its liberation." What a comedown from the days when the Mandelites shouted slogans for a "workers republic of Quebec"!

GS upholds the openly counterrevolutionary nationalist movements in the Soviet Union today as inspiration for Quebec, saying "the moves of Lithuania and the other Baltic countries remain exemplary." Just what "moves" do they find "exemplary"? Do they hail Estonia's discriminatory "immigration" controls and their restrictions on language, voting and employment rights directed against the Russians, Byelorussians and Ukrainians who make up 40 percent of the population? Or do they salute the Lithuanian nationalists for tearing down memorials to the Red Army's liberation of Lithuania from Nazi occupation? We do know that last fall the United Secretariat's *International Viewpoint* published an article defending the Estonian "Forest Brothers," claiming this gang of anti-Soviet Nazi terrorists were "freedom fighters" who were part of "The Armed Struggle Against Stalinism in Estonia" (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 486, 29 September 1989)!

Gauche Socialiste's response to the rise of xenophobia and racism in Quebec is highly revealing. In a little article on page six of the Summer 1990 *Combat Socialiste*, they blithely dismiss racism and chauvinism as at once a monster created by Ottawa, a fabrication of the bourgeois press, and something that just goes with the territory. "It would be utterly miraculous," they aver, "if there were not racism against people of color or from the Third World." "The astonishing thing" is that it's not worse, says GS smugly, as it presses forth with its nationalist crusade. What a disgusting alibi for racism, anywhere!

To immigrants and minorities GS offers a mailed fist in a velvet glove: "The determination to live in French...does not prevent making room for other languages, as long as everybody knows what the language of the country is and accepts it." And if they don't accept it? What should be done to them? Should Greek, Portuguese and Caribbean immigrant

children be forced to speak French at recess? What about the Mohawks—must they stop using English and accept French as the sole "official language" of Quebec? GS's position is a form of "left" bigotry, utterly antithetical to Lenin's fight for *equal language rights for all*.

As the imperialist press trumpets the "death of Communism" the Quebec and English Canadian wings of the decomposing Communist Party are seeking asylum in mutually hostile national chauvinisms, thus entangling themselves in an impossible contradiction. A recent conference of the Quebec CP endorsed Quebec independence, over the near-unanimous opposition of English-speaking and immigrant members. (The same conference mooted a resolution to dissolve the party entirely.) At the same time in English Canada, the CP continues to wave the Maple Leaf flag of Anglo-chauvinism, championing movements like the Pro-Canada Network.

The small student-based Action Socialiste group is about the only Quebec left organization which has not embraced the rise of nationalism. AS rejects the notion that independence would be progressive in the current situation and regularly denounces racism in Quebec as well as English Canada. But it tries to resolve the national question by evading it. According to the June 1989 *Socialisme Maintenant*:

"National oppression is not only a question of language. For Quebec within Canada, for Francophones outside Quebec, for the Native peoples or for the Atlantic regions, real national oppression exists."

Francophones outside Quebec and Native peoples are the targets of very real discrimination and oppression, and the Atlantic regions are desperately impoverished. But the difference in the case of Quebec is that it is an oppressed *nation*, i.e., a group of people sharing a common language, culture, territory, economic base, etc. An understanding of this simple fact, and recognition of the right to national self-determination, is essential for combating nationalism among the working class and winning them to common class struggle.

Internationally, AS rejects defense of the Soviet and East European workers states against capitalist restoration, dubbing these countries "state capitalist" at a recent congress. The same meeting cemented unification with ex-members of Libération, a leftover from the once large Quebec Maoist left. In the late 70s/early 80s groups like the Workers Communist Party tried to oppose Quebec nationalism—and wound up supporting the Canadian bourgeois state. Painting the USSR as the "main enemy," they applauded every imperialist anti-Soviet movement and even demanded strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces to counter the "Soviet threat." As the renewal of the Cold War brought union busting, racist state terror and wholesale assaults on civil liberties in preparation for war against the Soviet "evil empire," the Maoist organizations collapsed miserably and totally.

