

**Build a Revolutionary Workers Party  
to Fight for a Workers Government**

## Explosive Strike Wave Rocks France



Mass demonstration of striking workers in Paris, December 5. Burgeoning strike wave of railway workers and other public employees has virtually shut down France for weeks. AFP

DECEMBER 12—A crescendo of militant strikes and workers mobilizations has virtually paralyzed France. The railroads have been shut down for almost three weeks as part of the protests against attacks by the government of conservative prime minister Alain Juppé on the social service system. Mass transit in Paris and other major cities has ground to a halt. Last week there were two one-day general strikes, centered in the public sector, called by the CGT and FO trade-union federations. Even official estimates put the number of demonstrators on Thursday, December 7 at more than one million nationwide.

Today, close to two million came out at the unions' call. In Paris, a mile-long stretch beginning from the Place de la République was packed wall-to-wall with demonstrators chanting, "Juppé resign!" Over 200,000 marched in Marseille. The current workers' protests have come at a particularly embarrassing time for President Jacques Chirac, as Paris was to host a summit conference this week to

finalize the NATO-dictated "peace" accords for Bosnia. The site of the conference has now been moved outside the strikebound French capital.

Barely six months after the overwhelming victory of a right-wing government, which holds an 80 percent majority in parliament, today large numbers of workers and youth sense that they can stop the government in its tracks. But their leaders are moving to behead the struggle. After trying for weeks to ram through a slew of budget-slashing measures, Juppé has switched to a

divide-and-conquer strategy, offering concessions to the rail workers who have been the backbone of the strikes. Over the weekend, FO and CGT union leaders signaled their willingness to accept a compromise, dropping any preconditions for negotiations with Juppé. Now it is reported that leaders of some rail unions are going for Juppé's ploy, saying they are ready to settle.

The present situation cannot long continue. What is at stake here is not simply union retirement funds. The French bourgeoisie is out to inflict a decisive blow

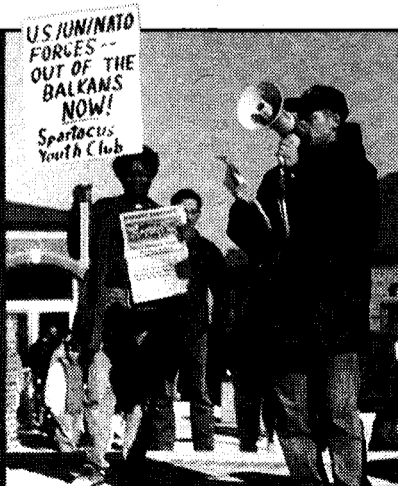
against the unions, which would set the stage for a broader onslaught against the working class, as was the case with Reagan's destruction of the PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981 and Thatcher's assault on the British miners in 1984-85. So far, Chirac/Juppé have been stymied. But if the workers do not break out of the stranglehold of the reformist misleaders, then the bureaucracy acting in collusion with the bourgeoisie will either dissipate the militancy or betray the strike outright. There will undoubtedly be "modifications" to the massive takebacks, and Juppé could well be sacrificed by the bourgeoisie as a sop to the workers' anger. But even if the government grants concessions, the capitalists will use other means—like devaluation of the franc and concomitant inflationary devaluation of wages—to try to take back everything they have granted.

The destruction of the Soviet Union has sharply intensified a worldwide capitalist assault on the living standards and organizations of the working class, while exacerbating economic competition among the imperialist powers. The French bourgeoisie is under relentless pressure from Germany to slash social welfare programs and drastically cut the

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**Spartacists  
Protest  
Imperialist  
Occupation  
of Bosnia**

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# Spartacists Protest Imperialist Occupation of Bosnia

As the first of 60,000 NATO troops, including 20,000 from the U.S., began to descend on Bosnia, the Spartacist League held protest demonstrations demanding, "U.S./NATO Get Your Bloody Hands Off the Balkans!" For Marxist revolutionaries, it is an elementary duty to mobilize opposition to this imperialist occupation force. Yet these were the first organized protests in the U.S. against the NATO expeditionary force. Three months earlier, the SL/U.S. and other sections of the International Communist League organized emergency protests against the massive NATO terror bombing of the Bosnian Serbs which paved the way for the current imperialist-dictated "peace" deal.

At the December 5 NYC protest outside the UN building, demonstrators carried signs reading "United Nations—Fig Leaf for Imperialist Slaughter." SL spokesman Len Meyers pointed to other recent imperialist interventions in the name of "peace," "democracy" or "humanitarianism," including the racist, colonialist invasions of Somalia and Haiti, the 1991 attack on Iraq and the continuing starvation embargo which has led to the deaths of 500,000 Iraqi children.



SL protest outside United Nations, New York City, December 5.

Meyers declared: "What this deal promises is more killing, more imperialist slaughter and more of the same kind of 'ethnic cleansing' that was hypocritically denounced a short time ago."

Speaking a day later at a Chicago protest outside the Federal Building, SLer Lisa Brooks pointed to the imperialist-instigated capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the former Yugoslav deformed workers state and unleashed the nationalist wars that have ripped apart the Balkans. She stated, "Lasting peace and national equality for all the peoples of the region will only come through proletarian revolutions leading to a socialist federation of the Balkans as part of a Socialist United States of Europe." Spartacist signs called "For Workers Revolution to Overthrow All the Bloody Nationalist Regimes!"

Emboldened by the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, the imperialist rulers in the U.S. and West Europe have unleashed all-out assaults on social welfare and education programs while scapegoating minority and immigrant workers for epidemic levels of unemployment. At an SL speakout at the College Park campus of the University of Maryland on December 7, a Spartacus Youth Club member told students: "With such a bleak future for today's youth, this is a time which

screams out for socialist revolution."

The same theme was underlined by Spartacist speakers in the Bay Area, as 70 protesters turned out December 9 for a demonstration in downtown San Francisco which was covered by three local television stations as well as KCBS and KPFA radio. SL speaker Barbara Francis pointed to the explosive strike wave rocking France, where the Balkans "peace" deal is slated to be signed December 14: "In France, the biggest class battles in 30 years are being waged just as French imperialism prepares to clean out 120,000 Bosnian Serbs from Sarajevo. We stand with the French workers in struggle to bring down the bloodthirsty French imperialists, while in the U.S. we fight to bring down our own racist rulers."

The Bay Area protest also drew a handful of representatives of other leftist groups, including the Freedom Socialist Party. An FSP supporter who addressed the Bay Area demo moaned about how "peace groups and activists are confused and divided over whether to support or oppose Clinton's plan to send U.S. troops to Bosnia." In fact, as a Spartacus Youth Club spokesman pointed out in reply, the FSP itself was "confused" on this fundamental question. Our comrade noted that the FSP's paper castigated Washington for not siding "with the Bosnian resistance fighting for a pluralistic society" and for the phony arms embargo which left the Sarajevo regime "almost defenseless." This was the line as well of the "Workers Aid" campaign in West Europe, supported by various fake Trotskyists, which ran convoys under UN "protection" to the Bosnian city of Tuzla. Now Tuzla is to be the base for 20,000 American troops.

As the New York SL speaker concluded, underscoring the urgency of the ICL's fight for revolutionary leadership: "The International Communist League fights to reforge the Fourth International of Leon Trotsky. This is the fight for workers revolution around the planet, to put an end, once and for all, to racist terror, to imperialist war, to imperialist exploitation. Join us in that fight!" ■

## France: Revolutionary Leadership Is Key

*The continuing wave of strikes which has paralyzed France in recent weeks points ever more directly toward the question of power: who will rule, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat? The reformist misleaders—the Communist and Socialist parties and the heads of the various labor federations—are the main obstacle to victory. They seek to impose a "solution" compatible with the interests of French capitalism, pleading for*



TROTSKY



LENIN

*piecemeal concessions which even if granted today will be taken back tomorrow. Writing at the time of the 1936 French general strike, Leon Trotsky underscored the urgency of forging an internationalist Bolshevik Party to lead the proletariat to power.*

Contrary to the assertions of the leaders of the Second and Third Internationals, present-day capitalism is already incapable of either giving work to all workers or raising the standard of living of the workers. Finance capital passes the costs of social reform onto the shoulders of the workers themselves and of the petty bourgeoisie by means of rising prices, open or concealed inflation, taxes, etc. The essence of the present "statism," of state interference—in both "democratic" and fascist countries—consists in saving rotting capitalism at the price of lowering the living and cultural standards of the people. No other method is possible on the basis of private property....

The mass organizations of the working class remain powerless, undecided, and lost, if they are not inspired and led forward by a firmly welded-together vanguard. The necessity for a revolutionary party is shown with new force.

Thus, all the tasks of the revolutionary struggle unfailingly lead to one task—the creation of a new, really revolutionary, leadership, capable of dealing with the tasks and possibilities of our epoch. Direct participation in the movement of the masses, bold class slogans taken to their conclusion, an independent banner, irreconcilability toward compromisers, mercilessness towards traitors—here lies the road of the Fourth International....

Participation in the living struggle, always in the front line of fire, work in the trade unions, and the building up of the party—all go on at the same time, mutually supplementing each other. All the fighting slogans—workers' control, workers' militia, the arming of the workers, a government of workers and peasants, the socialization of the means of production—are indissolubly bound up with the creation of workers', peasants', and soldiers' soviets.

—Leon Trotsky, "The New Revolutionary Upsurge and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (July 1936)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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15 December 1995

## Free Chinese Immigrants Imprisoned by INS!

We reprint below a December 8 protest statement by the Partisan Defense Committee.

District Director  
Immigration and Naturalization  
Service  
San Francisco, California

We demand the immediate release of *all* the Chinese immigrants who have been imprisoned for over two years after their nightmarish journeys on ships such as the *Golden Venture*, which ran aground off New York in June 1993.

On 13 September 1993 we telegraphed you to demand their release, including those who had arrived in San Francisco on the freighter *Pai Sheng*, after reports leaked out of a hunger strike "by as many as 60 prisoners some of whom have been subjected to solitary confinement." Now, over two years later, both the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *New York Times* reveal that the imprisonment/torture continues.

The *Chronicle* reported on 18 November that 19 women were in "the sixth day of a hunger strike at the Lerdo Detention Facility in Bakersfield." The 2 December *Times* says up to 22 women "have gone on a hunger strike to protest their detention for more than two years and the

Government's plans to deport them," and notes that nine women "had lost an average of 10 pounds." "There is no pain in dying, but it hurts when they keep you in jail," said 25-year-old apparel maker Tin Chin Wang. Another protested that "prison guards have placed her in solitary confinement in an effort to force her to eat."

These women have committed no crime: they are *victims* of a racist policy of the U.S. government which has whipped up anti-immigrant hysteria, including the old "yellow peril" bogeyman which has a long history, particularly in California. It was in fact Democratic president Bill Clinton and his National Security Council which ordered the policy of incarcerating such immigrants, and the well-hated INS eagerly implemented it. It is of a piece with the vicious anti-immigrant Proposition 187 pushed by Republican governor Pete Wilson. It's pure racism, designed to deflect rising discontent with a decadent economic system which, among its many crimes, brutally exploits Asian women under virtual slave conditions in sweatshops from L.A. to New York.

We repeat: Down with the Clinton/INS incarceration of the Chinese immigrants. Release them now! With great hardship, they got here—let them stay here!

# Oust UAW Tops, Labor Lieutenants of Capitalism

## Betrayal at CAT: Major Defeat for Labor

On December 3, United Auto Workers (UAW) president Stephen Yokich dealt Caterpillar workers and the whole labor movement a stunning and historic defeat by ordering the 8,700 strikers back to work "immediately and unconditionally." To choke off any show of defiance, the UAW tops announced they would cut off the weekly strike benefit checks for recalled workers (even though the union is sitting on a \$900 million strike fund)! Justifying this stab in the back, newly elected AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Richard Trumka declared this "a change of tactics, that's all." But a CAT striker in York, Pennsylvania voiced what thousands of CAT strikers feel in their guts: "It has been your worst nightmare come true." Indeed, the entire labor movement will pay dearly for the bureaucrats' treachery.

In Peoria, Illinois, strikers from UAW Local 974 voted down the proposal containing Yokich's ignominious terms of surrender by 94 percent; overall CAT strikers gave thumbs down to the "deal" by a whopping four-to-one margin. After the bitter 18-month battle against Caterpillar Inc., one of the world's largest producers of construction equipment and diesel engines, workers were told that, no matter how they voted, Yokich was calling off the strike. Hardest hit by this sellout are at least 150 unionists who were fired during the strike for the simplest acts of union militancy. They were sacrificed with a handshake between Yokich and the fabulously wealthy, union-busting Caterpillar bosses.

