

## For Mass Mobilizations to Defend the Clinics!

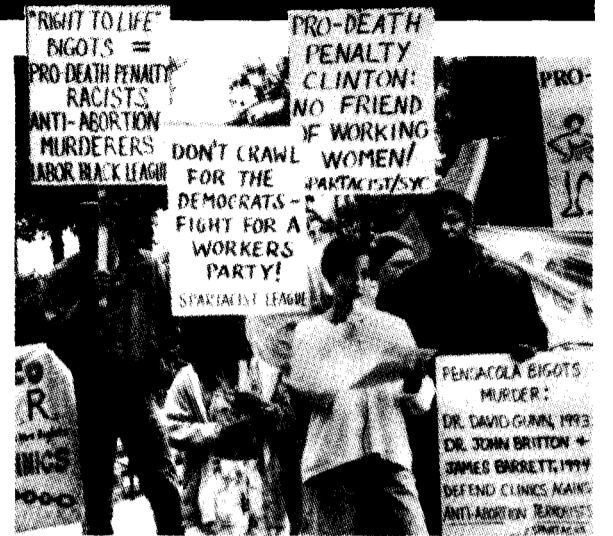
### Pensacola: Anti-Abortion Terrorists Kill Again

AUGUST 1—The double murder of an abortion doctor and his volunteer escort by an anti-abortion terrorist at a clinic in Pensacola, Florida was a bloody atrocity *waiting to happen*. The killer had ranted for over a year, on *Donahue* and other national TV shows, that murdering abortion providers was “justifiable homicide.” A hundred like-minded fanatics, leaders of the anti-abortion movement, had met publicly at a convention in Chicago only a few months

before, where they openly discussed murdering doctors. The killer passed out his “position” advocating death there. And then he struck.

The 12-gauge shotgun blasts fired by right-wing terrorist Paul Hill on the morning of Friday, July 29, left Dr. John Bayard Britton and escort James Barrett dead, and Barrett’s wife June wounded. They had just pulled their pickup truck into the parking lot of

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Protest in San Francisco, July 30.

WV Photo

## Elections Amid Peasant Revolt, Workers Struggles

# Mexico in Turmoil

*With tumultuous elections in Mexico coming up on August 21, our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista have issued a 2 August supplement of Espartaco. We publish an excerpted version below.*

There is no sign of the mythical stability and social peace trumpeted by the Mexican bourgeoisie and its Wall Street masters when they signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) of imperialist predation for a “Fortress North America.” As we wrote after the explosion in the south of Mexico: “The Indian peasant uprising in Chiapas has dealt a dramatic blow to the capitalist triumphalism of the ‘new world disorder.’ Only yesterday, with their ‘death of communism’ campaign, arrogant bourgeois propagandists declaimed that the class struggle had ceased to exist.” But the Chiapas rebellion “has shown—dismaying the ruling classes of Mexico, the U.S. and other countries while encouraging the oppressed—that radical social struggle is alive.”

The collapse of the Soviet Union, prepared by decades of Stalinist betrayals, has fanned the flames of interimperialist rivalry. Capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet bloc has produced fratricidal wars, escalating U.S. interventions, the threat that Cuba will be strangled. It has also produced a wave of resistance to anti-worker attacks from Japan to Europe, where Italian Alfa Romeo workers raised banners of Zapata as a symbol of rebel-



Mexican army occupied Chiapas to stem Zapatista peasant revolt last January. As August 21 elections approach, social unrest mounts throughout the country.

Ulises Castellanos

## No to Cárdenas Popular Front! For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

lion. In Mexico, the economic basis of the semi-bonapartist regime which has ruled this country for more than six decades has been undermined by increasing integration into the U.S. economy. This was symbolized and spurred on by NAFTA, Wall Street’s rape of Mexico. But the technocratic Salinas “free trade” regime has run into resistance from the working masses. As Mexico shows itself to be a weak link in the chain of American imperialism, this presents a very important opportu-

nity for the international working class.

It is urgently necessary to *break with the bourgeoisie* in all its variants; in Mexico this means the urgency of a *break with the “popular front,”* which ties combative sectors of the proletariat to the “opposition” Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas—a new version of the PRI [the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, of which Cárdenas was for years a prominent leader]. PRD graffiti declares, “Neither marches nor demonstrations,

Cuauhtémoc will provide the solutions,” reflecting Cardenista efforts to defuse rebellion. Meanwhile, having amassed considerable political authority by heading the courageous Chiapas rising, the leaders of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) are channeling discontent toward support for the PRD.

The popular-frontist perspective of a (bourgeois) “democratic transition” is a dead end. It is urgently necessary to forge the *revolutionary internationalist leadership of the proletariat*—a leadership that knows how to unite workers battles on both sides of the Rio Grande as part of the world proletarian struggle—in order to advance toward workers revolution, the only way out for the exploited and oppressed.

### Elections in the Wake of Chiapas

The imperialists and their Mexican junior partners who drooled over the promise that Mexico would be peaceful, open terrain for investment have taken fright as crisis after crisis strikes the gendarme regime of capitalist order in Uncle Sam’s “backyard.” Attempts at “pacification” through “dialogue” followed the bombing of Chiapas Indians. Meanwhile military encirclement has continued in Chiapas, racist ranchers and their rabid dogs of war are demanding more blood, the government has acquired anti-riot vehicles from the U.S. and repression escalates in Guerrero and other parts of the country.

The pro-government *Excelsior* (28 July) claims to have discovered an opposition “Plan for Violence in 12 States” and the capital, clearly setting up the pretext for a murderous crackdown on the scale of the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre if the regime considers it necessary.

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# Defend Bangladesh Writer Taslima Nasrin!

## Islamic Fundamentalists Vow to Kill Her

The following is based on an article prepared by Women and Revolution, which was recently printed in the August 1994 newsletter of the International Feminists of Japan.

The courageous Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasrin is in hiding in fear for her life. She is the target of a religious *fatwa* (condemnation to death) by Islamic clerics, and at their instigation the government of prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia has launched a police hunt threatening imprisonment and hard labor on charges of "deliberately and maliciously outraging the religious feelings of Muslims." But Taslima Nasrin's "crime" is to speak out against anti-woman bigotry and to denounce the bloody communalism of both Muslim and Hindu chauvinists in Bangladesh and

India. For this, according to the clerics, she must be hanged.

On June 30 the fundamentalists raged through Dhaka, chanting "death to Taslima Nasrin," as they tried to enforce a one-day shutdown of the city touching off a month-long campaign for Nasrin's death. In spite of this crusade and the mobilization of some 8,000 police and paramilitary troops, secular students, cultural organizations and artists carried out their own demonstration in defense of Nasrin. The fundamentalist frenzy against Nasrin has continued to escalate: on July 26, six people were killed in Chittagong in clashes between students and Jamaat Islami, which has led the campaign against her. Two days later nearly 200,000 Muslims reportedly demonstrated in Dhaka demanding that Nasrin be hanged and

all anti-Islamic activity banned.

The murderous witchhunt has been whipped up by clerics who formed a "Taslima Nasrin Peshan Committee" ("committee to grind down Taslima Nasrin"). "She is worse than a prostitute," fulminated Maulana Azizul Haque, the mullah who has called for her execution. "She demands 'freedom of the vagina'... This is against the Koran and Allah, it's blasphemy" (*Guardian* [London], 10 December 1993). These are the same forces that viciously repudiated and cast out the thousands of their own womenfolk raped by the Pakistani army during the 1971 war for independence.

Nasrin remains defiant. Before going into hiding she told the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, "I am never going to stop writing and I am determined not to compromise with fundamentalists or a government which tolerates Islam as a state religion. I fight with a pen, yet they are trying to hit me with a sword. I am expressing my thoughts and they want to kill me" (quoted in the *Vancouver Sun*, 9 July).

Noted writers such as Allen Ginsburg, Günter Grass, John Irving, Norman Mailer and Amy Tan have come out in support of Nasrin. So too has noted Bombay-born writer Salman Rushdie who is himself targeted for death since 1988 under a *fatwa* issued by the fundamentalist regime in Iran. Indian women's organizations and cultural figures have protested the government's attacks on Nasrin. Some 27 Indian writers condemned the warrant of arrest, saying her "only crime is to have spoken out boldly against religious bigotry, obscurantism and oppression as a liberated modern citizen and an emancipated woman" (*The Link* [Vancouver], 9 July).

It is the duty of the international working class to rally to Nasrin's defense. Our colleagues of the Partisan Defence Committee in Britain have registered a protest with the Bangladesh High Commission in London, demanding: Drop all the charges against Taslima Nasrin! For safe passage to the country of her choice! In the U.S., the Partisan Defense Committee has written to Attorney General Janet Reno demanding political asylum for Nasrin.

Taslima Nasrin first attracted the

hatred of the fundamentalists in 1991 with her essay anthology, *Selected Columns*. In it she criticizes the Koran, quoting from it to prove that religion "discriminates against women and treats them like sexual commodities." The immediate focus of the mullahs' vituperative wrath is her recent novel *Lajja* (*Shame*). *Lajja* depicts a Hindu family attacked by Muslim communalists in Bangladesh, following the razing of the mosque at Ayodhya in India by Hindu chauvinists and fascists. By the time the Bangladeshi government banned it last July, 60,000 copies had been sold.

In India the Hindu communalists and fascists of the Bharatiya Janata Party/Vishwa Hindu Parishad (BJP/VHP) have attempted to utilize *Lajja* for their vile communalist ends. Their only concern is to stoke the fires of anti-Muslim pogroms, in particular against Muslim Bangladeshi immigrant "infiltrators" who have fled from the horrendous poverty of Bangladesh to the slums of West Bengal and to cities like Delhi. Nasrin herself says, "I am very pained at what is happening with my book in India. I condemn the politics of the BJP and the Jamaat-e-Islami equally" (*India Today*, 31 October 1993).

It takes more than just obvious, elementary decency for any individual to take a stand like Nasrin has done in situations like Bangladesh today: it takes courage, especially if you are a woman, expected—in Nasrin's words—to remain "veiled, illiterate and in the kitchen." The attacks on Nasrin are the focal point of a generalized assault on women's rights throughout Bangladesh. Since the reactionary Islamic clergy pronounced her death sentence, *fatwabazi* (issuing of *fatwas*) has spread through rural Bangladesh as women are buried, stoned, caned, set ablaze for running afoul of the local mullahs. Between January and March, 110 schools where girls are taught were burned down in a campaign orchestrated by mullahs.

The deadly campaign directed at Taslima Nasrin highlights the fact that the struggle for women's liberation on the Indian subcontinent is inseparably tied to the fight against religious obscurantism, caste-based bigotry and bloody communalism which could plunge the masses into horrors surpassing those of the 1947-49 Partition, which was a direct product of British imperialism's divide-and-rule policies. The emancipation of women will only succeed through a struggle for *permanent revolution*—the revolutionary seizure of power and overthrow of capitalism by the working class, at the head of the peasantry, the masses of downtrodden women and all the oppressed, and led by a genuinely communist (Leninist-Trotskyist) party. *Defend Taslima Nasrin! For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For a socialist federation of South Asia!* ■



TROTSKY

### Imperialist War and Social Chauvinism

World War I, which broke out 80 years ago this month, signaled that the global forces of production had outgrown the system of capitalist nation-states, whose rulers were driven to war in the fight over spheres of exploitation. The reformist misleaders of the workers movement cynically mobilized the masses as cannon fodder for the rapacious bankers and industrialists in the name of "national defense." This was epitomized



LENIN

by the German Social Democrats' vote for the Kaiser's war budget on 4 August 1914. Lenin's Bolsheviks denounced these "social-patriots" and fought to "turn the imperialist war into a civil war" of the workers against all their bourgeois rulers. Today, the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, sapped by decades of Stalinist bureaucracy, has ushered in a period of heightened interimperialist conflict as the world increasingly resembles that in the period leading up to August 1914.

1. The European and world war has the clearly defined character of a bourgeois, imperialist and dynastic war. A struggle for markets and for freedom to loot foreign countries, a striving to suppress the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and democracy in the individual countries, a desire to deceive, disunite, and slaughter the proletarians of all countries by setting the wage slaves of one nation against those of another so as to benefit the bourgeoisie—these are the only real content and significance of the war....

4. The betrayal of socialism by most leaders of the Second International (1889-1914) signifies the ideological and political bankruptcy of the International. This collapse has been mainly caused by the actual prevalence in it of petty-bourgeois opportunism, the bourgeois nature and the danger of which have long been indicated by the finest representatives of the revolutionary proletariat of all countries. The opportunists had long been preparing to wreck the Second International by denying the socialist revolution and substituting bourgeois reformism in its stead, by rejecting the class struggle with its inevitable conversion at certain moments into civil war, and by preaching class collaboration; by preaching bourgeois chauvinism under the guise of patriotism and the defence of the fatherland, and ignoring or rejecting the fundamental truth of socialism, long ago set forth in the *Communist Manifesto*, that the workingmen have no country.... It must be the task of the future International resolutely and irrevocably to rid itself of this bourgeois trend in socialism.

—V.I. Lenin, "The Tasks of Revolutionary Social-Democracy in the European War" (August 1914)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: George Foster

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PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

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Dhaka, July 29: Nearly 200,000 Islamic fundamentalists march in Bangladesh capital demanding that Taslima Nasrin be hanged.

WORKERS VANGUARD



# What's Behind "Workers Aid for Bosnia"

Imagine self-styled leftists running supplies for the bourgeois-nationalist Bosnian Muslim regime, with British and French imperialist troops riding shotgun. Strange but true: that's "Workers Aid for Bosnia."

For more than a year now, a number of so-called Trotskyist groups in West Europe, particularly Cliff Slaughter's British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) and Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec), have been pushing this campaign as an example of "working-class internationalism." This gives a whole new meaning to doublespeak! As our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain wrote of this pro-imperialist lash-up shortly after it emerged: "The long and short of it is that 'Workers Aid for Bosnia,' which retails the imperialist propaganda for 'poor little Bosnia,' is simply a stalking horse for NATO intervention" (*Workers Hammer* No. 137, September/October 1993).

"Workers Aid" takes its cue directly from more potent ruling-class forces, particularly in Britain and France, which have the largest troop contingents in the UN "peacekeeping" forces in ex-Yugoslavia. The British Conservative government of Prime Minister John Major has been under attack by an unholy alliance ranging from the Labour Party to right-wing Tories like "Iron Lady" (now Baroness) Margaret Thatcher for not being aggressive enough on the side of the Bosnian Muslim regime. Among the endorsers of "Workers Aid" are former Labour Party leader Michael Foot and the head of the Trades Union Congress.

Likewise in France, home to the largest USec grouping, there is a sizable wing within ruling circles pushing for a more belligerent line against Serbia, including Socialist Party leader Michel Rocard. In the recent European Union elections, a "Europe Begins in Sarajevo" slate was fielded by intellectuals who participated in the May '68 student revolt and have since moved far to the right. The Sarajevo slate campaigned to "place Bosnia at the center of the electoral debate" and demanded an end to the arms embargo against Bosnia. So does the "Workers Aid" crowd.

The WRP's *Workers Press*, which proclaims this campaign "the centre of its political work," regularly runs banner headlines reading, "Timex to Tuzla," seeking to link a defeated Timex strike in Scotland to the Bosnian mining community which is the recipient of their campaign. Accounts in the newspapers of the various backers of "Workers Aid" describe the multiethnic character of

Tuzla's miners and how they sent aid to the British miners strike of 1984-85. But the "Workers Aid" campaign has *nothing* to do with supporting the multinational working class in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. These "leftist" charlatans cynically use the plight of the Tuzla mining community to promote political support to the Bosnian Muslim government in the three-

Islamic extremists, one Tuzla woman complained: "I can't wear a mini-skirt in the street without them swearing at me. They say I should be ashamed of myself."