Since our inception in 1975, the Trotskyist League has consistently upheld Quebec's right to self-determination, while combating all manifestations of chauvinism and nationalism and seeking to forge binational working-class unity. It is more than time to build a genuine revolutionary Marxist party in English Canada and Quebec to lead the fight for workers power. ■

## Quebec...

(continued from page 24)

Canadian industrial leaders, who are asking themselves what they can do in newly expanding international markets to lessen their economic dependence on English Canada."

So it's bye, bye, Maple Leaf, hello *fleur-de-lys*—all in the name of profit for Quebec bosses who see greater market advantage south of the border.

### Quebec: National Oppression and Class Struggle

Quebec was forcibly incorporated into British North America following the defeat of the French garrison on the Plains of Abraham in the citadel of Quebec in 1759. In the Confederation of 1867 the national subjugation of the Québécois was the cornerstone of the newly "independent" Canadian state. For more than two centuries Quebec was kept in benighted, priest-ridden rural backwardness by the English overlords in alliance with the Roman Catholic church. Finally in the 1960s the Liberal government of Jean Lesage moved to modernize and secularize Quebec society in what was known as the "Quiet Revolution." In 1967 when French president Charles de Gaulle declared "Vive le Québec libre!" from the balcony of Montreal's City Hall, he addressed the aspirations of a section of the Québécois middle class (and was asked to leave the country by the Canadian government).

The belated emergence from Church-dominated backwardness produced an upwardly-mobile Québécois petty bourgeoisie who sought to become "*maîtres chez eux*" (masters in their own house), initially through sharply increased public spending on education and economic development. Where 30 years ago barely 3 percent of Quebec youth graduated from college, today the figure is 20 percent and rising. Quebec's birth rate used to be one of the highest in the Western world;



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October 1970: Army occupies Montreal. Trudeau fabricated "apprehended insurrection" to round up unionists, left nationalists.



Canadian Press

"English only" bigots trample Quebec flag at Brockville, Ontario.

today it is the lowest. Freed from the shackles of clerical provincialism, where priests fulminated from the pulpit against the evils of trade unions, there also emerged the most militant and class-conscious proletariat north of Mexico. Québécois workers faced systematic discrimination on the basis of language; as late as the 1970s many were forbidden even to speak French on the job.

Opposition to such chauvinism and to the brutal suppression of Quebec's national rights, brought home again in the 1970 military occupation of Montreal under the War Measures Act, fueled an upsurge of labor militancy of a scope not seen in North America since at least the 1930s. The province-wide general strike of May 1972 reached near-insurrectionary proportions, with key industrial towns seized by the workers and more than a dozen radio and TV stations taken over to broadcast messages of solidarity. But Quebec's "socialist"-talking labor bureaucrats, cheered on by most of the left, led the workers into a nationalist trap, channeling labor militancy into votes for the bourgeois-nationalist Parti Québécois.

In 1976 the PQ under Lévesque defeated Bourassa's Liberals to form Quebec's first pro-independence government. Thousands of English-speaking businessmen packed up and left for Toronto, and *parvenu* Québécois capitalists moved into their executive suites. While the labor tops claimed the PQ government would be "progressive," we warned it would use nationalist rhetoric to dupe the workers while cutting their throats—and that is exactly what happened.

Lévesque went after the labor movement with a vengeance not seen since the days of Maurice Duplessis, who ruled Quebec for 18 years with the iron hand of clerical reaction, corruption and savage strikebreaking. Among the main targets were the unions who were the main bastion of support for the PQ's nationalist policies—teachers, government and hospital workers. So vicious were the PQ's anti-labor attacks that former premier Robert Bourassa, who was reviled as the most hated man in Quebec after he jailed the leaders of the province's major labor federations in 1972, was voted back into

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## Quebec...