But unknown numbers of strikers may never see the inside of a Caterpillar plant again; the company says they will be called back "as needed." Those who are recalled will have to toil with scarcely a fig leaf of union protection, their seniority, safety and scheduling rights ripped to shreds, forced to work alongside many of the scabs who slithered across the picket lines. Even using the word "scab" will be grounds for dismissal under "temporary" guidelines approved by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and armed company goons will be ready to act if anyone starts talking union. The whole surrender has CAT bosses and capitalists across the country grinning. "Caterpillar Prepares Rules for Conduct, Including Gag Order on Union Dispute," gloated the *Wall Street Journal* (5 December).

Meet the "new" AFL-CIO: this crushing defeat is the first accomplishment of the "reform" leadership elected at the labor federation's convention barely two months ago. Key among their supporters were the UAW, Machinists and Steelworkers leaders who are presiding over the wholesale gutting of this country's unions. While Caterpillar management kicks returning strikers in the teeth, AFL-CIO chief Sweeney calls for a new "social contract" between corporations and workers, saying he wants "to build bridges between labor and management, so that American business can be more successful and American workers can share in the gains."

### From "War Zone" to Killing Field

For the past few years, workers across the country have looked to the Illinois "war zone" struggles as a symbol of resistance to corporate greed. Thousands of unionists trekked to Peoria and Decatur to bolster picket lines and attend mass rallies. CAT unionists themselves have never lacked a willingness to fight. But here workers were hamstrung as one of the most powerful industrial unions in



Earl Dotter  
New AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Trumka (left) and UAW chief Yokich stabbed Caterpillar strikers in the back.

the world, the UAW, prepared its own defeat in one of its Midwest bastions of strength refusing to build *mass picket lines that would shut down production*. With over 5,000 "temporary" strike-breakers and as many as 4,100 scabbing union members waltzing across the picket lines, Caterpillar sales, profits, and even stock prices soared during the strike.

The *New York Times* (5 December) boasts that "Union Capitulation Shows Strike Is Now Dull Sword." But militant union action, which could have shut down production tight, is a sword that Yokich and the rest of the pro-capitalist union brass have never unsheathed. These *labor traitors* fear class struggle like the plague. CAT's profit-gouging, union-busting, scabberding and "outsourcing" is nothing new—nor is anything else that capitalists use to drive down the price of labor and crank up the rate of exploitation.

The union tops sabotage struggles for higher wages and against company take-backs because they embrace the interests of U.S. capitalism, reflected in their treasonous alliance with the Democratic Party. The CAT strike of 1991-92 was called off just 24 hours after the AFL-CIO endorsed then-candidate Bill Clinton. For the next two years the UAW waged an "inside campaign" that didn't seriously affect the company's production but did get a lot of union activists victimized. Membership anger finally flared into a multi-plant strike in June 1994. That summer the conjuncture of striking CAT and Bridgestone-Firestone rubber workers along with locked-out Staley corn processing workers in Decatur posed the possibility of powerful labor action across industry lines.

Noting that the most urgent task was to stop the scabs who threatened all three struggles, *Workers Vanguard* (No. 604, 5 August 1994) called for mobilizing the entire labor movement for mass pickets, to "hot-cargo" (refuse to handle) scab products, and to prepare for sit-down strikes inside key industrial sites. Urgently needed was a class-struggle leadership to transform the workers' will and determination to fight, even in the face of brutal cop attacks, into effective action. Meanwhile, a host of "reform" bureaucrats and mealy-mouthed "socialists" like the International Socialist Organization, Socialist Action and the *Labor Notes* crowd populated a strike support coalition which pushed diversions like consumer boycotts and civil disobedience stunts, allowing the bureaucrats to slowly but effectively strangle the "war zone" strikes.

The union tops channeled the workers' anger into chauvinist appeals for the "solidarity" of the American government against foreign capitalists and workers.



Mark Pokempner/Impact Visuals

The UAW launched a flag-waving campaign with the slogan, "Defending the American Dream," a direct attack on thousands of potential strike allies working in CAT plants abroad. Even more virulent was the United Rubber Workers' racist Japan-bashing campaign for Clinton to launch a trade war against Bridgestone-Firestone. By last spring, this filthy jingoism had smothered the URW strike, and union bureaucrats sent some 4,000 strikers back to work in another unconditional surrender.

Likewise, it's the union bureaucrats' loyalty to the capitalist system, the government and their Democratic Party which tolled the death knell for the fight against Caterpillar's union-busting. In response to the company's massive scabberding, UAW leaders ordered strikers to obey anti-picketing injunctions issued by the courts while lobbying the Democrats to pass a "striker replacement" bill that would have relegated strikes to binding arbitration. To workers, they offered

pie-in-the-sky promises of NLRB lawsuits, although not one of the over 170 anti-company charges upheld by the NLRB has ever been enforced.

### Revolutionary Leadership

The price of the UAW tops' betrayal at Caterpillar will be paid in places far beyond the factories of this construction equipment giant. The *Wall Street Journal* (8 December) is crowing that "Caterpillar Inc. wrote the book on how to operate factories profitably during a strike." Hard-pressed newspaper strikers in Detroit and the Machinists fighting Boeing will inevitably feel reverberations of this defeat. Just as the AFL-CIO tops' capitulation to Reagan's smashing of the PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981 gave a green light to a decade and a half of ruinous defeats—from the 1983 copper miners' strike against Phelps Dodge to last year's nationwide Teamsters

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## Appeals Court Turns Down UMWA Striker Jerry Dale Lowe

On November 28, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit refused to reconsider its denial of an appeal by United Mine Workers militant Jerry Dale Lowe. Lowe faces nearly eleven years in prison on federal frame-up charges in connection with the shooting death during a bitter 1993 strike of a scab contractor at Arch Mineral's Ruffner mine in Logan County, West Virginia (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 630, 6 October).

Jerry Dale Lowe was singled out because he was known as a defender of the union. But UMWA president Richard Trumka, now secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, refused to lift a finger in Lowe's defense. Trum-

ka's fellow "reform" bureaucrat, Teamsters chief Ron Carey, has likewise done nothing to defend Los Angeles area trucker Jesse Acuna, who was jailed during last year's national freight strike. The pro-capitalist labor tops do everything in their power to sabotage class struggle and abandon those who do fight on the picket lines to rot in jail.

The Partisan Defense Committee urges labor militants everywhere to fight for their unions to take up the cause of these and all class-war prisoners, as part of a broader struggle against anti-labor and racist repression. Drop the charges against Jerry Dale Lowe!



WV Photo

Lea and Jerry Dale Lowe.

## On China

**A subscriber in Seattle asks: Is China capitalist?**

Dear *Workers Vanguard*:

I have a question concerning China. We have said that the critical date when the old Communist Party of the Soviet Union fell victim to capitalist counter-revolution was the day Yeltsin stood the old guard Stalinist tanks down on the barricades in Moscow. We said it was a definitive historical event.

When we talk about China how do we know there is going to be this publicly observed historical act?

When we talk about China, how do we know there is going to be this same kind of event? The Stalinist Communist Party (CCP) is utterly committed to the establishment of capitalism and when it crushed the Tiananmen Square students (which was a warning to workers) to solidify its control of power, did it not also at the same time establish the dominance of capitalism to which it is committed? Is it not possible that the Chinese version of Yeltsin's barricade stand in reverse has occurred? Maybe we just didn't notice?

Some observations are called for. First of all, as *Spartacist Canada* has noted, the rate of privatization of industry is already much higher than Russia.

I've been in China twice. The first time was over a decade ago. I recall that the big announcement in the papers at the time was how all Chinese could afford orange sodas as a result of increases in production. The iron rice bowl was firmly in place. There were no public displays of ostentatious wealth or prostitution and people in general were afraid to talk with foreigners—with good reason. As deformed a workers state as it was there was nonetheless a socialist structure and goals.

I also was in China proper last year in places like Chengdu and Xian etc. and ethnic provinces like Tibet and Xinjiang. The changes have been phenomenal.

Petit-bourgeois shopkeepers abound. You can go into a restaurant and on the menu you will find listed right after the food dishes, guides for hire, wives for sale via "marriage services" just like the worst hellholes in Manila.

Another stunning sight was huge new houses built in tracts just like middle-class urban America. I'm talking about \$300,000 houses in a country where the GNP [per capita] is in the hundreds of dollars. No doubt they belong to the *taizidang* and other capitalist scum.

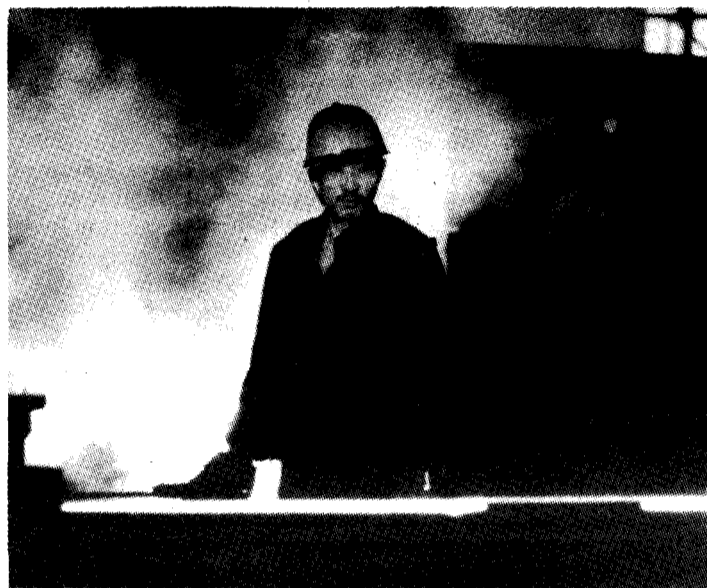
The Tibetans are becoming the equivalent of American Indians in China. Pool halls and lots of alcohol and tons of racism and spies and a huge Chinese immigration. Tibet reminds me of the "wild east." Even the black market money changers must be Chinese. Truly, cultural genocide is being perpetuated against them and the same is true in Xinjiang with the Uighurs, although I sense with less success. Very unfortunately, the Dalai Lama is the only game in town. Also, sadly, never once did I meet a Chinese person who viewed Tibet or Xinjiang as anything other than as an integral part of China, which they are not. The Tibetans are viewed as the "Chinese man's burden."

The last observation that sticks in my mind is this: again and again the Chinese I met were very concerned that China could break apart into literally separate countries. I realize historically that was often the case but maybe you could explain to me why and how that could occur because I'm at a loss to figure what could actually make that happen.

In conclusion, what I'm saying is that I'm having a hard time seeing China as even a very deformed workers state in any meaningful sense of the word. I'm not a China expert, I'm just a working-class Marxist. It seems to me though, that if it looks like capitalism, smells like capitalism and acts like capitalism—then it must be capitalism.

Red greetings,  
Lawrence

**WV replies:** To address the important questions raised by Lawrence's letter requires going into the situation in China in some depth. Lawrence echoes a view now fairly common in Western bourgeois circles and among many leftists—namely, that the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy has brought back capitalism in a gradual, "cold" manner from above. However, the restoration of capitalism in the Chinese deformed workers state



Fred Scott

**Workers in China's state industry face mass layoffs, while imperialist companies like Volkswagen (right) are invited in by Stalinist bureaucracy.**

would necessarily entail fundamental changes at the *political level*, i.e., state power. This Marxist understanding was reaffirmed by the recent counterrevolutionary overturns in the former Soviet Union and East Europe. The forces driving toward capitalist restoration in China—both inside and outside the bureaucracy—are undeniably powerful. But they have not yet triumphed.

Lawrence correctly points out that market "reforms" initiated under Deng Xiaoping have regenerated some of the most heinous aspects of life in prerevolutionary China, particularly in regard to women's oppression and the rampant, ostentatious corruption in the state bureaucracy. To be sure, Deng's dictum, "To get rich is glorious," has been taken to heart by many "Communist" officials. Furthermore, the Chinese bourgeoisie was not totally destroyed by the victory of Mao's army in 1949, but, after looting the country for all it was worth, fled to Taiwan and Hong Kong, setting up shop with the aid and protection of world imperialism. Over the past 15 years, offshore Chinese capital has repenetrated the mainland, especially through joint ventures in the "Special Economic Zones" (SEZs).

A large fraction of the Beijing bureaucracy is consciously striving to turn China into an "authoritarian" capitalist "tiger," à la Singapore or South Korea. This is also the perspective of significant elements in Western and Japanese ruling circles who, hoping to avoid the chaos of post-Soviet Russia and East Europe, would like to see the venal Stalinist officialdom oversee the restoration of capitalism while retaining tight control over Chinese society.