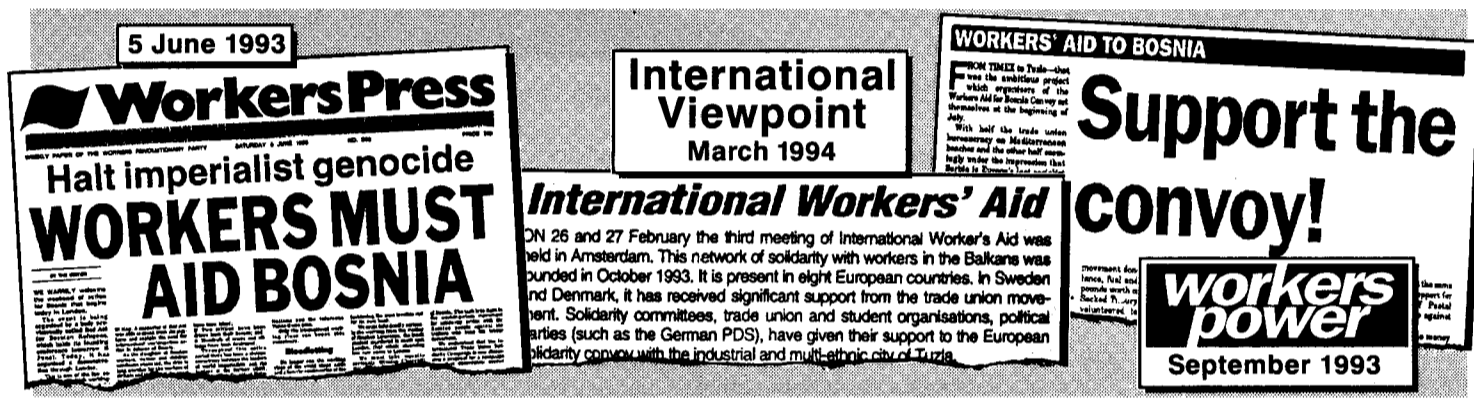
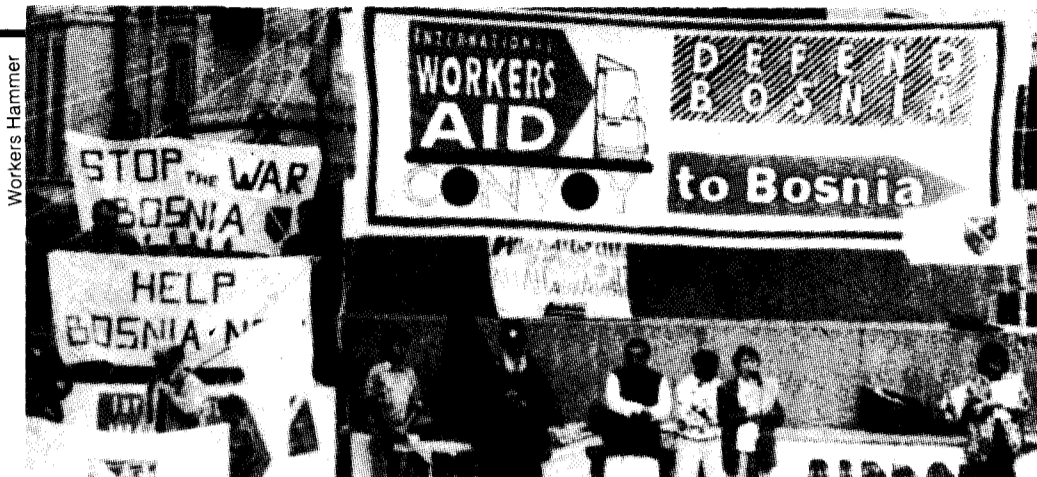
## "Make the Imperialists Fight"?

*Workers Press* has become a blatant press agent for the Sarajevo regime of Alija Izetbegovic, which it paints as a

Socialist Federation of the Balkans.

Such a perspective is utterly alien to the WRP Slaughterites, Mandel's USec, etc., whose ultimate goal lies in successfully pressuring their own imperialist bourgeoisies. Indicatively, a recent Slaughterite statement mooted a merger of its Workers International with the Morenoite International Workers League on the basis of their "joint intervention

Pseudo-Trotskyists promote "Workers Aid" scam to provoke NATO/UN imperialist intervention against Serbs.



sided fratricidal war in the former Yugoslavia and to push for imperialist support to Bosnia.

What residual cross-communal unity and secularism may exist in cities like Tuzla has been swamped by nationalist and communalist forces on all sides, including those of the Bosnian government. Indeed, one of the tragedies of the counterrevolutionary breakup of Yugoslavia, which the WRP and the other supporters of "Workers Aid" did their best to abet, is the tearing apart of heavily integrated communities. In the course of the civil war, the Serbian population of Tuzla has been reduced from 20,000 to barely 8,000, while formerly Serb villages in the surrounding area have been razed to the ground. The predominant political force there is now the Muslim nationalist Party of Democratic Action. Pointing to the growing presence of

multinational government "democratically elected by the Bosnian people as a whole" (*Workers Press*, 7 August 1993). The WRP echoes imperialist propaganda that Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic is "the Hitler of the Balkans" (*Workers Press*, 31 July 1993). In fact, Izetbegovic is no less a diehard nationalist than Milosevic. The Bosnian leader's 1990 "Islamic Declaration" called for "the islamization of Muslims." One of his military commanders identifies with CIA-financed Afghan fundamentalist cutthroat Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and proclaims, "Bosnia must be a Muslim country" (London *Sunday Times*, 27 June 1993).

But even if the Sarajevo regime were secularist, which it is not, there would still be no basis for revolutionary socialists to give military support to the Muslim forces against the Serbs. Bosnia is not a nation and there is no Bosnian "people." Formerly a province in the Ottoman and then Hapsburg empires, Bosnia-Herzegovina was set up as a constituent republic in Titoist Yugoslavia, intended to be a model of interethnic harmony among the three closely related peoples—Serbs, Croats and Slavic Muslims—who had become thoroughly geographically intermingled.

Thus since the Yugoslav bureaucratically deformed workers state broke up along national lines in 1991, Bosnia has experienced a communalist war in which all sides commit atrocities and "ethnic cleansing" on a scale depending upon the shifting balance of military forces. Within the framework of capitalist counterrevolution, any victory for the Bosnian Muslims must necessarily come at the expense of the Serbs and Croats. There can be no democratic solution to bloody nationalist conflict in Bosnia or other regions of ex-Yugoslavia short of proletarian revolution leading to a

in the Workers Aid for Bosnia campaign" does not so much as mention the word imperialism. Not an accident, as they say. The Sarajevo regime centers its military strategy on provoking imperialist intervention against the Serbs. This is where "Workers Aid" comes in.

"Workers Aid" asked for guarantees of "safe passage" from the UN "peacekeeping" forces; specifically insisting that the imperialists secure a route through the northern corridor of Bosnia. On the eve of a second convoy in the spring, Workers International member Dot Gibson wrote directly to the Croatian defense minister to "arrange for the blockade on the northern route from Orasje to Tuzla to be lifted" (*Workers Press*, 15 January). A banner at a convoy "report back" conference in London last October demanded: "UN must open the Northern Route to Tuzla!" Why the northern route? Because this is Serb-held territory. *The WRP is directly calling on the UN imperialist forces to launch an attack on Serb positions. And furthermore their target is the Posavina corridor through Brcko where the Bosnian Muslims are massing forces for their next offensive!*

Where Slaughter & Co. once perennially demanded, "Make the Labour Lefts fight," now they proclaim: "Make the imperialists fight!"

Meanwhile the USec set up its own "International Workers Aid"—with an office in the Croatian city of Split—and boasts of calling on the Zagreb regime of fascist Ustasha apologist Franjo Tudjman to officially recognize it as a "non-governmental organization" (*International Viewpoint*, April 1994)! The Mandelites crow that their supporters are actually driving the trucks in these UN auxiliary convoys. But this is nothing new for the USec, which did the same

*continued on page 6*



Social democrats mask imperialist intervention with "humanitarian" rhetoric. Above: French "Socialist" president François Mitterrand (center) visiting Sarajevo in 1992.

## Rad-Libs for Imperialist Intervention

Headlines like "Give War a Chance." Demands that "The West must impose a solution in Bosnia." Calls for "Military action to put Aristide back into office." This is the language of military "hawks," but it comes from the mouths of long-time liberal "doves" and even self-styled "radicals" and "socialists." The headlines appear in the pages not of William F. Buckley's *National Review* but of the social-democratic *In These Times*. They are the voices of "The New Interventionists," as a headline in the *Village Voice* (10 May) labeled them, 1960s-era antiwar liberals and radicals who today beat the drums for U.S. imperialist intervention in Bosnia, Haiti and elsewhere.

The new breed of imperialist hawks has become particularly vocal since fellow Democrat and erstwhile liberal "antiwar" protester Bill Clinton entered the White House, having denounced Republican Bush from the right for not intervening in ex-Yugoslavia. Among them are prominent rad-lib types like Christopher Hitchens and Susan Sontag, who during the Vietnam War went to Hanoi in an act of solidarity and denounced the U.S. as "the cancer of the human race." Other "new interventionists" include former SDS leader Todd Gitlin, liberal Zionist *Tikkun* editor Michael Lerner, Princeton professor and *Nation* editorial board member Richard Falk, and the social-democratic guru of the new "god that failed" crowd, one Tim Wohlforth.

These types have begun to sound like notorious right-wing Air Force General Curtis LeMay, who wanted to bomb Vietnam back into the Stone Age. Sontag and Hitchens call for bombing Serb positions in Bosnia. Lerner calls for bombing Serbia "to give a clear message to the Serbs and to everyone else that there is a price for genocide"—everyone, that is, except the Israeli butchers he consistently amnesties, who have been carrying out murderous repression of the Palestinian Arab masses for decades.

In the name of opposing the bloody military junta, the "new interventionists" also urge Washington to tighten the screws on Haiti, where Falk (who favors a "large-scale invasion" of Bosnia) sees "a positive case for 'cheap' intervention." Pro-Democratic Hollywood *glitterati* join with former anti-apartheid activist Randall Robinson and the Congressional Black Caucus to push Clinton to step up the embargo of Haiti and move toward a full-scale military invasion. Moaning that "the Joint Chiefs of Staff are the greatest pacifists in the country," Susan Sontag's son, essayist David Rieff, raves: "The Haitian military will be kicked out of Port-au-Prince by the 82nd Airborne or it won't be kicked out at all."

Falk's article in the *Nation* (20 December 1993), titled "Intervention Revisited: Hard Choices and Tragic Dilemmas," has become a manifesto of the "new interventionists." Proclaiming the "moral and legal case for intervention" in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia "compelling," Falk acknowledges an obstacle in "the memory of bloody defeat in Vietnam," which makes the U.S. "too unwilling to accept death selectively on its side in order to sustain humanitarian claims when these are tested by resistance." To get around the "Vietnam syndrome," Falk rehashes a scheme for U.S. involvement in a permanent UN expeditionary force put forward by prominent Clintonites during the election—and shelved after the Pentagon got its nose bloodied in the streets of Mogadishu.

Alexander Cockburn, the *enfant terrible* of the liberal bourgeoisie, denounces the rad-lib warmongers as "laptop bombardiers." But Cockburn *also* supports imperialist intervention in Bosnia, in the form of "a much larger [UN] peacekeeping force" (*Nation*, 23 May). In 1990, Cockburn joined with the Communist Party and other reformists in what we described at the time as the "UN fig leaf brigade" in pushing for UN economic sanctions against Iraq as an "alternative" to the Pentagon's war buildup. In contrast, we denounced the imperialist embargo and called for defense of Iraq

puppet regime, a string of "sadder but wiser" antiwar liberals like Joan Baez and Jane Fonda came forward to make their amends with U.S. imperialism through anti-Communist denunciations of the Stalinist regime in Hanoi. Where they had rallied behind a patriotic-pacifist appeal in the late 1960s-early '70s to "bring our boys home," we Spartacists called for "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution" and marched behind the banner: "All Indochina Must Go Communist!"

The rightward lurch of the radicalized intelligentsia was exemplified by

crowd later signed on to defend the war aims of U.S. imperialism in World War II. In the postwar years, these former "leftists" were among the most rabid anti-Communist ideologues of the Cold War.

At the time Isaac Deutscher observed that while Stalinists who became anti-Communists could do no better than to become police informers, their ex-Trotskyist counterparts became ideological apologists for Western imperialism. Very much intertwined with the *Partisan Review* crowd in this respect were Max Shachtman and James Burnham, who, refusing to defend the Soviet Union against imperialism, split from the Trotskyist movement at the onset of World War II. Denouncing the Soviet Union as a new form of exploitative class society dubbed "bureaucratic collectivism," Shachtman was pushed by the prevailing winds of the Cold War in the late 1940s in the direction of mainstream social democracy (Burnham became a raving right-winger).

In this period the Shachtmanites were associated with the similarly "third campist" British group of Tony Cliff, which broke from Trotskyism in refusing to defend North Korea against U.S. imperialism but maintained more of a leftist veneer, reflecting the higher level of working-class consciousness and struggle in the British Isles. By the early 1960s, Shachtman had become a full-fledged "State Department socialist," backing the CIA's Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in the name of "democracy." Later many of Shachtman's disciples went on to become prominent Reaganite "neo-cons," while the Cliffites (represented in the U.S. by the International Socialist Organization) became ardent "left" cheerleaders for the anti-Soviet war drive from Poland to Afghanistan and for Yeltsin's counterrevolution in the ex-USSR.

Today, Shachtman's social-democratic grandchildren are in the forefront of the "democratic" imperialist offensive. The unofficial voice of the pro-Clinton Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), *In These Times* (26 July 1993), last year featured a grotesque appeal for U.S. intervention in Bosnia by Tim Wohlforth, squeezed lemon and former toady of political bandit Gerry Healy, headlined "Give War a Chance." More recently, *In These Times* (30 May) has called on Clinton to take "military action to put Aristide back into office" as "a step toward a genuinely new world order." Yugoslav-born DSA co-chairman Bogdan Denitch (recently a candidate in elections for the Croatian parliament of Holocaust apologist Franjo Tudjman) issues shrill demands for U.S. forces to join in a UN military intervention in Bosnia.

The liberals and their social-democratic hangers-on cover their crawling before imperialism by raising bourgeois "democracy" to the highest principle. After all, they see this racist, capitalist state as *their* state. In justifying an expeditionary force to the former Yugoslavia, Denitch pleads: "Where a democratic nation is under attack by an undemocratic one, and where the point is to restore democracy, there we can take action." Where the liberals urge the imperialist powers to adopt "just" and "democratic" policies, we Leninists understand that imperialism is not simply a policy but a *stage* of capitalism marked by an ever bloodier and more brutal grab for markets and areas of investment. From the A-bombing of Hiroshima and

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**THE NEW INTERVENTIONISTS**  
HUMANITARIAN SAVIORS OR 'LAPTOP BOMBARDIERS'?  
WHY SOME LEFTIST INTELLECTUALS SOUND LIKE HAWKS. BY MICHAEL TOMASKY

**VOICE**

Former "dove" turned liberal "hawk" Susan Sontag in Sarajevo joins chorus for U.S. imperialist intervention in Bosnia.

Helgren/Reuters

and defeat of U.S. imperialism in the war, noting of Cockburn and his ilk:

"Cockburn and the CP want economic sanctions against Iraq, but nothing 'messy' like troops and warships. But to enforce sanctions, you need a blockade, and a blockade is an act of war backed up by the prospect of a shooting war, whether it's carried out under the Stars and Stripes or under the blue flag of the United Nations."

—"Desperately Seeking Imperialist Doves" (*WV* No. 510, 21 September 1990)

The UN starvation blockade not only led directly to the U.S.-led invasion, but has since killed hundreds of thousands more Iraqis, especially children and the elderly. Today embargoes have become a favored instrument in the "New World Order" for imposing U.S. imperialism's interests "on the cheap" from Cuba to Serbia to Haiti, where the already impoverished black masses suffer from ever more severe malnutrition.

### From Patriotic Pacifism to Imperialist Militarism

The mutation of Vietnam doves into "New World Order" hawks is not at all strange. Buying into the lie of "détente," they evenhandedly denounced U.S. imperialism and the Soviet degenerated workers state as "superpowers," while trying to duck the question of social revolution in Indochina. At bottom the radicalized petty-bourgeois intellectuals were reflecting the interests of a wing of the American ruling class which understood that its *losing* war in Vietnam was not in Washington's long-term interests.

