

## U.S. Imperialism Out of Haiti!



McNamee/Newsweek



Applewhite/Wide World

Haitian president Aristide at the Pentagon (left) pledges support to U.S. occupation. In Port-au-Prince, U.S. war minister Perry and Gen. Shalikashvili trumpet "success" of colonial invasion.

# Aristide: Front for U.S. Colonial Occupation

OCTOBER 10—The U.S. colonial occupiers of Haiti have set the stage for the return of exiled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide scheduled for October 15. Police chief Michel François has moved to a luxurious villa across the border in the Dominican Republic, and army chief Raoul Cédras and chief of staff Philippe Biamby have resigned their posts. But Cédras' replacement is General Duperval, another leader of the bloody 1991 military coup. The reality is that Aristide is returning as a front man for the racist American occupation and an agent for continued impe-

### Death Squad Leaders on CIA Payroll

rialist exploitation. The Yankee occupiers will "retrain" the murderous police forces to put down the Haitian masses, who will not be satisfied with Aristide's promise to lift them "from misery to poverty in dignity," as he vowed in a speech to the United Nations last week.

The U.S. occupation has been carefully orchestrated to show crowds cheering

U.S. forces as their "liberators" during the occasional American forays against the *attaché* killers, who are descended from the dreaded Tontons Macoutes of the Duvalier dictatorship. But, as we warned they would, U.S. troops have repeatedly intervened to save the *attachés* from the masses thirsting for justice and vengeance. When thousands marched

through Port-au-Prince to mark the third anniversary of the coup on September 30, American troops positioned themselves to stop demonstrators from going "up the hill" toward the plush homes of the elite

in Pétionville, leaving five marchers to be killed by *attachés*. The same day, U.S. soldiers chased off hungry slum dwellers who broke into a supermarket warehouse.

The Haitian death squad regime has always been a puppet of U.S. imperialism. Cédras was trained in the U.S. and François went to the "School of the *continued on page 5*

## U.S. Get Your Bloody Hands Off Iraq!

OCTOBER 10—To ensure continuing control over the Persian Gulf oil fields, in 1991 U.S. imperialism devastated Iraq, killing over 100,000 people in the fighting and its aftermath. Following the Gulf War, a brutal economic embargo remained in place aimed at reducing the most technologically advanced country in the Arab East to starvation and economic ruin. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died of malnu-

trition and disease, with child mortality soaring to 85,000 a year.

Now Washington claims that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein has moved a number of army divisions toward the Kuwaiti border as a pressure tactic to bring about an end to the UN-sanctioned embargo. For their own reasons, France and Russia now want to ease the sanctions, while the U.S. is bent on the total degradation of Iraq. Moreover, Clinton is desperately trying to overcome his abysmal standings in public opinion polls, a month before Congressional elections, by military adventures abroad—first the colonial occupation of Haiti, now war threats against that tried and true target,

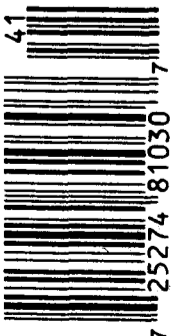
Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

At least 36,000 U.S. troops are being sent to Kuwait along with hundreds of warplanes; another 25,000 troops are on standby. Pentagon spokesmen are visibly chomping at the bit to again launch their arsenal of mega-death against Iraqi soldiers.

As we go to press, the Baghdad government has announced its army divisions will be pulled back from the Kuwaiti border. Nonetheless, the U.S. military buildup in the region is continuing, raising the danger of a major U.S. attack on Iraq regardless of what Hussein does. The *New York Times* (10 October) reports that "there is growing support within the

White House for an aggressive battle plan intended to finish off the job that Mr. Bush left undone: making sure that Iraq no longer poses a threat to its neighbors."

It is U.S. imperialism which is the main threat to the peoples of the Near East. As U.S. warplanes and missiles laid waste to Iraq, Bush proclaimed a "New World Order" of American global domination in the interests of Wall Street and the Fortune 500. Workers and oppressed peoples throughout the world must demand: U.S. imperialism—hands off Iraq! U.S. and all imperialist forces out of the Persian Gulf! Down with the imperialist embargo of Iraq!



# Auto Workers Need Class-Struggle Leadership

## Flint Strikers Showed Union Power

You hear it everywhere. The big business press lectures that "strikes don't work anymore." The AFL-CIO tops say that unless Congress protects labor from scabs, the power of the strike is lost. Fake "militants" and reformists assert that workers have to stay on the job and use the "inside game." But Flint workers in UAW Local 599 taught a different lesson last week.

On September 27, they shut down

GM's giant Buick City complex, demanding that the company hire more workers and put an end to grinding and dangerous overtime. The average age of Buick City workers is 47, and they have been working up to 66-hour weeks. The plant has gone from 24,000 workers to only 11,500, as auto bosses have slashed jobs while driving up the rate of exploitation of those workers who are left. One worker who is back on the line after a



Buick strike led to cascading shutdowns throughout GM chain.

heart attack just five months ago, said of the pace, "You carry the nitro and you hope."

Just hours after the strike began, GM plants began to fall like dominoes. The company's just-in-time inventory system, which depends on the UAW bureaucrats to enforce labor peace, can work to the advantage of workers who are prepared to strike and strike hard. Flint produces key engines and transmission components for the entire GM empire, from North America to Brazil and Europe.

By 7 p.m. the night of the strike, GM announced that Lansing Plants Nos. 1 and 2 would shut down, idling 6,550 workers. On September 29, the company shut down the Linden, New Jersey truck plant and canceled weekend overtime at plants in Wilmington, Delaware and Oklahoma City. Another 1,000 workers were sent home from transmission plants in Warren and Ypsilanti, Michigan. By the next day, when the UAW tops and GM announced a tentative settlement, closings were expanded to plants in Pontiac and in Shreveport, Louisiana and the Ste. Thérèse plant in Quebec—another 8,000 workers.

In the settlement, GM agreed to hire 779 workers at Buick City from the ranks of the over 50,000 who have been thrown on the street in the last three years. The UAW leaders, who have acted as the auto

bosses' cops in enforcing the billions in givebacks and hundreds of thousands of layoffs, called off the strike before GM was really squeezed. If the strike had lasted through the weekend, one-quarter of GM's production would have shut down. Another few days and the entire company would come to a standstill. Flint workers won jobs because they had GM by the throat—it was Solidarity House that let go.

The grueling exploitation and overtime at Buick City is the rule at GM and throughout U.S. industry. The Flint strike should have been spread through all of GM. A worker from Local 326 at nearby Fisher Inland Guide was one of many area workers who joined the picket lines. He told a *Workers Vanguard* salesman that the UAW International prohibited his local from striking, despite 66-hour workweeks.

The power that was shown in the Flint strike has been hamstrung by the UAW bureaucracy's grotesque class collaboration. GM continues to boast that it intends to slash as many as 30,000 more jobs in the near future, just in North America. The struggle for jobs for all by reducing the workweek with no loss in pay ("30 for 40") requires the building of class-struggle leadership fighting to sweep away capitalist exploitation once and for all. ■



TROTSKY

### The Popular Front: Obstacle to Proletarian Revolution

From Spain in the 1930s to Chile in the early 1970s, the policy of popular-frontism—a coalition of the parties and mass organizations of the working class with the "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie—has paved the way for bloody reaction. Even in more "peaceful" conditions, such as the election of Mitterrand in France in 1981, the popular front stands in the way of a revolutionary outcome, paralyzing the proletarian and therefore driving the petty bourgeoisie into the arms of the right. As Trotsky wrote at the time of the 1936 French elections, when the Stalinist Communist Party formed a People's Front with the social democrats and bourgeois Radical Party supposedly directed against the "200 families," the aristocracy of French capital:

As for the Communists, extremely proud of their initiative in the cause of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, they picture the People's Front as an alliance between the proletariat and the middle classes. What a parody on Marxism! The Radical Party is not at all the party of the petty bourgeoisie. Nor is it a "bloc between the middle and the petty bourgeoisie," in accordance with the idiotic definition of the Moscow *Pravda*. The middle bourgeoisie exploits the petty bourgeoisie not only economically but also politically, and it itself is the agency of finance capital. To give hierarchical political relations, based upon exploitation, the neutral name of a "bloc" is to make mock of reality. A horseman is not a bloc between a man and a horse....

An elementary axiom of Marxist strategy reads that the alliance between the proletariat and the little men of the city and country can be realized only in the irreconcilable struggle against the traditional parliamentary representation of the petty bourgeoisie. In order to attract the peasant to the side of the worker, it is necessary to tear the peasant away from the Radical politician, who subjects the peasant to finance capital. In contradistinction to this, the People's Front, the conspiracy between the labor bureaucracy and the worst political exploiters of the middle classes, is capable only of killing the faith of the masses in the revolutionary road and of driving them into the arms of the fascist counterrevolution....

The coming parliamentary elections, no matter what their outcome, will not in themselves bring any serious changes into the situation....

The struggle against the "200 families," against fascism and war, for peace, bread, and freedom, and other magnificent things is either a lie or it is the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. The toilers of France are faced with the problem of the revolutionary conquest of power not as a distant goal but as the task of the coming period. Meanwhile, the Socialist and Communist leaders not only renounce the revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat, but resist it with all their strength. Fraternizing with the bourgeoisie, they hound and expel the Bolsheviks. So greatly do they hate the revolution and dread it!... The entire course of the French labor movement for the last twelve years has placed the task of creating a new revolutionary party on the order of the day.

—Leon Trotsky, "France at the Turning Point" (March 1936)

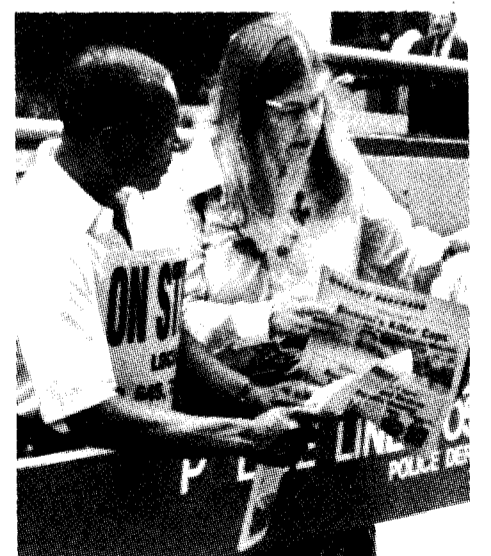


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## WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The Spartacist League is the U.S. Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

*Workers Vanguard* (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and with a 3-week interval in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is October 11.

No. 608

14 October 1994

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WV Photos

Heavily black and Hispanic AFSCME 420 hospital workers rally September 22 against the NYC mayor's racist cutbacks (left). Striking Legal Aid workers faced "PATCO treatment" in city's union-busting drive.

# Giuliani Axes NYC Jobs

## Harlem Hospital in Danger

"Giuliani is his name, union-busting is his game," chanted hundreds of striking Legal Aid lawyers outside lower Manhattan courts on October 4. They struck after the city-funded Legal Aid Society went after their health benefits and refused to grant a miserly 4.5 percent pay raise over two years. Local 1199 clerical staff walked out in solidarity. The lawyers, who represent poor defendants in court, start at \$31,000 a year. But Republican mayor Rudolph Giuliani—who was No. 3 man in Reagan's "Justice" Department during the mass firing of PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981—responded with an immediate ultimatum. If the 1,100 lawyers were not back on the job the following morning, they would never work for the city again, he threatened, adding that he was "sending a message" to every one of more than 200,000 city workers.