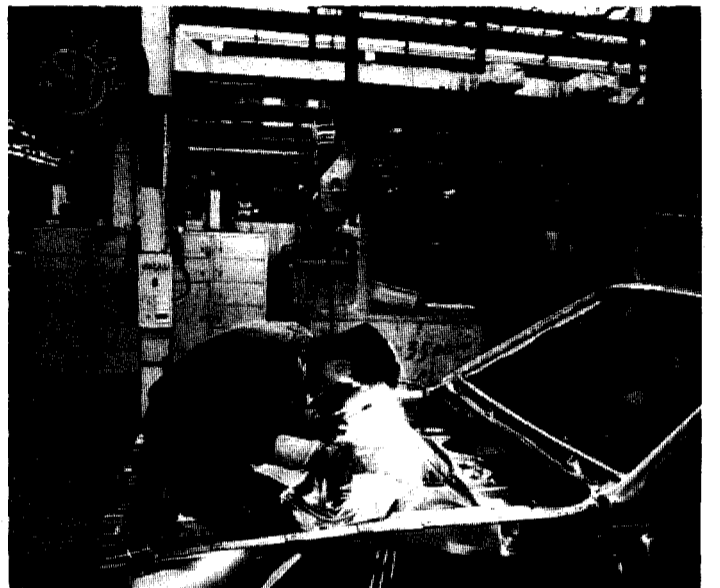
Today, ex-Stalinist "hardliners" on the outs in Yeltsin's Russia, along with elements of the Castro bureaucracy in beleaguered Cuba, wistfully look to China as an alternative to the wrecked regimes of the former USSR and East Europe.

But there is a potentially powerful obstacle to capitalist counterrevolution in China: the working class. Far from being smashed, the Chinese proletariat has shown many signs of struggle in recent years, from strikes in the SEZs to demonstrations by workers in state plants fighting to defend the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed jobs, income and social benefits. In 1993 there was a 50 percent increase in officially recognized labor disputes, totaling over 12,000 strikes and slowdowns. And this does not include wildcat actions unreported in government statistics.

Unlike the workers of Poland and other East European countries, who reacted to Stalinist bureaucratism and the lie of "real, existing socialism" by swallowing Western propaganda that capitalism would give them a life of

remains a workers state, whose military apparatus is the People's Liberation Army (PLA). While even the PLA has delved into the market, generating more revenue through its business ventures than it receives from the state budget, the manifest tensions within the army at the time of the 1989 crisis indicate that this armed force cannot be relied upon to shove the immiseration and deprivation that must accompany the restoration of capitalism down the throats of the workers and peasants.

The Beijing bureaucracy is playing an increasingly precarious balancing act between the working people in whose name they rule and the imperialist powers. While state industry accounted for just over one-third of China's economic output in 1994, and continues to decline relative to private and "collective" township businesses, the industrial core of the economy remains state owned, accounting for 70 percent of state investment and employing 70 percent of all industrial workers. In the face of demands by world bankers that Beijing cut its subsidies, the regime has



Schwarzbach/Argus

plenty, millions of Chinese workers have already experienced the harsh reality of exploitation in capitalist enterprises in the "socialist market economy." And workers in state factories know that their livelihoods will be on the chopping block of any capitalist-restorationist government. Key to transforming the massive but amorphous unrest in the Chinese working class into a proletarian political revolution against the decrepit Stalinist regime is the construction of a Trotskyist vanguard party.

### Deng's China and Yeltsin's Russia

The changes racking China have not arisen overnight. Following the disastrous "Cultural Revolution," Deng took the reins of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1978 with a program to revive the economy by decollectivizing agriculture, extending market incentives and inviting greater foreign investment—all of which had begun under Mao. The bloody suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen protests showed that there would be no political opening, such as Gorbachev introduced in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980s, to go along with economic "liberalization."

To argue that a bourgeois counterrevolution has already occurred buys into the bureaucracy's schema of a gradual, and bountiful, transformation to a market economy. What this scenario denies is the central question of the state which issued out of the victory of Mao's guerrilla forces in 1949. Despite the rule of a bureaucracy, which originally upheld Stalin's nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" but now embraces the gospel of the (capitalist) market, this

increased its investment in state industries in the years following the suppression of the Tiananmen protests.

In a book on China written a couple of years ago, an American banker in Hong Kong stated with evident disapproval: "Much of the economy remains under the sway of huge state enterprises—such as steel or coal companies that sometimes have more than 100,000 employees. These are run rather like an American post office, with no incentives for efficiency and almost as little ability to fire lazy or incompetent workers" (William H. Overholt, *The Rise of China* [1993]). Similarly, in contrast to the "shock treatment" imposed on the peoples of the former USSR, Poland, East Germany, etc., Beijing refuses to implement a bankruptcy law, passed years ago at the urging of foreign investors, before a package of "social security" benefits for laid-off workers is in place. This is not because the Chinese Stalinists are sympathetic to the interests of the workers. Rather they are fearful of worker unrest and ultimately of political revolution.

As we wrote in "Turmoil Brewing in China" (*WV* No. 618, 10 March), the bureaucracy's policies exemplify a tendency common to all Stalinist regimes, which rest on proletarian property forms while excluding the working class from political power. From "market socialism" in Yugoslavia and Hungary in the 1970s and '80s to Gorbachev's *perestroika*, the Stalinist rulers opted for market mechanisms to correct the bottlenecks produced by bureaucratic mismanagement of the centralized economy. These "reforms" generated capitalist-restorationist forces which, with the full support of the imperialist powers,

# Che Guevara and Workers Democracy

Milwaukee  
16 October 1995

Great piece on Che and the mystique of the guerrilla! [see "Cuba, Castro and Che: The Mystique of the Guerrilla Road," in the *Young Spartacus* pages of WV No. 630, 6 October]. As someone who was caught up in "sandalismo" in the '80s, your article hits the political allure right on the head. The portion on Che and material incentives is also right on. Your critique of Che's position on revolutionary internationalism clearly brings theory and practice together. But does this mean that Che did not believe in proletarian democracy or that within the context of a besieged state a deformed workers state was the best they could do? After all Che did split after it became clear that Fidel wanted to run the show.

Please send your pamphlet on Cuba & Marxist Theory and your writings on revolutionary integrationism. ¡Hasta la Victoria!

C.F.

*WV replies:* In our article, we noted that "Guevara's politics were a particularly idealistic, voluntarist brand of Stalinism," and that this reflected the attempt to build "socialism" in a small, impoverished and besieged island. In fact, there is an intimate connection between Che Guevara's program of peasant-based guerrilla struggle led by a tiny *foco* of austere revolutionaries and the hostility of the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy to direct workers political rule. This hostility was shared by all wings of the bureaucracy, not just the old-line pro-Moscow PSP but also Castro and Guevara personally. Since various pseudo-Trotskyist groups have long tried to portray Che as an unconscious Trotskyist, it's useful to examine his real views and actions.

The program of seeking to overthrow the capitalist state through peasant guerrilla warfare, if successful, necessarily leads to a state apparatus based on the petty-bourgeois cadres of the guerrilla army, not democratically elected organs of proletarian power: workers councils and workers militias. Guevara stated this explicitly. Referring to the experience of the nationalist 26th of July Movement's struggle against the Batista dictatorship, in a 1963 essay on "The Role of a Marxist-Leninist Party" Guevara declared that the guerrilla leaders in "the mountains" were "ideologically proletarian" whereas those in "the plains" (i.e., the cities) were petty-bourgeois. His conclusion: "The Rebel Army is the genuine representative of

the triumphant Revolution." While the bureaucratically deformed workers state rests on proletarian property forms resulting from the expropriation of Cuban and imperialist capital in 1960-61, its political leadership has always been rooted in a peasant-derived army rather than the organized working class.

This came through clearly in everything Guevara wrote concerning the working class. In a June 1960 speech on "The Working Class and the Industrialization of Cuba" he declares, "The workers should understand all their duties," adding: "One cannot hide the fact that the revolutionary movement was based first in the peasants and later in the working class." The workers' "duties" are listed as producing, saving and organizing—not to rule society, but to carry out orders from above. "We are not yet certain if the working class has understood the problems we face or how much they will help," he said, graphically expressing the distance of the petty-bourgeois leadership from the proletariat.

The nationalist guerrillas in power became Stalinist bureaucrats, who soon found themselves afflicted with...bureaucratism. In a February 1963 article, "Against Bureaucratism," Guevara wrote: "Our revolution was, in essence, the product of a guerrilla movement which undertook an armed struggle against the tyranny and crystallized in the taking of power. The first steps as a revolutionary state...were strongly colored by fundamental elements of guerrilla tactics as a form of state administration." This led to a spate of "administrative guerrilla wars." "As a countermeasure," Che went on, "strong bureaucratic apparatuses began to be formed which characterize this first period in the construction of our socialist state."

Guevara attributed the malady of bureaucratism to three factors: lack of revolutionary consciousness, lack of organization and lack of technical knowledge. His answer was to call for infusing the workers with a permanent "spirit of October," the spirit of unstinting self-sacrifice and urgency that accompanied the October 1962 "missile crisis" when the fate of the Cuban Revolution hung by a thread. This was summed up in his call for "moral incentives" as opposed to material incentives to raise productivity. In contrast to this *idealist* approach, Leon Trotsky's materialist analysis of the bureaucratic degeneration of the Russian Revolution located its origins in the scarcity imposed by international isolation leading to the political domination of a narrow, nationalist petty-bourgeois

layer. This could only be overcome through extension of socialist revolution, particularly to the advanced industrial countries.

The previous year, speaking before the leadership of the Cuban trade-union federation (speech of April 1962), Guevara asked why there was "apathy" in the working class: "Why do great, enormous tasks which belong directly to the working class always have to come from bureaucratic initiatives?...Why do initiatives arise at the top, and go from the

(see "Freedom for Cuban Trotskyists!" *Spartacist* No. 3, January-February 1965). As we pointed out in our two-part article, "For Workers Political Revolution in Cuba!" WV Nos. 223 and 224, 19 January and 2 February 1979), "The most active slanderer of Trotskyism in the Cuban leadership has been Ernesto 'Che' Guevara."

Che Guevara was certainly a courageous fighter, who was vilely murdered by CIA operatives as he sought to carry out his program of guerrilla war against



Che Guevara as Cuban minister of industry, 1964.

top to the bottom, where they really should have originated, to the entire working class?" He called for the "participation" of "active revolutionary nuclei" who were the "true representatives of the working class." But co-opting a few workers and union leaders has nothing to do with the genuine rule of workers councils as took place under the Bolshevik Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky.

Guevara had a clear Stalinist conception of a one-party state. In an interview with Maurice Zeitlin, first published in January 1962, he declared: "You cannot be for the revolution and be against the Cuban Communist Party." He also opposed factions within that party, denouncing as "counterrevolutionary" Trotsky's formation of the Left Opposition against Stalin's usurpation of the revolution. Asked about the printing plates for Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution* being smashed by Cuban officials, Guevara said this was an "error," but went on to slander the Cuban Trotskyists as "acting against the revolution." He was incensed that they had criticized the "Workers Technical Committees," saying "the Trotskyists characterized them as a crumb given to the workers because the workers were calling for the direction of the factories."

The Cuban Trotskyists were jailed in 1963. When a Spartacist supporter raised this during a meeting with Guevara on a trip to Cuba the following year, Guevara labeled the Trotskyists "divisionists" and threw in a dose of CIA-baiting

the imperialist-backed military dictatorship in Bolivia. He has come to symbolize for many radical youth the self-sacrificing revolutionary they aspire to be. But his petty-bourgeois nationalist worldview was counterposed to a proletarian-internationalist Marxist perspective. There has been much speculation about the reasons for his departure from Cuba in 1965. Yet as we have pointed out, his differences with Castro over economic policy represented at most intra-bureaucratic conflicts within the Cuban Communist Party (see "Radical Egalitarian Stalinism: A Post-Mortem," *Spartacist* No. 25, Summer 1978).

The Spartacist tendency originated in a fight within the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., whose degeneration from Trotskyism into centrism and then hardened reformism was signaled by its abandonment of the fight for a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard and its fulsome embrace of the Cuban leadership of Castro and Guevara. Defending the Cuban Revolution against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution, we have fought from the outset for a Cuban Trotskyist party to lead a proletarian political revolution to sweep out the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy and establish the rule of workers councils as part of a fight for international socialist revolution.

As Yankee imperialism continues its unrelenting war on the Cuban Revolution, and the desperate Castro-Stalinist bureaucracy multiplies pro-capitalist "reforms," the fight for Trotskyism in Cuba is all the more urgent today. ■

emerged victorious in the counterrevolutions that swept the USSR and East Europe. The destruction of the Soviet Union enormously increased the pressures of world imperialism on China. Yet the Chinese Stalinists only hardened in their pursuit of "free market" measures.

Nevertheless, if a bourgeois regime were to take power in China, it would have to dismantle the CCP's military/political structure and construct a new state apparatus committed to enforcing capitalist austerity by whatever means are necessary. In China, this could only be a neocolonial regime dependent on foreign capital and subservient to imperialism. That situation would be a far cry from today's "People's Republic," whose growing military power has touched off alarm bells from Taipei to the Pentagon. Significant voices in the U.S. ruling class are today screaming for a harder line against Beijing, often under the guise of promoting "human rights."