As soon as the Vietnamese succeeded in driving out the U.S. and its Saigon

the *New York Review of Books*, which started out as an organ of "literary" strikebreaking, seeking to "fill the gap" in the 1966 NYC newspaper strike. During the Vietnam War it became the principal organ of the rad-lib milieu, publishing articles such as Mary McCarthy's reports from North Vietnam under U.S. bombardment. As Democrat Jimmy Carter moved to morally and militarily rearm American imperialism with his anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade in the late 1970s, the rad-libs' "anti-imperialist" rhetoric gave way to impassioned calls for (capitalist) "democracy" in East Europe. By the early 1980s, the *NYRB* was filled with articles singing the praises of counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność, the religious company union for Wall Street and the CIA.

### "The God That Failed," Again

The itinerary of the Vietnam-era radical petty-bourgeois intelligentsia is hardly unique. It recalls that of the self-proclaimed "independent" leftists around the magazine *Partisan Review* in the 1930s. (*NYRB* founding editor Barbara Epstein is a former *Partisan Review* editor.) Although they excoriated the CP Stalinists for the frame-up Moscow trials and bloody purges in Russia, even printing an occasional article by Trotsky, these intellectuals were a product of the Popular Front period when radical "leftism" was viewed in liberal circles as "respectable." When the Soviet Union's popularity plummeted in petty-bourgeois "democratic" opinion following the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact, these "disappointed intellectuals" (as Trotsky called them) became rabidly anti-Soviet, and virtually the entire *Partisan Review*

# Pensacola...

(continued from page 1)

the Pensacola Ladies Center as a half dozen or more shells burst through the windshield. As he did every week when he flew in from his home near Jacksonville for appointments at the Pensacola clinic, the courageous doctor was wearing a bulletproof vest—standard practice for abortion providers these days. But Hill shot him and Barrett right in the head.

Dr. Britton, 69 years old, was the only doctor willing to perform abortions in Pensacola after the murder of Dr. David Gunn at the city's other clinic in March 1993. James Barrett, 74, was a Korean War veteran and retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, while his wife, June, 68, is a retired nurse and captain in the U.S. Health Service.

Paul Hill regularly terrorized clients and clinic workers at Pensacola's two abortion centers. Last year, he disrupted a memorial service for Dr. Gunn, yelling "you deserve to die" and other threats. Only two weeks ago, the clinic staff had demanded the FBI arrest Hill for violating the new "Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances" law, to no avail. A half hour before the murder, this known inciter to deadly violence was spotted by local cops on the clinic grounds.

Yet despite repeated firebombings, despite ongoing harassment and death threats, despite the presence of a known homicidal fanatic, Pensacola police sergeant Jerry Potts basically shrugged, "incidents where people elect to shoot at doctors are sad.... But we can't be everywhere all the time" (*Washington Post*, 30 July).

That evening, an abortion clinic in Falls Church, Virginia was firebombed. The clinic has been the scene of many anti-abortion protests.

In the aftermath of the latest murders, "responsible" voices are urging the FBI and other federal agencies to step in to defend abortion clinics. An editorial in the *New York Times* (31 July) says: "Send in the Marshals." Feminist Majority Foundation president Eleanor Smeal wants the FBI "to form a special task force." A Democratic Congressman calls on the feds to use the "same techniques" they did in infiltrating the Ku Klux Klan in the '60s and '70s. But the FBI's role in the civil rights movement was to assist the KKK lynchers—their racist "informers" murdered civil rights worker Viola

Liuzzo, and were in on the 1963 Birmingham church bombing that killed four young black girls! Last year the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, acting on orders from Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno, torched a racially integrated religious commune outside Waco, Texas, murdering 86 men, women and children.

*If ever an event demonstrated the suicidal futility of looking to the capitalist state—the Clinton White House, the FBI, cops and courts—to defend the rights of women and minorities, the murderous rampage in Pensacola, Florida is it. The coldblooded assassinations of David Gunn, John Britton and James Barrett cry out for justice and vengeance. Now, before the bigoted killers strike again, it is necessary for supporters of abortion rights to mobilize in force to defend the clinics the only way possible, by sweeping away the "right-to-life" mobs.*

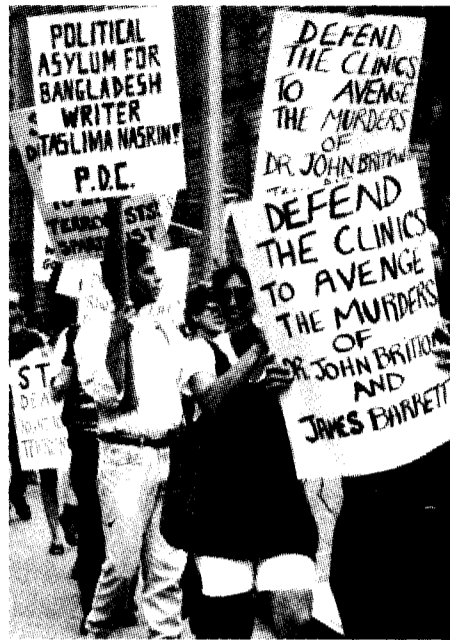
We warned after the murder of Dr. Gunn that this was not the work of a "lone wacko," but of a right-wing terrorist against women's rights. While Operation Rescue and more "mainstream" anti-abortion groups issue hypocritical "condemnations," they all promote and cover for the mad-dog killers in their midst. In the wake of the latest murders, Don Treshman, the head of Rescue America, threatened: "Up to now, the killings have been on one side, with 30 million dead babies and hundreds of dead and maimed mothers. On the other side, there are two dead doctors. Maybe the balance is going to start to shift."

Frustrated by the election of a "pro-choice" Democratic president, the right-wing anti-abortion bigots have ever more brazenly adopted a program of terror and intimidation, with chilling effect. Legal abortions are not available in 83 percent of U.S. counties, because there are no doctors willing to perform them. Blockades of abortion clinics skyrocketed 900 percent between 1991 and 1992 alone. Fully half of 281 clinics surveyed by the Feminist Majority Foundation reported incidents in the first seven months of 1993 of murder, attempted murder, vandalism, arson, bombing, assault and battery, death threats and stalking! Last August, Dr. George Tiller barely survived a shooting as he left his abortion clinic in Wichita, Kansas.

"It should be painfully obvious to all but the blind that an entire terror network exists against the abortion clinics," said Kathleen Harris of the Spartacus Youth Club at an emergency speak-out in the San Francisco Bay Area on July 30. "The

terrorists of Operation Rescue crawled out of the same cesspool that breeds the lynch mobs of the Ku Klux Klan. The same terror network against abortion clinics also is responsible for burning crosses against blacks and busting up picket lines against the workers."

Pensacola has become the focal point of the "right-to-life" terrorists. It was in this Klan-infested Florida panhandle city that Randall Terry founded Operation Rescue in 1986. At the center of the anti-abortion mobs in Pensacola is John Burt, the local head of Rescue America, who was the "spiritual adviser" to Michael



New York: Outraged demonstrators at Foley Square, August 1.

Griffin, the murderer of David Gunn. Burt is an admitted "former" Klansman who was active in the lynch mob terror against school integration in St. Augustine in the 1960s. Burt also "advised" the two men who bombed the Pensacola Ladies Center and the homes of two abortion doctors on Christmas Day, 1984—six months after an earlier bombing at the clinic. Two years later, Burt and three others stormed into the Ladies Center, slamming the director against a wall, and trashed the clinic. In 1988, Burt and an accomplice parked outside the clinic with a trunkful of steel pipes, explosives and detonators. Last September, Burt pinned a note to the door of Dr. Britton's office threatening: "What would you do if you had five minutes left to live?"

The liberal feminist "pro-choice" organizations (NOW, NARAL, etc.) look to the "Billary" White House to defend

women's rights. So, too, do reformist leftists like the Workers World Party, which calls on the government to protect women's rights. But like the Republicans, the Democratic Party of American capitalism is an enemy of poor and working women. Clinton has already given Congress the green light to remove abortion coverage from the health care bill. His legislation to "end welfare as we know it" targets poor and minority women and their children for starvation and death. Meanwhile, the Clinton administration pushes the reactionary "family values" campaign, as Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala imitates Dan Quayle in lambasting the media for sympathetic portrayals of single mothers.

NOW, NARAL, et al. place their faith in "their" bourgeois state and in federal legislation like the clinic access law. This is a dangerous diversion: we warned from the outset that, far from defending abortion clinics, such legislation would be used against the left and workers movement—to bust up strike pickets and militant abortion defense actions. Indeed, the "power feminists" themselves have time and again acted to demobilize militant defense of abortion clinics, seeking to impose "nonviolence" pledges, promoting the use of unarmed, defenseless "escorts" and preaching reliance on the courts and cops who, especially in the Deep South, heavily overlap with the KKK killers.

What is needed to win the raging war to keep abortion clinics open are mass, militant mobilizations drawing in all defenders of women's rights and seeking in particular to mobilize the social power of the integrated labor movement. It is necessary to drive off and disperse the rightist mobs who lay siege to the abortion clinics and thus provide a screen for the killers like Hill and Griffin. Pensacola is a right-wing bastion dominated by the Navy, including Corry Station and the Naval Air Station. At nearby Eglin Air Force Base, commandos are currently training for an invasion of Haiti. Less than an hour away is Mobile, Alabama, site of a notorious Klan lynching of a black man a few years ago. But Mobile is also home to a strong black ILA (longshore) local which could provide the core of a disciplined detachment of worker marshals to make short shrift of the racist anti-abortion terrorists.

*Avenge the murders of Dr. Britton and James Barrett by mobilizing to defend the clinics! Free abortion on demand—For women's liberation through socialist revolution!* ■

# Bosnia...

(continued from page 4)

for Polish Solidarność in the early '80s, running supplies "donated" by the CIA through its conduits in the German SPD and other West European social-democratic parties.

## Workers Power: The Blue Flag's Flying Here

Guarding the left flank of the pro-imperialist "Workers Aid" lash-up is the British Workers Power (WP) group, which likewise raises the call, "Solidarity with Bosnian Muslims!" WP complains that the WRP's northern route strategy "could easily be interpreted as a call on the UN to blast its way through" and chastises the USec for refusing even to tack on a lip service slogan calling for "UN out of the Balkans" to its "International Workers Aid" (*Workers Power*, December 1993). But these oh-so-principled opportunists deem it "entirely legitimate to demand the UN give permission for the WAFB Convoy to pass through the Serbian-controlled Posavina Corridor, and to place a nominal UN escort at the head of the Convoy." Nothing like having British SAS (Special Air Services) Lt. Gen. Sir Michael Rose, UN commander for Bosnia (formerly with British occupation forces in Northern Ireland), along

for the ride to give you a sense of security.

Indeed, Workers Power's main gripe with the imperialist presence in Bosnia is that Sir Michael & Co. "have not lifted a finger to stop ethnic cleansing" by the Serbs. The same article which calls for "UN troops out of the Balkans" also urges support for a picket of United Nations offices in London "demanding the opening of Tuzla airport." WP also raises the slogan "Lift the arms embargo." From the mouths of Workers Power & Co., this is simply a mealy-mouthed way of calling on the imperialists (and the ultrareactionary Saudi monarch and Iranian mullahs!) to arm the bourgeois-nationalist Bosnian Muslim forces. The United States Senate recently decided to join Workers Power in its endeavors, voting to demand that Clinton lift the arms embargo on Bosnia.

Not that "poor little Bosnia" is having any trouble getting weapons. Particularly since the formation of the Bosnia-Croatia federation engineered by German imperialism last spring, arms have been pouring into the Muslim nationalist regime via Zagreb. In early May, an Iranian air force transport carried in at least 60 tons of explosives and other raw materials for weapons production. The Bosnian Muslim forces have also been reinforced by "volunteers" from Turkey, Malaysia and veterans of the CIA-

backed mujahedin war in Afghanistan. But that shouldn't bother the USec, WRP and WP, who all opposed the Soviet intervention against feudal forces in Afghanistan.

Workers Power also has "wide" (bourgeois) backing for its demand to open the Tuzla airport. This became a rallying cry for anti-Serbia hawks in the West when the U.S. and NATO forces bombed Serb positions earlier this year to pressure Belgrade into accepting an imperialist ultimatum. In May, U.S. Admiral Leighton Smith, commander of NATO's southern flank, called for the creation of an "exclusion zone" around Tuzla to eliminate a Serbian weapons concentration near the airfield. This demand was raised again last week as part of renewed imperialist military threats against the Serbs following the collapse of the latest imperialist-sponsored "peace" deal.

With their call for solidarity with the Bosnian Muslims, Workers Power et al. have placed themselves squarely at the service of the nationalist Sarajevo regime and its NATO imperialist sponsors. Always on the lookout for a lesser evil, WP hops from tailing one reactionary force to another: only two years ago their Austrian comrades engaged in a joint action with Serbian nationalists and fascists!

As proletarian revolutionaries, we oppose all sides in the orgy of murderous nationalism that has ripped up the former

Yugoslavia, while at the same time we fight against the UN/NATO economic blockade of Serbia and we call for defense of Serb forces against imperialist military attack. ■

# Rad-Libs...

(continued from page 5)

Nagasaki, to the carpetbombing of Vietnam, to the bombing of Panamanian barrios and Iraqi cities, "democratic" U.S. imperialism has sown mass murder around the globe.

For decades, only fear of war with the Soviet Union restrained the bloody hand of American imperialism, which would otherwise have certainly used nuclear weapons in both the Korean and Vietnam wars, as well as against Castro's Cuba. But with the counterrevolutionary restoration of capitalism in East Europe and the former Soviet Union, Washington proclaimed a "New World Order," reasserting its intent to rule the world. As the U.S. bourgeoisie gears up for new wars of neocolonial conquest and ultimately world war against its imperialist rivals—in which all sides will be armed with atomic weapons—the choice is truly, as the great revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg put it, between socialism and barbarism. And the "new interventionists" are the drumbeaters for a new imperialist war. ■

# L.A. Transit: Unions Under the Gun

LOS ANGELES, August 2—Transit workers on the West Coast are battling attempts by capitalist politicians, both Republican and Democrat, to wipe out hard-won union gains and even the core of the unions themselves. In L.A., bus mechanics met at the Convention Center today and voted to accept a contract after eight days on the picket line. The agreement gives the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) enormous power to carry out the "privatization" of bus lines through contracting out, with resulting layoffs. In addition, the contract contains divisive "two-tier" wages for new hires.

In L.A. the strike was solid as drivers and clerks honored the mechanics' picket lines. But in a stab in the back, United Transportation Union bureaucrats kept Metrolink rail workers, members of UTU Local 84, on the job while their brothers and sisters were out against the rest of the transit system. The private companies which make up Foothill Transit, which will be the prime beneficiaries of the privatization, ran hundreds of scab buses—driven by Teamsters!

The transit union tops never fought against the scab buses and anti-union campaign orchestrated by Mayor Richard Riordan. Democratic gubernatorial candidate Kathleen Brown also came out against the strike, calling for the imposition of a strikebreaking 60-day "cooling off" period.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, some 2,000 workers at the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART) have had it with union-busting attacks and are in open revolt against their own union leadership. BART workers decisively voted down (twice!) a rotten contract recommended by their own union misleaders that used work-rule changes to attack seniority—the heart of unionism. Without seniority, workers are at the mercy of racist, labor-hating management who will victimize minorities and union members who speak up, setting worker against worker. The contract would also have frozen wages, sharply increased the cost of health benefits and used unionized lead workers as a club against other workers.

In separate negotiations at AC Transit, where some 1,700 East Bay bus drivers and mechanics represented by Amalgamated Transit Union Local 192 have been working without a contract since the end of March, the ranks rejected the bosses' "offer" by a two-to-one margin on July 11. But in a dirty backroom deal, Local 192 misleaders agreed to a "voluntary cooling off period" until August 5. And across the Bay, San Francisco city workers' union tops agreed to an across-the-board wage freeze and a ban on strikes because otherwise, moaned SF Labor Council president Josie Mooney, "it would have been a war, and nobody wanted that" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 8 July).