There should have been an immediate mobilization of the labor movement to support the Legal Aid attorneys as Giuliani goes after city jobs and working conditions with a vengeance. Union president Michael Letwin declared, "We are the first ones to stand up to this bully and we hope New Yorkers will stand up and say, 'Enough.'" Instead the pro-Democratic Party municipal union tops volunteered as labor cops for the Republican union-hater. Teachers union head Sandra Feldman and AFSCME District Council 37 chief Stanley Hill were the worst backstabbers. Hill whined, "I'm concerned about the rhetoric out here because we've been able to sit down with

the Mayor and negotiate." Even as Giuliani issued his strikebreaking threat, Hill was holding talks with the city to negotiate away \$200 million in workers' health benefits.

Left to face Rudy the Slasher alone, by the following morning the strikers had taken down their picket lines and agreed to return to work under a permanent no-strike clause.

Just three months ago, in his first city budget, Giuliani cut \$1.1 billion in health care, social services and education, axing over 6,000 jobs with paltry "buyouts." Now he's back for another \$800 million, targeting 30,000 unionized city workers for severance or layoffs and warning the rest to forget about raises "for the definable future." Hospitals, welfare, schools, AIDS care, parks, libraries and youth programs are all on the chopping block. Home care for the elderly is to be cut back, as is the Division of AIDS Services, which coordinates benefits for many of the 61,000 AIDS patients in the city. Up to 8,000 welfare and social services workers are to be eliminated, a grievous blow to the 1.4 million New Yorkers receiving public assistance and food stamps.

While his cops go after squeegee men trying to eke out some form of survival, Giuliani wants homeless people who

avail themselves of the filthy, overcrowded shelters to pay "rent" unless they attend degrading "treatment and training" programs. Now, fresh on the heels of breaking the Legal Aid staffers strike, Giuliani has declared war on the city's Home Relief program, demanding that over 230,000 welfare recipients work as slave labor to replace laid-off unionized workers.

Grotesquely claiming he is improving the "quality of life," Giuliani is out to make life ever more miserable for the sick and homeless and the black and Hispanic poor. Last month, Giuliani's hospital chief announced that 3,000 workers, one in every 16, would be laid off and the hospital budget slashed by \$357 million. The chief target of Giuliani's slash-and-burn operation is Harlem Hospital.

In one of the wealthiest cities in the world, where almost one-third of all doctors in the U.S. are trained, there remains just one city hospital to provide care for the hundreds of thousands of black and Hispanic people living in the hundreds of square blocks in upper Manhattan comprising Harlem and its surrounding communities. Over the last 20 years, eight hospitals in the area have closed. Harlem Hospital's trauma center last year handled 16,000 patients. Yet workers trying to care for patients routinely

run out of sheets in the maternity ward, Clorox to wash down the TB ward, even toilet paper. That is the brutal visage of "Wealthcare USA."

Giuliani spokesmen haughtily point out that 35 percent of the beds at Harlem Hospital are empty. *They're empty because of reduced staff.* Already reeling under successive cuts by previous city administrations, Harlem Hospital Center is now slated to lose another 303 workers, cutting back in-patient care by 135 beds. In an area where the infant mortality rate is a staggering 19 per 1,000, higher than in some Third World countries, one nurse may have to care for as many as 36 pediatric patients. Now 65 percent of pediatric beds and more than a third of obstetric beds are to be eliminated. Cuts will also endanger the hospital's clinic system, which serves 100,000 patients per year. The burn and radiation-therapy units were already shut down earlier this year.

Speaking at a hospital workers rally, AFSCME Local 420 president James Butler vowed, "We will fight to the last drop of blood." But the union mislead-ers, working hand in glove with the Democratic Party city council, have abetted Giuliani as he drops his budget ax on the necks of tens of thousands of heavily minority city workers and the black and Hispanic poor. Sanitation union bureaucrats recently agreed to a 20 percent increase in the workload and the loss of at least 600 jobs through attrition. Transport Workers Union Local 100 tops hid behind the state's strikebreaking

*continued on page 5*

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- Ernest Mandel  
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- Joseph Seymour  
Central Committee, Spartacist League/U.S., International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

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New York City

# U.S. Marines Slaughtered 15,000

## Yankee Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934



National Archives



Corpse of Haitian peasant leader Charlemagne Peralte, assassinated in 1919 by U.S. Marines and displayed to terrorize population. U.S. troops capturing Port-au-Prince in 1915, beginning 19-year occupation.

"I spent 33 years and 4 months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force—the Marine Corps.... And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism.... "Thus, I helped make Mexico... safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street."

—Major General Smedley Butler, "America's Armed Forces," *Common Sense*, October 1935

Clinton's colonial occupation of Haiti was, at first, hailed by desperate Haitians hoping for protection against the death-squad terror of the Cédras regime and its paramilitary *attachés*. But the U.S. military has gone into Haiti precisely to prevent the uprooting of the military machine which Washington created and maintained through decades of Yankee imperialist domination. When the Marines landed in Port-au-Prince in 1915, it was the beginning of an American occupation which lasted 19 years, killed thousands, and left the bloody U.S.-trained National Guard in control.

The pretext for the July 1915 invasion came when despised Haitian president Vilbrun Guillaume Sam was torn limb from limb by an enraged multitude. Beset by insurrectionary forces, Sam's supporters had mowed down 173 political prisoners in the capital. U.S. warships rushed to the scene to put down the uprising. President Woodrow Wilson cited the possibility that Germany might build a base at Haiti's Môle St. Nicolas, facing the eastern tip of Cuba. Washington's concern to secure access routes to the Panama Canal, which opened a year earlier, "certainly weighed in the balance of the motivations for the occupation," writes Suzy Castor in her 1971 study *La ocupación norteamericana de Haití y sus consecuencias (1915-1934)*. But "fundamental" to Washington's aims, she wrote, was the "economic motiva-

tion": to make Haiti safe for exploitation by American capital. This was "dollar diplomacy" by gunboat.

A telegram to the U.S. Navy Department by Admiral William Caperton shortly after the invasion requested additional forces to disband the guerrilla soldiers known as *cacos*, adding: "Such action now imperative at Port au Prince if United States desires to negotiate treaty for financial control of Haiti." Already in December 1914, a contingent of Marines had landed in the Haitian capital at the request of the National City Bank of New York and seized \$500,000 from the National Bank of Haiti. The purpose was to force the Haitian government to sign over control of the customhouses.

The Yankee occupiers seized control of Haiti's government and economy. Just as American soldiers are today deployed around the Haitian parliament to show who's boss, in 1915 Marines guarded the doors of the building where assembled deputies and senators voted in Washington's hand-picked "president," Dartiguenave, who had agreed to U.S. control of Haiti's finances. To ensure ratification of a treaty effectively making Haiti a U.S. protectorate, Caperton seized unsigned bank notes intended for the Haitian government and proclaimed that they would be turned over when the Senate approved the treaty.

The occupation was brutal and racist to the core. A report in the *Nation* (10 July 1920) testified:

"The five years of American occupation... have served as a commentary upon the white civilization which still burns black men and women at the stake. For Haitian men, women, and children, to a number estimated at 3,000, innocent for the most part of any offense, have been shot down by American machine gun and rifle bullets; black men and women have been put to torture to make them give information; theft, arson, and murder have been committed almost with impunity upon the persons and property of Haitians by white men wearing the uniform of the United States....

"I have heard officers wearing the United States uniform in the interior of Haiti talk of 'bumping off' (i.e., killing) 'Gooks' as if it were a variety of sport like duck hunting."

The occupation force was dominated by white Southerners led by Marine col-

onel Littleton W. T. Waller, a Virginian who replaced Caperton as the U.S. commanding officer. Waller made known his objection to "bowing and scraping to these c--ns." U.S. authorities instituted a color bar against "race-mixing" after the arrival of white women from the U.S. The American military forced rural Haitians to carry a "*bon habitant*" (good citizen) card which Marines could demand to inspect at any time. Failure to produce the card meant immediate arrest or even execution.

The imperialists attacked the very roots of Haiti's independence, gained through the revolutionary struggle led by Toussaint L'Ouverture that smashed chattel slavery more than a century before. In 1918 Haitian peasants rose up in the *cacos* rebellion against subjection to the forced-labor *corvée* system. Black American writer James Weldon Johnson wrote after visiting Haiti in 1920:

"The Occupation seized men wherever it could find them, and no able-bodied Haitian was safe from such raids, which most closely resembled the African slave raids of past centuries. And slavery it was, though temporary. By day or by night... Haitians were seized and forcibly taken to toil for months in far sections of the country. Those who protested or resisted were beaten into submission.... Those attempting to escape were shot...."

—quoted in Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman, *Dollar Diplomacy* (1925)

Led by Charlemagne Peralte, the *cacos* overran the *gendarmérie* (police). Marines responded with a bloodbath. Peralte was shot and his corpse hung from a door. Photos of his execution, which resembled the crucifixion of Christ, were disseminated throughout the countryside, but this only inspired more resistance from the religious peasants. Horrifying examples of vengeance by Marine and *gendarme* squads—including the beheading of a young blind man, the killing of entire families and pregnant women—were documented by Haitians in a petition to the Secretary of the U.S. Navy (reprinted in the *Nation*, 21 May 1921).

The rebellion lasted about five years. A U.S. military inquiry put the number of *cacos* killed at 3,250, while Marines

and *gendarmes* suffered only 100 killed or wounded. This was the first reported case of coordinated air-ground combat, as planes bombed rebels trapped by Marines. In one incident, U.S. troops killed over 50 (and possibly as many as 200) *cacos*, who had been hurling rocks. The sole U.S. "casualty" was a Marine who lost two front teeth. For his "bravery" in this "battle," Major Smedley Butler was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, thanks to an order by Assistant Naval Secretary Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Benefiting from the U.S. occupation were companies like Standard Fruit and the Haitian American Sugar Company, which took advantage of new land ownership laws to massively dispossess the peasants. U.S. companies were encouraged to set up shop where, as a New York business daily reported, "The run-of-the-mill Haitian is handy, easily directed, and gives a hard day's labor for 20 cents, while in Panama the same day's work cost \$3" (quoted in James Ridgeway, ed., *The Haiti Files* [1994]). The same theme was struck in the 1980s when the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) touted Haiti's "highly productive, low cost labor." When President Aristide in 1991 timidly tried to raise the minimum wage from 22 cents to 37 cents per hour, AID howled against this "high distortion in labor costs."

In 1929, an outbreak of social struggle led the U.S. to question the usefulness of continuing the occupation. After a five-week student strike, American authorities called for more Marine reinforcements. In response, customhouse workers in Port-au-Prince went on strike, and Haitians swarmed into the streets to throw rocks at the U.S. troops. In the southern town of Les Cayes, Marines killed 12 protesters. But the writing was on the wall. A U.S. investigation of the 1929 protests, the Forbes Commission, recommended a policy of "Haitianization" and gradual withdrawal of the Marines. Under the sign of FDR's "good neighbor" policy in Latin America, the last U.S. troops were withdrawn in 1934. Yet U.S. control of Haiti's finances continued until after World War II.

An estimated 15,000 Haitians had perished under the bloody occupation. To run Haiti after its exit, the U.S. left the new *gendarmérie*, the National Guard, which it developed and trained after disbanding the Haitian military. Since 1934, one-third of Haiti's budget has been spent on the military. The U.S. has propped up every Haitian despot since that time, including the infamous "Papa Doc" Duvalier, who organized the Tontons Macoutes thugs and killed 50,000 opponents. His demented son "Baby Doc" was forced to flee to France amid a mass upheaval in 1986, and the U.S. sponsored the current junta of torturers and murderers under Raoul Cédras. To put an end to the cycle of puppet dictators it's necessary to defeat the imperialist puppet masters. That must be the common effort of Haitian and American workers against the capitalist rulers, from Port-au-Prince to Washington and Wall Street, who have turned the first black republic into a neo-colonial hell. *U.S. out of Haiti!* ■

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# U.S. Out of Haiti...