It is useful to compare China today with the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev. After a few years of tinkering with market-oriented "reforms," in early 1988 Gorbachev announced a "500 day plan" for the outright restoration of capitalism. But as the leader of a degenerated workers state, Gorbachev could not implement this plan. It took the seizure of political power by Boris Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary gang in August 1991 to initiate the destruction of the fractured workers state and the consolidation of a new state power to enforce the laws of the capitalist jungle on the Soviet peoples. The Communist Party was immediately banned; the USSR was officially dissolved that December; the Soviet military was purged of pro-socialist commanders and broken up along nationalist lines in Russia, the Ukraine, etc.; strikes were broken to demonstrate the regime's commitment to its imperialist godfathers.

In the former Soviet Union and

throughout East Europe, capitalist restoration has resulted in the collapse of industrial production, the pauperization of millions of workers, the closure of large numbers of big factories and mines and hyperinflation reaching annual rates of 2,000 percent. This is to say nothing of the bloody nationalist, racist frenzies besetting the region. The effects of counterrevolution have been brutally apparent.

This bears little resemblance to China. Whereas the gross domestic product in Yeltsin's Russia has plummeted by 60 percent since 1991, the Chinese economy has been growing at an average annual rate of 10 percent for the past few years. While inflation in China in recent years has been relatively high by past standards, annual price increases are still only about 1 percent of the level experienced in post-Soviet Russia or Poland. (And it is interesting to note that while the anti-Communist purges in Yeltsin's Russia included organized destruc-

tion of Marxist classics, Beijing has just announced the publication of new Chinese editions of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin—and Stalin.) Nonetheless, the danger of capitalist counterrevolution is quite real.

## Stalinism Undermines Gains of 1949 Revolution

As Lawrence reports, many people in China fear that the country may be torn apart. It is not national separatism that poses this threat, since national minorities make up only 8 percent of the population. Rather, the attenuation of central planning, the growth of "township/village enterprises"—now the fastest-growing sector of the economy—and the opening of whole areas to direct imperialist exploitation have all served to create a species of economic warlords who chafe at the constraints imposed by the central bureaucracy.

The book *China Wakes* (Random continued on page 11

**O**n November 16, the celebrated civil rights lawyer, social revolutionary and fighter for black freedom, Conrad Lynn, died at his home in Pomona, New York, less than two weeks after his 87th birthday. Lynn was a courageous pioneer in the struggle for black rights in the United States this century, in the forefront of many key legal battles against segregation and racist cop terror. It was Conrad Lynn who initiated the legal struggle to desegregate the American army in World War II; it was Lynn who defended the two black children (ages 7 and 9) charged with rape for kissing a white playmate in the infamous North Carolina "Kissing Case" in 1958; it was Lynn who uncovered the frame-up of the Harlem Six, black youth who dared to defend themselves against the cops in the hot New York summer of 1964—to mention only a few of his famous legal battles. Yet with the exception of a respectful obituary in the *New York Times*, Conrad Lynn's death received only perfunctory notice in both the established black and bourgeois press, now enamored of Louis Farrakhan and the Million Man March.

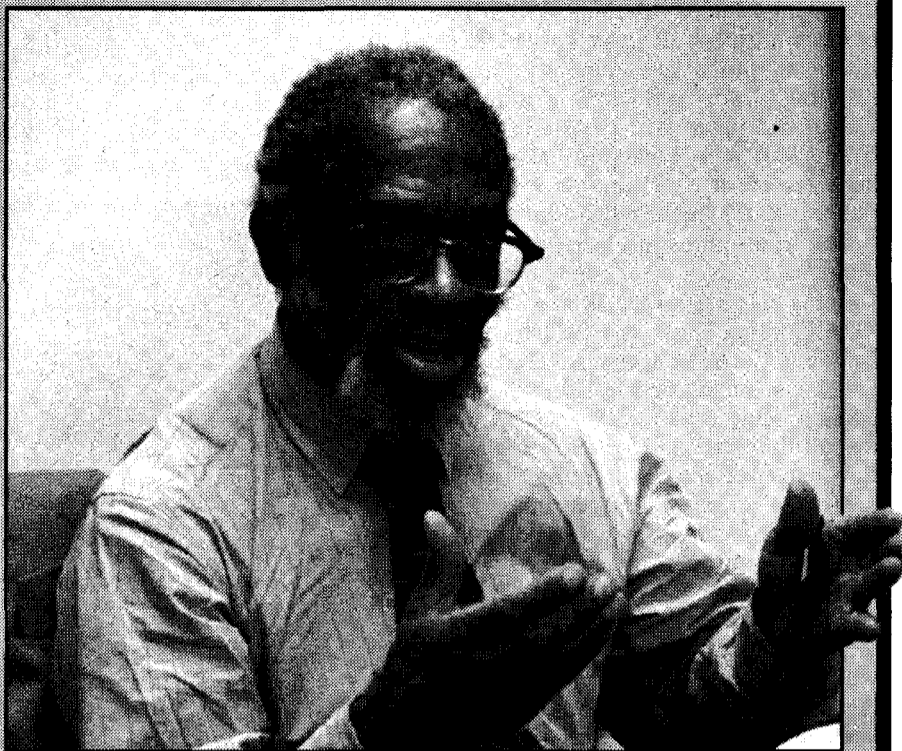
Conrad Lynn was always much more than a lawyer for civil rights causes—he was also an active participant, a fighter for radical causes, a believer in the necessity of integrated social struggle against the capitalist American state. As such, Lynn not only took up the explosive legal cases that the likes of Roy Wilkins and Thurgood Marshall refused to touch—he told the truth about the pusillanimous misleadership of black Democratic politicians like Adam Clayton Powell and liberal civil rights organizations like the NAACP. Neither did Lynn have much truck with the Black Muslims' segregationist political program, and he condemned Muslim leader Elijah Mohammed for accepting money from George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party.

Conrad Lynn firmly upheld the right of armed black self-defense against Klan and cop terror. He stood with heroic Monroe, North Carolina NAACP leader Robert F. Williams, who organized black self-defense against the KKK in Monroe in the late 1950s and early '60s. Lynn defended Williams in the bourgeois courts—and he defended him in front of the national board of the NAACP, which threatened Williams with expulsion in 1959 for publicly advocating armed self-defense. When the bourgeois authorities tried to prosecute Williams on phony kidnap charges, Lynn helped Williams escape the country.

Such stands did not endear Conrad Lynn to liberal black civil rights leaders, the bourgeois establishment, or to black nationalists for that matter. But we in the Spartacist League are proud to have considered him a friend and sometime ally. Our relationship with Conrad was established in the first year of our exist-

# CONRAD LYNN

## 1908 - 1995



## A TRIBUTE

WV Photo

ence as an organization, in united-front action in defense of Harlem during the infamous cop riot in July 1964.

### The 1964 Harlem Cop Riot

The years 1963-64 saw New York's rulers panic-stricken as the Southern civil rights movement moved north into the heart of American capitalism. Rent strikes spread like wildfire through Harlem. Two effective school boycotts galvanized opposition to the racist policies of the New York school board. Self-proclaimed communists were getting a hearing among the black masses, in particular Harlem-based Bill Epton, who was vice chairman of the Maoist Progressive Labor Movement.

Democratic Party mayor Robert Wagner and Police Commissioner Michael J. Murphy were intent on confronting and smashing this wave of black protest. In mid-July 1964, after an off-duty police lieutenant shot and killed a 15-year-old black youth, James Powell, the cops decided to use the resulting protest as an excuse to launch a pre-emptive strike against unrest in the ghetto. *Spartacist* No. 3 (January-February 1965) described what happened in the ensuing days as "wave after wave" of the tactical cops "swept through Harlem indiscriminately beating and terrorizing all who crossed their paths."

In the midst of this all-out police assault, Bill Epton's Harlem Defense Council (HDC) issued a leaflet calling for the organization of block committees as basic units of community self-defense, and for a mass demonstration of these block committees in organized defiance of the reign of cop terror. The city administration, backed up by the craven official black "leadership" organized in a Harlem "Unity Council" (including everyone from the NAACP to the Muslims), went all out to stop that march.

Epton was put under intense pressure to call off the action—when he refused, the police banned the march, marshaling an incredible army of 27,000 cops to make sure no one dared protest in Harlem that day. In a singular act of personal courage and defiance of New York's arrogant racist rulers, Bill Epton, surrounded by supporters, went to the march assembly point. At his side, arms

linked with Epton's, was Conrad Lynn—probably the only well-known civil rights lawyer in the country willing to stand with Epton at that moment. Epton and Lynn were arrested as they stepped off the curb—the march was stopped.

We in the Spartacist tendency also did our best to defend the embattled black masses of Harlem, seeking to mobilize the social power of the working class. A few days after the abortive HDC march, a rally in the city's garment district sponsored by the Spartacist-initiated Harlem Solidarity Committee drew over 1,000, demanding "Remove the rioting cops from Harlem" and "Support the right of the citizens of the ghetto to defend themselves." Again Conrad Lynn was there—a featured speaker along with Milt Rosen of Progressive Labor and Jim Robertson of Spartacist. In response to the frenzied redbaiting of the bourgeois press, which sought to blame the Harlem protest on a communist conspiracy, Robertson noted, "Unfortunately there aren't many Reds in Harlem now—but there will be!"

However, the reign of cop terror and redbaiting managed to put a clamp on the growing protest movement in New York. The witchhunters went after Pro-

gressive Labor with a vengeance. Injunctions were issued barring many members of Progressive Labor and other radicals from even setting foot in Harlem. A grand jury investigation was begun. Bill Epton was charged with criminal anarchy and many other PLers were jailed for contempt for refusing to testify before the jury. When in February 1965 Jim Robertson was subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury, we determined to use his testimony to undermine the lurid lies being told by the "red squad." While refusing to "name names," we sought to indict the system and defend our socialist aims and views instead of taking the Fifth Amendment. Robertson's testimony placed the blame for the "riots" the previous summer squarely where it belonged—on the cops.

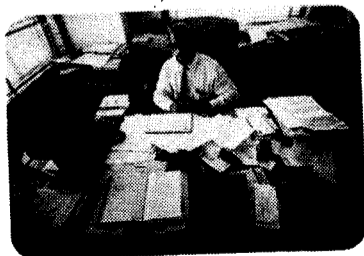
Conrad Lynn and his partner Gene Ann Condon agreed to serve as Robertson's legal counsel, and assisted in preparing his testimony. Lynn understood well the potential power of our tactic. Called to testify before the witchhunting House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in 1963, he had refused to take the Fifth Amendment. Indeed, Lynn had gone on the offensive in the HUAC hearing, detailing the injustices against black people which had been perpetrated in each of the Committee members' districts! In his fundamental outlook, Conrad was far from sharing the legalistic prejudices of his profession.

In the following few years we sometimes had cause to consult Conrad over legal matters, and he followed our press and our activities, writing to us a few times (see *Spartacist* Nos. 4 and 5, May-June 1965 and November-December 1965). Even after we developed our own legal apparatus, we continued our connection with him. His complimentary subscription to *Workers Vanguard* began with issue No. 1 and continued to the end of his life.

In 1980, Lynn was threatened with disbarment for exposing corruption in the NYC legal system (see WV No. 260, 11 July 1980). Conrad solidarized with the labor/black mobilizations against the Klan and Nazis which we initiated in several cities in the early 1980s. He spoke at the Partisan Defense Committee's first fund-raising benefit at Small's Paradise in Harlem in 1984. Around this time the Spartacist League sued the FBI, forcing them to retract their witchhunting "definition" of the Spartacist League which equated Marxism with terrorism; at our 1985 victory forum in New York, Conrad Lynn was one of the featured speakers.

In 1990 he wrote us, skeptical of *Workers Vanguard's* report that the military arm of the African National Congress (ANC) had begun negotiations with the army of the white-supremacist South African capitalist state. Like many of those who supported Mandela's ANC, Conrad found it hard to believe that these

There  
is a  
Fountain  
The  
autobiography  
of a  
civil rights  
lawyer



Conrad Lynn

Conrad Lynn's autobiography, published by Lawrence Hill & Co. in 1979.

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petty-bourgeois nationalists could contemplate a deal with the apartheid ruling class.

### The Best of His Generation

Conrad Lynn published his autobiography *There Is a Fountain: The Autobiography of a Civil Rights Lawyer* (Lawrence Hill & Co.) in 1979. It was given little attention in either the mainstream or the left press. *WV* (No. 252, 21 March 1980) reviewed it and the *SL* helped distribute it: *There Is a Fountain* is quite as useful an introduction to the major battles for black freedom and social justice in this country this century as one is likely to read. We are happy to report that it is currently in print and available in both paperback and hardback editions.

Young people who have been radicalized around the campaign to free Pennsylvania death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal will draw particular inspiration from the first chapter of Lynn's book, an account of how he unraveled the monstrous police frame-up which kept six black youths from Harlem in jail for years on a bogus murder charge. These youth were part of a teenage social club training in karate—they were targeted by the cops because they dared to jump to the defense of some young schoolchildren being beaten by a police tactical squad in the hot spring of 1964.