(continued from page 21)

office. Now the union tops promote the renewed rise of nationalism—only this time even the socialist rhetoric is gone, as they cheer on their new French-speaking capitalist masters.

### Nationalism and Self-Determination

The Trotskyist League has consistently championed Quebec's unconditional right of self-determination—i.e., to independence—not out of nationalist support for separation but rather internationalist commitment to remove barriers (such as the forcible subjugation of Quebec by English Canada) to the class unity of the English-speaking and French-speaking workers of North America. As we stated in a Central



no credit

### January 1983: Quebec unionists demonstrate against René Lévesque and his PQ labor haters.

Committee memorandum on Quebec following the 1976 election of the Parti Québécois (see "Quebec Nationalism and the Class Struggle," *Spartacist Canada* No. 12, January 1977):

"In oppressed nations within multinational states the question of whether or not to *advocate* independence depends on the depth of national antagonisms between the working people of the different nations. If relations have become so poisoned as to make genuine class unity impossible within a single state power, we support independence as the only way to remove the national question from the agenda and bring the class issue to the fore. The Bolsheviks did not find it necessary to *advocate* independence for the oppressed minority nations in tsarist Russia, yet Lenin did support the call for Norwegian independence from Sweden."

At this time we continue to unconditionally defend Quebec's right to independence while not advocating the exercise of that right. Despite escalating national hostilities, it has yet to be decisively demonstrated that the cause of proletarian class unity can only be resolved through separation for Quebec. However, should conflicts over language rights, immigration policies and other issues inflame national antagonisms to such

a point—a distinct possibility in the present situation—then we would be obliged to demand independence.

Certainly the potential for a deep cleavage in the labor movement was seen at the biennial convention of the Canadian Labour Congress in Montreal last May. When the CLC tops submitted a position paper which opposed Meech Lake from the standpoint of the Anglo-dominated status quo, the delegation from the Quebec Federation of Labour threatened to quit the convention if it was even discussed.

Yet Quebec workers have played a key role in sparking cross-Canada labor actions. In several rail and postal strikes of the 1970s and '80s, the initiative was taken by Montreal union locals. Given the high degree of integration of the North American economy, this militant and combative working class has the potential for playing a leading role in the struggle for proletarian power throughout North America. But this has been undercut by the national arrogance of the existing leadership of the English Canadian working class—in particular the social-democratic New Democratic Party which waves the Maple Leaf flag of Anglo-chauvinism and refuses to recognize Quebec's right to self-determination. Correspondingly, this has inflamed nationalist sentiments among Québécois workers which their union leaders have used to tie them to "their own" capitalist exploiters.

In the 1970s sundry "left" nationalists and syndicalists raised the call for an "independent socialist Quebec." But no strategy based on separatism—including the utopian "socialist independence"—can truly show the way forward for the working masses of Quebec. As we argued at the time, a Quebec "Commune" would have to be extended through socialist revolution throughout North America or it would be crushed. Now Québécois workers face the prospect of an independent bourgeois Quebec "ghetto." At nearly 10 percent, the Quebec unemployment rate is already among the highest in the country, and with enforced French unilingualism it will be hard to get out.

The proletariat of Quebec will find their social as well as national liberation only within the framework of a continental socialist revolution. That requires a proletarian internationalist leadership forged in opposition to the bureaucratic misleaders of the labor movement whose reactionary nationalism has only served to encourage feelings of hostility among the working people while protecting the bosses' profits, whether they be Canadian, American or Québécois.

### Chauvinist Reaction on the Rise

Today's national polarization is shot through with ugly chauvinism on both sides. Early this year more than 50 cities and towns in Ontario passed resolutions rejecting the federal government's policy of bilingualism and banning municipal services in French. French-speaking residents of the steel town of Sault Ste. Marie were told to "speak white." Demonstrators for "English rights" in Brockville, near the Quebec border, were filmed burning and stomping on Quebec flags. In the Prairies, the far-right Reform Party has garnered mass support through anti-French bigotry mixed with racism and a populist anti-tax campaign.