After Vice President Al Gore intervened and Governor Pete Wilson imposed a no-strike order for 30 days, the bureaucrats in the BART unions, SEIU Local 790 and ATU Local 1555, insisted that the law mandated this strikebreaking order be imposed for a full 60 days! War has been declared by the bosses, but labor's hands are tied by class traitors at the top who must be ousted.

We reprint below a leaflet issued by the Los Angeles Spartacist League on July 26, as the strike began.

\* \* \*

Over 7,000 transit workers shut down L.A.'s bus, trolley and subway system at midnight on July 25. The strike against the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is finally on—and it is a fight that all working people, minorities and poor in Los Angeles can and must win.

With bus and train drivers from the

## Bay Area Transit Workers Rebel Against No-Strike Union Tops

United Transportation Union and clerks from the Transportation Communications Union honoring the picket lines of striking Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) mechanics, the strike has quickly crippled the MTA. But Mayor Riordan, the County Supervisors and the rest of the MTA board have declared they want

standard of living of the workers. From rubber workers in Alabama to Caterpillar workers in Illinois, strikes have erupted as workers are pushed to the wall.

Through the last four presidencies—Carter, Reagan, Bush, and now Clinton—the U.S. ruling class systematically deindustrialized the unionized Midwest



Striking Los Angeles transit workers at downtown picket line, July 27.

to crack the union, "privatizing" bus routes, contracting out work, freezing wages and cutting health benefit payments. Over 80 mechanics were laid off last week. This strike is a critical class battle for all Southern California labor—city/county workers, truck drivers, longshoremen, L.A. teachers, aerospace, airline, hotel and construction workers. Victory to the L.A. transit strike!

With the union workers solid, the MTA bosses are trying to run the Red Line subway and Blue Line trolley during the day, adding cars to the Metrolink commuter rail, and hiring private bus company scabs to run 300 buses. Any attempt to run trains with management scabs can and must be stopped by mass picket lines. The way to win this strike and win it fast is to shut down all L.A. transit systems, bringing downtown, Century City and the capitalist profits of Pacific Rim bankers grinding to a halt. Transit workers in the Bay Area are under similar attack and are itching to go out on strike. Like L.A. transit workers, Bay Area workers are currently chopped up into a dozen different unions and locals—this strike points clearly to the need for all transit workers to be in one industrial union. Strike together to win!

The key to winning this strike is leadership. In every bus barn and shop, strike committees drawn from among the workers themselves must take charge and run this strike. The contract expired on June 30, but the union tops did everything they could to prevent a strike, and continue to keep strikers in the dark. The real problem is political—the trade union bureaucrats are in bed with the ruling class, aiming to "mediate" the conflict between capital and labor in order to maintain the status quo. But given major shifts in the American economy and changes in the world situation, a program of maintaining the status quo necessarily means assisting the capitalists in carrying out major cuts in the

and moved operations to the open-shop South as well as offshore. Their purpose is to drive down wages and drive up productivity, and that means destroying organized labor. Having driven down U.S. wages by over 20 percent, now they're after unionized municipal workers who the bosses say make "too much" money.

With the destruction of the Soviet Union, the capitalist rulers around the world now believe there is no limit to their exploitation of labor and minorities. In 1917 the working people in Russia overthrew capitalism and established their own state and a planned economy. When the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy later usurped political power from the workers, the Soviet Union very much resembled a giant labor union with

bureaucratic leadership, only with state power. The capitalists hated the Soviet Union because for them it still symbolized the workers revolution. Having been destroyed from within by the Stalinist bureaucracy whose final betrayal was to restore capitalism, the Soviet Union is no longer there to suggest the seizure of power by the workers. Now, in western Europe just as in the U.S., the ruling class is waging a wholesale attack on the working class—with double-digit unemployment, attacks on unions and minorities, and the gutting of social welfare programs which had been maintained for decades.

It is desperately necessary to fight. But from letting Reagan fire striking air traffic controllers in 1981 to hobbling and selling out Teamster truckers earlier this year, the current misleadership of the unions has blocked the mobilization of labor's real power at every point. These treacherous bureaucratic middlemen must be removed and replaced with a leadership politically armed with the methods and program of class struggle. Their collaboration with the ruling class is politically expressed and organized through the Democratic Party, which ties workers to the capitalists who exploit them. The Republicans prefer to rule with the naked fist of state repression. The Democrats lie and do the same thing. Workers need their own party—a class-struggle workers party, committed to the fight for a workers government.

What counts in a strike is power. The strength of the unions lies in their numbers, militancy, organization and discipline, and their relation to the decisive means of production. Labor's weapons are inherent in its collective organization—the picket line, solidarity strike, secondary boycott. The capitalists' arsenal is their state—the courts, cops, and ultimately the army—which is not neutral but the guardian of the capitalists' "law and order." Whatever helps the workers win, the capitalist state can declare "illegal." But there are no "illegal" winning strikes. And if you play by the rules laid down by your enemy, you are guaranteed to lose. Any "cooling off periods" will be an attempt to cut the throat of the strike. In the Bay Area, Vice President Gore intervened to get a "cooling off" period to head off a pending BART strike. Coal miners knew what to do when Democrat Jimmy Carter invoked a Taft-Hartley injunction against their strike in 1978—they burned it.

Teamster truck drivers got a tough lesson in the class nature of the state during their strike last April: strikebreaking

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### SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

#### National Office:

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

#### Atlanta

Box 4012  
Atlanta, GA 30302  
(404) 521-9338

#### Boston

Box 390840  
Central Sta.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 492-3928

### TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

#### Toronto

Box 7198, Station A  
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8  
(416) 593-4138

#### Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO  
Chicago, IL 60680  
(312) 663-0715

#### Cleveland

Box 91037  
Cleveland, OH 44101

#### Los Angeles

Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.  
Los Angeles, CA 90029  
(213) 380-8239

#### New York

Box 3381, Church St. Sta.  
New York, NY 10008  
(212) 267-1025

#### Norfolk

Box 1972, Main PO  
Norfolk, VA 23501

#### Oakland

Box 29497  
Oakland, CA 94604  
(510) 839-0851

#### San Francisco

Box 77494  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
(415) 777-9367

#### Washington, D.C.

Box 75073  
Washington, D.C. 20013  
(202) 872-8240

#### Montréal

C.P. Les Atriums  
B.P. 32066  
Montréal, QC H2L 4V5

#### Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2  
(604) 687-0353



Eric Miller/Impact Visuals

Workers greet formation of COSATU trade-union federation in Western Cape in 1986. Powerful black workers movement challenged apartheid system but has remained shackled to ANC/SACP nationalist popular front.

# SOUTH AFRICA POWDER KEG

AUGUST 1—The first part of this series (WV No. 603, 8 July) explained how the apartheid system—centrally based on the superexploitation of black labor—developed as a product of the European colonial subjugation of pastoral peoples in southern Africa. It described the explosive conditions created by the “power sharing” coalition government of Nelson Mandela’s African National Congress (ANC) and the white ruling

## PART TWO

National Party of F.W. De Klerk. In particular, we pointed out that the powerful black workers movement—believing it was “payback time”—was bound to challenge the ANC leaders, now acting as junior partners of the white capitalist class.

That challenge has now come with a vengeance! In a little over two months since the new government took office, almost 50 separate workers actions—involving gold and platinum mining, steel, textiles and apparel, telecommunications, postal service, municipal and even court workers—have rocked South Africa. Days lost due to strikes in the second quarter of this year—that is, right

## Growth of the Black Workers Movement

before and right after Mandela’s election as the country’s first black president in late April—are up 70 percent over the same period last year. Already there have been more strikes this year than in any since 1987, the year of the great gold strike, the largest in South African history.

The *New York Times* (23 July), the premier mouthpiece for the American ruling class, reports worriedly:

“[T]he soaring hopes of workers have collided with the new economic reality, creating a fallout of strikes and disenchantment.

“Unionists who regard themselves as heroes of the liberation struggle often find themselves pilloried as an impediment to foreign investment, a menace to economic discipline and a potential threat to the Government they helped elect....”

We had written that the black workers would quickly come up against the repressive apparatus of the “new” South Africa, which is essentially the same police/army/security forces of the old apartheid regime. Already there are

photos of combative strikers facing shotgun-wielding cops at the Pick ‘n Pay grocery store chain, pictures that looked like they were from the height of the anti-apartheid struggle. Now, just two days after Mandela personally appealed to the trade-union leaders for labor peace, tens of thousands of auto workers have walked out, striking Volkswagen, Delta, Mercedes Benz, BMW and Nissan plants in Port Elizabeth and East London.

Yet black workers cannot defend or further their interests simply through struggles at the trade-union level, however militant. The proletariat must place itself at the head of the struggle for the national liberation of the black African people as well as the coloureds (mixed-race) and Indians, a struggle culminating in a black-centered workers government. This question stands at the heart of the relationship of the black workers movement, which developed over the last generation, to the now-bourgeois nationalist ANC leadership. It is out of a struggle

against this new ruling layer and its “labor lieutenants” that a racially integrated, revolutionary vanguard party must be built.

\* \* \*

Formed in 1912, the African National Congress has historically exercised political hegemony over the black African masses, at various junctures eclipsing, absorbing or subordinating rival and other independent organizations. In its first decades of existence, the ANC was a relatively small organization of the black African elite, whose main activity consisted of futilely lobbying the British imperial authorities to pursue more liberal policies in South Africa.

As part of the rightward turn of the international Stalinist movement toward “popular frontism” in the mid-1930s, the South African Communist Party entered the ANC. Over the course of the next several decades the SACP cadre became completely intertwined with the non-Stalinist, petty-bourgeois nationalist elements in the ANC, producing a hybrid political formation.

The weakening of British imperialism after World War II led in South Africa to its displacement in 1948 by the Afrikaner Nationalist regime, which strengthened and rigidified the racist

Salguero/NY Times

Weekly Mail & Guardian



The “new” South Africa: black workers striking Pick ‘n Pay grocery store chain in July faced shotgun-wielding racist cops.



police state under the banner of apartheid (separateness). At the same time, the wave of anti-imperialist struggles which swept colonial Africa and Asia in this period had strong reverberations in South Africa. A new generation of radical black nationalists, exemplified by Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, ousted the conservative "old guard" of the ANC and turned the organization toward militant action. During the 1950s, the ANC led a series of mass campaigns in defiance of the new apartheid legislation, such as the pass laws.

The Afrikaner nationalist regime responded with ever more savage and effective repression, culminating in the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. In its aftermath, the entire leadership and most of the cadre of the ANC and rival nationalist Pan-Africanist Congress were imprisoned or driven into exile. The 1960s saw the totalitarian suppression of all black struggle and independent political life.

In this heyday of apartheid capitalism, South Africa was a magnet for American and British investment, the U.S. business magazine *Fortune* writing in 1972:

"The Republic of South Africa has always been regarded by foreign investors as a gold mine, one of those rare and refreshing places where profits are great and problems are small. Capital is not threatened by political instability or nationalization. Labor is cheap, the market is booming, and the currency hard and convertible."

—quoted in Martin J. Murray, ed., *South African Capitalism and Black Political Opposition* (1982)

## The 1970s: Eroding the Apartheid Police State

Yet just as these words were written, events began to explode South Africa's image as a veritable paradise for multinational banks and corporations. In 1973, a mass strike wave of factory and municipal workers in Durban signaled the emergence of a new black union movement which would become one of the largest and strongest in the Third World. At the same time, a new generation of student-youth, centered around Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), were trying to break the shackles of apartheid slavery.

Partly inspired by the defeat of the South African army in Angola by the Cubans and their left-nationalist Angolan allies a few months earlier, in June 1976 thousands of black youth marched through Soweto protesting the compulsory teaching of Afrikaans—the language of the hated oppressor—in the schools. The white-supremacist regime answered with a bloodbath. While the heroism and martyrdom of South Africa's black plebeian youth captured the world's attention, the Achilles' heel of the apartheid system was its dependence on black labor.

The continuing growth of black unions led in 1979 to their legalization, in the regime's calculation a means of more effectively controlling a movement which it could not simply suppress. Nonetheless, these unions were still too weak to seriously challenge the apartheid system. Union organizers—who included a number of white radicals—recognized that the white-supremacist regime was not going to be dislodged or even liberalized in the near future. Hence, they saw their task as one of gradually building up the union's strength on the shop floor. However, we predicted at the time:

"In a longer historic term, apolitical bread-and-butter unionism cannot prevail in South Africa. The white racist oppression of the black masses is too deep, too brutal, too all-sided, too obvious. That most black workers have their families and relatives on the bantustans in itself goes against a narrow trade-unionist consciousness."

—"The Struggle for Independent Black Unions in South Africa," *WV* No. 248, 25 January 1980

While the ANC retained the passive allegiance of the black masses as "their"

liberation organization, the activists who came to the fore in the 1970s—both student militants and union organizers—emerged outside the organizational structures of the ANC/SACP and did not share its ideological outlook and program. The dominant current among student-youth was the BCM.

The new black union movement lacked



Powerful mass strike wave in Durban in 1973 marked the emergence of new black workers movement.

a single, dominant current but was rather highly politically diverse. Some unions were led by old ANC/SACP veterans, others were affiliated with the Black Consciousness Movement. However, the two most important union groupings—the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)—were genuinely independent of the petty-bourgeois nationalist movements.

The NUM was organized by a young black lawyer, Cyril Ramaphosa, who had previously been one of the directors of the Urban Foundation, a fund launched by Harry Oppenheimer, to promote the development of a black middle class. Oppenheimer, head of the giant Anglo American mining and manufacturing conglomerate, was the godfather of the "liberal" English-speaking capitalist opposition to the Afrikaner Nationalist regime. Anglo American invited Ramaphosa to organize the gold miners in order to head off their unionization by more radical forces.

In its first years the NUM was an extremely cautious, narrowly economist and apolitical union. Nonetheless, given the truly hellish conditions of black gold miners, it grew rapidly into the country's largest union. In later years, under the pressure of its base, the NUM engaged in some bitter, hard-fought battles with the mine bosses. However, Ramaphosa always represented the political right wing of the black union movement before becoming the new general secretary of the ANC a few years ago.

The most important union grouping in the late 1970s and early '80s was FOSATU, whose leadership represented a quasi-syndicalist current which later came to be called "workerism." They expressed distrust that an ANC government would ride roughshod over the

black workers movement, pointing to post-colonial Africa, especially Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, where post-independence nationalist regimes suppressed the unions which helped them to power. A 1982 address by FOSATU's general secretary Joe Foster was generally regarded as a declaration of trade-union independence from the ANC/SACP. Describing the

of FOSATU's "workerist" politics, we wrote:

"Foster's assertion of the need for independent working-class organization and his warning about the potentially treacherous character of petty-bourgeois nationalism—in themselves entirely valid statements—are used here to justify trade-union economism. Foster defines the task of trade unions as defending the sectoral interests of workers within the framework of apartheid capitalism. He assigns to the nationalist-populist ANC the herculean task of liberating enslaved black people from white colonial rule with perhaps incidental aid from the black union movement. But this is a task that petty-bourgeois nationalism cannot fulfill. The only way to ensure that national liberation movements do not turn against their worker supporters is for the workers movement to place itself at the head of the oppressed black people, to combat every manifestation of white racist rule...."

—"South African Revolution: Black Unions the Key," *WV* No. 366, 9 November 1984

The failure to develop a revolutionary workers party in South Africa would lead over the next decade to the increasing subordination of the black union movement to the petty-bourgeois nationalist ANC, which in turn became increasingly directly subordinate to the white ruling class.

## The 1980s: Prelude to the "Power Sharing" Deal

Whereas in the early 1970s Wall Street and the City of London viewed South Africa as a bastion of political stability amid the turbulent Third World, a decade later they saw things very differently. The American imperialists in particular were concerned with the growth of anti-Western radicalism among the black masses. The South African Communist Party (SACP) was one of the few in the world which retained and even enhanced its popular authority. SACP head Joe Slovo was best known as leader of the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation). In 1981, a study commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation, titled *South Africa: Time Running Out*, concluded "all the ingredients of a major crisis are present there. The dangers of political instability, large-scale racial conflict, and the growth of Communist influence are real."