The "Harlem Six" were charged with the heinous murder of a Jewish shopkeeper and his wife—the cops used the perjured testimony of one of the real murderers to put the six behind bars. Lynn's account of the case reveals not only the depths of the police frame-up system, but the limits and hypocrisy of the bourgeois courts. After the frame-up was exposed, four of the six defendants accepted a deal offered by the district attorney—on the understanding that the two youths already falsely convicted would be released and the other four would plead guilty to manslaughter. Needless to say, the D.A. never lived up to the bargain.

But *There Is a Fountain* is more than just a story of Lynn's major legal cases—it is the odyssey of a black radical, won to communism in his youth, who retained his Marxist convictions and fighting spirit into old age. That makes the book a rare work.

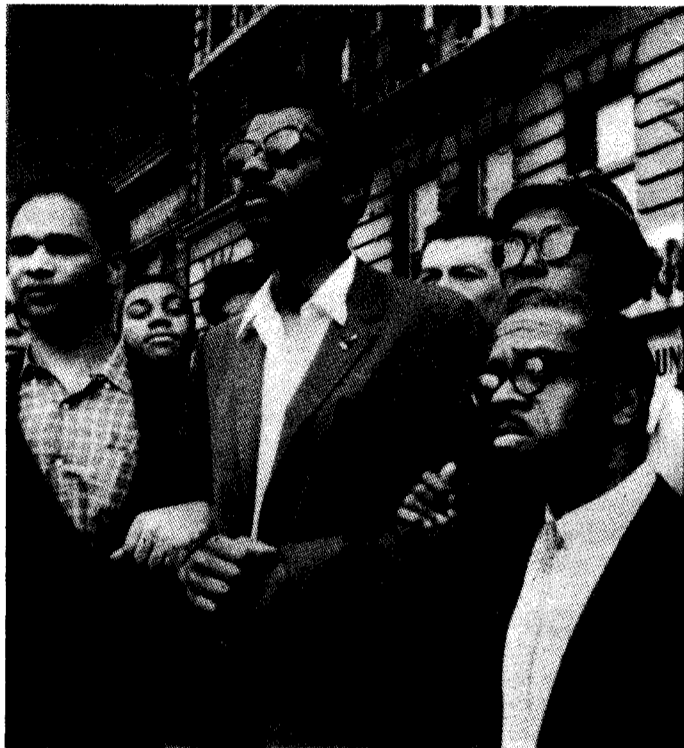
Many young black intellectuals were won, as Conrad Lynn was, to the Stalinized American Communist Party (CP) in the late 1920s and early 1930s. At that time and despite the limits of its program, the CP did some heroic work against the hideous racial oppression that is the bedrock of American capitalism. Many young blacks saw in the party—and the socialist revolution it claimed to fight for—the vehicle for black liberation. But the CP betrayed the promise it had held out to its black comrades, sacrificing the struggle for black freedom after 1935 in favor of craven support to the American government of Democratic president Franklin Roosevelt.

This was part of the policy known as the "People's Front." It was adopted because Stalin looked to the imperialist rulers of the U.S., Britain and France as allies against Nazi fascism. In the name of the popular front, in order not to "frighten" the "democratic" bourgeoisie, the Stalinists bloodily suppressed proletarian revolution in Spain. The CPs abandoned demands for independence of British, French and U.S. colonies (from India to Vietnam to Puerto Rico). When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Kremlin proclaimed World War II a "war against fascism." The American CP denounced struggles for black rights as undermining the war effort. But while class-conscious workers around the world stood for defense of the Soviet Union, WW II for the imperialist countries was a war to redivide the world among themselves.

The Communist Party's consolidation

around its popular-front program in the late 1930s, supporting FDR and his "Dixiecrat" allies, abandoned a burgeoning proletarian base in the Deep South, where CP-led struggles for black workers and sharecroppers and against Jim Crow discrimination had won to communism a vanguard layer of young black fighters. CP black intellectuals also began to leave in disillusionment. The experience of this social layer is reflected in the best of 20th-century American literature—works by Richard Wright, Chester Himes, Ralph Ellison provide fictionalized accounts of the crushing disappointment of this layer of black ex-revolutionists, many of whom became bitter anti-communists. Those who didn't leave the CP became hollow and cynical Stalinist hacks and figureheads, bowing to every twist and turn in the Kremlin's line.

Conrad Lynn escaped both these fates. He was won to the Young Communist League (YCL) in 1928 as a student at Syracuse University (he was the school's



Conrad Lynn (right) and Bill Epton (center) were arrested as they tried to lead off July 1964 march against police occupation of Harlem, defying cop ban.

first black law graduate). He soon dropped out of the YCL for political reasons. He opposed the idiotic idea—pushed onto the American party by Stalin—that blacks in the "black belt" of the American South constituted a separate nation which should be given the right to self-determination. Lynn reports:

"I could hardly contain my amusement when we discussed this proposition at the YCL meeting. My contacts with the Deep South were close; in fact, my emotional affinity for Southern blacks was far stronger than for their Northern cousins. In all my reading of Southern Negro expression, and in conversations with acute black thinkers from that region, I had never heard of any demand for a separate black nation in the American South."

Lynn later rejoined the Communist movement, but only in 1934, after the self-determination slogan had been quietly shelved (and before the open class-collaboration of the "People's Front"). He watched in dismay as the party adapted its line to what was acceptable to the "democratic" imperialist powers. He was expelled in 1937 for his insistence that the CP should support a strike of oil workers against British imperialism on the Caribbean island of Trinidad.

Though Lynn resolved never again to join a radical political party, his experience in the Stalinist CP never shook his belief in the necessity for social revolution. He continued to be active in and around the left-wing movement—he was the lawyer who won the rescinding of the 1939 postal ban against the Trotskyist *New International*, theoretical organ of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP),

for example. He worked with Bayard Rustin and other pacifists as a participant in the first black freedom ride in 1947. He adopted a non-sectarian, if aloof, attitude toward the various groups active on the American left.

During the 1950s, Conrad Lynn led the defense of Puerto Rican nationalists jailed by the U.S. for their fight for independence for the Caribbean colony. Following an uprising on the island and an attack on the Blair House residence of President Truman in 1950, the government jailed Nationalist Party leader Pedro Albizu Campos. At the height of the McCarthyite witchhunt, when few lawyers would touch this explosive case, Lynn defended Albizu Campos in a San Juan court. (It was during this time that Conrad met his future wife, Yolanda Moreno, who had been a nurse of Albizu Campos.) Later, after four Puerto Rican Nationalists staged an armed attack on the U.S. Congress in 1954, Lynn was the attorney for the leader, Lolita Lebrón, and 11 of the 16 *independentistas* who

it was nonetheless true. The SWP could no more escape the influence of the pervading psychology than most other groups. Only the hungry barbarians at the gates incessantly see their salvation in war."

From their own vantage points, it seems Lynn and Malcolm had picked up on the SWP's slide into reformism, increasingly seeing itself as a white party enthusing from the sidelines for liberal and nationalist leaders of the black struggle. The Spartacist tendency formed inside the SWP to fight against its degeneration in the early 1960s, sharply opposing the failure of the party to intervene in the civil rights movement North and South to fight for Trotskyist leadership.

An early supporter of the Cuban Revolution, Conrad helped arrange Fidel Castro's famous stay in Harlem's Hotel Theresa in 1960. Lynn not only supported the social revolution in Vietnam, he traveled to North Vietnam in 1967 as part of Bertrand Russell's War Crimes Commission in order to expose the terror-bombing campaign of U.S. imperialism against the Vietnamese Revolution. In 1965, when liberal pacifists insisted that "Stop the War Now" be the sole slogan of the New York Fifth Avenue Peace Parade, Lynn praised Spartacist for insisting on the demand for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. As he wrote: "Any position less than this is objective aid to the Johnson Doctrine of armed intervention against the social revolution where ever it may break" (*Spartacist* No. 5, November-December 1965).

In *There Is a Fountain*, Lynn writes: "It would be hard to deny...that the basic ideas of Karl Marx have afforded a key to understanding the fundamental factors about which the world has been in conflict for the last one hundred and fifty years." Yet although he saw a socialist future as necessary, Lynn stood aside from the fight to forge a Marxist party on the program to lead the working class in the struggle for power. Thus he often adopted an uncritical attitude toward the leaderships of existing social struggles, for example the Stalinist NLF in Vietnam. He preferred to cheer where he himself did not seek to lead. As we noted in reviewing *There Is a Fountain*, "In Conrad Lynn one finds an example of a courageous and principled black radical, but also the self-limitation of that role."

In the epilogue, Lynn expressed the hope that "The struggle of our brothers and sisters in the neo-colonial regions of Africa, Asia, Central and South America will at long last re-arouse the spirit of the working people in the so-called advanced countries." He expressed confidence in a socialist future and hoped that "it will still be possible in the cases I continue to handle to encourage in a small way the building of a base for real civilization." Conrad Lynn's nearly three-quarters of a century of struggle in defense of the persecuted earned him a place in the ranks of honored fighters for the American socialist revolution, to which the struggle for black liberation is key. We honor his memory. ■

### POLICE BREAK UP HARLEM PROTEST; 2 LEFTISTS SEIZED

Small Band of Followers Is Dispersed After Defying Murphy and Injunction

#### PLEAS PROVE FRUITLESS

Negro Leaders Had Sought to Avert Demonstration, but Opposed Ban, Too

By R. W. APPLE JR.  
The police blocked a proposed protest march in Harlem yesterday by arresting the leftists who had organized it.

They had insisted on proceeding with the demonstration against the police despite a ban by Police Commissioner Michael J. Murphy, a Supreme Court injunction obtained by the city and the combined opposition of nearly every organization in Harlem.

The march had been planned by the Harlem Defense Council, an offshoot of the Communist-controlled Progressive Labor Movement. City officials had feared that the demonstration would precipitate renewed violence in Harlem.

Those arrested were William Epton, 32 years old, the council's leader and a self-described disciple of the Chinese Communist Party, and his lawyer, Conrad J. Lynn, 55, who has a long record of associations with left-wing movements.

Wide World  
New York Times  
26 July 1964

were tried for conspiracy to murder the Congressmen.

Lynn remained an astute observer on the left. In the early 1960s he was a regular speaker at the SWP's Militant Labor forums, as was Malcolm X. In *There Is a Fountain*, he recounts a discussion about the SWP which he had with Malcolm X shortly before his murder:

"At this later meeting Malcolm talked with me about the Socialist Workers party. He was grateful that its paper, the *Militant*, was printing his speeches in full because his message was at least being circulated. But he noticed, and I did too, that a strong nonviolent tendency was beginning to show itself in the SWP. This would seem laughable if an individual examined only the group's rhetoric, but

## WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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# France...

(continued from page 1)

budget deficit in the interests of launching a common European currency by 1999. This would hit hardest at the most vulnerable sectors, "immigrants" and youth. The Italian bourgeoisie, having installed the extreme right-wing Berlusconi cabinet to streamline the government and discipline the workers, then let Berlusconi be swept away by the biggest general strike in that country in several decades. Instead a government headed by former Bank of Italy chief Dini was installed with the votes of the reformist left, to legislate the pension "reform" that Berlusconi and his fascist allies had failed to impose.

The spreading strike wave in France has produced a sharp confrontation between the working class and the bourgeoisie. What's desperately needed in order for the proletariat to throw off the shackles of decaying capitalism is a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France have intervened in the strike wave, issuing a special supplement to their paper, *Le Bolchevik*, on December 4. (An English translation is printed below.) This supplement is also being published in Arabic for distribution to the large numbers of workers and youth of North African origin. Our comrades call "For a New, Revolutionary Leadership—For a Workers Government to Sweep Away the Whole Rotten Capitalist System!" As an LTF supporter declared at one of the daily strike assemblies of postal workers last week:

"While the government sends its troops to the Balkans and its army against immigrants and their families, it sent its cops against yesterday's demonstration. Against this, we need a resolute leadership, and that poses the need for a strike committee, elected by the general assembly of strikers, who can also revoke its mandate, to organize and lead the strike, to organize mass pickets and delegations to other sectors to ask them to help us mobilize. A showdown with the government is posed and the question of power is posed."

Many militant workers are already angry and suspicious of the trade-union leaders' willingness to negotiate with Juppé, and fear a sellout. This underscores the urgency of forming factory committees to take control of the struggle out of the hands of the reformist union tops.

## Biggest Workers Mobilizations Since 1968

The rail strike has caused businesses throughout France to curtail production or shut down. Air traffic has also been hard hit by strikes of air traffic controllers as well as firemen and other airport workers, who battled police on the runways last week. Meanwhile, students are on strike at a score of universities and have participated heavily in the workers' demonstrations. The Paris Gare



Pelissier/Reuters

Coal miners from Gardanne region join students in Marseille protesting government cutbacks.

