

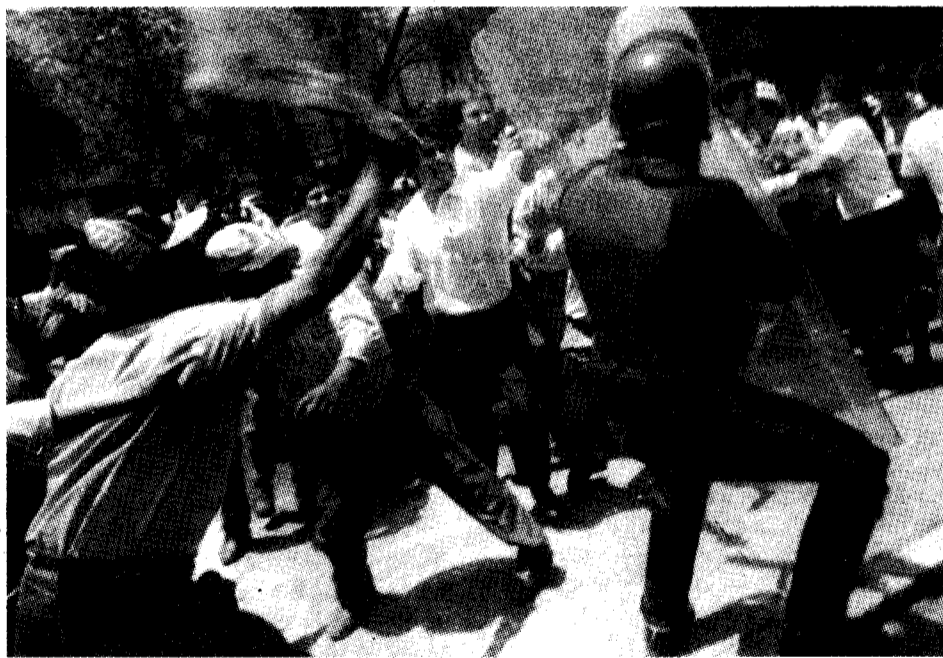
## PRI Government Enforces NAFTA, IMF

# Mexico: Fight Austerity— Mobilize Workers Power!



Hundreds of thousands of workers marched through the streets of Mexico City with trade-union and leftist banners on May Day last month, filling the city's huge central plaza, the *Zócalo*, to overflowing. The mammoth turnout, a half million or more, was a sharp challenge to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) government of President Ernesto Zedillo and the hidebound corporatist Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) which serves its interests. For the second year in a row, CTM head Fidel Velazquez, the 96-year-old *charro* (bureaucrat) who has run the federation with an iron hand for more than 50 years, had not only canceled the traditional official union rally but had called for a ban on any labor demonstrations marking May Day, the international workers holiday. Yet Velazquez' dictate was defied not only by a large number of independent unions, but as well by ten unions traditionally allied with the PRI regime.

The massive outpouring of Mexican working people on May Day reflected widespread and growing unrest among broad sectors of the population, as the imposition of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994—coming on top of austerity attacks imposed at the behest of the world bankers' cartel, the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—has led to a cataclysmic assault on living standards. Since the Wall Street-engineered crash of the peso in December 1994, real wages have plummeted by over 35 percent, with pay



**Mexico City: Half a million workers pour into city's central plaza on May Day, defying ban by pro-government corporatist labor chiefs (top); May 23 demonstration of 7,000 striking teachers brutally attacked by police (above).**

settlements averaging half the rate of inflation. In April, the government approved a 12 percent rise in the minimum wage (to less than \$3 a day), while at the same time raising the price of government-controlled staples like milk and corn tortillas by up to 30 percent.

This in turn has provoked a rising tide of labor combativity, with the month of May registering the highest increase in strike activity in the recent period. The

regime has responded by unleashing draconian repression against Mexican workers and peasants, from the brutal army invasion to suppress a rebellion by Zapatista (EZLN) peasant rebels in the southern state of Chiapas beginning in 1994 to the imprisonment of leaders of the independent SUTAUROS bus workers union in Mexico City last year. On May 23, Mexico City police unleashed an orgy of violence against a demonstration

by striking teachers, seriously injuring at least 40. And earlier in the month, Javier Elorriaga and Sebastián Entzin were given prison sentences of 13 years and six years respectively for alleged ties to the EZLN.

Washington's hand is clearly visible in the current wave of repression coming down on Mexico's working people. The Mexican army's bloody massacres in Chiapas were carried out with weapons supplied by the U.S., and recently the PRI government agreed to an unprecedented pact to have Mexican soldiers trained at American bases, as part of a scheme for joint policing of the border. Meanwhile, the Clinton administration has militarized large parts of the border and drastically stepped up its racist deportations of Latin American immigrants.