The Rockefeller Foundation's forebodings were realized in the black township revolt of 1984-85. The regime's collaborators and police informers were terrorized and in some cases killed. Rents went unpaid. Effective control of the segregated black cities like Soweto and Alexandra passed into the hands of popular committees generally supportive of the ANC. Militant bands of plebeian youth, calling themselves "the

*continued on page 10*

ANC as "a great populist liberation movement," he argued that "workers must strive to build their own powerful and effective organization...to ensure that the popular movement is not hijacked by elements who will [in the] end have no option but to turn against their worker supporters" (*South African Labour Bulletin*, July 1982).

While the FOSATU leadership was clearly to the left of both the ANC/SACP and the Black Consciousness Movement, it was fundamentally incapable of politically defeating and displacing them as the leadership of the oppressed black African masses. In a critical assessment



Soweto youth saw Nelson Mandela's release in 1990 as harbinger of liberation. ANC leadership betrayed struggle for black freedom in "power sharing" deal with white ruling class.

# South Africa...

(continued from page 9)

comrades," became the shock troops of the revolt.

Black militants in South Africa and leftists throughout the world believed that the hated white-supremacist regime was about to fall. But while the black masses had the power to "make the townships ungovernable," in the ANC/SACP's watchword of the day, the white ruling class retained both the military force and political will to isolate and crush the revolt. As we wrote at the time:

"South Africa appears to be rumbling down the tracks to a bloody confrontation. The system of apartheid—a bogus partition in which the whites give up nothing—is coming apart. Blacks have made it clear that they are not taking this oppressive situation any more. And the white population is armed to the teeth, determined to defend what they've got. The coasts are secure, there is a belt of cowed black African states to the north, and the struggle is along white-vs.-black national lines. So long as the national principle predominates, in a military confrontation, now and for the next period the whites will win hands down."

—"South Africa: Razor's Edge,"  
WV No. 376, 5 April 1985

By 1986 the Afrikaner National Party regime of P.W. Botha had broken the township revolt, killing over a thousand blacks and imprisoning 20,000 anti-apartheid activists.

Nonetheless, the revolt had convinced decisive sections of the white ruling class and even more so their senior partners in Washington and London that some kind of deal with the ANC was needed if South Africa was to regain any degree of political stability. Prominent white businessmen such as Anglo American's Gavin Relly journeyed to Lusaka, Zambia for well-publicized meetings with the ANC's exile leadership. While denouncing such meetings as treasonable, the Botha regime itself began secret negotiations with the imprisoned Mandela in 1986, as well as establishing contact with the ANC exile leadership.

The beginnings of "power sharing" talks reflected the fact that during the township revolt the ANC re-established its political/organizational hegemony over the black masses. The Black Consciousness Movement lost ground and prominent militants to the ANC. The township revolt greatly enhanced the popular authority of the pro-ANC unions and tended to discredit the semi-syndicalist FOSATU, which continued to concentrate on shop-floor organizing as if nothing much had changed in South Africa.

The FOSATU ranks, especially shop stewards in the Transvaal, pressured the "workerist" leadership into participating in the mass revolt against the apartheid state. In November 1984, FOSATU (represented by Moses Mayekiso) joined with student and community groups as well as pro-ANC unions in organizing a stayaway strike in the Transvaal around the demands of equal education for all,

opposition to rent increases and the removal of white troops from the townships.

An insider's history of the black union movement by Jeremy Baskin, a leading trade-union official in the early 1990s, describes the factional struggle in FOSATU precipitated by the township revolt:

"Fosatu's participation was not without internal tensions. Many established leaders argued that the federation was bowing to populist pressures. But these lead-

In November 1985, the Mineworkers, FOSATU and pro-ANC unions merged to form the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the largest organization of black labor in the country's history. We wrote:

"The formation of COSATU certainly strengthens the economic power of black workers, and for this reason is to be welcomed by communists. But it also underscores the danger that the black working class will be used as cattle to haul the ideological cart of nationalism. The new federation is demonstrably closer to the

simply a means of pressuring the ANC."  
—"South Africa: Blacks Defy  
Apartheid Elections," WV  
No. 486, 29 September 1989

A quasi-syndicalist current could exist in the black union movement only as long as the white-supremacist regime was relatively stable and there was no immediate prospect of an ANC government. Once Mandela was released from prison in 1990 and the "power sharing" negotiations began in earnest, the COSATU "workerists" either had to support this development, seeking to influence its outcome, or put forward their own program for governmental power. But they never had a program or perspective for taking state power. Hence at this point Mayekiso and the other "workerist" leaders joined the SACP, hoping in this way to play an influential role in shaping the "new" South Africa.

## The Road to the Mandela/De Klerk Government

While secret negotiations between the National Party regime and the ANC leaders had begun in 1986, for four years these talks went nowhere. Expectations that Mandela was about to be released from prison were repeatedly frustrated. The maximum the ANC leadership was willing to concede at this time was still less than the minimum demanded by the white ruling class.

The logjam in the ANC/National Party negotiations was broken by developments not in southern Africa but rather in East Europe—the breakup of the Soviet bloc and the disintegration of the Kremlin bureaucracy under Gorbachev. Like many Third World nationalist movements and regimes, the ANC based its strategy on playing off Moscow and Washington. For decades, the Soviet Union had been the ANC's primary international sponsor, supporting it in various diplomatic forums and providing arms for Umkhonto's symbolic guerrilla actions.

However, Mandela, Sisulu and Oliver Tambo (then ANC president) were by no means agents or even loyal clients of Moscow. Rather they sought to use Soviet support as a means of pressuring Western imperialism to pressure the South African ruling class into accepting a "power sharing" deal. This was the aim of the international campaign for economic sanctions and corporate divestment. After meeting with Gorbachev in 1986, Tambo called for a kind of global "popular front" against the apartheid regime: "East and West, North and South can and must act together in a decisive manner for the triumph of democracy in South Africa."

The collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989-90 thus brought with it the collapse of the ANC's entire international strategy. If the disintegrating Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy was abandoning East Europe to Western imperialism, it was certainly not going to support a client state in southern Africa. The ANC leaders now had to act within the framework set by Wall Street and the City of London and their South African partners. As National Party leader Gerrit Viljoen explained in justifying the legalization of the ANC and SACP to his white constituents:

"Our situation has changed fundamentally by what has happened in the international field, in Eastern Europe, Russia, and in several African states recently. The total effect of all these things puts the threat posed by the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress in an entirely new context."

—quoted in David Ottaway,  
*Chained Together: Mandela,  
De Klerk, and the Struggle to  
Remake South Africa* (1993)

While the legalization of the ANC/SACP and Mandela's release from prison in early 1990 clearly posed a "power sharing" deal with the white

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Gubb/J.B. Pictures

Funeral march commemorates murdered trade-union activist in Port Elizabeth, 1986. Following suppression of township revolt in mid-1980s, COSATU emerged as main organizer of mass militant black struggle.

ers were losing their tight grip on the federation. Even within Fosatu's central committee there was growing pressure for a more engaged approach. This reflected rank-and-file impatience, particularly in the Transvaal, with what was perceived to be Fosatu's political hostility towards mass action."

—*Striking Back: A History of  
COSATU* (1991)

Thus, during the course of the township revolt those elements in FOSATU who favored actively collaborating with the ANC gained the upper hand over the core of the established leaders, who opposed such a policy.

The township revolt demonstrated that syndicalism or labourite social democracy could not prevail in South Africa's black unions. These unions could not stand passively outside a mass upheaval against the apartheid system as the FOSATU "workerist" leaders had initially tried to do. And since the FOSATU "workerists" had no program or perspective for leading the struggle against national oppression, they could participate in it only by accepting the dominant ANC leadership.

Indirectly, the township revolt also brought Ramaphosa's Mineworkers into the ANC camp. Ramaphosa's policies were always guided by what was acceptable to the Anglo American bosses, his original sponsors. Now that the Anglo American bosses were actively pursuing a "power sharing" deal with the ANC, Ramaphosa led his union into a nationalist popular front with the ANC.

liberal nationalist African National Congress (ANC) than were the main union groupings which came together to form COSATU."

—"South Africa: Black Union  
Federation Launched," WV  
No. 393, 13 December 1985

With the suppression of the township revolt, the unions soon emerged as the principal organizations of mass, militant black struggle. This was dramatically demonstrated by the great miners strike in the summer of 1987, the largest strike in the Rand gold fields in South Africa's history. At its height 340,000 miners were involved, and almost five million working shifts were lost. The strike ended in a standoff. Under the threat of mass firings, the union agreed to terms slightly better than those offered by the mine bosses before the strike. Nonetheless, the Randlords were more shaken by the sheer scale and combativity of the strike than triumphant over holding the line on wages.

However, the growing social and political power of COSATU was paralleled by its increasing subordination to the ANC. In 1987, COSATU's national congress endorsed the 1955 Freedom Charter, the basic program of the ANC, over the rearguard opposition of the "workerists." The COSATU "workerists" like NUMSA leader Mayekiso sought to resist the federation's increasing subordination to the ANC by putting forward a "workers charter" which would "articulate the basic rights of workers" and be "guaranteed by the constitution of a people's government." In other words, they advocated a pro-labor program to be implemented by a future ANC government under the pressure of a strong trade-union movement. We wrote of the COSATU "workerists" at this juncture:

"The road to liberating the toilers of South Africa is not, however, through maintaining a strong trade-union movement under a petty-bourgeois nationalist ANC regime which it is assumed will replace white-supremacist rule. What's needed is the establishment of a black-centered workers government through smashing apartheid capitalism. This poses the formation of a racially integrated workers party, drawn primarily from class-conscious militants in the predominantly black unions. This is the only road forward if the protestations of 'socialism' and 'workers power' by left-wing militants in COSATU are not to be

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# Haiti...

(continued from page 16)

million Hutus, has the support of Belgium, the former colonial overlord, and the blessing of the United States. Thus, Tutsi commander Paul Kagame was being trained at the U.S. military college at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas when he was named head of the FPR military forces.

As over Somalia, television and newspapers have been filled with heart-rending images of starving Rwandan children and victims of massacres. But by now it's notorious how this propaganda served as a cover for the murderous racist occupation of Mogadishu. The UN fig leaf provides the U.S. with a modern "humanitarian" cover for a very old game: imperial domination of poor black nations. Clinton wants to reassert American imperialist hegemony over the world on the cheap. *We say: U.S. get your bloody hands off the world!*

It's a sign of the times when *Newsweek* (18 July) presents "The Case for Kind Colonialism"! In a debate titled, "Should We Invade Haiti?" the racist "pro" side echoes Clinton's classic Yankee imperialist "it's in our backyard" rationale, while the racist "con" side argues that Haiti represents no vital U.S. interests and besides it's a "snake pit." In the "New World Order," the doves of yesterday have become rabid interventionists in Bosnia, Haiti and Rwanda, while old-time hawks have gone "isolationist"—in good part because they love Haitian strongman General Cedras.

These days, the phrase on every liberal ideologue's lips is "saving failed

## Call It 'Lake Monroe'

A century of U.S. military actions in its backyard.



New York Times Map

Slaughter" war on Iraq in 1990-91, made possible by the collapsing Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy under Gorbachev.

Then the U.S. moved on to invading Somalia. But the Somalia adventure became a debacle, mostly because recalcitrant Somali clans inflicted some casualties against U.S. troops in retribution for large-scale UN/U.S. massacres. In selling the Rwanda intervention, the

Institute. An SSI paper (March 1994) insists that the "bottom line" is a "worldwide U.N. embargo, enforced by warships of the United States" on "all trade and aid...targeted much more heavily on Haitian military and civilian elites" (emphasis in original).

Meanwhile, the Congressional Black Caucus and liberal white politicians have been demanding that the U.S. "restore democracy"—but some of them are getting cold feet, perhaps mindful that they could be saddled with responsibility for the inevitable racist atrocities which will be committed in the name of "democracy." And these atrocities are already being prepared. The lists of Aristide supporters which have been gathered by U.S. immigration personnel have not, in fact, been used to grant asylum (only 1 in 120 applications were accepted!), but they provide a very useful hit list of "troublemakers" in the event of an occupation.

Reporting on revelations by a source in the INS, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* (13 April) quoted Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights: "There is a huge information-gathering process going on in Haiti by the INS and by the Coast Guard when it returns all the repatriated Haitians. By this time, U.S. officials and the entire Haitian military know the structure of the Haitian opposition—from top to bottom. It's much like what happened 30 years ago in Indonesia when a hundred thousand Indonesians were slaughtered after a CIA-backed coup, in which the CIA apparently

fed the names back to the murderers."

There are serious divisions within the American ruling class over how to deal with Haiti, in particular given the right wing's deep antipathy to the populist priest Aristide. The racist U.S. government is mainly concerned to slam the doors on desperate black refugees. Washington's irresolution was reflected in the hasty retreat last year by the USS *Harlan County* in the face of a handful of junta thugs. The *New York Times* has been so worried about getting into a quagmire that it has uncharacteristically recalled the bloody history of U.S. colonialism in the Caribbean. A recent article by Larry Rohter notes:

"The Marine commander Smedley Butler, for instance, led forces in Panama, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua, and once likened the American role in the region to that of 'trustees of a huge estate that belonged to minors.' He later repented his actions and in a famous autobiography called himself a 'racketeer for capitalism,' who 'helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street'."

—*New York Times*, 24 July

For the working people of the United States, especially for the oppressed black and Hispanic minorities, it should come as no surprise that the yuppie racists in the White House treat the dark-skinned workers and peasants of Third World countries with contempt and brutality. The American working class must oppose Washington's imperialist adventures down the line, as part of the struggle against our own capitalist exploiters. U.S. out of Rwanda! Hands off Haiti! ■



Le Bolchévik

Paris, July 1: Ligue Trotskyiste de France demonstrates against French imperialist intervention in Rwanda.

states"—under the aegis of UN "multilateralism." UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali has long been among the advocates of this "new" colonialism, arguing that "the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty...has passed" (*An Agenda for Peace*, June 1992). For Clinton and the American ruling class, the end of the Cold War means the U.S. should be global gendarme of the "New World Order," certainly within the Western hemisphere. The U.S. made its bloody intentions clear with the barbaric "Desert

Clinton administration claims to have learned the "lessons of Somalia." The lesson is that the U.S. still hasn't overcome the "Vietnam syndrome"—fear of a losing dirty imperialist war. And since the American population won't stand for casualties in imperialist adventures, this leads to repeated invasions of tiny defenseless states, from Reagan's rape of Grenada and Bush's assault on Panama to Rwanda and Haiti.

From the start we have denounced the U.S. economic sanctions against Haiti as an act of war, demanding "Down with the starvation blockade—Yankee imperialists hands off Haiti!" We have also warned of the danger these neocolonial war moves pose to the Cuban deformed workers state, just across the Windward Passage from Haiti, whose economy is being battered by the vindictive U.S. boycott, particularly after Soviet aid was cut off three years ago.

The U.S. blockade of Haiti has massively increased the misery of Haiti's poor; yet some so-called "socialists" actually criticize the imperialists for not squeezing hard enough! The International Socialist Organization chastises Clinton and the UN for not carrying out "a serious embargo" (*Socialist Worker*, June 1994). This view is shared by...the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies

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## Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 10

### Malcolm X: The Man, the Myth, the Struggle

What's Missing from Spike Lee's Movie  
Activists Remember the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Era

"New World Order" Neocolonialism in Africa

February 1993 Spartacist Publishing Co. Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

# Mexico...

(continued from page 1)

Bloody "pacification" is already hitting the bourgeois opposition; when a highway "accident" almost killed Chiapas PRD candidate Amado Avendaño and cost the lives of three of his assistants, the PRI's presidential candidate brushed it aside with shameless cynicism. With the rise in repression in recent days, four young PRD activists were barbarically tortured in Mexico City, recalling the fate of the four Cardenista students murdered in August 1988.

Each of the nine presidential candidates "recognizes" that the situation demands big changes and promises that his or her government will guarantee a peaceful road to a regime of "democracy." The only ones not represented in this contest are the workers—all the parties participating (including those government-sponsored fake opposition parties such as the bogus Partido del Trabajo [Labor Party]) represent the bourgeoisie. They are committed to continuing policies of pillage and robbery; none opposes NAFTA. It's no accident that Mexican capitalism, subjugating the proletariat with bourgeois nationalism and class collaboration backed by repression, has succeeded in slashing real wages much *more* than the Pinochet dictatorship did in Chile. Thus the profits obtained from this exploitation are sky-high.