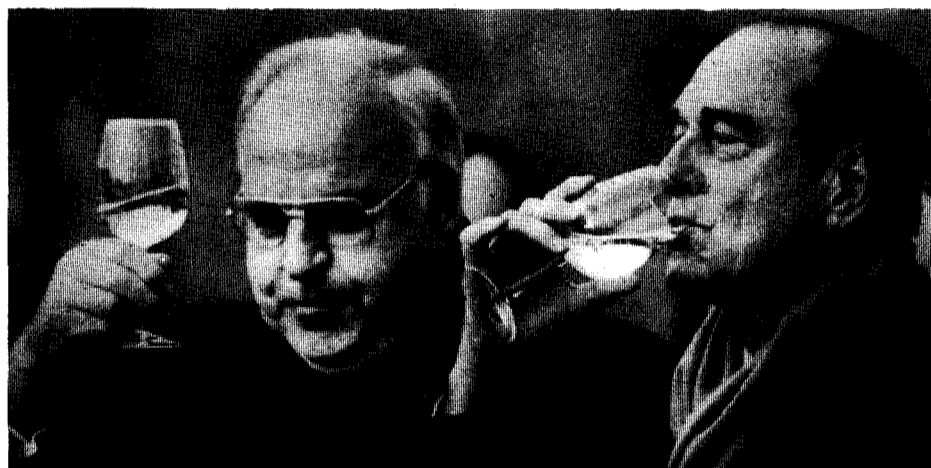
du Nord train station has become a rallying point for strikers from other sectors and an unofficial organizing center, dispatching delegations to hospitals, post offices and elsewhere to extend the strike.

In Lorraine, thousands of coal miners who are facing layoffs and mine closings engaged in pitched battles with CRS riot cops. In the northeastern town of Freyming-Merlebach, 4,000 strikers set fire to the company headquarters and threw burning trash cans, metal bolts and rocks at police who were attacking the strikers with tear gas and stun grenades. Dockers and naval yard employees in several ports have walked out. In Toulon, where Jean-Marie Le Pen's fascist National Front won the mayoralty last spring, pickets have shut down the military shipyards. In Nantes, the main banner in the strikers' demonstration denounced the government's racist "Operation Vigipirate," which uses the army to terrorize immigrant communities. Strikers in that city have repeatedly erected barricades to counter police attacks, and public utility workers have taken jackhammers to a local police station.

So far, with important exceptions, the wave of strikes has been centered on the public sector. At the same time, last week's strikes and demonstrations, which were particularly strong in industrial cities outside Paris, included contingents from heavy industrial plants—often from the private sector—such as Michelin tires in Clermont-Ferrand, the Dassault aerospace plant in Bordeaux, Peugeot automobiles and Pechiney aluminum in Dijon, Rhône-Poulenc chemicals, Renault trucks and Alstom industrial machinery in Lyon, and the heavily North African and Turkish coal miners in Grenoble. The paucity of strikes in heavy industry reflects the weakness of the unions in the private

sector, for which the trade-union tops are responsible. A leaflet distributed today by the CGT branch in the Renault car factory in Flins argued *against* solidarity with the rail workers and opposed "premature" strikes.

Despite the widespread disruptions, opinion polls show that an increasing majority of the population supports the strikes. Government attempts to organize



Rattay/Reuters

German chancellor Kohl with French president Chirac last week. Assault on social programs in France is part of scheme for D-mark dominated European Monetary Union. French workers must link up their struggles with their class brothers and sisters throughout Europe.

anti-strike demonstrations have been dismal failures. The union struggles have given expression to a broad discontent within the population, which is fed up after over a decade of austerity and massive unemployment. But in the face of vacillations by the reformist leaders of the working class, frustration among the petty bourgeoisie could boil over into open hostility to the strikes.

## Reformists and Centrists: Roadblocks to Workers Revolution

Increasingly, union leaders Marc Blondel of the anti-Communist, social-democratic FO and Louis Viannet of the Communist Party-led CGT have talked of bringing down "the government"—i.e., Juppé and his cabinet. But they are tacitly appealing to divisions within the ruling Gaullist party, the RPR. Sensing that the government's days may be numbered, several RPR leaders have jumped ship and cynically come out against the "Juppé plan." National Assembly chairman Philippe Séguin met with striking railway workers, and promised to present their case to the president, while former interior minister Charles Pasqua melodramatically declared, "You can't run this country like a board of directors. The French need dreams, they need hope and they need passion." This ultrarightist who today talks of "love" is a sinister demagogue and vile racist, who reveled in massive police brutality and murder of immigrants. The fascist Le Pen has also positioned himself to take advantage of the government's unpopularity, as his National Front recently came out against the "Juppé plan."

Meanwhile, the "far left" does little more than echo the rhetoric of Blondel and Viannet. The sizable pseudo-Trotskyist groups supported the "Socialist" president Mitterrand through 14 years of anti-working-class austerity, Cold War anti-communism and racist terror. On this basis, they (and legions of their ex-members) managed to make their way into the middle and lower levels of the trade-union bureaucracy (and in some cases into the upper reaches, such as the FO national organizer, who is a supporter of Pierre Lambert's Parti des Travailleurs). Today these organizations call to "extend the strike" to force "withdrawal of the Juppé plan" (Lutte Ouvrière), or for an "unlimited general strike" to "dismiss this government" (Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire). What this rhetoric amounts to in reality is pressuring the FO and CGT tops to bring about a reshuffling of Chirac's cabinet. This attempt to appear as the most "unlimited" of militants leaves untouched the hard political tasks of articulating a clear program to lead the proletariat and its allies forward toward the conquest of power.

The smaller, centrist Gauche Révolutionnaire-Jeunesses Communistes Révolutionnaires, affiliated with the British Militant group, calls for a general strike to "make Chirac and Juppé resign" and, "as in '36 and '68," to "accumulate a maximum of gains," notably a 35-hour week, retirement at 55, and a 1,500 franc (\$300) monthly raise. Yet it was pre-

cisely through such economist demands that the Communist Party sabotaged the 1936 and 1968 general strikes. The general strike is, as Trotsky said, "the necessary means for casting off the treachery of the leadership and for creating within the working class itself the preliminary conditions for a victorious uprising." But the GR/JCR et al. instead tail after the existing leadership, and thus are themselves an obstacle to revolutionary consciousness in the working class. This is reflected in their refusal to even mention the racist attacks faced by North Africans, who form a strategic component of the working class in France.

The recent mobilizations are the largest outpouring of combative mass protest in France since 1968. The example of May '68, when a workers general strike and student revolt brought the country to the brink of revolution, has become a widespread point of reference in France, both for the capitalist rulers, who fear a repeat, and for striking workers. However, the differences with the 1968 upheaval are greater than the similarities. The sharp defensive struggles in France today come in the context of a period characterized by momentous defeats: the collapse of the Soviet Union and the capitalist reunification of Germany. The 1968 events took place during a period when the Western imperialist countries were engulfed by political turmoil as a result of victorious national liberation struggles and social revolutions in the colonial world—the Cuban Revolution, the Algerian War of independence and, above all, the Vietnam War. Meanwhile, the bastion of world capitalism, the United States,

LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DE FRANCE  
tendance apartiste internationale

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MAI 68

REVOLUTION SABOTEE

Ligue Trotskyste intervenes in current class confrontation pointing to lessons of May 1968: revolutionary leadership is key.

LE BOLCHEVIK  
Supplément spécial

A bas Vigipirate! Unité des immigrés, des femmes et de la jeunesse derrière la puissance sociale de la classe ouvrière!

Pour une nouvelle direction, une direction révolutionnaire!

La question cruciale aujourd'hui, c'est la question de la direction. La direction de la CGT n'est solidarisée avec les luttes ouvrières que comme la puissance sociale. Les dévotions de la CGT et de FO procèdent de leur objectif final qui est le retrait de Juppé. Mais Chirac et Juppé ont déclaré clairement qu'ils ne se résignent pas à la démission. Ce conflit ne sera pas réglé par des marchandages de coalition sur le terrain parlementaire. Il se règnera par une plus complète prise de conscience des luttes ouvrières. Méfiez-vous de ceux qui, comme le PCF et le PS, prétendent offrir des directions aux travailleurs dans le seul but de saboter leurs luttes et de les détourner dans l'attente électorale. Si la classe ouvrière a agit pas avec détermination et audace, le résultat pourrait bien être un renouveau, non seulement de la droite parlementaire, mais aussi des forces fascistes de Le Pen, qui servent les intérêts et s'efforcent comme chiens valets de la bourgeoisie face à une menace révolutionnaire de prolétariat.

Comme le disait un gréviste, nous avons besoin d'un gouvernement de la grève. Mais comment y parvenir? Il est nécessaire d'unifier les travailleurs dans une même organisation, d'unifier les travailleurs dans le même parti, de réaliser d'autres secteurs de la population qui constituent les travailleurs et leurs luttes contre les attaques sous diverses formes. La première étape est la formation, dans les usines et entreprises, de comités élus, sur la base de nouvelles assemblées générales de grévistes, pour l'industrie et de la grève des travailleurs. La deuxième étape est la formation d'un parti révolutionnaire qui sera le parti des travailleurs et de la jeunesse. Ce parti doit être capable de diriger les luttes ouvrières et de les unir dans une même direction. Ce parti doit être capable de diriger les luttes ouvrières et de les unir dans une même direction. Ce parti doit être capable de diriger les luttes ouvrières et de les unir dans une même direction.

Pour un gouvernement ouvrier qui balaye tout le système capitaliste pourri!





Reuters photos

Rail workers in Lille (left), in forefront of mass strike wave. Orly Airport workers battle cops, Paris, December 7.

was shaken by rebellions of the black masses in the Northern ghettos.

But despite the widespread sense of revolutionary potential in May-June 1968, the reformist Communist Party was able to liquidate this massive social upheaval in exchange for short-lived economic gains. This dramatically demonstrates that even under the most favorable conditions, socialist revolution requires the leadership of a Leninist vanguard party which has established its authority in the working class. At that time, the pseudo-Trotskyist groups in France were consumed in student vanguardism and/or trade-union economism. None of these groups fought to forge a revolutionary party to lead the fight for power and therefore necessarily sought other forces to tail after. The project for a new popular front, led by François Mitterrand, originated in a meeting at the Charléty stadium in the last weeks of the May-June '68 events.

The present social explosion in France is the most powerful response to date to the intensified capitalist offensive following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. After several years in which it was widely taken for granted that brutal austerity and the destruction of welfare programs were the inevitable vision of the future, the working class has boldly stepped to center stage. The outcome of the current French upheaval will have a powerful impact on the class struggle throughout Europe. The shifting climate was captured by British journalist Martin Woollacott: "Europe's resignation, its sense of slowly drifting into worse times, is suddenly confronted by youthful energy and by union resolve, phenomena we had almost forgotten" (London *Guardian*, 9 December).

But energy and resolve are not enough. The key question today, as in 1968, is the struggle to build an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the workers to power. This is what the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and its French section, the Ligue Trotskyste, fight for.

## Smash Vigipirate! Unite "Immigrants," Women, Youth Behind the Power of the Working Class!

### For a New, Revolutionary Leadership!

#### For a Workers Government to Sweep Away the Whole Rotten Capitalist System!

The following special supplement to *Le Bolchévique*, newspaper of the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, section of the *International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)*, was issued on December 4.

France is moving toward a showdown. On one side stands the Chirac/Juppé government and the bourgeoisie, backed up by the bourgeoisies of all of Europe. On the other stands the working class, women, "immigrants," youth and students, pensioners—all the intended victims of the rulers' austerity assaults and racist terror. The burgeoning protest movement is headed toward a general strike, a *political* clash with the bourgeoisie and its state. The question which is increasingly posed is: who will rule? The bourgeoisie is united in its determination to wage war on the workers and oppressed. To fight back, to win, the working class needs a general staff, a revolutionary leadership based on a program that those who labor must rule.

Following the capitalist counterrevolutions which destroyed the gains of the planned, collectivized economies in the Soviet Union and East Europe, the bourgeoisie cheered over the supposed "death of communism." Today, the eyes of workers around the world are riveted on France, where the combative workers have demonstrated that the class struggle lives. But what is necessary for the workers to move on to victory is that Marxism live, in the form of an internationalist, Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party which fights for the proletarian conquest of power—a party of revolutionary action, not of parliamentary sell-outs and trade-union bureaucrats. Such a party will be infused with Lenin's understanding that it must serve as a trib-

une of the people, opposing all manifestations of oppression against all sectors of the population, drawing in behind the power of the working class the youth, the besieged North African and black African workers and their children, who are dismissed as "immigrants" even when they are born in France and are French citizens, the women whose right to abortion is increasingly at risk.