(continued from page 1)

Americas" (SOA)—otherwise known as the "School of Assassins"—for foreign officers at Fort Benning, Georgia. Now an article in the *Nation* (24 October) by Allan Nairn reveals that blood-drenched *attaché* chief Emmanuel Constant was a paid CIA informant. FRAPH, the party of the death squads, was set up on the urging of Constant's U.S. handler, Defense Intelligence Agency Colonel Patrick Collins, as a "balance" to Aristide's *lavalas* (flood) movement. DIA man Collins and CIA station chief Donald Terry were inside Cédras' military headquarters when Aristide was overthrown. Now Collins is back in Haiti as an officer in the occupation force.

To the extent that the Cédras regime "confronted" Washington, this simply reflected divisions among the U.S. rulers. Thus it turns out that Constant was still on the U.S. payroll when his *attachés* chased off the USS *Harlan County* from docking in Port-au-Prince last year. More recently, on October 4, Constant was feted at a U.S. embassy "press conference" where, surrounded by concertina wire to protect him from an enraged crowd, he called on "everyone to put down their stones, their tires, their guns." Constant and the Haitian military know that the U.S. will continue to rely on them to police the masses on behalf of the imperialist exploiters. Now Aristide is promoting a "new" police force, to be trained by "international police monitors" headed by former New York police chief Raymond Kelly.

The American population is far from enthusiastic about the occupation of Haiti. But in the absence of U.S. casualties, there has been no significant active opposition to Clinton's invasion. But the "humanitarian" façade of the Yankee invasion will soon crumble, as it did in Somalia. It is all the more critical now for revolutionaries to combat illusions in Washington's "democratic" pre-



"Democracy" U.S. Marine style: Haitian parliament surrounded by barbed wire and machine guns.

tensions and forthrightly demand: *U.S. imperialism out of Haiti!*

In fact, the biggest cheerleaders for a U.S. protectorate over Haiti are liberal Democrats such as the Congressional Black Caucus. Among them are former Vietnam-era "doves" turned "hawks," like columnist Christopher Hitchens, who crows that "for now I proudly wear the yellow ribbon that supports our boys in Hispaniola" (*Nation*, 17 October). And many on the reformist left, which overwhelmingly hailed Aristide's election, supported the U.S./"UN" starvation embargo of Haiti while some are trying to duck the question of the invasion.

Sam Marcy's Workers World Party has consistently and uncritically enthused over Aristide and his petty-bourgeois nationalist *lavalas* movement, which was tied to "democratic" imperialism through liberal bourgeois figures like Antoine Izméry. Meanwhile the Revolutionary Communist Party carries a front-page headline warning that "U.S. Occupiers Can't Be Liberators," but buries

any statement of opposition to the invasion in fine print on an inside page (*Revolutionary Worker*, 9 October).

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) joined the liberal chorus for imperialist intervention, saying: "The call to maintain and strengthen the economic embargo of Haiti remains an important way to aid the Haitian toilers in their fight to topple the brutal military regime" (*Militant*, 13 December 1991). Later, when the devastating effects of the embargo on the Haitian masses could not be ignored, the SWP opportunists changed their tune. But as recently as last summer, the International Socialist Organization quoted one of its recruits from Aristide's administration who argues: "If the U.S. was serious...then—okay—we could try an embargo, a serious embargo" (*Socialist Worker*, June 1994).

Some Haitian left groups, like the National Federation of Haitian Students and the National Popular Assembly (APN), have opposed the U.S. occupation, which the APN called "another

humiliation." But APN spokesman Harry Numa claims that the occupation provides "a moment for the Haitian people to go out, to express what they haven't expressed for three years," and that the masses "have to accept [the occupation] now, to see if they can get Aristide back. Once they get that, the fight will be against the occupation" (*Haiti-Progress*, 28 September). But Aristide is being brought back with U.S. bayonets, pledged to uphold the dictates of international capital and to "reconcile" with the military and *attaché* thugs. His masters are not in the slums of Port-au-Prince, but in the White House and on Wall Street.

We have warned from the beginning that the U.S. invasion poses a deadly threat not only to the long-suffering Haitian masses but to the Cuban Revolution, which overthrew Yankee imperialism and its local thugs in 1959-60. Indeed, while the Pentagon initially resisted going into Haiti, Clinton's national security adviser Anthony Lake and State Department deputy Strobe Talbott pushed for the invasion as part of "a new script for U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War world" and in order "to enshrine a new doctrine for U.S. military intervention on behalf of democracy" (*Washington Post*, 25 September). This is an undisguised threat against Cuba, which since the destruction of the Soviet Union has faced ever more beligerent attacks and counterrevolutionary pressures from the U.S.

Rapacious U.S. imperialism poses a deadly danger to all the peoples of the world. As the Haitian masses will all too soon realize, the U.S. has invaded their country to prop up the system of capitalist exploitation which has kept them downtrodden and impoverished. An internationalist Leninist vanguard party would strive to unite Haitian and Dominican workers, on the island of Hispaniola and throughout the diaspora in the Eastern seaboard of North America, where as part of the American proletariat they can take the class struggle to the heart of the imperialist beast. U.S. out of Haiti now! Defend Cuba against Yankee imperialism! ■

# NYC Jobs...

(continued from page 3)

Taylor Law to push through a contract which allows the use of part-time bus drivers and opens the door to "one person train operation"—a deadly threat to passenger safety and union jobs.

Four years ago, the same sellouts paved the way for the last round of layoffs and cutbacks during the administration of black Democrat David Dinkins. Now, they tell city workers to beg from Governor Mario Cuomo and line up at the polls in November. Leading the pack is Hospital Workers Local 1199 head Dennis Rivera, who moonlights as a vice chairman of the state Democratic Party. Rivera's latest contract with the city's private hospitals has been touted as a "coup," promising "guaranteed jobs" in exchange for a wage freeze. But part-time workers and those with less than two years' seniority were promised nothing, and Rivera admits that if private hospitals close, then "all bets are off."

The union tops peddle the capitalists' lie that "there is no more money." There's plenty of money for the Wall Street banks, which get 8 percent of NYC's \$31 billion annual budget in interest payments. Billions more of Medicaid dollars are poured into the profit-bloated HMOs. Meanwhile, millions of dollars continue to go to the prisons and police to enforce the city's war on the homeless, minority youth and the poor.

Giuliani was elected riding a racist cop mobilization against the city's black and Hispanic population, who have since been subjected to a deadly shooting spree.

Recently, the cops almost killed one of their own, as a white off-duty officer pumped four bullets into the back of a black plainclothes transit policeman on a crowded subway platform. On September 27, black teenager Jamiel Johnson was shot in the stomach and critically wounded by a cop in Bedford-Stuyvesant who claimed the youth had a "realistic" plastic handgun. The same night, also in Brooklyn, 13-year-old Nicholas Heyward Jr. was shot dead while playing with a toy gun in the Gowanus Houses by a trigger-happy housing cop. Signs posted by angry residents asked, "Whose 13-year-old is next for Robocop?"

Catapulted into office by a slim margin of white Staten Island votes, Giuliani appeals to his constituency of Wall Street yuppies and white ethnic enclaves by seeking to blame the decay and immiseration of New York on its victims—the nonwhite majority, working people and the poor. His racist backlash budget has been dubbed "the revenge of the outer boroughs." But his stringent austerity and union-busting are a frontal assault on the living conditions of all workers, part of a nationwide capitalist offensive to "downsize" municipal services and "privatize" public employee unions out of existence. From Los Angeles and San Francisco transit unions to sanitation workers in Philly and New York, the ruling class is concentrating its fire on the public employee unions with the same zeal that they went after the industrial unions of the Midwest a decade ago.

It will take sharp class struggle to stop them. A black social services worker at an anti-cutback rally said, "To beat Giuliani, we have to cripple this city." A militant citywide strike by transit, sani-

tation, communication and hospital workers could indeed cripple this center of financial capital. But any serious labor struggle will run head on into the whole array of no-strike laws, court injunctions and police strikebreaking that the bosses have at their disposal.

The lesson of the "PATCO treatment" meted out by Giuliani to Legal Aid workers is not that strikes can't win, but that you need a class-struggle leadership that will mobilize the working class and all

the oppressed against the capitalist rulers. It's not just Giuliani: prominent Wall Street Democrat Felix Rohatyn has been calling on the mayor to "extract major union concessions," with Democratic governor Mario Cuomo joining in the cutback chorus. It is urgently necessary to fight for a *class-struggle workers party* that fights for a workers government to expropriate the capitalists and rebuild the cities through a planned socialist economy. ■

## STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Publication title: *Workers Vanguard*.
2. Publication no.: 09-8770.
3. Filing date: 27 September 1994.
4. Issue frequency: Bi-weekly (except 3 alternate issues in June, July, August and 3-week interval in December).
5. No. of issues published annually: 22.
6. Annual subscription price: \$10.00.
7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 41 Warren St., New York, NY 10007.
8. Complete mailing address of headquarters or general business office of publisher: 41 Warren St., New York, NY 10007.
9. Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher—Spartacist Publishing Company, 41 Warren St., NY, NY 10007; Editor—Jan Norden, 41 Warren St., NY, NY 10007; Managing Editor—None.
10. Owner: Spartacist Publishing Company (Unincorporated Association), 41 Warren St., NY, NY 10007.
11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None.
12. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates: Not applicable.
13. Publication name: *Workers Vanguard*.
14. Issue date for circulation data below: 16 September 1994.
15. Extent and nature of circulation: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: a. Total no. copies (Net press run): 16,545; b. Paid and/or

requested circulation: (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 10,777; (2) Paid or requested mail subscriptions: 2,620; c. Total paid and/or requested circulation (Sum of 15b(1) and 15b(2)): 13,397; d. Free distribution by mail: 338; e. Free distribution outside the mail: 0; f. Total free distribution (Sum of 15d and 15e): 338; g. Total distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f): 13,735; h. Copies not distributed: (1) Office use, leftovers, spoiled: 2,810; (2) Return from news agents: 0; i. Total (Sum of 15g, 15h(1), and 15h(2)): 16,545. Percent paid and/or requested circulation: 97.51%.

Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: a. Total no. copies (Net press run): 20,000; b. Paid and/or requested circulation: (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 14,139; (2) Paid or requested mail subscriptions: 3,038; c. Total paid and/or requested circulation (Sum of 15b(1) and 15b(2)): 17,177; d. Free distribution by mail: 343; e. Free distribution outside the mail: 0; f. Total free distribution (Sum of 15d and 15e): 343; g. Total distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f): 17,520; h. Copies not distributed: (1) Office use, leftovers, spoiled: 2,480; (2) Return from news agents: 0; i. Total (Sum of 15g, 15h(1), and 15h(2)): 20,000. Percent paid and/or requested circulation: 98.04%.

16. This statement of ownership will be printed in the 14 October 1994 issue of this publication.

17. Signature and title of editor, publisher, business manager, or owner: (Signed) Jan Norden (Editor), 21 September 1994. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions and/or civil sanctions.

# Declaration of Fraternal Relations Between Luta Metalúrgica (Brazil) and the International Communist League

The following declaration is the result of intensive discussions indicating wide-ranging programmatic agreement between the International Communist League and the Luta Metalúrgica (Metalworkers Struggle) group of Brazil. Luta Metalúrgica recently broke from Causa Operária, which is part of the tendency led by Jorge Altamira's Argentine Partido Obrero. The initial basis for these discussions was a common principled programmatic position of proletarian opposition to popular fronts, including calling for no vote to any candidates of such class-collaborationist formations. Another key issue bringing our two organizations together was the Leninist understanding of the role of the revolutionary party as a "tribune of the people" in fighting all forms of special oppression.

\* \* \*

"The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.... [T]he crisis of the proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International."

—Leon Trotsky, "The Transitional Program" (1938)

The Luta Metalúrgica group of Volta Redonda, Brazil and the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) concur in this declaration of fraternal relations as part of the urgent struggle to overcome the crisis of proletarian leadership through re-forging the Fourth International as the democratic-centralist world party of socialist revolution.