It is the elementary duty of Marxists to stress that in these elections there is no force for which the exploited should vote. *Not one vote for the bourgeois parties!* The only solution is to forge a revolutionary workers party to lead all the oppressed to socialist revolution.

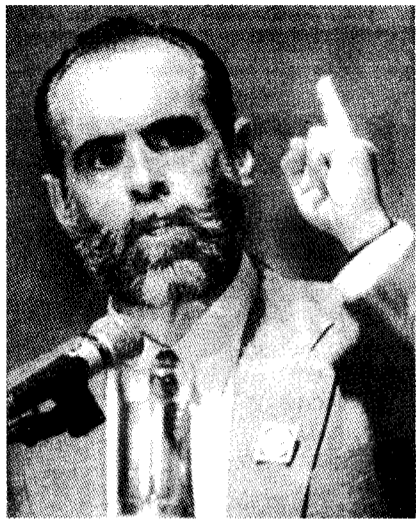
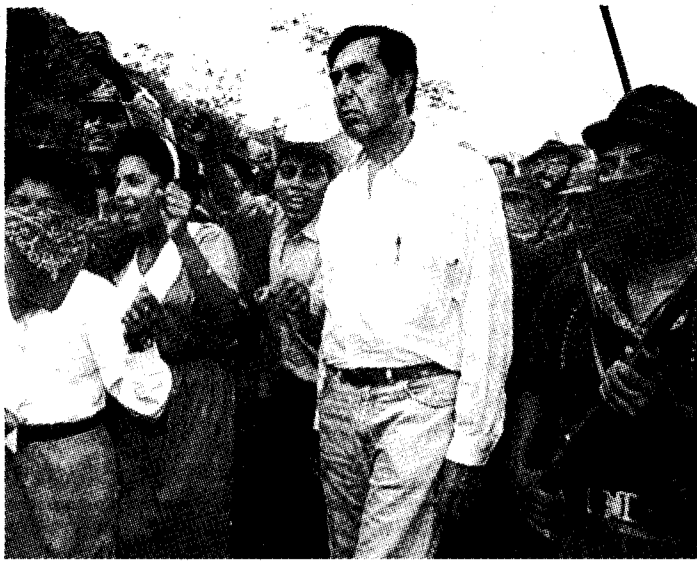
For seven decades the working class has been held in thrall to the corporatist, semi-bonapartist PRI regime. Despite deep-going fissures in the PRI's system of control, the *charros*, gangster-bureaucrats of the CTM [Mexican Labor Federation], still manage to oblige more than a million workers to join their [pro-government] May Day demonstration each year in Mexico City. This year the "independent" trade unions put together a unitary march, unlike the "two, three, many marches" of previous years, but in reality these unions continue to be subjugated to the neo-PRI—the PRD. The way to break the stranglehold of the bourgeoisie and its lieutenants is not the search for a fictitious bourgeois "democracy" (leaving intact the subjugation and exploitation of the working people) with calls for "unity" of all, including sectors of the bourgeoisie, but hard, unified and well-organized class struggles. What's urgently necessary is to win the *political independence of the proletariat* from these apparatuses of bourgeois rule, mobilizing the working class at the head of all the oppressed with a revolutionary program which can uproot the repression and misery that have deepened after 70 years of governments "of the Revolution."

## Break from the Popular Front!

The PRD has been key to efforts to defuse Mexico's "social bomb." The Cárdenas-led popular front arose in order to rein in the wave of struggles that broke out after the 1982 debt crisis, including powerful strikes and mobilizations of auto and electrical workers, the Cananea miners, Sicartsa steelworkers and many other workers, as well as peasant protests and the movement of the CEU [University Students' Council], which led the mass occupation of the National University in late 1986 and early 1987]. Due to the union and "left" leaders' complete lack of a revolutionary class-struggle program, the neo-Cardenistas were largely able to pacify and subjugate these mobilizations to bourgeois electoralism and the rules of the game imposed by the capitalist state.

The PRD now openly backs NAFTA

**Mexican presidential candidates compete in promoting NAFTA attack on working class (clockwise from right): populist PRD's Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, ruling PRI's technocrat Ernesto Zedillo, rightist PAN demagogue Diego Fernández de Cavallos.**



Gerardo Magallón



AP

and assures Yankee imperialism that the popular front is the best way to control social unrest. In the famous May 12 candidates' debate Cárdenas underlined that he wants to govern with figures "from business, banking, commerce..." In his May 22 declaration "99 Years from the Birth of Lázaro Cárdenas" [his father, the nationalist president who ruled from 1934-40], he promised, "We will also govern with the Armed Forces" of bloody repression, "which we want people to respect and love," and even invited the "high command of the Armed Forces" to nominate those who would occupy "the political posts designated by the president" in his administration. And the popular frontists have the gall to say "Mexico is not Chile" when we recall the bloody results of collaboration with the "constitutional high command" under Allende's Unidad Popular!

In fact the PRD's lack of answers to the most burning needs of the population has produced the dangerous phenomenon of "Diegomania," a growing sympathy toward the candidate of the rightist PAN [Diego Fernández de Cevallos]. It is quite evident that support for Cárdenas has fallen greatly since the days of "Cuauhtémoc" frenzy [during the presidential elections of] six years ago. The technocratic regime of [president Carlos] Salinas imposed itself through blatant fraud, making the computer tallying system crash rather than recognize an opposition victory, and vilely murdered hundreds of rank-and-file PRD supporters. But allying with the PAN, appealing to the army and enlisting fake-lefts through

"committees to defend the vote," Cárdenas sought to turn angry protests and seizures of town halls into a kind of theater that would serve as an escape valve for the population's rage.

Against the lie of a bourgeois "democracy" in this country of volcanic class struggles ruled by a semi-bonapartist regime, we fight for the proletarian democracy of a *workers and peasants government*. Only a workers and peasants government would put an end to NAFTA robbery, breaking with the International Monetary Fund and the debt which suffocates the working people, mobilizing the militant solidarity of the workers to the north of the Rio Grande and across the oceans against any imperialist aggression. A proletarian regime would provide the countryside with the machinery and products of the city which it needs. Defeating all the white guards [landowner terror squads], it would have its red workers and peasants army guarantee the free organization of Indian communities, the expropriation of landowners and *caciques* [rural bosses] and agricultural production for the benefit of all. It would create the conditions for liberating women from oppression and domestic slavery; it would guarantee the right to free abortion on demand and uproot discrimination against homosexuals. Only such a government can eradicate all forms of social oppression, because it is the only kind of government that can eliminate the social bases of the injustices imposed by bourgeois society.

The workers of Mexico want to fight and have carried out important battles

in the recent period. This spring the Metropolitan and Chapingo university unions went on strike while teachers have mobilized in Nuevo León, Zacatecas, Tlaxcala, Puebla and other states; in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, 10,000 teachers marched in defiance of bourgeois repression. In the auto industry—which employs 360,000 workers in Mexico, linking them to proletarians from the U.S. and Canada to Germany, Japan and South Africa—there have been hard-fought struggles at the giant Volkswagen plant in Puebla as well as Ford plants in Cuautitlán, Hermosillo and Chihuahua. But repeatedly strikes, even by "independent" unions, are derailed by subordination to the corporatist apparatus of arbitration and conciliation. Playing by the bosses' rules means you lose!

The current social unrest in Mexico, from Indian peasants in the south to the capital to the *maquiladora* (free trade zone) industries with their heavily female workforce in the northern border region, lays the basis for some hard working-class struggle. This can extend across the border to the proletariat in the U.S. But such battles will not be waged by tame reformists who are politically subordinated to the bourgeoisie, whether the PRI or PRD or the U.S. Democratic Party. What is posed was graphically shown by the fight of Sony workers in Nuevo Laredo last April against a six-day workweek and undemocratic union "elections." When several hundred workers managed to effectively block six of the seven Sony plants in the city, the police were sent to bust up their picket. This was followed by firings of union activists.

For decades the semi-corporatist "unions" of the CTM have maintained a rigid stranglehold on the millions-strong Mexican proletariat, chaining it to the PRI, within which CTM leader Fidel Velázquez' machine represents a hard right wing. Wildcat strikes and opposition currents are brutally suppressed by CTM *charro* thugs working together with the police. Where unrest can't simply be suppressed, the regime has had recourse to the replacement *charrismo* of the other components of the CT (Congress of Labor), including the CROC, CROM, etc. And meanwhile, workers are subjected to starvation wages through "pacts for stability."

In order to wage a winning fight against this misery, worker militants should *elect workers committees* independent of state controls and all of the bourgeois parties (including the PRD), to drive out the *charro* bureaucrats and lay the basis for genuine unions as organs of struggle of the workers. In *maquiladora* industrial "parks" such committees cannot be limited to individual plants but must be spread through the area to mobilize the concentrated proletarian power. In border regions and against "multinational" companies, there must be appeals for real international solidarity through industrial action by workers on the other side of the line.

The potential is there, from heavily

**Zapatista guerrillas' New Year's rebellion as NAFTA went into effect sent shock waves from Mexico City to Washington. Right: EZLN leader Subcomandante Marcos.**

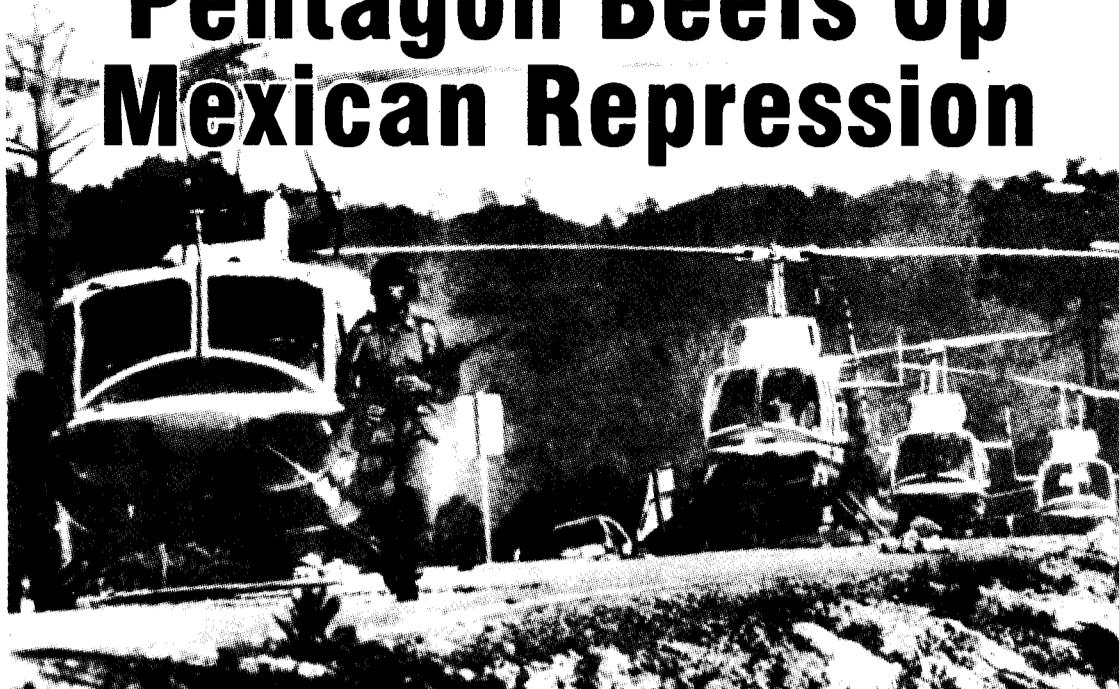


Taboada/AP



Miranda/NY Times

# Pentagon Beefs Up Mexican Repression



U.S.-supplied helicopters in Chiapas. Huge flow of riot-control vehicles from U.S. in preparation for possible unrest after August elections.

Núñez/Cuartoscuro

The Zapatista Indian peasant uprising in the state of Chiapas in southern Mexico at the beginning of this year, just as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was going into effect, set off alarm bells in Washington. Instead of juicy profit opportunities to use the Mexican “hinterland” for low-wage export production, suddenly the rulers of U.S. imperialism saw the spectre of Central American-style unrest in their “backyard.” This was followed by the assassination of the presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio of the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in April. Now with Mexican elections scheduled for August 21, events are coming to a head.

Expectations of fraud are so pervasive that it is widely said that the real election starts on August 22, and will be played out on the streets. The pro-government press repeats sensational “revelations” of plans to “destabilize” the country following the elections. The staid *Excelsior* (28 July) claims that “sitdowns, civil resistance, occupation of city halls, blockades, explosions, kidnappings, invasion of hotels, gasoline stations and even maritime terminals” are scheduled. It talks of a “national guerrilla front,” claiming armed groups are active not only in Chiapas, but also in Guerrero, Puebla, Veracruz and several other states. The patent purpose of such scare propaganda is to set the stage for a government crackdown against post-election protests.

But the preparations are not just at the level of propaganda. The Salinas regime has been beefing up its military arsenal, with the full support of the Clinton administration in Washington. Almost immediately after the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, in the Lancandon rain forest near the Guatemala border, several hundred U.S. troops were sent to Guatemala. In April, reports leaked out that huge amounts of military vehicles were being imported by Mexico from the U.S. The UPI (1 May) relayed a story from the Mexico City daily *Reforma* that “Mexican customs officials say more than 3,000 military vehicles ordered by the Mexican Defense Ministry have entered Mexico from the U.S. in 1994, including armored

vehicles with water cannon, jeeps, trucks, motorcycles—and tanks.”

Water cannon, armored trucks, tanks—these are not intended to put down guerrilla struggles but for use in urban areas. An AP dispatch made this clear, noting that some of the armored vehicles were “fitted with plows to break through barricades.” Meanwhile, in Washington, an amendment to the Defense appropriation bill passed by the House of Representatives gives the attorney general authority to transfer up to 10,000 U.S. troops to the border with Mexico. There are also reports circulating that racist anti-immigrant outfits are planning to mass at the border around August 21, particularly around San Diego, California. In short, the Mexican government and its U.S. godfathers are gearing up for potential civil war. For all the talk of “democracy,” keeping Mexico “safe” for U.S. investors means being prepared to impose the kind of military-dominated authoritarian rule common to others of the imperialists’ low-wage “production platforms,” such as Indonesia, Thailand or South Korea.

In the event of repression around the elections, the left and labor movement in the U.S. must be prepared to mobilize

in the streets in defense of the Mexican working people.

## After Chiapas

The first American troops arrived in Guatemala on January 8, one week after the uprising next door in Chiapas. They were part of a new U.S. operation called “Fuerzas Caminos Sur ‘94” (Strong Roads South, ‘94), billed as a “civic action” exercise supposedly to build roads, hospitals, etc. In February, the Mexican newspaper *El Financiero* was reporting that the initial staff of “Fuerzas Caminos ‘94” was made up of DEA and CIA agents and U.S. military personnel. *El Día* (14 February) reported that 4,500 U.S. National Guardsmen were scheduled to participate in the operation, several hundred at a time; 12 Black Hawk helicopters were to be handed over to the Guatemalan army. The New York City *El Diario/La Prensa* (18 April) cited the head of the Mexican National Assembly of Human Rights, Armando Quiroz Alejandro, saying that up to 6,000 American troops were involved.

Even more alarming stories began surfacing about the large amounts of military equipment pouring into Mexico. The *San Antonio Express-News*

(27 April) broke the story: “The Mexican government quietly is importing millions of dollars worth of riot-control vehicles across the Texas border, apparently in preparation for any civil unrest after the late-summer presidential election.” The reporters, John MacCormack and Carmina Danini, had identified “two hulking blue armored trucks” and what turned out to be a Commando LAV-150 water cannon in a freight forwarding yard in Laredo. According to its manufacturer, Textron, 18 such water cannons were purchased by Mexico. A company official was quoted in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* saying they would be useful “with the approach of the upcoming elections.”

The armored trucks are 17-ton Cobra riot control vehicles, equipped with a plow, gun ports and water cannon with a 2,000-gallon tank. In addition, the Cobra’s special features include a video recording system and

guns to shoot “indelible dye to mark dissidents”! A police equipment vendor noted, “This could be used by a snatch squad” to single out and grab protest leaders in the middle of a crowd. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, already by January at least 16 armored fighting vehicles had been shipped to Mexico over the last year. The Mexican weekly *Proceso* has printed photographs showing training under way with the water cannon and Cobras in Military Camp No. 1 in Mexico City.