From the outset, the International Communist League has denounced NAFTA as an imperialist "free trade" rape of Mexico. Against the racist protectionist policies of the U.S. labor bureaucrats, who rail against Mexican workers "stealing American jobs," we fight for common class struggle by workers in Mexico and the U.S. The key is forging internationalist vanguard parties to lead the working class in struggle against U.S. imperialism and all the capitalist rulers.

The following article is translated, from *Espartaco* No. 8 (Spring-Summer 1996), newspaper of our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM), section of the ICL.

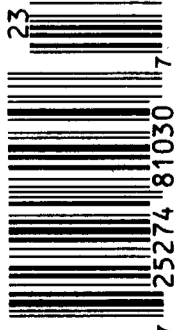
It is in the interests of the whole working class to demand immediate and unconditional freedom for all activists and fighters for the exploited and oppressed who are being held in the jails of the bourgeois state! When the government of Ernesto Zedillo jailed eleven leaders of SUTAUROS last year and subsequently imprisoned, along with others,

*continued on page 12*

### Cold War Hack Smears Trotsky, Attacks Enlightenment

## Richard Pipes: Exorcising the Russian Revolution

SEE PAGE 8



## In Memory of Ivan Vrachev

Moscow  
17 May 1996

To the Editor,

We have just learned that Ivan Yakovlevich Vrachev passed away on 22 December 1995 at the age of 97. He was the last living link to the Bolshevik leadership of the October Revolution and to the central cadre of Trotsky's Left Opposition. Like a number of other Oppositionists, in 1929 Vrachev renounced his Trotskyist views. Other prominent capitulators were nevertheless executed; Vrachev survived the purges of the 1930s, he believed, because of the

patronage of Politburo member Anastasy Mikoyan.

In his final years, Vrachev's primary concern was to use the opening allowed by Gorbachev's *glasnost* to record for history his unique knowledge of certain truths buried for decades under mountains of Stalinist lies. In an interview with comrades of the International Communist League (ICL) in 1990, Vrachev told us:

"To tell the truth of the events, that is my credo. If the Institute of Marxism-Leninism was interested like you are interested, they would provide for me the conditions wherein I would have a ste-



Ivan Vrachev (far left) with his family in Moscow, 1991.

Spartacist

nographer, a tape recorder, text that I could verify. Once dead, all this will be lost. There are things that I alone know."

When we first met him in 1990, Ivan Yakovlevich was in robust health and perfectly lucid. But he lived less than two years after the death on 8 February 1994 of his second wife, Rebecca Mikhailovna Boguslavskaya, to whom he had been married for 25 years. She was the daughter of Mikhail Solomonovich Boguslavsky, who was a Jewish working-class fighter in the 1905 revolution, a delegate to the October 1917 Second Congress of Soviets in Petrograd at which the workers seizure of power was proclaimed, a prominent Soviet government leader in the Ukraine and Russia during the period of 1917-1924 and a prominent supporter himself of the Left Opposition at one time.

Representatives of the ICL were fortunate enough to be guests on several occasions in the Vrachev's Moscow home. Their apartment was always bustling with family and pets and filled with warm hospitality. The last time I visited Ivan Vrachev was in September, just three months prior to his death.

In keeping with their wishes, Ivan Vrachev is buried in his family's plot in the Danskoy Crematory and his wife is buried with her family in Golovinskoye Cemetery.

The month he died the Russian media was flooded with nationalist election campaign demagoguery about "bringing back the Soviet Union." Not a word appeared to mark the passing of Ivan Vrachev—this despite the fact that he was the last living signatory to the December 1922 treaty that established the USSR.

Ivan Vrachev joined the Bolshevik party as a young worker in Moscow in March 1917, on the heels of the February Revolution. He was soon drafted into the army by the Provisional Government and posted to the city of Voronezh, south of Moscow.

A genuine workers revolution throws open the road to youth and all the oppressed who rise to meet its promises and challenges. While Vrachev had worked from the age of eleven and received only three years of formal schooling, he nevertheless displayed such acute intelligence, and oratorical and organizing strength, that by the summer he was in the leadership of the garrison and city soviets.

In January 1918, Vrachev was elected to the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants Deputies. At the proposal of its chairman, Yakov Sverdlov, he was also brought onto its expanded Presidium. Thus at the age of *nineteen*, Vrachev became the youngest leader in the Soviet workers government.

How fortunate we were to hear Vrachev's first-hand accounts of those days! It is one thing to read the debates that raged in the Bolshevik Party and the Soviets over the 1918 Brest-Litovsk

negotiations with German imperialism. It is another thing altogether to hear the words of Lenin and Trotsky, reverberating with all their conviction, related by an actual participant in the first days of Bolshevik power.