## I

"The question of questions at present is the People's Front. The left centrists seek to present this question as a tactical or even as a technical maneuver, so as to be able to peddle their wares in the shadow of the People's Front. In reality, the People's Front is the main question of proletarian class strategy for this epoch. It also offers the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism."

—L. Trotsky, Letter to the Dutch RSAP (July 1936) [emphasis in original]

Ever since Marx and Engels' struggle for the basic principle of the revolutionary independence of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie, genuine Marxism has fought against class collaboration. The fight by Lenin and the Bolsheviks against Kerensky's Provisional Government (which Trotsky later called the greatest historical example of a popular front) culminated in the most important victory of the world proletariat: the October Revolution of 1917. In opposition to the betrayal of the Stalinists, social democrats and centrists, the Fourth Internationalists under Trotsky's leadership fought head-on against all support to popular fronts, which in France and Spain led to terrible defeats for the proletariat, thereby paving the way for the second imperialist world war.

In our times, the struggle against popular-frontism draws a line between revolutionary Marxism and all variants of opportunism. In Chile, Allende's Unidad Popular tied the combative pro-

letariat to the institutions of the bourgeois state, preparing the bloody outcome in Pinochet's 1973 military coup. Already in 1970 at the time of Allende's election, when all the fake-Trotskyist tendencies advocated one or another type of support to the popular front, the Spartacist tendency (today ICL) warned:

"It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."

—[Spartacist No. 19, November-December 1970]

With the election of Mitterrand's popular front in France in 1981, once again the Spartacists warned against any support to this class collaboration, while pseudo-Trotskyists (from Mandel and Moreno to Lambert and Altamira) hailed it as a "victory" of the working class. The politics of popular-frontism led to more defeats from Bolivia to El Salvador, Nicaragua and many other countries.

Today in South Africa, the nationalist popular front around the African National Congress led by Nelson Mandela ties the black workers to the bourgeois state apparatus which maintained the murderous regime of apartheid. It is the duty of revolutionaries to urgently warn against any political support to, or confidence in, the "power sharing" government, which is already attacking the black and "coloured" [mixed-race] workers. We note the importance for revolutionary workers in South Africa of the struggle against the popular-frontism of the reformist Brazilian Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT—Workers Party), and of the events in South Africa for the workers and radical youth in Brazil.

In Brazil the left is impregnated with nationalism and popular-frontist reformism. At present its various tendencies are competing with each other to see who can best capitulate to the Frente Brasil Popular (FBP), the open coalition of Lula's PT with bourgeois politicians. This front does everything possible to demobilize the exploited and oppressed, in this country which has a highly combative proletariat and is experiencing deep social unrest. The trade-union bureaucrats and their leftist advisers insist that instead of fighting, the working people must "wait" for Lula to be elected and not "frighten" his bourgeois allies. The Stalinists (PPS and PCdB [People's Socialist Party, formerly the pro-Moscow CP, and Communist Party of Brazil, formerly pro-Albania]) with their doctrine of class collaboration—who supported the bourgeois governments of Sarney, Collor and Itamar Franco—are now part of the popular front led by Lula. While the Mandelites of Democracia Socialista and the Lambertistes of O Trabalho [Labor] revel in their by now traditional role as faithful servants of the leadership of Lula & Co., the Morenoites of the PSTU [United Socialist Workers Party] strike a hypocritically "critical" posture at the same time as they have openly joined the FBP.

To the left of these tendencies are

the centrists of Causa Operária (CO) [Workers Cause, aligned with the Argentine Partido Obrero of Jorge Altamira]. The comrades of Luta Metalúrgica were originally recruited to CO because they believed it represented a revolutionary, Trotskyist opposition to the popular front. But already in the 1989 elections, at the same time as it "criticized" the popular front, CO voted for the popular front's candidate, Lula. Thus its "criticism" had no consequences in deeds, serving only as a fig leaf for its vote in favor of class collaboration.

Facing the 1994 elections, CO has been spinning around, first seeking to make a "distinction between supporting Lula and campaigning for him, and possibly calling for a vote to the candidate of the PT" (*Circular Interna* [Internal Bulletin], 1 April 1994), later feigning a position of "no vote to the candidates of the Frente Brasil Popular" (*Causa Operária*, 12 June), only to wind up with the call to "vote for Lula and the worker and peasant candidates" (*Causa Operária*, 1 August). CO thereby reproduces the fake Trotskyists' typical trick of arguing that a vote for the "workers candidates" of the popular front (in this case including its presidential candidate) is somehow "different" from voting for the popular front as such.

For these petty bourgeois who peddle their wares in the shadow of the popular front, "leftist" phrases are not to be taken seriously but serve only to prettify tailing after their reformist masters! Their line has nothing to do with that of Trotsky, who characterized the support by Andrés Nin's POUM to the Spanish popular front as a *betrayal* and stressed, regarding the popular-front government: "It is necessary to openly and boldly mobilize the masses against the Popular Front government" ("Is Victory Possible in Spain?" April 1937).

We note that this "national-Trotskyist" tendency [of Altamira] has traditionally justified its betrayals through Menshevik stageism and references to the "anti-imperialist united front," the formula used by Guillermo Lora (former ally of Jorge Altamira's Partido Obrero in Argentina and CO in Brazil) in Bolivia to justify his shameful capitulation to a whole series of popular fronts.

Against this Menshevism, in a document (April 1994) opposing CO's line, the comrades of the Volta Redonda cell (Luta Metalúrgica) characterized the FBP as "a class-collaborationist front," a popular front. They demanded "that Causa Operária break with the PT and the popular front in all its variants.... The elementary duty of all revolutionary Marxists is to irreconcilably struggle against the popular front in the elections and to have absolutely no confidence in it." The CO leadership suppressed this clear denunciation, together with the entire last part of the document, in CO's *Circular Interna*. A subsequent document (July 1994) that the comrades wrote against CO's capitulation ended with the clear slogan: "For a revolutionary workers party—No vote to the popular front and Lula." The International Communist League has raised the same position of intransigent

proletarian opposition to the popular front.

## II

The world situation today has been profoundly affected by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe. Far from representing a "victory" or mere "episode" as the fake Trotskyists claim (including CO, which virtually kept its members away from all discussion of the Russian question), the restoration of capitalism in the USSR—resulting from the encirclement and enormous pressure of imperialism and prepared by decades of Stalinist betrayals—represented a great *defeat* for the workers of the world. Its repercussions for the semi-colonial victims of imperialism are very clear from Iraq to Haiti, with the growing military adventures of Yankee imperialism, which today threatens to strangle the Cuban deformed workers state (undermined from within by the Castro bureaucracy).

In the present "new world disorder" there are growing inter-imperialist rivalries, fratricidal inter-ethnic wars, fascist attacks against immigrants and dark-skinned workers in Europe, assaults against the rights of women. At the same time, unrest throughout the world—symbolized by the revolt of Indian peasants in the south of Mexico, the victorious Air France strike, youth mobilizations against fascists in Europe and many other events—brings opportunities for revolutionary intervention by the proletariat. It is more urgent than ever to forge the international Leninist vanguard party.

Trotsky, founder of the Red Army, taught us that those who do not defend conquests already won will never be able to win new conquests. He showed the dual character of the [Stalinist] bureaucracy, a narrow nationalist caste resting atop the gains of October: at times it was obliged to defend these conquests in its own partial and contradictory way, while undermining them through betraying the world revolution and trampling proletarian democracy.

Trotsky and James P. Cannon, founder of North American Trotskyism, compared the revolutionary policy toward the USSR to the situation of a bureaucratized trade union. Conscious workers defend the union against the capitalist government and the bosses, while fighting for a revolutionary leadership to throw out the treacherous bureaucrats. Likewise, it was the duty of the world proletariat to give unconditional military defense to the USSR, while fighting to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy through proletarian political revolution, indispensable for preventing capitalist restoration. During the entire period of the Left Opposition and the struggle for the Fourth International, Trotsky emphasized that "Defense of the Soviet Union from the blows of the capitalist enemies, irrespective of the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict, is the elementary and imperative duty of every honest labor organization" ("War and the Fourth International," June 1934).

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# Brazil: IMF Candidate Wins Election

## Lula Popular Front Chains Workers' Struggle

The October 3 national elections in Brazil resulted in solid victory for Fernando Henrique Cardoso, whose (thoroughly bourgeois) "social-democratic" party, the PSDB, was allied with a bloc of rightist parties and local political bosses. While characterized by plenty of government "dirty tricks" in favor of the official candidate, the vote was a stinging defeat for Cardoso's main electoral opponents, the Frente Brasil Popular headed by Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT—Workers Party). Only four months ago, Lula was riding high with over 40 percent support in the opinion polls, more than all other candidates combined. Now Cardoso has been elected on the first round of the voting, with more than 54 percent of the valid votes.

Cardoso rode to victory on the coattails of the currently popular "Real Plan" which he designed as outgoing president Itamar Franco's treasury minister. Named after a new currency (the *real*—the most recent in a long series of monetary units introduced to "cure" Brazil's spectacular financial instability), the plan was based on linking the currency to the American dollar, slashing public spending, continuing privatizations of state-owned companies and attracting foreign investment.

While for the moment it has dramatically reduced inflation from 50 percent to less than 6 percent a month, this International Monetary Fund-style "stabilization" scheme is aimed pointblank against the working class. Budget cuts and privatizations mean even more mass layoffs and poverty, in a country where more than 12 million people earn less than the starvation minimum wage of US \$71 a month and 5 million work without receiving any cash wages at all. Moreover, these "quick cure" plans have a tendency to go down in flames after a few months, which is why it was introduced only in July. Leading businessmen (97 percent of whom supported Cardoso, according to one poll) temporarily held off price increases in order to prevent a Lula victory, and the government concealed unfavorable economic figures to help the official candidate.

The Real Plan spelled electoral disaster for Lula, who quickly cut short opposition to the scheme after accurately denounc-

ing it as a crude electoral gambit. Rather than mobilize workers' action against the anti-labor plan, the PT-aligned CUT (United Workers Federation) sought to quickly end strikes by the powerful São Paulo metalworkers as well as by 50,000 members of the oil workers union. All along, the PT's campaign aimed at proving its respectability and fitness to administer Brazilian capitalism. Programmatically this was underlined at the party's April conference, where abortion rights and other "controversial" planks were scrapped from the PT's longstanding (reformist) program. Sealing alliances with bourgeois politicians, Lula succeeded in making himself virtually indistinguishable from Cardoso—whom he accused of "stealing" his program!

In numerous meetings with São Paulo moguls, Lula promised support to large-scale budget cuts and vowed that, far from touching capital's interests, his government would be good for Brazilian big business. On a junket to Wall Street he announced that the PT had abandoned its previous call for a moratorium (not even repudiation) on payments to foreign banks and governments; he was asking only for a "renegotiation" of the foreign debt, which totals \$135 billion. This year Brazil already renegotiated financing on a third of the debt; the PT accepted the onerous terms and wanted to do the same with the rest, promising to keep feeding the bloodsucking international financiers who drain 12 billion dollars from the country each year.

During a June visit to Nelson Mandela in South Africa, Lula promised a "coalition government." After Cardoso met with Archbishop Arnos of São Paulo, a close Lula adviser, Lula proposed a "cooperation agreement" with the PSDB, a call soon echoed by Cardoso's own running mate. In the final stretch, the PT candidate averred that the PT had to "flexibilize" its program even further in order to garner support from the "middle class" (*Folha de São Paulo*, 3 October). As if all this weren't clear enough, Lula reiterated that if Cardoso were elected he would support him and possibly "participate" in a Cardoso government (*El Diario/La Prensa* [New York], 30 September).

With the "choice" between IMF-ordered cutbacks and layoffs adminis-

tered by Lula or by Real Plan "wizard" Cardoso, Brazilian voters decided to go with the latter, who at least promised to deliver "stability" by slashing the savage inflation. "Historic" populist leader Leonel Brizola was reduced to insignificance in the vote, with his nationalist PDT (Democratic Labor Party) receiving only 3 percent in its traditional stronghold, the state of Rio de Janeiro.