Tulane University professor Roderic Camp wondered about the Mexican government “if they are really planning fraudulent elections that would produce the kind of reaction that this equipment is made for. The point is, they have not used this type of equipment ever before.” The *Express-News* reporters noted that “the last time the Mexican army intervened forcibly in an urban setting was the 1968 Tlatelolco protest march.” But while the PRI managed to restabilize its rule with that bloody massacre which killed hundreds, today the long-ruling PRI-government is in a process of terminal decay. The Yankee imperialists are well aware of this, as these preparations for a bloodbath show. ■

Latino El Paso garment workers, California janitors and “drywallers” to Caterpillar workers and Teamsters across the U.S. who have come up against brutal strikebreaking by the companies and cops. In the context of a *maquiladora* strike, joint actions by Mexican and U.S. workers stopping the transport of goods across the border, for example, or solidarity strike action by Japanese workers against Sony, or U.S. workers against Ford, or German workers against Volkswagen (as occurred during the 1987 VW strike), can bring the NAFTA bosses to their knees. And a fight for full citizenship rights for immigrant workers, as our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. have raised for years, can undercut the anti-Mexican racism and protectionist poison whipped up by the bourgeois politicians and their labor “lieutenants.”

While Mexican workers are presently held in thrall by a pervasive repressive apparatus, they have tremendous potential power. Against crackdowns by the police and labor contractors/company cops of the CTM, *plant occupations* backed up by *workers defense committees* can be a powerful response, sparking wide support and extending the struggle to other sectors (as happened at Ford-Cuautitlán). The July 28 demonstration against repression called by the syndicalist Movimiento Proletario Independiente (MPI), which includes the bus

transport workers of Mexico City’s Ruta 100 organized in SUTAU, points to the possibility of *mass workers mobilization against repression*. Should the government bring in the military and paramilitary apparatus it has been building up to put down unrest around the elections, a solid strike by transport workers (bus, metro, colectivos [minibuses]) could bring the capital to a standstill.

## The EZLN and the Popular Front

To its credit, the EZLN refused to disarm after valiant Indian combatants succeeded in resisting the onslaught of the bourgeoisie’s armed forces. The Chiapas rebellion touched off a wave of peasant land seizures in the teeth of white-guard terror, as well as mass demonstrations against repression and significant outbreaks of rebellion in the working class (see “Toward Workers Revolution,” *Espartaco* No. 5). After months of sowing illusions in the regime’s “pacification” spokesmen like Manuel Camacho Solís, the Zapatistas said “no” to the accord proposed by the government (doing so in a way and at a time that clearly favored Cárdenas).

Millions of workers and youth in Mexico and around the world hoped that the Chiapas uprising would signal the beginning of a revolution. But in hundreds of manifestos, interviews, resolutions and communiqués the EZLN stresses that

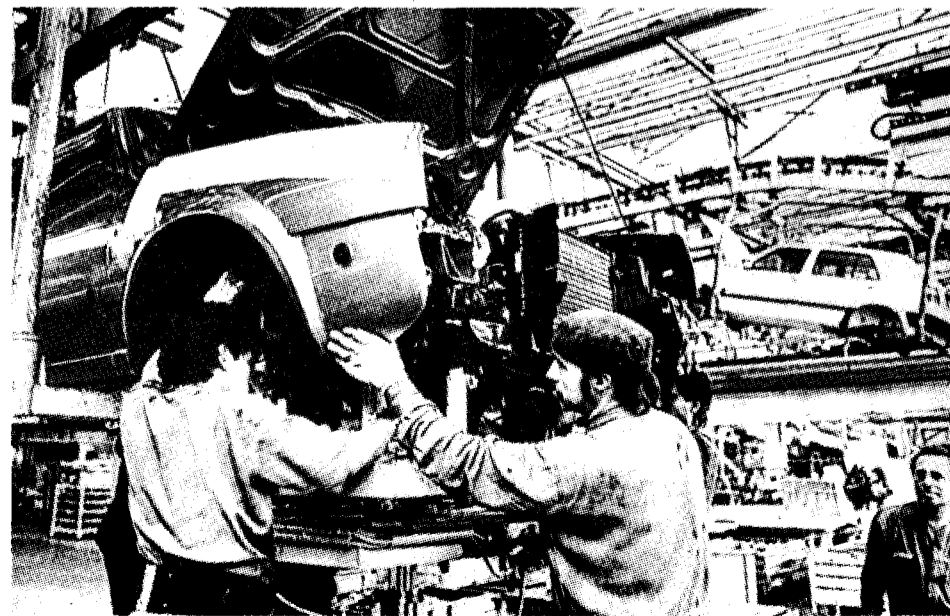
what it seeks is *not* to take power nor to make a revolution, but instead to pressure for “a political solution in Mexico’s transition to democracy.”

This reaches the extreme that when PRI presidential candidate Colosio was mysteriously assassinated, Subcomandante Marcos asked, “Wouldn’t it be better to kill one of us instead?” (i.e., one of the insurgent Indians). He warns that “the explosion is imminent” and that “the

only possibility of stopping it” is to “really open room for democracy” (*La Jornada*, 21 June). In other words, the EZLN leadership declares that far from fighting to overturn the system of exploitation it wants to help prevent the social struggles that the bourgeoisie fears so much.

Despite the fact that Cárdenas solidarized with the federal army against

*continued on page 14*



Mexican auto workers, like these at Volkswagen Puebla factory, are key link to international workers struggle in the U.S., Germany and Japan.

Financial Times

# South Africa...

(continued from page 10)

ruling class, the exact terms of such a deal were yet to be resolved. De Klerk initially sought to play off the Zulu tribalist Inkatha movement against the ANC. In this way the National Party leaders hoped to acquire for themselves a bonapartist role in the "new" South Africa, acting as arbiter between the violently hostile black factions. Encouraged by powerful forces in the white state apparatus, Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi now escalated his terrorist attacks on the ANC. The fighting spread from the Zulu homeland of Natal to the black townships of the Vaal Reef, where Zulu migrant workers clashed with the ANC-dominated civic associations.

It was generally believed that the "Reef War" was engineered and manipulated by a sinister "third force." To no one's surprise, this "third force" turned out to be senior cadre in the police and military. Official protestations that they were acting without the knowledge of De Klerk and his ministers were believed by no one. The regime's support for and complicity in Buthelezi's terrorist

attacks on the ANC—the "Inkathagate" scandal—led in mid-1992 to a temporary breakdown in the "power sharing" negotiations.

Seeking to assuage its angry and disenchanted ranks and to bring renewed pressure on white ruling circles, the ANC/SACP then launched a campaign of "rolling mass actions." Some more radical leaders, such as SACP general secretary Chris Hani (who was later assassinated by a white racist) and SACP national organizer Ronnie Kasrils, spoke of exercising the "Leipzig option." This was a reference to the mass protests which had brought down the old-line Stalinist regime of Erich Honecker in East Germany in 1989. However, unlike the demoralized and decomposing bureaucratic caste resting atop the deformed workers states of East Europe, the capitalist class in South Africa was determined to hold onto the key levers of political power, a determination fully backed by its partners in Washington and London.

The testing ground for the "Leipzig option" was to be the Ciskei, a Xhosa bantustan ruled by a notoriously repressive despot, Brigadier Gqozo. Kasrils announced a campaign for the "peaceful overthrow" of this apartheid puppet. In

September 1992, as Kasrils led 50,000 unarmed protesters into Bisho, "capital" of the Ciskei, Gqozo's thugs—bought and paid for by the National Party regime—opened fire with machine guns. Twenty-nine of the protesters were killed, over 200 wounded. The South African army, massed at the "border" of the "tribal homeland," watched the Ciskei forces mow down the fleeing demonstrators. And De Klerk then publicly denounced the Communists for provoking the violence!

Slovo & Co. responded by groveling before the Randlords. "Self-criticism" over the Bisho massacre within the ANC/SACP served as the occasion for the re-ascendancy of the more right-wing leaders. In a position paper ("Negotiations: What Room for Compromise?"), Slovo openly called for scrapping the principle of one person, one vote and forming a coalition government with De Klerk's National Party regardless of the outcome of any elections. This anti-democratic program was prettified as "a 'sunset' clause in the new constitution which would provide for compulsory power-sharing for a fixed number of years" ([emphasis in original] *African Communist*, 3rd Quarter 1992). The maneuvers leading to the present Man-

dela/Slovo/De Klerk government were simply a working out of this openly declared betrayal of the black toilers by their ANC/SACP misleaders.

However, the fate of the "new" South Africa will *not* be determined by constitutional clauses and agreements between the ANC/SACP leaders and the masters of the Jo'burg stock exchange. Just as the struggles of the black toilers for freedom and equality broke down the old apartheid system, so they will break down the neo-apartheid "power sharing" deal between the Randlords and their new black front men.

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

[TO BE CONTINUED]

# Mexico...

(continued from page 13)

the Chiapas insurgents, Marcos "distinguishes" between the PRD with its PRIista "vices" and the figure of Cárdenas himself, who is the embodiment of the PRD—thereby encouraging those who seek a "revolutionary" orientation from the EZLN to support Cárdenas.

who devote themselves to discrediting the name of Trotskyism, identifying it with reformist servility. The Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Party), Mexican section of Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat of the Fourth International," has shamelessly dissolved itself into the Cárdenas campaign. The *Militante* group, followers of Ted Grant's British Labourite tendency, which is part of the

Díaz [the dictator overthrown in 1910]. Yet the fake left seeks only to repeat the experience of 1910-17, when due to the lack of a communist leadership capable of mobilizing the proletariat as a class, the bourgeoisie was able to frustrate the revolution, subordinating the masses through class collaboration decorated in nationalist rhetoric. Today under the image of the peasant fighter Zapata, whose assassination was the symbol of the frustration of that revolution, there has broken out a radical petty-bourgeois nationalist armed peasant movement. Liberal commentators praise the EZLN for not having an "ideological program." But the fact is that it does: the orientation toward the popular front under the selfsame formula of "democracy." The preachers of "post-modern"-style class collaboration claim that the dénouement will be determined by the efforts of the "civil society" of distinguished lawyers, engineers and the regime's numerous kept intellectuals. But the popular front means workers' blood—we do not forget Spain, Indonesia, Chile, Bolivia and all the other defeats prepared by such class collaboration.

The frustration of the 1910 Mexican Revolution demonstrated in the negative what the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 demonstrated in the positive. The only way to satisfy the burning needs of the working people—including their democratic demands, the struggle for the land and against the imperialist yoke—is for the proletariat to take power at the head of the poor peasants and all the oppressed and extend the revolution internationally. This is the Trotskyist program of *permanent revolution*.

In order for the proletariat to put itself forward as an independent alternative, it is essential that it have a party representing its international and historic interests. Mexico has a combative, largely young working class which is increasingly linked to the proletariat of North America and the world. The Trotskyists of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM) invite worker militants seeking the road forward in the auto plants, in the *maquiladoras*, in every sector, as well as radical youth, to discuss the path and the program for building the revolutionary workers party that we need. If there is a new Río Blanco or Cananea [strikes that were precursors to the 1910 Mexican Revolution], this time the struggle must not end up subordinated to the bourgeoisie; it must point toward workers revolution! For this to occur what is urgently required is revolutionary leadership.

We must take the road of Lenin and Trotsky, the road of workers revolution. As we wrote after the uprising in Chiapas: "we salute the valiant Chiapas insurgents with the red flag of world proletarian revolution while clearly stating that we are not Zapatistas—we are Bolsheviks." The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), of which the GEM is part, is determined to forge the world party the proletariat needs in order to save humanity from new calamities.

Not one vote for the bourgeois parties! Break from the popular front! Forge a revolutionary workers party! For a workers and peasants government as part of the Socialist United States of Latin America! ■



Espartaco

Mexico City, May Day 1994: Independent unions march in opposition to PRI-dominated corporatist labor federation demonstration.

Zapatista spokesmen told Cárdenas: "If you take power and make the government change, we will support you."

The declared purpose of the "National Democratic Convention" (CND) called by the EZLN is to unite "honest Mexicans" (i.e., exploiters and exploited) for "peaceful democratic change," that is, for the victory of the "democratic" bourgeois opposition. The EZLN command has now openly called to "vote against the candidates of the Institutional Revolutionary Party and its satellites" (*La Jornada*, 31 July). The CND explicitly excludes "those that disagree with trying out the electoral path" and calls for a bourgeois "transitional government." While the EZLN acts as an armed pressure group on the bourgeoisie and ally of the popular front, and Cárdenas declares his "agreement" with the EZLN's objectives so as to better entrap the discontented population, the urgent need is for the *independent class politics of the proletariat, showing the way toward workers revolution*.

This policy is sharply counterposed to that of Mexico's fake left. Among the most enthusiastic capitulators are those

Cárdenas/Muñoz Ledo bourgeois party, tries to corral radicalizing youth with its call to "vote for a PRD government with a class program" (it already has one, a program of its capitalist class!). It appeals to the PRD to call a "general strike" against repression by the very same armed forces together with which Cárdenas declares he wants to govern.

The Partido Obrero Socialista-Zapatista (POS-Z—Socialist Workers Party-Zapatista), Mexican section of the moribund [Morenoite] International Workers League, has launched the slogan to "vote EZLN" and for a "government of the EZLN and the workers, peasants and people's organizations," with the pretense that this represents a class alternative to voting for the bourgeois parties. Inasmuch as the EZLN lends itself *de facto* to winning support for the PRD from workers and radical youth, the POS-Z's call is nothing more than a "new" manifestation of its standard line of *tailing the popular front*.

Today in Mexico a smell of *ancien régime* is in the air; things are falling apart; it's no accident that the situation is compared to the last days of Porfirio

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# Decatur...

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to the fight against racism and unemployment. Only by taking up the struggle against the special oppression faced by black working people can the unions forge the kind of integrated struggle needed to beat back the capitalist attacks.

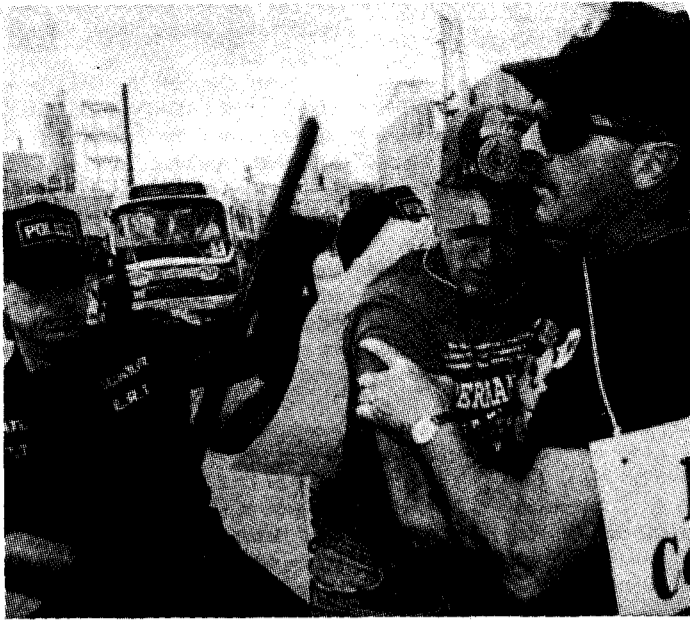
But a genuine fight against unemployment and race-terror must challenge the racist profit system itself. That's why the AFL-CIO bureaucracy went all out to sabotage the labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK in nearby Springfield last January 16. Initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle defense organization affiliated to the Spartacist League, the call for labor-centered action to spike a Klan provocation against the Martin Luther King holiday drew support from significant sections of Decatur and Springfield labor. But state AFL-CIO head Don Johnson issued a backstabbing directive ordering unions to stay away. Still, a hard core of labor and blacks turned out in Springfield on January 16 to oppose the KKK.