Meanwhile, in Quebec racist anti-immigrant banners have been prominent in nationalist demonstrations, and the cops and pogromist mobs repeatedly lash out against black and Native Indian minorities (see page 3). The main school board in Montreal recently tried to ban all students, including hundreds of thousands of immigrant children from southern

Europe and the English-speaking Caribbean, from speaking anything but French on school property—even during recess!

As the Trotskyist League argued in our 1977 memorandum: "While we recognize and seek to redress the historic discrimination against use of the French language, particularly on the job and at school, we do this by fighting for *equal language rights for all*, not for new discriminatory regulations." While various fake-leftists championed French unilingualism in Quebec we pointed out that it would "provide a perfect excuse for the denial of language rights to French-speaking minorities by English chauvinists in other provinces."

The smug nationalists who campaign for a "unilingual French Quebec" could care less about the nearly one million French speakers elsewhere in Canada. When French-speaking residents of Alberta challenged legislation enforcing English unilingualism, the Quebec government went to court...to support Alberta's "English only" laws! As the country divides along national fault lines, minorities everywhere—non-French speakers in Quebec, Francophones in English Canada, immigrants most of all—will be targets for yet more chauvinist abuse. The power of the integrated, binational labor movement must be mobilized to smash racist attacks and demand full and equal language rights for all!

### For Socialist Revolution Throughout North America!

"History's bequest to Canada is to be the country of the American counter-revolution," wrote the ever-Tory British *Economist* (23 June). From the start, Canada was an artificial creation of the British, who sought to safeguard their North American interests, and of the defeated counterrevolutionary United Empire Loyalists who fled the American Revolution. In a rare moment of honesty, Tory prime minister Mulroney, commenting last February on the possible separation of Quebec, asked: "What is Canada without it? There's no country. It's like an adjunct of the United States."

To shore up its flagging economy against imperialist rivals in West Europe and Japan, the U.S. bourgeoisie made a "free trade" pact with Canada. For Quebec's entrepreneurs, increasing their trade south of the 49th parallel is one of the key arguments for independence. For the rest of the country the combination of the free trade pact, which is increasing north-south trade/investment links, together with collapse of the Meech Lake accord, is unleashing yet more centrifugal forces which, particularly if Quebec secedes, could spell the complete demise of Canada as an independent state.

Some months ago Montreal businessman Aldan Furlong laid out the following scenario to the London *Guardian* (27 March): "If Quebec goes, British Columbia and the Prairies will seek to join the U.S. within a year or two, and Newfoundland may be even quicker." Newfoundland was one of the provinces which held out against Meech Lake and opinion polls show that the greatest sentiment for joining the U.S. comes from the population of the dirt-poor Atlantic provinces, which would be completely cut off from the rest of the country if Quebec separated. Within days of Meech Lake's collapse,



Trotskyist League fights anti-French chauvinism at July 4 Toronto demonstration to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. SC Photo

western premiers started seeking more independence for their own provinces. William Vander Zalm, the ultraright nut-case premier of British Columbia, raised the call for "sovereignty-association" for his fiefdom.

The U.S.-Canada "free trade" pact provoked an outburst of Canadian nationalism from the union tops and the NDP, who accused the Mulroney government of "selling out" Canada to the U.S. But this was an essentially equitable deal between the Canadian bourgeoisie and Wall Street. Moreover, the English-speaking people of Canada and the U.S. already share a common language, culture and highly integrated economy. Certainly, Quebec nationalists should not be sanguine about their prospects for "independence" in the context of sharply increased economic integration with the U.S. But it is Mexico that will really pay as U.S. imperialism turns its attention to extending "free trade" from the "Yukon to the Yucatán." This would be nothing more than an attempted wholesale takeover of Mexico by Yankee imperialism in alliance with its Canadian imperialist underlings.