### No Vote to the Popular Front!

Claiming some 600,000 members, the Brazilian PT has been the flagship for a Latin American "left" which—after the collapse of Stalinism led it to junk all reference to class struggle or revolution—set up the "Foro de São Paulo" to bring together Mexican Cardenistas, Nicaraguan Sandinistas and a host of others on the basis of verbiage about a "democratic revolution." At the same time, the PT has been a key point of reference for debates in South Africa on the question of a "workers party," with both the Communist Party (now in the ANC/De Klerk government) and leftist critics in WOSA (Workers Organisation for Socialist Action) looking to Lula's party for inspiration.

Around the world, pseudo-Trotskyists of various tendencies, and particularly Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat, have seen the Brazilian PT as a model of a non-Stalinist "democratic socialist" party in which they hoped to achieve mass influence by acting as leftist advisers to Lula & Co. Consequently they have systematically painted up this pale pink party in bright red colors. A recent article by American Mandelite George Saunders claims:

"The PT is neither a bourgeois populist nor a social democratic nor a Stalinist party.... To the contrary, the PT consciously calls itself revolutionary socialist and has adopted revolutionary socialist policies and perspectives (most recently at its national gatherings in June 1993 and April 1994).... As I have indicated, most of the ranks and leaders of the PT have consistently rejected both populist and Popular Front-ist conceptions and pressures."

—*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, September 1994

This fairy tale is a lie from start to finish.

Not a social-democratic party? Following the recent vote, José Dirceu, the secretary general of the PT who is leader

of the dominant tendency, Articulação, declared: "The party is a left social-democratic party. Its objectives are to democratize the political institutions, wealth and power" (*Folha de São Paulo*, 5 October). A "revolutionary socialist" party? While the June 1993 PT statement has a dash of leftist verbiage, the program is entirely one of "structural reforms" to "democratize the state," "redistribute income" through "progressive tax reform," "democratize land ownership" through agrarian reform, etc. By the PT's April 1994 election platform all "revolutionary" window-dressing has been excised (see *International Viewpoint*, December 1993 and July 1994, for the text of these thoroughly reformist documents).

And far from "rejecting popular-frontist conceptions," the PT set up a popular front, both in the 1989 presidential elections and again this year, as a guarantee to the international and domestic bourgeoisie. Aptly named, Lula's Frente Brasil Popular (FBP) is a class-collaborationist coalition tying the workers movement and left to the politicians and institutions of the bourgeois state. Reaching out to the armed forces, Lula promised to triple the military budget and called for establishing the previously nonexistent post of defense minister as a seal of approval for the military. This recalls the "constitutional guarantees" Salvador Allende gave to the Chilean military, paving the way for the September 1973 Santiago coup. In Brazil, it echoes the way the reformist left chained the workers movement to "progressive" bourgeois politicians and officers, setting the stage for the bloody 1964 military coup which ushered in two decades of brutal army rule.

As in the case of Allende's Unidad Popular and Mitterrand's Union de la Gauche in France, the position of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) toward the FBP in the Brazilian elections was for no vote to any of the candidates of the popular front. Given the character of the PT as a workers party with mass support, we would seek to intersect working-class discontent toward the PT's class-collaborationist electoral campaign, calling on the PT to repudiate its guarantees to and alliance with the bourgeoisie and run on a

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Goldgrub/Jornal do Brazil



Gurgel/Manchete  
Brazil president-elect Fernando Henrique Cardoso.



Workers Party (PT) candidate Lula (above, center) campaigning in recent elections. PT leaders gave guarantees to capital by forming the Brazil Popular Front together with minor bourgeois parties.



# Brazil...

(continued from page 7)

class-against-class basis. Such a break would be the minimum precondition for any kind of critical electoral support. If it had the resources, a Trotskyist party in Brazil would have run in these elections against the PT, putting forward a program to fulfill the toilers' urgent needs through socialist revolution.

This has also been the position of a small group of revolutionary workers who, continuing their longstanding fight against popular-frontism, have broken from the swamp of the fake-Trotskyist left in Brazil (see the "Declaration of Fraternal Relations Between Luta Metalúrgica [Brazil] and the International Communist League [Fourth Internationalist]," in this issue). In a recent issue of their bulletin (*Luta Metalúrgica*, September 1994), these comrades write:

"The Popular Front and the CUT have demobilized struggles in order to play strictly according to the electoral calendar (Lula 94!!)...."

"The PT and Popular Front's minimum wage proposal is lower than that put forward by ["center-right" candidate] Quercia; the bourgeois candidate Brizola has a harder position on privatizations than Lula, etc., and there is no class cutting edge differentiating the FBP candidacy from the bosses' candidacies; the FBP is one more among the variants of bourgeois politics in the institutional framework. And when the Popular Front has been the government (São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, Volta Redonda, etc.), it acts the same as governments of the bosses, attacking the rights of public employees and so on...."

Calling for united strike action, including the occupation of landed estates and factories, and the preparation of a general strike against the ravages of the Real Plan; for "defense of Cuba," "Yankees out of Haiti," a fight against racial oppression and to "defend the rights of women, Indians and homosexuals," the comrades of Luta Metalúrgica raise as their slogan for the elections: "a broad campaign together with the workers of the city and the countryside and the youth for a null vote and for the construction of a true workers party, the revolutionary party." The statement ends with the call for "Proletarian Opposition to the Popular Front—For Workers Mobilization to Defeat the Cardoso/IMF Hunger Plan! For a Workers and Peasants Government!"

## Powerhouse of Latin American Labor

Brazil, in territory the fifth-largest country on the planet, is the colossus of Latin America: its 158 million inhabitants make up half the population of South America. With the tenth-largest economy in the world, it is a case study in combined and uneven development. Glaring regional differences divide the country. Huge, cosmopolitan cities like São Paulo are surrounded by desperately impoverished shantytowns (*favelas*) and dominate a countryside mired in backwardness and illiteracy. There are 32 million people living in hunger, 20 million unemployed and underemployed, 12 million *sem terra* (landless peasants). Export-led industrialization produced a huge, highly combative proletariat, with hundreds of thousands of workers in high-tech "multinational" industries. The Brazilian working class is the powerhouse of the Latin American proletariat.

For years, the Brazilian bourgeoisie kept the lid on through a combination of nationalist populism and iron-fisted repression. In 1963-64 large-scale mobilizations by land-hungry peasants reached the point of threatening the bourgeois-nationalist regime of President João Goulart. The example of the Cuban Revolution had helped radicalize a new generation of leftists, many of them impatient with the sterile reformism of the pro-Moscow Communist Party. In April 1964, the Brazilian military took power in a coup d'état planned in close cooperation with Lyndon B. Johnson's White House. This coup decapitated the left and labor movement,



**Killing of street children by death squads of police and drug traffickers is rampant in Brazil's shantytowns. Above, six killed in Duque de Caxias suburb of Rio de Janeiro, November 1991.**

setting the stage for the dictatorships that took power a few years later throughout Latin America's "Southern Cone"—in Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay and Argentina.

The generals' Brazil was a living hell for leftists tortured in prison cells, and for the working people as a whole, whose real wages were slashed by 30 percent from 1964 to 1974. Precisely for this reason, the country was a paradise for investors; the military boot suppressed attempts by the working class to defend itself against the most brutal superexploitation. In the early '70s, the economy "took off" at a rate surpassing any other "underdeveloped" capitalist country, except oil producers. Far from a "free market" success story, the "Brazilian miracle" developed under military technocratic state control. Massive foreign investment, which increased by 25 percent a year after 1970, led to imperialist corporations controlling not only the auto and pharmaceutical industries but also industries which had traditionally been the domain of Brazilian capital, such as beverages, textiles and machinery.

While urbanization and industrialization grew apace during the 20 years of military rule, Brazil's income distribution became one of the most starkly polarized in the world. A burgeoning population in the *favelas* provided cheap labor but a scanty internal market. By the end of the 1970s, inflation was skyrocketing and a massive wave of strikes, centered on São Paulo's "ABC" auto manufacture zone, had begun to rock the regime (see "Labor Shakes Generals' Brazil," *WV* No. 256, 16 May 1980). In an attempt to head off widespread radicalization, the generals decreed a limited and controlled *abertura*—a political "opening" designed to be a face-lift for the dictatorship. The safety valve for discontent was supposed to be the regime's kept "opposition," the MDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement), an umbrella group bringing together a range of bourgeois politicians, union bureaucrats (called *pelegos* in Brazil), and even a sector of fake leftists.

## PT Reformism Shackles Mass Struggles

Meanwhile, the traditional populists were quite incapable of leading a struggle against the military regime. This was the backdrop for a sector of MDB-linked *pelegos*, led and symbolized by "ABC" metalworkers leader Lula, to begin talking about a "workers party." Reflecting the broad and militant strike wave, the result was a break from the openly bourgeois parties and the official launching of the Partido dos Trabalhadores in February 1980. In the spring 1982 elections, the slogan of Lula's bid for the São Paulo governorship was "worker vote for worker." The new party had a big popular appeal; many famous entertainers and sports figures (among them soccer great Pelé) gave it their support.

Yet from the beginning the PT leadership, with close links to the liberal wing of the Catholic Church, quite consciously limited the party to a reformist program.

The PT's February 1980 manifesto calls for "democratic control over the state bureaucracy and the decisions made by the big companies." Stressing its national character, the party eschewed affiliation to any international grouping (although the CUT labor federation in 1992 joined the U.S.-aligned International Confederation of Free Trade Unions). It refused to challenge the limits set by the bourgeois state in this country where capitalist rule has meant military terror, superexploitation and hunger for millions. Accommodating the anti-Communist winds blowing from Washington, the PT eulogized Poland's Solidarność; in early 1981, Lula joined his personal hero, Lech Walesa, at the Vatican for an audience with Polish Pope Wojtyla.

Soon enough, the meaning of reformism was brought home to thousands of workers when the PT started winning city elections. While PT administrations collaborated with layoffs and brutal budget cuts in several regions, the most famous case was that of São Paulo mayor Luiza Erundina's breaking of a major municipal transport workers strike. The PT's reformism was instrumental in allowing the military to make an "orderly transition," hand-picking civilian president José Sarney in 1985. As in other Southern Cone countries, the military torturers and executioners went free; the military brass, withdrawing from the limelight, made it clear that not only would the armed forces' "institutionality" remain intact, but they would keep a close eye on political developments.

Bringing up the PT's rear was the whole gamut of the "Marxist left." The two sizable Communist Parties (the pro-Moscow PCB and formerly pro-Albania PCdoB) originally criticized the PT from the right for being too "hard" on the traditional populist parties, only to jump on the bandwagon when Lula's popularity grew. A slew of fake-Trotskyist tenden-

cies had participated in the PT's founding. The Mandelites, ironically going under the name Democracia Socialista, served as hatchet men for the Lula bureaucracy. The O Trabalho group, followers of French pseudo-Trotskyist Pierre Lambert, sought to be loyal left advisers. The PT was also home for many years to Convergência Socialista, section of Nahuel Moreno's International Workers League, which achieved a certain implantation in some union sectors, as well as the small centrist group Causa Operária, linked to Jorge Altamira's Argentine Partido Obrero.

The Brazilian PT is the first organic mass labor-based party to arise in this region where the left has historically been dominated by petty-bourgeois nationalism and Stalinism. Yet although it arose out of militant workers strikes, the PT has never gone beyond social-democratic reformism. It is dramatic proof of Lenin's classic statement that revolutionary consciousness can only be brought to the workers *from without*.