The crucial question now is the question of leadership. The CFDT union federation leadership has declared itself at one with the government's assault on the social welfare program. The CGT and FO labor leaders proclaim as their final goal defeating the Juppé plan. But Chirac and Juppé have made it clear that they intend to go ahead at any cost. This conflict will not be resolved through backroom deals on the terrain of parliament. Nor can it win simply within the confines of narrow trade unionism. Beware those like the Communist Party (PCF) and Socialist Party (PS) who claim to offer leadership to the workers only to behead their struggles and divert them into electoral channels. If the working class does not act boldly and audaciously, the result could well be a strengthening not only of the parliamentary right-wing but of Le Pen's fascist marauders who terrorize "immigrants" and bid to act as the bourgeoisie's final resort against a revolutionary challenge by the proletariat.

As one strike militant put it, we need a "government of the strike." But how to get there? It is necessary to unite the workers in a concerted and coordinated struggle against the regime, to draw in other sectors of the population who support the workers and are also fighting against the all-sided attacks. The first step is the formation, in the factories, of committees elected in mass assemblies of strikers at the shop floor to lead and coordinate the struggle. It is crucial to extend the strikes to other sectors, especially the bastions of industrial workers, where immigrant workers are a strategic component—time and again, the lack of leadership to generalize and link up workers' struggles has allowed the bourgeoisie to isolate combative sectors and suppress the workers' militancy. Against the government's plans to use scab buses to break the transportation strike, it is necessary to mobilize mass pickets which block the streets and to launch flying pickets which extend the strike—especially to the private sector—and keep it solid.

Against the threats to use the army, against the mobilization of the fascists who act as spearheads of social reaction and are waiting to be used as auxiliaries for the bourgeoisie's strikebreaking, it is

necessary for the factory committees to organize *workers defense guards*. Disciplined contingents of workers are needed to defend strike mobilizations and protests and to defend the immigrant quarters which are the first target of the fascist gangs and the racist Vigipirate police terror. The workers movement must appeal to rank-and-file soldiers to refuse to be used as strikebreakers.

Factory committees, centralized on a citywide and national level, should control and organize distribution of goods and services, drawing in representatives from among the students, "immigrants," the unemployed, working women and housewives and other layers of the population.

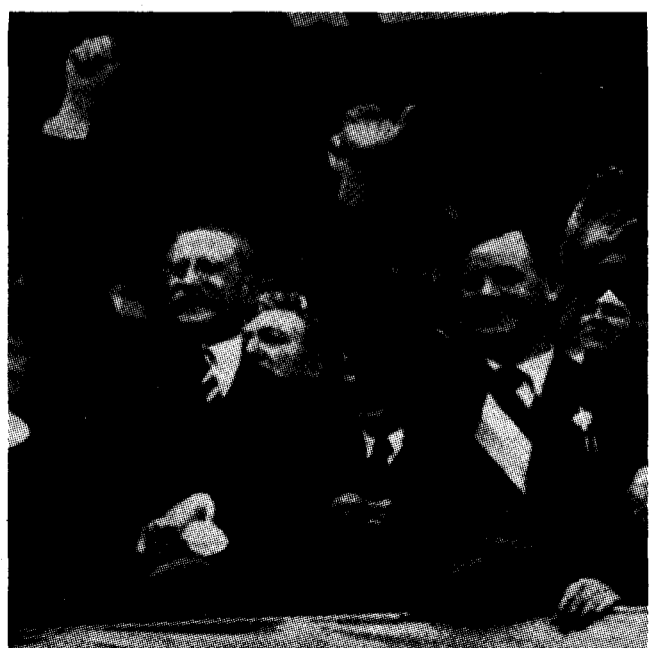
Such factory committees can serve as the nucleus of *workers power*—workers councils, or soviets—which will confront the power of the bourgeoisie. The outcome of the confrontation will depend on the leadership of the working class.

The government's current assault on the working class was prepared by an ongoing racist campaign targeting immigrant workers and their children through deportations and police terror, whose aim was to scapegoat them for the crisis of capitalism and to divide the working class on the basis of racism. It is a matter of elementary self-defense of the entire proletariat that the workers movement uncompromisingly combat all forms of discrimination in employment, wages, education and housing and to demand that all public sector jobs be opened to "non-French" workers—For full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families! To fight unemployment, we demand a shorter workweek at no loss in pay to provide jobs for all!

The current student protests against cutbacks must join behind the proletariat in struggle. As the Jeunesse Spartaciste, youth group of the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), emphasized in a leaflet to students last month: "What is necessary today is a revolutionary program that links the struggle of the youth for the right to a job, housing and wages—to a decent life—to the struggle for the proletariat to end this capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. We, Jeunesse Spartaciste, fight for free quality education for all, without any race or class discrimination. We want the proletariat to have access to culture, for working-class youth to have full access to the universities. For universities open to all and for adequate stipends!"

The assault by the French capitalist regime on the social security system is not unique. The same thing has happened in Britain, it is being attempted in Italy, it is being planned in Germany. The IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the capitalist rulers of Europe have made it clear that the French bourgeoisie must push this through, and the French bourgeoisie is more than prepared to unite with its ruling-class allies across the border to quash the French proletariat, as it has done time and again for the

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Illustration

Popular Front leaders, social democrat Léon Blum (left) and Stalinist Maurice Thorez, betrayed general strike of 1936. Thorez crowed: "It's necessary to know how to end a strike."

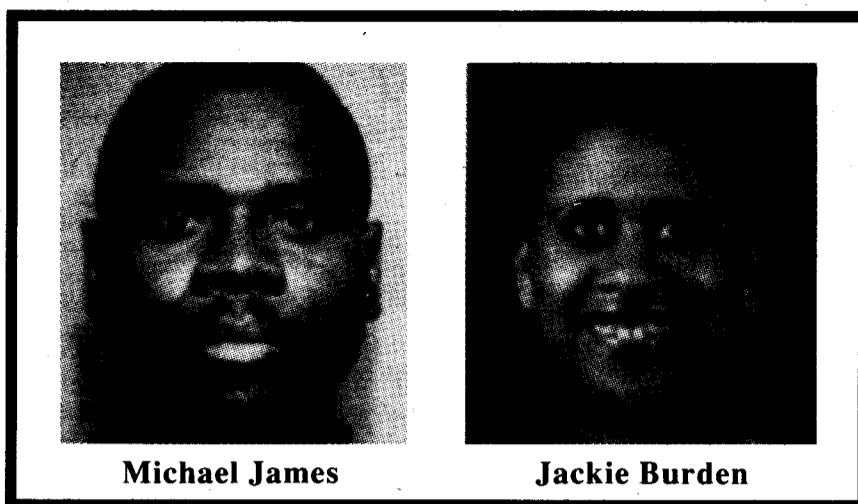
# Racist Paratroopers Gun Down Black Man and Woman

## Nazi Murder in North Carolina

In a cold-blooded racist execution, three soldiers of the U.S. Army's elite 82nd Airborne Division gunned down 36-year-old Michael James and 27-year-old Jackie Burden in nearby Fayetteville, North Carolina on the night of December 6. The black man and woman were shot at least five times in the head at close range after being stopped by the carload of nightriders as they were walking down the street.

The three killers, all members of the paratroop unit based at Fort Bragg, had a history of cruising the streets "hunting" for black people to terrorize. They openly paraded around in skinhead regalia and had swastika flags as well as right-wing "resistance" propaganda, pamphlets on Hitler and Nazi Germany, and instruction manuals for making bombs. According to the *Washington Post* (9 December), at least one of them "made no secret of his white supremacist views" on base.

Fort Bragg is a hotbed of racist, chauvinist reaction. The 82nd Airborne is an



Michael James

Jackie Burden

Washington Post photos

advance guard of U.S. imperialist butchery around the world. This is the home of the "Green Beret" Special Forces, hard-bitten killers who were involved in some of the worst atrocities of the Vietnam War, like the infamous Phoenix "rural pacification" program which

assassinated tens of thousands of Vietnamese. The Special Forces were also involved in "domestic counterinsurgency," including in the massive army spy operation which stalked Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1960s (see *WV* No. 582, 13 August 1993).

Fort Bragg is right in the middle of Klan country. Less than 100 miles from Fayetteville is Greensboro, site of the infamous November 1979 massacre of leftist black and labor organizers by Klansmen working in collusion with local and federal police. Today, there are at least two distinct right-wing "militia" movements in the state, and a "Special Forces Underground" publishes a newsletter at Fort Bragg called *The Resister*. This racist rag fulminates against the Congressional Black Caucus as "the vanguards of neo-communist tribalism" and rails against "societal leveling, social equality, and egalitarianism."

From the racist "war on drugs" to imperialist terror abroad, this capitalist ruling class encourages and breeds the fascist marauders who murder black people with impunity. It will take nothing less than a socialist revolution to put an end once and for all to the racist oppression and lynch mob terror which is rooted in the bedrock of American capitalism. ■

## France...

(continued from page 9)

Commune to Vichy. Against the Europe of NATO, it is necessary to counterpose a Europe of workers struggle. What is needed is an internationalist perspective that reaches out to the struggling workers of Italy, that seeks to link arms with the student protesters in Belgium, that appeals to the workers of Germany for common struggle against the capitalist attacks. It is particularly crucial to reach out over the Mediterranean to the North African masses beset by imperialist exploitation, whose class brothers are a key component of the proletariat here.

Yet the PCF stands counterposed to such a perspective, with its nationalist-chauvinist appeals to "Produce French" which blame the growing unemployment here not on the French bosses but on foreign workers. The PCF would like to serve as an agency for the bourgeoisie to derail and subvert the combative workers movement, just as it did in '68, when it showed it knew "how to end a strike," throttling the workers' occupations of the factories and the mass student protests on the streets which had brought the country to the brink of revolution. With its grotesque appeals to anti-"immigrant" racism, exemplified by the bulldozing of a hostel of Malian workers in Vitry in 1981, and its support to 14 years of the "socialist" Mitterrand government, whose hallmark was racist state terror against "immigrants," the PCF helped prepare the ground for the growth of Le Pen's National Front, which today prepares to unleash its fascist

thugs against the workers movement.

The historic role of the PCF has been to contain class struggle and divert it into the dead end of parliamentarism. Today, the PCF is no longer the hegemonic force it once was within the working class because of the complete bankruptcy of Stalinism in both the Soviet Union and East Europe—where the betrayals of the bureaucracies paved the way for capitalist counterrevolution—as well as in France. But rest assured that PCF chief Hue & Co. have not given up their old game and will do the best they can to derail the workers' struggle.

Emboldened by the world-historic defeats for the proletariat in the destruction of the homeland of the October Revolution, the bourgeoisie today feels it can ride roughshod over the workers at home, with or without the assistance of its reformist lieutenants. It is no wonder that syndicalist prejudices and a mistrust of political parties are so widespread today among militant workers. This is the result of decades of class-collaborationist betrayal by the PCF, perverting the very meaning of the word communism, and of 14 years of attacks on the working class and minority communities by popular-front governments masquerading as "Socialist" (which in fact were class-collaborationist coalitions between the PS, the PCF and bourgeois politicians).

Lacking a revolutionary program and perspective, fake-Trotskyist groups like the LCR and LO seek to appear as more militant than the widely discredited reformist bureaucracies. They issue calls for "indefinite" general strikes, limited to strictly economist slogans. They do not breathe a word of the need for the integrated workers movement to combat racial and sexual oppression, to smash Vigipirate, to mobilize against the fascist threat. Their "revolutionary alternative" stands to the right of a whole layer of the current student movement, exemplified by the St. Denis students who issued a leaflet calling for opposition to the government's racist attacks. At the mass demonstration last fall against the nuclear tests in the Pacific, neither the PCF and PS nor their "far left" tails raised a single word against Vigipirate. Thus they all wind up embracing the campaigns and interests of their "own" bourgeoisie and do nothing to challenge capitalist rule, just as they supported the anti-working-class Mitterrand popular front.

More recently, several of these organ-

izations, such as the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and Pouvoir Ouvrier, have joined in the hypocritical hue and cry over "poor little Bosnia," demanding imperialist intervention against the Bosnian Serbs. Now they have got what they screamed for. As for Lutte Ouvrière and Socialisme Internationale, they refused to call for the defense of the Bosnian Serbs against imperialist aggression.

The same French troops who besieged the immigrant quarters of Marseille and Paris are now to be sent on a "humanitarian mission" to Bosnia. Yet even as the bourgeoisie prepares to send its army to impose NATO's dictates on the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, they first threaten to use these soldiers to impose the economic dictates of NATO Europe on the working people here. It is necessary for the working class to oppose this imperialist expeditionary force to the Balkans. The jockeying of the big powers in the Balkans underscores the escalation of imperialist rivalries following the destruction of the Soviet Union and ultimately points toward another world war.

We Trotskyists of the LTF have called for defense of the Bosnian Serbs against NATO's onslaught. No to the draft—Not one man, not one penny for the bourgeoisie's army! And in contrast to the capitulation by the reformists and centrists to Chirac's racist crusade, the LTF called a united-front demonstration

against the wave of racist and imperialist state terror in France and Tahiti to demand: Down with the anti-immigrant pogroms and Chirac's racist state of siege! Cops and French troops out of the immigrant quarters and out of Tahiti! Our Paris protest was held in front of the Grand Rex cinema, one of the places where on 17 October 1961, hundreds of Algerians were massacred as they demonstrated for independence.