When the free trade pact was introduced, we wrote:

"As Marxists we are for the increasing economic unity of the world on a democratic and egalitarian socialist basis. This is a very different kettle of fish from a deal aimed at strengthening the power of the U.S. bourgeoisie....

"When the bourgeoisie talks of the benefits of free trade, they mean strengthening their hand against the unions and tearing apart social programs. Yet the way to fight this is not by protectionist poison, setting Canadian and U.S. workers at each other's throats, but by *common class struggle against the U.S. imperialists and their Canadian junior partners.*"

—"Unite North American Workers in Class Struggle!," *Spartacist Canada* No. 73, Winter 1988/89

What is desperately needed is a revolutionary *internationalist* leadership that can unite the working people from Montreal to New York City, Vancouver to Los Angeles and Mexico City in a fight to defend minority rights and national self-determination, to break the power of capital and establish their own class rule which will achieve genuine liberation for all of the exploited and oppressed. ■



**For Workers Unity Through Class Struggle!**

## Anglo-Led Reaction Inflames Quebec Nationalism

### Defend Quebec's Right to Independence!

Chanting "Quebec for the Québécois" and "In-dé-pen-dance!" more than a quarter million people marched through downtown Montreal June 25 to celebrate St. Jean Baptiste Day, the national holiday of Quebec. As the London *Guardian* (25 June) commented: "With Quebec's blue-and-white fleur-de-lis flag hanging from every other balcony, over the doors of corner groceries, and from the car radio aerials, one could be forgiven this weekend for thinking one was already in an independent country."

Two days earlier the Meech Lake accord—a last-ditch effort by the federal government which sought to win Quebec's endorsement of the 1982 constitution by amending it to officially recognize Quebec as a "distinct society"—collapsed in a wave of English Canadian chauvinism. As the deadline for ratification of this approached, fans at Toronto Blue Jays games were booing at the French verses of the national anthem. Two provinces refused to endorse the accord, and on June 23 Mulroney pronounced it dead.

Quebec Liberal Party premier Robert Bourassa immediately broke off constitutional negotiations and began "non-partisan" consultations on Quebec's future with Jacques Parizeau, leader of the nationalist opposition Parti Québécois (PQ). The PQ has declared that it is for complete independence while Bourassa holds up the European Economic Community as a model for relations between Quebec and the rest of Canada—more popularly known as "sovereignty-association" (partial independence plus economic association with Canada). The status quo, Bourassa emphasized, is *not* an option.

T-shirts at the St. Jean Baptiste celebration read "*Enfin oui René*" (Finally Yes René), referring to René Lévesque, the former PQ premier of Quebec who lost a 1980 provincial referendum on "sovereignty-association." Ten years ago only 40 percent voted "yes" in the PQ referendum. Now opinion polls claim over two-thirds of Quebec's population, and nearly



Steve Liss

**Montreal, June 25. Over a quarter million people march for Quebec independence under the fleur-de-lys flag.**

80 percent of French speakers, support some form of independence.

A half-dozen federal Conservative MPs including Mulroney's chief Quebec lieutenant Lucien Bouchard have quit the party to campaign for independence. While all three Quebec labor federations have endorsed the call for secession, the current separatist drive is being led by a recently emergent Québécois bourgeoisie. Bernard Lemaire, president of the Cascades forestry group, assured Wall Street investors: "We are ready. We have the economy and viable companies. We won't be scared twice." The *Washington Post* (21 May) commented approvingly:

"In the 1970s, Quebec's separatist movement was centered in smoke-filled union halls and university campuses. But today, the spirit of Quebec nationalism has drawn increasing force from the oak-paneled boardrooms of gleaming new office towers that loom over downtown Montreal—monuments to the emergence of a powerful French Canadian business elite....

"More sovereignty for predominantly French-speaking Quebec is viewed less as a political objective and more in practical terms by increasingly self-confident French

(continued on page 21)