Genuine Trotskyists would have sought to intervene inside the PT, particularly in its early years, to break out a section of the party fighting on a revolutionary program against the reformist Lula leadership. Such a tactical orientation in fighting to build an independent Leninist vanguard party is in sharp contrast to the perpetual entrism and tailism of the fake Trotskyists. Even after a red purge beginning with the expulsion of Causa Operária and extending to Convergência, they continue to vote Lula. Today, the Morenoites, while openly admitting that the FBP is a popular front, are an official part of this class-collaborationist lash-up.

In the 1989 presidential elections, the PT formalized its class collaboration with the formation of the first edition of the Frente Brasil Popular. It presented bourgeois politician José Paulo Bisol as Lula's vice presidential running mate and received support in the second round of voting not only from Brizola's PDT but from Cardoso's PSDB (Party of the Brazilian Social Democracy). A sleazy provincial politician, Fernando Collor de Mello, backed by a coalition of right and "center" parties, narrowly defeated Lula in the vote.

Taking office on a "clean government" platform, Collor de Mello soon imposed a "neo-liberal" shock treatment centered on Thatcherite privatizations and accompanying massive layoffs in steel, light and power, etc. At the same time as he was gouging the working people, Collor was soon up to his neck in a labyrinthine scandal of payoffs. A groundswell of popular rage broke out in a massive movement demanding "Collor out!" Bringing together militant workers, student youth, *favela* dwellers, housewives and the rural poor, the mobilizations showed a potential to strike at IMF-imposed austerity

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## Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

### BERKELEY

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m.  
Next class: October 26  
204 Dwinelle  
U.C. Berkeley

For more information: (510) 839-0851

### BOSTON

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.  
Next class: October 22  
Sever Hall, Room 101  
Harvard Univ., Harvard Square  
Cambridge

For more information: (617) 492-3928

### CHAMPAIGN/URBANA

Alternate Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.  
Next class: October 26  
Illini Union, Room 211

For more information: (217) 352-3359

### CHICAGO

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.  
Next class: October 20  
Spartacist Public Office  
161 W. Harrison, 10th floor

For more information: (312) 663-0715

### LOS ANGELES

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.  
Next class: October 18

For more information: (213) 380-8239

### NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.  
Next class: October 22  
Spartacist Public Office  
41 Warren St.

For more information: (212) 267-1025

### SAN FRANCISCO

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.  
Next class: October 20  
Room B112, Student Union  
San Francisco State

For more information: (415) 777-9367



# Declaration of Fraternal Relations...

(continued from page 6)

The CO leadership never talked about such classic works by Trotsky as *In Defense of Marxism* (written against Shachtman's petty-bourgeois opposition, renegades from the defense of the USSR), because it has had a neo-Shachtmanite position toward all the conflicts between the capitalist enemies and the USSR. After the Altamiraites hailed the Islamic "revolution" of the feudalist hangman Khomeini in Iran, they opposed Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against the "holy warriors" who were fighting to overthrow the left-nationalist regime for the "crime" of legislating education of women and agrarian reform. The CIA armed the anti-communist fanatics with enormous amounts of weapons and money so that they would kill Soviet soldiers on this battlefield of Cold War II. In Brazil the ultra-reactionaries of Family, Tradition and Property staged marches to the cry of "Russians out of Afghanistan," and the fake Trotskyists had the same position! The Spartacist tendency, following the principles of Trotsky's Fourth International, defended the USSR and the women and oppressed of Afghanistan, saying "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!"

When in Poland Solidarność consolidated as a clerical-nationalist movement for capitalist restoration under the aegis of the Vatican and Reagan, the Brazilian PT praised the "example" of Walesa; Lula in particular sought to identify himself with this puppet of imperialism. The question of Solidarność was an acid test for every tendency which called itself Trotskyist. The pseudo-Trotskyists shouted their "solidarity with Solidarity." While Moreno called for "All power to Solidarity," Altamira called for "the seizure of power by Solidarity." In contrast the Spartacists said, "Stop Solidarity's counterrevolution!" As the Luta Metalúrgica comrades stated in their July document, "the worker" Walesa whom the fake Trotskyists followed "was the best and principal instrument of imperialism and the Vatican for counterrevolution." As the ICL warned, the victory of this anti-communist movement has brought terrible suffering to the working people of Poland.

The CO leadership had the gall to attack the Luta Metalúrgica comrades for daring to tell the truth, evident to millions of class-conscious workers, that the destruction of the deformed workers state of East Germany through its annexation by German imperialism was a defeat for the workers of the world. While the ICL threw itself into fighting against capitalist unification and for a red Germany of workers councils as part of a socialist Europe, Altamira claimed that "the phony 'unification' of Germany must...open up, sooner rather than later, a great mass mobilization and a revolutionary situation from which no country of Europe will be exempt" (*Prensa Obrera*, 3 July 1990). Far from producing a "revolutionary" situation, German reunification brought a rise in racist terror, unemployment for millions with the closing of factories, destruction of conquests for the working people, with especially brutal results for working women.

Whereas the Spartacists organized a protest in New York against Gorbachev and Yeltsin's 1991 withdrawal of the Soviet brigade [from Cuba], which gave imperialism a green light for a possible invasion, CO's newspaper (12-18 October 1991), far from protest-

ing, proclaimed that the event had no importance because "the presence of Soviet troops has nothing to do with defense of the island..." Today CO publishes a resolution (17 July 1994) of its national congress, on Clinton's threat to invade Haiti, which *does not even mention* the urgent danger facing the Cuban Revolution.

The low point came when Yeltsin seized on the failed coup by the "Gang of Eight" in August 1991 to launch a campaign to completely destroy what remained of the gains of October and the Soviet state. In the USSR the ICL distributed thousands of leaflets with the urgent call, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" While the Morenoites hailed the "new Russian revolution," the absurd line of Altamira was that U.S. imperialism gave its support not to its man Yeltsin but to the "Gang of Eight"—in other words, that for the Soviet workers the basic thing at that time was to fight against these Stalinist has-beens and *not* against Yeltsin, Bush's man and the spearhead of open capitalist counter-revolution. CO repeated the phony propaganda that a "mass mobilization" defeated the Gang of Eight's botched coup.

It is obvious why Altamira and CO don't want their members to find out about Trotsky's line on the Russian question! It is no accident that a tendency which capitulates to class collaboration with its "own" bourgeoisie capitulated to the imperialist campaign against the conquests of the October Revolution, a campaign which culminated in the destruction of the USSR.

### III

The Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky proclaimed that "The black question has become an integral part of the world revolution." Brazil has the largest black population in the world after Nigeria, and as part of the Brazilian working class, black and mulatto workers have enormous potential power. The struggle against the oppression of blacks in Brazil is a *strategic* question of the proletarian revolution. As Cannon noted in his essay on the Russian Revolution and blacks in the U.S. (1961), it was Lenin and the Bolsheviks who insisted that black oppression is a special question which requires special attention and work by the revolutionary party.

As Lenin said in *What Is To Be Done?* the vanguard party must be the "tribune of the people," fighting to mobilize the power of the working class against every kind of oppression. The urgency of this is seen in Brazil, where death squads constantly kill black "street children." In the steel mills, black workers are condemned to die from leukemia.<sup>1</sup> But the attitude of the fake left in Brazil, which follows the social-democratic PT and the bureaucracy of the CUT [pro-PT labor federation], is the narrow "trade-unionist" and economist position which Lenin's Bolsheviks fought against.

This is seen in the most scandalous way in the case of Causa Operária, which, as the Luta Metalúrgica comrades have noted, has been willfully *blind* to black oppression. CO did not even take up this question in the 6,600 lines of its collection of basic documents from 1979 to 1988 (*Bases Programáticas*). This collection was published just when tens of thousands of blacks were marching through the streets during the centenary of the abolition of slavery, shouting slogans

<sup>1</sup>[Blood disease caused by fumes from the blast furnaces, which are run mainly by black workers. When Luta Metalúrgica denounced this, the companies said this disease is "genetic" for blacks. —Translator's note.]

against the brutal racism of present-day Brazil and trying to pull down the statue of the racist mass murderer Caxias!<sup>2</sup>

In an important effort to confront this strategic question, Luta Metalúrgica wrote a document in August 1993 for the meeting on "The CUT's Role in the Struggle Against Racism." In this document, which reflected a transitional period in the group's development and was marked by some important weaknesses (such as the slogan for black fractions in the unions), the comrades called for worker-peasant militias for self-defense in the struggle against racist terror, denounced forced sterilization of black women and criticized the fake left's silence on black oppression, which went hand in hand with the fact that the bulk of the "left" voted for a starvation minimum wage (less than 100 dollars a month) that condemns millions of blacks to superexploitation. In the recent period, in a significant internationalist effort, the comrades translated the document "Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom" (1967), in which the Spartacist League/U.S. elaborated the program of revolutionary integrationism.

As the tribune of the oppressed, it is indispensable that the Leninist party raise the banner of struggle against the oppression of women, rooted in the institution of the bourgeois family—a question of utmost importance in Brazil—as part of the program of permanent revolution. The defense of the rights of Indians and homosexuals is an important element in the fight against the bourgeois prejudices that poison the consciousness of the working people and against the nationalist fake left which reproduces the social values of "its own" bourgeoisie.

What Trotsky said in 1939 about blacks in the U.S. applies today as well:

"We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class.... If it happens that we...are not able to find the road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all. The permanent revolution and all the rest would be only a lie."

—[Leon Trotsky, "Plans for the Negro Organization" (April 1939)]

The black question in Brazil, as in the U.S., is not a national question, and the fantasies of black nationalism regarding "self-determination" are an obstacle to the struggle against oppression. The only road for black liberation is that of the socialist revolution, carried out by the proletariat under the leadership of a multiracial Leninist party. This means that it is indispensable to forge black cadres of the internationalist Trotskyist party. Inspired by the heroism of such fighters as Zumbi, João Candido, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Frederick Douglass, John Brown and Sojourner Truth, the beginning of joint study on the black question is an important element of these fraternal relations.

### IV

The comrades of Luta Metalúrgica ended their April document against the popular front by citing what Trotsky wrote on Spain in the 1930s: "For a successful solution of all these tasks, three conditions are required: a party; once more a party; again a party!" Calling for "a revolutionary regroupment that takes the form of the construction of a Trotskyist party with a firm Marxist programmatic base," they emphasized: "The key to a well-founded revolutionary regroupment is therefore a deep-

going struggle for internationalism and the transitional program."

Essential to this effort is the fight to *forge cadres* of a Leninist nucleus. The party is built, in Lenin's words, "from the top down," on the basis of the Fourth Internationalist program. In its beginnings—in contrast to the fake left's hollow "mass" pretensions—such a nucleus has to be a *fighting propaganda group*. In Brazil it is a priority to publish a Trotskyist journal in line with the real size and work of the group, in order to carry out propaganda for the revolutionary program. With the authority earned in years of bitter working-class struggles, the comrades of Luta Metalúrgica face the need to polemicize against those who besmirch the name of Trotskyism—in the first place the centrists of Causa Operária; to seek the possibility of regroupments through splits and fusions; and to recruit youth so that a new generation of revolutionaries may enter the struggle against capitalist barbarism. The effort to build a propaganda group will certainly involve difficult decisions on priorities, which will need to be resolved through collective discussion.

The rotten values of semi-social-democratic groups like the PSTU and CO are shown not only over such issues as their support to "strikes" by the police (the professionals of anti-worker and racist repression) and calls for a more "people's" police. They are shown as well in the open disdain of CO's leaders toward the revolutionary workers of Luta Metalúrgica, whom they defame as "ignorant" and backward. We jointly declare a pitiless struggle to politically unmask these petty bourgeois who tail the popular front and lose no opportunity to keep their mouths shut regarding the oppression of blacks and women.

For us internationalism is not a pretty sentiment for Sunday speechifying and resolutions. It is the struggle to build a world party based on revolutionary democratic centralism, quite opposed to the national federations of innumerable nationalist opportunists. Luta Metalúrgica's record of struggle against the popular front and for finding a proletarian program against black oppression has a deep-going parallelism with the struggle of the Spartacist tendency since its foundation, and provides a solid basis for going forward together. We underline the need to carry out joint work, in full consciousness of the difficulties posed by geographic distance and other obstacles; overcoming these difficulties will require conscious, mutual efforts. We note as an urgent task the study of Portuguese by the comrades of the ICL, and of Spanish and English by comrades of Luta Metalúrgica.