Riding the coattails of the capitalists' one-sided war on the unions, the Klan returned on May 7 for racist recruitment rallies in Springfield and Decatur. This time the deadly threat against blacks and labor was ignored, as the UAW tops instead mobilized thousands to cheer Democratic politicians at a CAT workers' rally 80 miles away in Peoria. Under a class-struggle leadership these thousands of workers would have taken the fight to the CAT bosses by crushing their racist dogs of war. But rather than taking on the class enemy at home, the UAW tops waved little American flags and railed against our working-class brothers abroad and the products they make. This is a program for defeat.

## Protectionism Poisons Workers' Struggles

Union misleaders use national chauvinism as a political straitjacket on labor, preventing hard class struggle while binding working people to their own exploiters. Some leaders of the locked-out Staley workers push the notion that they are fighting a "British invasion" by

June 25:  
"Corporate Campaign"-style  
civil disobedience  
is met with brutal  
cop assault.



opposing Lyle and Tate, the corporation that currently owns Staley. Behind this nationalism is the idea that they could get a fair shake from American capitalists and their government. Fat chance. Look at what happened when Local 7837 members and supporters sat down in front of the Staley plant gate on June 25. As a video distributed by the Staley Workers Solidarity Committee graphically shows, state and local cops viciously sprayed gas pointblank into the faces of dozens of peacefully demonstrating workers. *This atrocity was 100 percent American-made.* The main enemy is at home!

Now the URW tops are pushing even more virulent chauvinist poison in the strikes against Dunlop and Firestone, which are Japanese-owned, and Armstrong, which is Italian-owned. A Local 998 official in Oklahoma City said: "It's America against Japan.... That's why we have the American flag. This is a Japanese company and they come in and start taking things away from us" (*State Journal-Register*, 13 July). Local 713 in Decatur complains that under Japanese ownership, Firestone management has been pushing "Japanese-style programs" like Quality Circles and Employee Participation Teams. But union-busting is as American as pizza pie. Such programs are a product not of "Japanese culture" but of the union-busting policies carried out by General MacArthur's occupation forces in Japan after World War II. Years of labor defeat have paved the way for

their widespread introduction in the U.S. These defeats resulted from the AFL-CIO's role as domestic, and international, labor cops for U.S. imperialism.

## Build Class-Struggle Leadership!

Capping 15 years of defeats with not a single significant victory to point to, AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland wants to protect his shrinking dues base by embracing labor-management "cooperation" to enhance productivity—i.e., intensify exploitation. He's even come out for a Clinton administration proposal to legalize company unions. Begging Congress for a "permanent replacement worker ban," the AFL-CIO tops offered to send all labor disputes to arbitration. Impressed by such pro-capitalist reasonableness, *Business Week* (23 May) opines that, in the wake of "one of the most successful anti-union wars ever," the U.S. might be "better off...with a healthier union movement," especially if the unions "become partners with management in boosting efficiency"—that is, in disciplining the workers.

Many workers bitter at the betrayals of Kirkland & Co. are attracted to the activism being sold by Ray Rogers of Corporate Campaign, Inc. Rogers' strategy entails toothless consumer boycotts, stockholder protests, informational leafletting and civil disobedience. This is the same losing strategy which squandered the militant solidarity of striking meatpackers during the Hormel

strike almost a decade ago. What Rogers shares with Kirkland is a strategy of reliance on the Democratic Party, capitalism's "lesser evil." Rogers' civil disobedience action of June 25—where Staley workers and supporters were told to allow the cops to brutalize them with mace—was a demoralizing defeat. Opportunist fakers like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) actually criticize Local 7837 for not undertaking more of this crap. Hell no! Meekly letting union supporters get maced and beaten without resistance only emboldens labor's enemies. It's time to stand up and fight!

At CAT and Staley, the urgent task is to stop the scabs—mobilize the entire labor movement in mass picketing. Take a page from Toledo's labor history: defy the injunctions. Pull out ADM with mass pickets. Enlist the unemployed in the struggle: demand a massive public works program at union-scale wages with no discrimination in hiring. All transport of raw materials and finished products must be halted. *Workers Vanguard* has learned that some Teamster-driven trucks are crossing URW lines to transport stockpiled tires! Meanwhile, union rail crews are moving trains to the vicinity of the struck plants and then amicably turning them over to management personnel to be taken across the picket lines. *All rail and truck traffic in the area must be stopped—hot-cargo scab products!* A large delegation of angry strikers would remind Teamster and rail union tops that the picket line means don't cross.

Militants must prepare for an escalation of the government's strikebreaking moves. Any mobilization of the National Guard should be answered by the workers sitting down inside a couple of key industrial sites; let the bosses beg to regain control of their precious capital.

This kind of militant struggle can win if it doesn't play by the bosses' rules. It's necessary to forge a leadership that will unceasingly combat the poison of national chauvinism that sabotages labor struggle, a leadership that will push the fight for black freedom to the forefront. What's needed is a class-struggle workers party fighting for a workers government that will expropriate industry and replace the capitalist boom-bust cycle—the bankrupt system that produced the Midwest "rust bowl"—with international socialist economic planning. ■

# L.A. Transit...

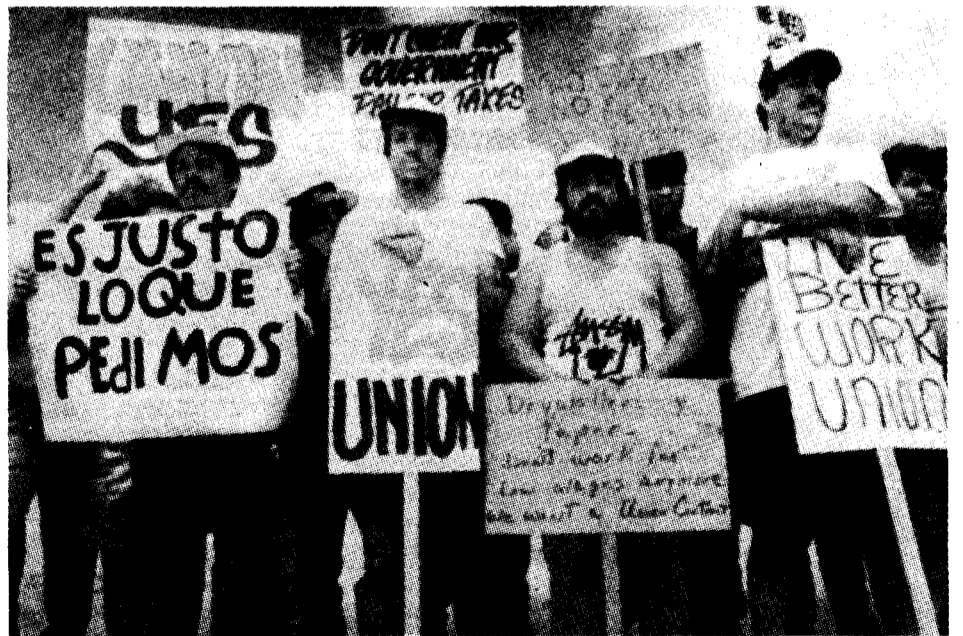
(continued from page 7)

injunctions, SWAT team attacks on picket lines, dozens of arrests on trumped up charges. In L.A., Teamster Jesse Acuna faces bogus assault and "torture" charges for defending his union picket line. From the persecution of the McNamara brothers in 1910-1911, to the North American Aviation strike in 1941 to recent brutal cop attacks on Justice for Janitors and striking drywallers, Los Angeles bosses have considered "their" city an open shop town. And the viciously racist LAPD is their armed fist. It is not only an outrage but a serious danger that cops from L.A. Sheriffs to the BART police are affiliated with the labor movement. These racist hired guns of the bosses must be ousted from the unions.

Courageous strikes like those of the SEIU janitors, the Southern California drywallers and other heavily immigrant workers, have withstood cop attacks and been an example to all of labor. Class

struggle by racially integrated unions cuts across the attempts of the ruling class to divide the workers by playing the race card—from the vicious racist oppression of blacks built into this capitalist system from the bottom up, to racist anti-immigrant hysteria. When the black and Latino masses exploded in rage after the April 1992 whitewash acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King, there should have been union strike action against *la migra* sweeps and the martial law occupation of the ghettos and barrios. Now, there is a real possibility in this strike for an alliance between the largely black and Latino strikers and the multiracial working class and oppressed masses of L.A.

The MTA and the bosses' media are trying to whip up "public opinion" against the strike, by oozing concern over the commuter—even though it is an open book how the capitalists deliberately destroyed public transportation in L.A. And now, even as they raise fares again, they are deliberately sending the bus system into decay in favor of heavily subsidized rail designed to funnel yuppie commuters into the center city, speeding past poor and minority communities. Most of the real "public" are workers and poor people who have to squeeze into overcrowded buses and who are sick and tired of having to pay for the greedy rulers who whine that they have no money after looting the economy and leaving it devastated. In fact, L.A. transit workers could mobilize massive demonstrations of support by calling for free



Barrera/L.A. Times

Striking Latino drywall workers waged sharp struggle in face of LAPD and *migra* repression.

mass transit—abolish the fares!

Mayor Riordan, with his privatization schemes to bust unions, and Governor Wilson and the Sacramento Democrats—are all going after the poor, minorities, sick, aged and homeless in an equally relentless fashion. A hard-fought winning strike by transit workers could galvanize the explosive, pent-up anger at the bottom of this increasingly barbaric, decaying system by linking labor's struggle with demands that address the needs of poor and working people who have the most to lose by the attacks on city services.

A fighting labor movement would reach out to the unemployed by fighting for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay to create jobs for all.

What's necessary is to unite the struggles of all the oppressed behind a political mobilization of the working class to seize the capitalists' property and establish a planned economy. Only a workers revolution can sweep away the capitalist parasites and give us a future.

Spartacist League  
26 July 1994

**NOTICE**  
**Workers Vanguard will skip the second issue in August.**  
**Our next issue will be dated September 2.**

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Down with Clinton's Colonial Adventures!

# U.S./UN Keep Your Hands Off Haiti!

AUGUST 1—With yesterday's United Nations rubber-stamp resolution, the invasion of Haiti threatened by President Clinton has been brought a step closer. To ensure the resolution's passage, deposed Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who has been very coy about calling for a U.S. invasion, submitted a letter calling on the international community to take "swift and definitive" action. This letter was requested by Latin American bourgeois rulers, fearful of popular unrest against *yanqui* aggression, as a cover for their capitulation to the U.S. diktat.

Over the last month, 17 warships carrying 2,800 Marines and nearly 6,000 naval personnel have been massing in the area just north of the blockaded country, conducting mock raids and "rescue" scenarios. This is in addition to 17 Coast Guard vessels seizing refugees in the Windward Passage. In charge of this flotilla is the high-tech USS *Mount Whitney*, with the commander of the U.S. Navy's

## Imperialist Troops Out of Rwanda!

Second Fleet on board.

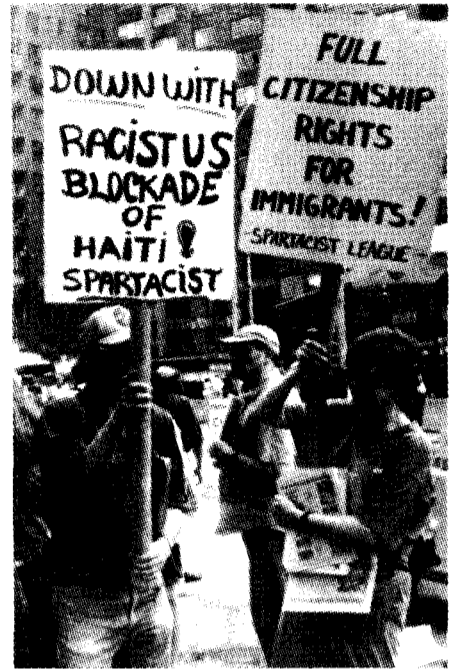
"The administration's pre-invasion checklist is virtually complete," noted *U.S. News & World Report* (1 August). Plans call for an invasion force of 15,000, followed up by a "multinational" occupation force of 25,000. Grotesquely, Washington asked Israel to participate as "peacekeepers"—no doubt based on their years of experience bloodily "pacifying" the Palestinian people. Already a multimillion-dollar "reconstruction plan" has been drawn up, under which Haiti would again become a protectorate of the United States as it was from 1915 to 1934.

But Haiti is not the only target in Clinton's sights. Only days before, the White House announced the dispatch of up to 4,000 U.S. troops to deliver

"humanitarian aid" to Rwandan refugees on the Zaire border. Following the Somalia model, Clinton stressed that the U.S. troops would be part of an international relief effort—but then added the possibility of setting up an American military base in Rwanda for over 2,000 more troops.

Behind the truly genocidal bloodshed in Rwanda is a history of imperialist rivalry and "divide and rule" (see "The Rwanda Horror: Bitter Legacy of Colonialism," *WV* No. 601, 27 May). The Hutu majority militias which slaughtered hundreds of thousands of the Tutsi minority this spring were armed and backed by France. The Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR), which has now taken over the country, driving out well over a

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WV Photo  
New York City, July 28: Spartacist League joins in protest against threatened U.S. invasion of Haiti.

# CAT, Staley, Firestone: Class-Struggle Leadership Is Key Labor "War Zone" in Decatur

## "Corporate Campaign," Protectionism Sabotage Union Struggle

DECATUR, Illinois—A wave of labor struggle has spread across the Midwest as members of the United Rubber Workers (URW) struck five Bridgestone/Firestone tire plants on July 12 and three Pirelli Armstrong factories a few days later. The walkouts brought the number of striking rubber workers to nearly 8,000, including the tire builders who walked out of Dunlop's plant in Huntsville, Alabama. Also on strike since June 21 are 14,000 Caterpillar workers, members of the United Auto Workers (UAW). Undermined and misled from the start by the UAW and URW Internationals, these limited struggles are a far cry from the industrywide action needed to marshal labor's forces against highly profitable corporations that are intent on squeezing out every last dollar from the workers. Yet in a few key industrial centers the opportunity is growing for a powerful outburst of concerted labor action extending *across industry lines* and led by militant unionists.

Nowhere is this possibility more sharply posed than here in the central Illinois manufacturing city of Decatur. The industrial belt on the city's east side includes not only the large CAT and Firestone plants that are on strike, but also Staley Manufacturing Co.'s huge corn processing plant, where 760 members of Paperworkers (UPIU) Local 7837 have been locked out for over a year. Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), a processing "competitor" that has been aiding Staley during the lockout, also owns two large plants in this complex of factories and rail lines. Meanwhile, four locals of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) are poised to strike Illinois Power, which services a huge mid-state region, when a 30-day contract extension runs out on August 1. "All we need now is ADM. The place would be paralyzed," commented one CAT striker to *Workers Vanguard*.

That is exactly right. With 7 percent of Decatur's entire workforce already either on strike or locked out in bitter conflicts, the road to *victory* lies in pulling together these forces in a common strike front. It was just such a citywide shutdown 60 years ago in the auto parts manufacturing city of Toledo, Ohio that helped set the stage for the militant organizing drives that built the UAW and other industrial unions. The 1934 Toledo Auto-Lite strike was led by socialists in the American Workers Party who welded workers from different crafts and industries along with the unemployed into a powerful force. They built mass pickets in defiance of injunctions, drove off the scabs, battled the police, faced down the National Guard—and won. The main obstacle to this kind of hard class struggle today is the AFL-CIO bureaucracy and its dead-end strategy of union-management "cooperation." In particular, the union tops' obedience to the bosses' government and support to their Democratic Party is a ticket for defeat for labor.

### Labor Must Fight Racial Oppression!

Decatur has one of the highest unemployment rates in Illinois. This joblessness falls especially heavily on Decatur's black population, which finds itself increasingly segregated into a depressed inner-city ghetto. Like in CAT's Peoria, hiring in this company town has never included more than a tiny percentage of black workers. And in the past year the Ku Klux Klan has targeted this region and Decatur in particular in a recruitment drive for racist terror. Though most blacks have been excluded from higher-paying unionized jobs by the massive layoffs, there still exists a core of veteran black unionists in the UAW, UPIU and URW to help link the power of organized labor

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Slodounik/Decatur Herald & Review  
Decatur, Illinois: Rubber workers hit the picket line; workers at Caterpillar and Staley are already out. For mass pickets! Midwest labor's gotta play hardball to win!