In this way, as in our international struggle to demand freedom for black U.S. death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, we seek to act as the nucleus of the revolutionary workers party which will be a tribune of all the oppressed. A defeat of the Juppé plan today would be an enormous victory for the workers movement. But a bourgeoisie which has been wounded is truly a dangerous animal.

The bourgeoisie is on the attack against the working class. The reformists and class collaborators of the PCF and PS and their centrist tails offer only illusory reforms. They are all incapable of leading the working class in the current struggles and in the struggle to end the system of wage slavery once and for all. Only a party of the Bolshevik type based on a working-class revolutionary perspective can lead the workers forward. The forging in struggle of that party is the urgent task of the hour. ■

## CAT Strikers...

(continued from page 3)

strike—the massive betrayal of CAT strikers today can't help but accelerate the precipitous decline of the unions, particularly in the private sector, where barely 10 percent of the workforce is organized.

The defeat at Caterpillar will also fuel the growth of the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi race-terrorists who have increasingly targeted Midwestern cities like Decatur and Springfield. It's no coincidence that during this strike Caterpillar shipped scabs from the KKK-infested and open shop backwoods of Mississippi to its Illinois factories. In January 1994, the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle defense organization affiliated with the Spartacist League, organized a union-centered mobilization to stop a Klan provocation against the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday in Springfield.

This anti-fascist action drew significant support from unionists in the area, but the Illinois AFL-CIO worked overtime to sabotage labor support.

In the wake of the historic surrender at Caterpillar, the key lesson for militant unionists who want to get the labor movement off its knees is the necessity for a political struggle within the unions to oust the pro-capitalist misleaders. As we wrote shortly after the latest CAT strike was launched (*WV* No. 604, 5 August 1994), workers must "forge a leadership that will unceasingly combat the poison of national chauvinism that sabotages labor struggle, a leadership that will push the fight for black freedom to the forefront. What's needed is a class-struggle workers party fighting for a workers government that will expropriate industry and replace the capitalist boom-bust cycle—the bankrupt system that produced the Midwest 'rust bowl'—with international socialist economic planning." ■

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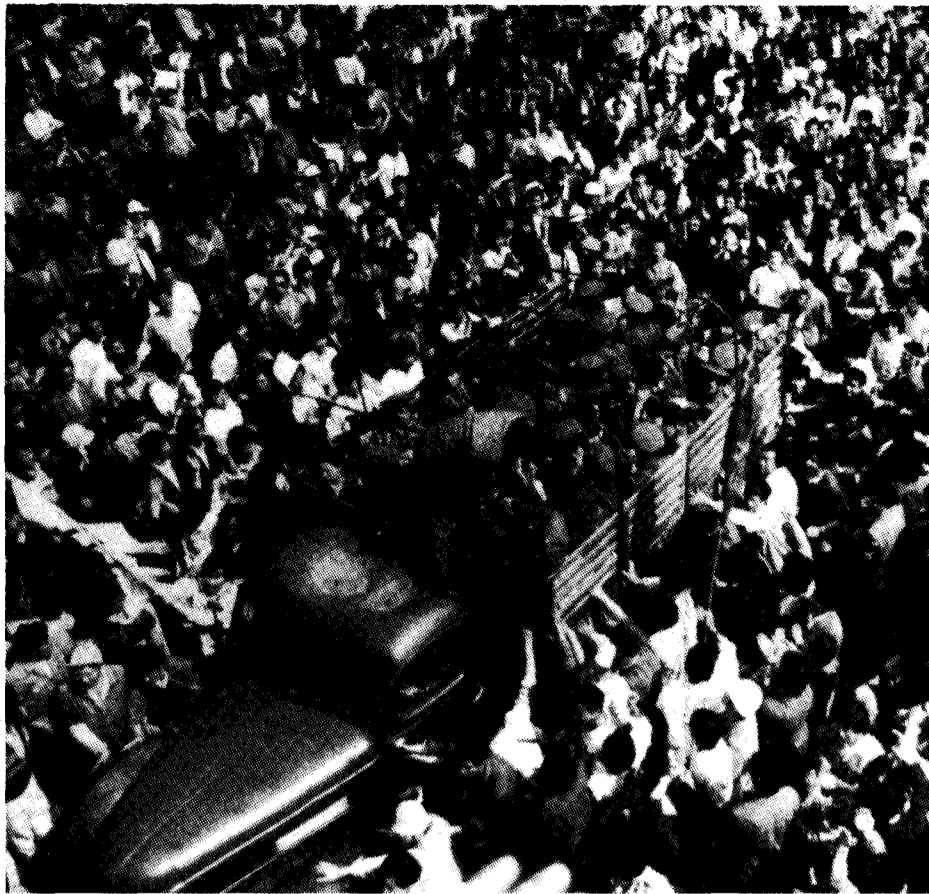
# China...

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House [1994]) by Nicholas Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn recounts the tale of a village chief who had made a small fortune in local "collective" factories exploiting labor from other villages. He armed and organized what was essentially a private militia which was able to fend off police from the nearby industrial city of Tianjin who had come to investigate the murder of an accountant. While he was eventually made to submit, such stories immediately bring to mind the warlord-ridden country that emerged after the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in 1911. The warlords were only vanquished when Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang (Kuomintang) regime was sent packing by the 1949 Revolution, which secured the national unification of China. Today, capitalist counterrevolution would be a huge impetus to latter-day successors to the warlords to carve out zones of exploitation in league with imperialist moneymen.

This is already beginning to happen in Guangdong province, where the first SEZ was established in Shenzhen. Local state officials have presided over the steady integration of Shenzhen and other cities springing up nearby into Hong Kong, the international banking metropolis just across the border, which dominates foreign investment in the region and shares a common language with the area's Cantonese population. Trumpeting the slogan, "One country, two systems," China has declared in advance that its takeover of the British colony on 1 July 1997 will not threaten imperialist investors in the least. At a recent conference in Beijing attended by leading Hong Kong business executives, a Chinese official stressed that Hong Kong would remain "financially independent," so much so that the central government would not even collect taxes in the territory!

The answer to the threat of warlordism is not the backward-looking nationalism put forward by the sclerotic bureaucracy.



Peter Turnley

**Tiananmen Square, Beijing, 1989: Demonstrators against Deng regime surround and fraternize with military units ordered to suppress mass protests.**

dependence for Soviet republics in Tibet and other minority regions, while advocating a socialist federation with China. On the other hand, we understand that the imperialist-inspired call for an independent Tibet—which prior to the Chinese Revolution was a hideously backward, monk-ridden region incapable of leading an independent existence—has since the 1950s been a fig leaf for counterrevolution.

The biggest threat to the social stability craved by the ruling Stalinists and capitalist investors alike may well be the peasantry, which makes up three-fourths of the population. The liquidation of the rural communes under Deng and the reversion to private farm plots—dubbed the "Family Responsibility System"—created a vast "surplus" population

tain efficient large-scale collective and state farms. So now Mao's heirs have turned the historical clock back, putting forward a policy that encourages class differentiation in the countryside, where more successful (or well-connected) peasants will shortly be hiring others to labor for them.

The Stalinists have also begun encouraging Confucian beliefs and even religious practice. This particularly threatens women, who before the revolution were literally enslaved in the traditional Chinese family. Today, many rural women joining the influx into the cities are preyed upon by pimps and kidnappers seeking to sell them into slavery as "wives." Thus, the Stalinists are recreating some of the brutal conditions of rural life which spawned countless peasant rebellions through the centuries, leading to the collapse of major dynasties.

## For Proletarian Political Revolution in China!

The stark alternatives before the Chinese proletariat are the sweeping away of the decrepit Stalinist regime through workers political revolution or the coming to power of a counterrevolutionary government. The latter would spell a social catastrophe for the hundreds of millions of Chinese toilers. It would also set off a fevered competition between U.S. and Japanese imperialism over the spoils, sharply exacerbating the drive to a new inter-imperialist war.

The struggle for political revolution was posed pointblank in the Tiananmen upheaval in May-June 1989. Since Lawrence believes that the wave of terror that suppressed these protests marked the emergence of a capitalist regime, it is useful to review what happened then.

First of all, to say that the bureaucracy brutalized the students as a message to the working class misses the key point—it was the entry of the workers onto the streets, not only in Beijing but throughout the country, that put a deathly fear into the regime. The ensuing repression was first and foremost directed against the workers who mobilized in solidarity with the students and to advance their own demands, raising the prospect of a proletarian political revolution. But the workers lacked the Trotskyist leadership necessary to organize a fight for political power. This would have required, among other things, drawing a sharp line against all pro-capitalist elements in the protests and winning over the ranks, and many officers, of the PLA. In the upshot, while some army units refused to move on the demonstrators, the regime was able to mobilize other detachments to put down the rebellion in blood.



WV Photo

**Migrant workers outside Shanghai railway station, October 1995. As result of decollectivization of agriculture, over 100 million rural laborers have flooded into China's cities.**

While the minority peoples of Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and the hill regions in the South have gained enormously since 1949, Mao and his heirs, like all Stalinist regimes, have aped the chauvinist policies of the prerevolutionary ruling class in discriminating against minority peoples. This stands in sharp contrast to the internationalist policies of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik regime, which granted the right of self-determination, i.e., separation, of the non-Russian nations, while recognizing that this democratic question was subordinate to the overriding necessity to defend the workers revolution.

A China of workers and peasants councils would recognize the right of in-

which formed the initial labor pool for the capitalist SEZs. Today, over 100 million laborers from the countryside are estimated to be flooding the cities, looking for work in the construction boom taking place from Beijing in the North to Shanghai and Guangzhou (Canton) along the southeastern seaboard. Other displaced peasants scrape by as part of the huge class of petty proprietors spawned by market "reforms."

While the 1949 Revolution laid the basis for an agricultural revolution by expropriating the capitalist-landlord class, the People's Republic could not on its own, with China's backward technology and infrastructure, mechanize farming to the degree necessary to sus-

The bureaucracy then sought to ensure social peace by staging public executions of workers, while most student activists were able to flee or go underground. A few purges in the military and party apparatus were sufficient to enable the bureaucracy to rule more or less as before...but not for long. As we wrote in the 1992 conference document of the International Communist League:

"The conditions which led to near civil war in 1989 have in no way been mitigated. China is today a seething cauldron of contradictions and discontents barely suppressed by an octogenarian Stalinist regime.... When Deng dies, if not before, the succession crisis likely will lead to a situation in which proletarian political revolution or capitalist counterrevolution are posed pointblank, thus determining the fate of the most populous country on earth."

—"For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!"  
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This underscores the decisive factor of leadership, especially in the workers movement. Following the Tiananmen crackdown, some pro-imperialist "dissidents" like Han Dongfang turned to "independent" union organizing. Last March, a petition circulated to the National People's Congress hailed the United Nations—an imperialist den of thieves—as a force for "democracy" and "human rights." As we wrote then, "Abstract calls for 'democracy,' in the absence of any declaration of defense of the Chinese workers state, however deformed, against capitalist forces, amount to a program for bourgeois rule, which would be anything but democratic" (WV No. 618, 10 March). Giving a "left" cover to "democratic" counterrevolution, the Hong Kong journal of the pseudo-Trotskyist United Secretariat, *October Review*, has printed appeals for U.S.-backed "dissident" Chen Ziming, hailed Tibetan "independence" demonstrators and lauded the recent UN Women's Conference in China, where Hillary Clinton fatuously told Third World women that the way to escape their horrendous oppression was by going into business!

Time is running short in the struggle to prevent the re-enslavement of the Chinese masses by imperialism. But as Trotsky insisted in his 1940 "Letter to the Workers of the USSR":

"It is the duty of revolutionists to defend tooth and nail every position gained by the working class, whether it involves democratic rights, wage scales, or so colossal a conquest of mankind as the nationalization of the means of production and planned economy. Those who are incapable of defending conquests already gained can never fight for new ones."

We Trotskyists stand for unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state—including its right to a nuclear arsenal—against imperialism. To stop the drive toward internal counterrevolution requires mobilizing the Chinese workers, at the head of the peasantry, to oust the bureaucracy, expropriate the imperialist enterprises and extend the struggle for socialism to the industrial powerhouses of Korea and especially Japan. This points directly to the need for a Leninist-Trotskyist party, which would be faced with the difficult task of introducing the program of revolutionary Marxism to a working class whose consciousness has been numbed by decades of Stalinist lies that passed for "Communism," whether in the guise of Mao's peculiar peasant nationalism or of Deng Xiaoping's gospel of the marketplace. Only such a party can draw the bitter lessons of the destruction of the Soviet Union for all those struggling to prevent a similar disaster in China. ■

## NOTICE

**Workers Vanguard skips a week in December.**

**Our next issue will be dated January 5.**