Our perspective is for these fraternal relations to be a step toward the fusion of our organizations, uniting our efforts in the struggle for communism throughout the planet. The realization of such a fusion would represent an important extension of the ICL. We fight to reforge the Fourth International on the basis of the communism of Lenin and Trotsky and the rules set forward in the "Transitional Program":

"To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International."

20 September 1994

—Approved by Luta Metalúrgica, 22 September 1994.

—Approved by the International Secretariat, International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), 26 September 1994.

## Prop 187...

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war zone, complete with 12-foot-high metal fences, ditches and floodlights.

Meanwhile, Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein demands that immigrants arrested at the border be thrown on buses and dumped hundreds of miles inside Mexico. (As mayor of San Francisco, "Dixie Dianne" had the Confederate flag flying outside city hall until a supporter of the Spartacist League and Labor Black League tore it down.) Feinstein also joins Brown in calling for a "tamper-proof" Social Security/ID card for everyone in the country. A commission appointed by Clinton, chaired by Texas black Democrat Barbara Jordan and including Prop. 187 co-author Harold Ezell, calls for a centralized computer listing of all Americans with their Social Security number and immigration status. This is part of an ongoing attempt to regiment the population by imposing the sort of pass system made notorious by South Africa's racist apartheid regime.

The bourgeoisie is by no means solidly behind Prop. 187, and major newspapers have come out against it. Nonetheless, the mainstream opposition to the anti-immigrant referendum echoes the racist "law and order" themes of the Brown and Feinstein Democratic campaigns. Los Angeles County Sheriff Sherman Block, a featured speaker at the kick-off rally of "Taxpayers Against Prop. 187" in August, called for tougher controls at the border, claiming that Prop. 187 just doesn't do the job (*Los Angeles Times*, 19 August). Last February, the statewide California Latino Civil Rights Network was formed, including organizations such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) and key Latino Democrats like Gloria Molina and Art Torres. The network has a five-point program that explicitly calls for strong border controls, and for a voter registration drive among those naturalized under the amnesty provisions of the 1986 immigration "reform."

But with the elections around the corner, the more "mainstream" Latino organizations like the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund are opposing the planned October 16 rally, just as the big-name Democrats boycotted the previous rally on May 28. A demonstration of some tens of thousands of workers and youth is too hot for most of the Democratic politicians to handle—one opponent of the rally told the *Los Angeles Times* (26 September), "The last thing we need is a sense that L.A. is truly overrun by all these immigrants"! Meanwhile, groups like One-Stop Immigration and the AFL-CIO's California Immigrant Workers Association (CIWA), along with other sections of the labor bureaucracy, see October 16 as an oppor-



Davis/L.A. Times

"Justice for Janitors" march for union recognition in Los Angeles, August 1993. Latino workers in California are in forefront of fight for labor rights.

tunity to get out the vote and blow off steam.

Many of the Latino youth who will turn out on October 16 understand that the Democratic Party of Boxer, Brown and Feinstein is no less their enemy than the Republican Party of Wilson. But with the main slogan "Stop Pete Wilson—No on 187!" the demonstration organizers seek to divert the outrage of L.A.'s immigrant workers into electoral support for the Democrats. CIWA director José de Paz said of the march: "Not only should we demand voice and vote in the legislation that affects us, but also we should support our candidates at election time" (*La Opinión*, 9 September).

For working people and immigrant youth—at least those who even have the right to vote—choosing which of the immigrant-bashing, union-busting capitalist parties should lord it over them is no choice at all. The coalition opposing Prop. 187 includes not only the liberal machine of the Westside Democratic Club and the California PRD, supporters of Mexican bourgeois populist Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, but also the agribusiness Farm Bureau. This class-collaborationist popular-frontist formation will not and cannot fight for the rights of immigrant workers.

### For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

A whole collection of reformist left groups have virtually liquidated into the pro-Democratic Party organizing vehicle for October 16, in which they do the donkey work for the labor bureaucrats and the Democrats. It was this same AFL-CIO bureaucracy which tried to squelch a march by 200 union janitors against INS sweeps following the multi-racial L.A. upheaval in 1992 over the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King.

What unites the liberals and the reformists is the lie that the capitalist state can be reformed or pressured into serving the needs of the working class. This "popular front" political strategy is directly counterposed to mobilizing the integrated working class to stop immigrant-bashing and cop terror. Anti-immigrant terrorism, whether by the capitalist state's police/military agencies or paramilitary fascist gangs, can be smashed only by the working class taking state power in its own hands and sweeping away the capitalist system root and branch.

Immigrant workers, many with experience of bitter class struggle in countries like El Salvador, have taken the lead in strikes in the L.A. area in recent years. They are a prime reason why, despite a general lack of militant labor struggle around the country, Southern California

has seen one militant strike after another in recent years. L.A.'s massive port facilities and key rail links are the linchpin of the U.S. rulers' designs to dominate the Pacific Rim. Immigrant worker militancy poses a serious challenge to Los Angeles' longstanding reputation as an "open shop" (non-union) town, and their struggle is of vital importance to all workers.

In 1990, SEIU Local 399's heavily Latino "Justice for Janitors" campaign resisted a brutal LAPD onslaught in organizing the glitzy Century City complex. In 1992, "drywalero" construction workers waged a five-month strike against the nearly slave-like conditions in which they work, achieving union recognition under Carpenters Local 2361. The largely Latino independent truckers shut down the port for ten days in 1993.

A number of unions like SEIU 399 and the transit workers, who recently struck for eight days, also include significant numbers of black workers. H.E.R.E. Local 11 won a recent victory against the Wilshire Hotel when Korean restaurant workers stood with the largely Latino hotel workers against management. And in the recent Teamsters strike, Latino, black and white workers fought side by side against police assaults and the bosses' union-busting schemes. Latino trucker Jesse Acuna, sentenced to five years on frame-up charges for defending his picket line during the recent IBT strike, is a hero for the entire working class.

The power of labor must be mobilized in struggle against the assault on immigrants and in the fight for full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers in the country. Anything less leaves immigrants vulnerable to constant victimization and deportation. In addition, there must be a fight by the unions against



Der Spiegel

Troops seal off U.S.-Mexico border near San Diego.

## Brazil...

(continued from page 8)

and the roots of poverty and oppression: the capitalist system. But in the absence of a revolutionary leadership, the reformist PT—after first trying to ignore the anti-Collor protests—joined forces with the bourgeois opposition to head off the danger, containing the crisis within the parliamentary framework.

With the aid of Lula and the PT/CUT bureaucracy, the bourgeoisie gave Collor the hook (but no jail time) and replaced him with his vice president, Itamar Franco. The PT pledged its cooperation with Franco, who included "ex-PT" ministers in his cabinet.

### For Workers Revolution!

Today, Lula vows to keep the Frente Brasil Popular going after the election—although it will almost certainly fall apart in the face of enticements to various of

its elements to join Cardoso's regime. Yet the prospects for Cardoso's popularity are limited. This politically seething country with its huge working class will continue to be the scene of convulsive struggle, and the eventual popping of the "Real Plan" balloon could set off major class battles.

The key to unchaining the power of Brazil's proletariat is forging a revolutionary internationalist workers party, breaking the working-class base of the PT from the pro-capitalist tops and fighting for the program of workers power. Such a party must be a Leninist "tribune of the people." In Brazil this means taking on the issue of black oppression, which has been an "unspoken question" on the Brazilian left, which echoes the bourgeoisie's myth of "racial democracy." More than half of Brazil's population consists of blacks and mulattos, who are concentrated in the proletariat and poor peasantry. Not only is discrimination rife and the starvation minimum wage used to generate immense profits from the super-

exploitation of blacks, in recent years Brazil's army and police death squads, financed by prominent businessmen, have become infamous worldwide for their savage massacres of black street children (the *meninos da rua*) in Rio de Janeiro and other parts of the country.

Under the sway of the narrow, economist worldview of the PT and CUT bureaucracy—and reflecting at bottom the social values of its "own" nationalist bourgeoisie—the Brazilian left, including its "Trotskyist" components, has turned a blind eye as well to the oppression of women, discrimination against homosexuals and the barbaric extermination of Indian peoples by profit-crazed prospectors and ranchers. The Brazilian proletariat can liberate itself only by taking on the historic mission of emancipating all the oppressed, smashing the rule of capital and putting this country's immense resources and energies at the service of the working people. Leading the millions of land-starved peasants, the working class must establish its own rule

as part of a Socialist United States of Latin America, fighting to extend revolution to the imperialist heartland, the United States. This is Trotsky's program of permanent revolution.

Indeed, the construction of a Brazilian Trotskyist party with a strong black leadership component would strike an important chord from Harlem to Johannesburg. The internationalist program would provide a powerful beacon not only for the workers and peasants of Brazil but for the beleaguered toilers of countries like neighboring Bolivia, where capitalist governments have decimated the working class; for the oppressed masses of Haiti and the embattled workers of Cuba, starved by imperialism's embargo and threatened by counterrevolution; and South African workers whose strikes are being broken by Mandela's nationalist popular front. While Lula's popular front flounders, the urgent need is to build a Trotskyist party of workers revolution in Brazil, in the fight to reforge the Fourth International. ■

unemployment through a shorter work-week with no loss in pay and a campaign to organize the unorganized. Particularly with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), this must reach across the border to the brutally exploited workers in the *maquiladoras* fighting U.S. and Japanese corporations and Mexican government repression.

NAFTA is an attempt by the U.S. capitalists to annex Mexico as a low-wage labor zone, but it has also enhanced opportunities for joint struggle by Mexican and U.S. workers. The key to militant labor struggle within the U.S. is a political struggle to oust the pro-Democrat labor bureaucrats, who seek to tie the workers to their "own" bourgeoisie. For years, the AFL-CIO tops have pushed racist protectionist poison against Japanese and Mexican workers, as they did in their campaign against NAFTA. In contrast, the Spartacist League denounced NAFTA as a Yankee imperialist "free trade" rape of Mexico, calling for joint class struggle by workers throughout North America and Mexico to smash it.

In Mexico today, outrage over Prop. 187 and the "Operation Gatekeeper" border blockade is likewise being channeled into appeals to the viciously anti-labor Salinas government to champion the cause of Mexican workers in the U.S.! An example of the impotence of such nationalist appeals is the call by a group of Tijuana leaders for a refusal to cross the border into the U.S. on October 29-30 (*Excelsior*, 3 October). In contrast, joint protest strike action by workers on both sides of the line would send shock waves to Mexico City, Washington and Wall Street.

### Capitalist Decay Nurtures Racist Mobilization

Wilson and the backers of Prop. 187 hope to foment a racist mobilization with the aim of diverting attention from the capitalist crisis which is the cause of the economic devastation ravaging California. They want to turn the victims of this increasingly bankrupt economic system into scapegoats, in the same way as the "war on crime" targets the black ghettos for racist repression because there are no jobs for minority youth.

Still reeling from the latest recession, with real unemployment in double digits, California is fertile ground for anti-immigrant demagoguery. The state has lost more than 650,000 jobs, three-fourths of them in Los Angeles County. The California public school system, the only one in the U.S. with a majority of minority students, has been decimated. Per-student spending is now among the lowest in the country—thanks in large part to Prop. 13, passed in 1978, which froze property taxes on which local schools depend.

Latinos now outnumber non-Hispanic whites in the Los Angeles area. One-third of the population of L.A. and one-quarter that of San Francisco and Orange County

are foreign-born, many of them undocumented. Under the terms of Prop. 187, an estimated 400,000 students statewide would be thrown out of school. In L.A.'s Belmont High School alone, Prop. 187 would lead to the expulsion of 2,000 of the 4,500 students.

The state's estimated 1.6 million undocumented immigrants are the most vulnerable target for the racists. But these immigrants are not simply victims. While "S.O.S." backers rave about supposed savings to be realized by denying basic services to "illegal" immigrants, even bourgeois studies show that immigrants contribute a net surplus of \$12 billion to the state's economy. That means they have some *social power*! Over half of the workforce in California's huge "factories in the fields"—which have such a severe labor shortage that crops are literally rotting on the vine—consists of undocumented workers.

While Reagan & Co. (reflecting the interests of California agribusiness) tacitly encouraged large-scale immigration to the U.S. in the 1980s, much of it from Latin America, elements of the ruling class are beginning to fear that the Mexicans are "taking back" the Southwest that was stolen from Mexico in the middle of the 19th century. The National War College at Fort McNair recently hosted Dan Stein, executive director of the "Federation for American Immigration Reform" (FAIR). In a speech shot through with undisguised racism, Stein claimed that an "uncontrolled wave of in-migrants" threatened to "overwhelm" the country, ranting: "Today, whites are at or below replacement level, while minorities are above it." He warned the military that unless the borders were shut tight, "Our institutions will erode, our harmony of outlook will disappear, and our entire sense of national cohesion will evaporate."

This is sinister stuff. FAIR is heavily funded by the Pioneer Fund, which was founded in 1937 by a textile magnate who advocated shipping black people to Africa. This outfit is notorious for sponsoring "research" to "prove" that blacks are genetically inferior to whites. One of the authors of Prop. 187, former INS official Alan Nelson, was until recently a FAIR consultant. Another prominent Prop. 187 backer is California State Senator Don Rogers, who is tied to the "Christian nationalist" right. Rogers recently appeared alongside a founder of the fascist Aryan Nations, which regularly guns down blacks and Jews, at a "Christian Identity" conference and has written for its newsletter.

Obscenely, the Wilson gubernatorial campaign seeks to appeal to black people against immigrants. A TV ad depicts Wilson in a classroom surrounded by an interracial group of children. The sly message—money saved by cutting off illegal immigrants would go to educate black children. This campaign is aided and abetted by a handful of black demagogues who argue that Latinos are



San Francisco, May 1993: Spartacist demonstration outside INS building protests racist deportation of Chinese immigrants.

"stealing" black jobs and social services. Likewise, when the beating of Latino teenager Felipe Soltero by a black Compton cop provoked an integrated protest by black and Latino militants, nationalist demagogues on both sides joined the bosses' media in trying to turn it into an ethnic confrontation.

This is deadly dangerous for both Latinos and black people. It is vital for Latino workers to understand that the color line has always been the central, strategic question in racist, capitalist America. And blacks must understand that immigrant-bashing and anti-black racism go hand in hand. One Prop. 187 sponsor explicitly evoked the imagery of KKK nightriders before an Orange County audience: "You are the posse and SOS is the rope" (*Los Angeles Times*, 10 August).

Anti-immigrant racism has always been a cornerstone of nativist American reaction, from the Know Nothing attacks on German and Irish workers in the 1800s to "yellow peril" hatemongering against Chinese and Japanese. Anti-Japanese racism was whipped up in California in the service of the "war effort" in WW II as more than 100,000 Japanese Americans were interned in concentration camps. Today, Korean immigrants are a particular object of chauvinist hostility, in particular by black nationalist demagogues.

Intent on warding off social struggle and dividing the working class, the racist rulers seek to pit black against Latino, "legals" against "illegals." This is not without effect. According to opinion polls, Prop. 187 is favored by a majority (52 percent) of Latino registered voters. But while some of the more conservative Mexican American organizations have lined up behind Prop. 187, there is a growing realization that this is a racist attack on *all* minorities.

The possibility of bringing together blacks and Latinos in struggle against

the racist rulers was demonstrated in the 1992 L.A. upheaval in which poor Latino, black and white youth took to the streets. Key is mobilizing the power of the working class. Recently, SEIU Local 399 organized a demonstration which brought together mainly Latino janitors and black Kaiser hospital workers to demand a new trial and freedom for former Black Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), who has been languishing in a California prison for 23 years for a crime the government knows he did not commit.

Along with immigrant-bashing, the American ruling class wants to put ever more blacks and Hispanics in jail. California's prison budget already equals its spending on higher education, and its prison population of 120,000 represents the highest incarceration rate in the world. Prop. 184, also on the November ballot, mandates 25-year-to-life sentences for those convicted of a third felony after a previous conviction for a "violent" crime. This is aimed at making it harder for the state legislature to repeal a virtually identical "three strikes" law already signed by Wilson. Such draconian laws will be used, for instance, against unionists convicted of "violent crimes" like defending their picket lines against scabs. No to Prop. 184!

The current sharp rise in anti-immigrant racism in the U.S. is part of a worldwide phenomenon, which has reached a fever pitch with fascist terror against immigrants in Europe. For years, U.S. immigration policy was not only a means of securing cheap labor but a key weapon in the Cold War. Unlike black refugees from Haiti fleeing the bloody U.S.-trained junta, those fleeing "communism" in Cuba (as well as from the former Soviet Union, East Europe and Vietnam) were welcomed with open arms as "freedom fighters" and given government handouts from the day they arrived. With the destruction of the USSR, the imperialist bourgeoisies no longer feel the need to maintain the façade of granting asylum to refugees and are slamming the doors shut. Yet there are now an estimated 100 million refugees worldwide, many driven from their homes by the economic devastation and ethnic civil wars unleashed by the counterrevolutions in the former Soviet Union and East Europe.

The fight for immigrant rights, against racist terror and for a decent standard of living for all working people requires the forging of a *revolutionary workers party* grounded in an internationalist program. Acting as a *tribune of the people*, such a party can unite all the oppressed behind the working class in a successful struggle for state power. The fates of the Mexican and U.S. proletariats are closely linked, including by the human bridge of immigrant workers. We seek to build a communist internationalist vanguard fighting for working-class revolution from the Yukon to the Yucatán. ■

## Spartacist Forums

**Republicans/Democrats—  
Twin Parties of Racist Reaction!**

**For a Class-Struggle Fight  
Against Anti-Immigrant Racism!**

• No to Proposition 187!  
• Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Speaker: Barbara Franck, Spartacist League  
Special Eyewitness Report on Mexico: Skye White, Spartacus Youth Club

**Saturday, Oct. 22, 3:00 p.m.**  
Hollywood United Methodist Church  
Grant Hall, Franklin at Highland  
(just north of Hollywood Blvd.)

For more information: (213) 380-8239

**LOS ANGELES**

**Thursday, Oct. 27, 6:00 p.m.**

San Francisco State University  
Student Union B119

For more information: (415) 777-9367

**SAN FRANCISCO**

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Down with Prop 187!

# Mobilize California Labor to Smash Anti-Immigrant Racism!

Last month an 87-year-old Korean immigrant woman in Pinole, on north San Francisco Bay, died because she and her family were afraid to go to the hospital until the last minute. Her daughter found the elderly woman severely burned in a household accident, but hesitated to call for medical help for fear that undocumented members of the household would be arrested and deported. No wonder her daughter was worried. Building up to the November elections in California, immigrant-bashing is the name of the electoral game—codified in Proposition 187. If passed, this proposition would force hospital and school personnel to report suspected “illegal immigrants” to the notorious Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) police. It would also deny welfare, education and health care to undocumented immigrants.

Taking immediate aim at “illegal” immigrants, Prop. 187, sponsored by the rightist “S.O.S.” (Save Our State) campaign, is the electoral spearhead of a xenophobic offensive against all immigrants, inciting a climate of racist hostility particularly against Latinos and Asians. California Republican governor Pete Wilson is running for re-election on a platform of unalloyed Hispanic-bashing. But he’s not alone. The Democrats are competing on the terrain of anti-immigrant electoral racism, from the White House to the California state house race on down.

The capitalists’ real aim is not stopping “illegal immigration” but controlling the border like a faucet—turn it on when labor is needed, turn it off when it’s not. Criminalizing immigrants makes them even more vulnerable to brutal exploitation, while the threat of deportation aims at turning them into docile wage slaves. This poses a deadly threat to the multiracial working class, particularly in California whose population of 31 million is on the verge of becoming “majority minority”—Latino, Asian and black—and where Latino workers are an increasingly strategic and militant component of the labor movement.

The Spartacist League calls to vote “no” on Prop. 187. But we also warn that this racist assault won’t be defeated at the ballot box, particularly when those most directly threatened by it don’t even have the right to vote. Polls show a 62 percent approval rating for Prop. 187. The capitalists’ game is to pit everyone at the bottom against each other in a desperate struggle for a piece of an ever-diminishing pie. The power to stop them lies in the hands of the multiracial working class. But to mobilize that power, to build a genuinely integrated labor movement that champions the rights of all the oppressed,



Los Angeles, May 28: Over 15,000 predominantly Latino workers marched on L.A. City Hall with banner proclaiming, “Stop Racist Attacks Against Immigrants!”

from welfare mothers to immigrant youth, boils down to a question of leadership. And that question can only be answered by a revolutionary leadership of the working class.

Southern California has seen a wave of labor struggles in recent years—from militant janitors and drywall construction workers to Los Angeles teachers and teaching assistants, hotel workers, hospital workers, county workers, longshoremen, Teamsters and independent

truckers—which have either been led or heavily supported by Latino workers. Across the border, Mexico is seething in outrage against Prop. 187 and the recent INS blockade of the border (“Operation Gatekeeper”). But on both sides, calls for protest focus on pressuring the capitalist politicians to act.

Tens of thousands are expected to turn out in Los Angeles on October 16 for a massive demonstration of opposition to Prop. 187, a demonstration

endorsed and built by significant sections of the California labor movement. Last May, more than 15,000—including a number of trade-union contingents—also marched in L.A. But all the labor tops want to do is channel militant opposition to anti-immigrant racism into a campaign to “stop Wilson” by electing equally racist Democrats.

Tying the interests of the exploited to those of the exploiters, whether it be the Democrats in the U.S. or the PRD of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in Mexico, kills any possibility of class struggle, fracturing the labor movement along racial and ethnic lines by keeping the working class bound to a system whose existence is predicated on such divisions. The only action that can successfully resist this racist onslaught is *multiracial* class struggle which can unite the militant heavily Latino L.A.-area unions and others who have denounced Prop. 187 (including teachers, health workers and the California Labor Federation) together with super-exploited Mexican workers just across the border in the U.S.-owned *maquiladora* (free trade zone) sweatshops of Tijuana. Such proletarian internationalist action would send a powerful message to the immigrant-bashers. *Down with Prop. 187! Full citizenship rights for ALL immigrants!*

### Democrats and Republicans Compete in Immigrant-Bashing

Pete Wilson overcame a 20 percent lag in the polls behind Democratic challenger Kathleen Brown by pushing Prop. 187. Last year Wilson demanded repeal of the 14th Amendment, in order to deny citizenship to children born in the U.S. to undocumented immigrants. This constitutional amendment, guaranteeing citizenship to *everyone* born in the United States, was one of the hard-won victories of the Civil War which destroyed chattel slavery and led to the enfranchisement of the black freedmen. Brown opposes Prop. 187 as going too far, but attacks Wilson for being “johnny-come-lately” on the immigrant-bashing front.

Brown advocates militarizing the Mexican border, as does Democratic Senator Barbara Boxer. And the Clinton administration is already doing it. Days after ordering the colonialist invasion of Haiti—in large part aimed at stopping the flow of black Haitian “boat people”—Washington launched “Operation Gatekeeper,” doubling the number of Border Patrol agents along a 14-mile stretch south of San Diego. Modeled on “Operation Blockade”—which has INS agents lined up along 20 miles of border separating El Paso and Ciudad Juárez—this turns the border into a

*continued on page 10*

## Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!