During the Civil War, Vrachev served on the Southern fronts in various leading army and party posts, eventually becoming Chief Political Commissar of the Red Army of Transcaucasia. The Red Army played a key role in extending proletarian power to the region, defeating imperialist-backed nationalist forces in Azerbaijan and Armenia and a pro-imperialist Menshevik government in Georgia. The consolidation of Soviet rule in economically backward and ethnically kaleidoscopic Transcaucasia and Central Asia was based on the combination of proletarian social-revolution in the urban centers, agrarian revolution in the countryside, and the struggle for full equality for all nationalities and ethnic groups. Where today Yeltsin's slaughter in Chechnya reduces whole cities to rubble, the birth of soviet power in the region was based on a *smychka* (alliance) of the predominantly Russian oil refinery workers of Grozny with the pro-Soviet rising of the landless mountain people, the Chechens.

In the Civil War against the White Guards, the Red Army became a school of internationalism, and Vrachev was one of its teachers. In the Turkestan Front newspaper that he edited, the *Political Commissar Daily*, and in special pamphlets, Vrachev addressed the need to counteract commandism and Great Russian chauvinism and to be sensitive to the national particularities of the various minority peoples. This was all explicitly linked to Lenin and Trotsky's perspective of spreading the revolution from Soviet Central Asia throughout colonial Asia.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable moments in Vrachev's life was when he became one of three Left Oppositionists to be allowed as delegates to the 13th Party Conference in January 1924. This conference took place after Trotsky's "New Course"—calling for the revival of party democracy—met with an unexpected groundswell of support in the ranks, filling the pages of *Pravda* in November 1923. In response, Stalin's apparat for the first time managed to completely rig delegate elections and turn the last remaining forum of Bolshevism into a demonstrative fist of defiance by the apparat against the revolutionary layers of the party. It was Vrachev who, amid the orchestrated heckling, denounced Stalin's course and warned the delegates that they were witnessing the end of party democracy: "Comrades, it may be that we have only a few hours left of full democracy, so let us use it!"

Indeed, the January 1924 conference marked the decisive point of the Soviet Thermidor, the political counterrevolution which took place in 1923-24.

Upon his return to Tbilisi, Georgia,

### Jacobinism and Communism

*The program of communism—for a just and egalitarian society based on the overcoming of economic scarcity—has its roots in the rational humanism of the Enlightenment. The Great French Revolution, especially under the Jacobin dictatorship of 1793-94, sought to realize the most radical principles of Enlightenment thought under the banner of "liberty, equality, fraternity." But by the late 19th century, capitalism had outlived its progressive period and its*



TROTSKY

*ideologues were denouncing Jacobinism, which they identified with "red revolution." In his seminal work laying out the theory of permanent revolution for backward Russia, written after the defeat of the 1905 Russian Revolution and vindicated by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Leon Trotsky paid homage to the historic achievements of Jacobinism, while indicating that its program of revolutionary bourgeois democracy had been transcended by the proletariat's struggle for socialist revolution.*

In the heroic period of French history we saw a bourgeoisie, enlightened, active, as yet not aware of the contradictions of its own position, upon whom history had imposed the task of leadership in the struggle for a new order, not only against the outworn institutions of France but also against the reactionary forces of the whole of Europe. The bourgeoisie, consistently, in all its factions, regarded itself as the leader of the nation, rallied the masses to the struggle, gave them slogans and dictated their fighting tactics. Democracy bound the nation together with a political ideology....

*Jacobinism* is now a term of reproach on the lips of all liberal wiseacres. Bourgeois hatred of revolution, its hatred towards the masses, hatred of the force and grandeur of the history that is made in the streets, is concentrated in one cry of indignation and fear—*Jacobinism!* We, the world army of Communism, have long ago made our historical reckoning with Jacobinism. The whole of the present international proletarian movement was formed and grew strong in the struggle against the traditions of Jacobinism. We subjected its theories to criticism, we exposed its historical limitations, its social contradictoriness, its utopianism, we exposed its phraseology, and broke with its traditions, which for decades had been regarded as the sacred heritage of the revolution.

But we defend Jacobinism against the attacks, the calumny, and the stupid vituperations of anaemic, phlegmatic liberalism. The bourgeoisie has shamefully betrayed all the traditions of its historical youth, and its present hirelings dishonour the graves of its ancestors and scoff at the ashes of their ideals. The proletariat has taken the honour of the revolutionary past of the bourgeoisie under its protection. The proletariat, however radically it may have, in practice, broken with the revolutionary traditions of the bourgeoisie, nevertheless preserves them, as a sacred heritage of great passions, heroism and initiative, and its heart beats in sympathy with the speeches and acts of the Jacobin Convention.

—Leon Trotsky, *Results and Prospects* (1906)



LENIN

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Nobel Prize Winner Defends Israeli Nuclear Technician

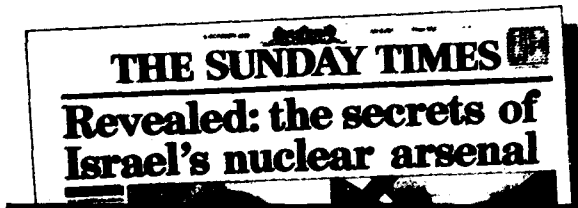
## Free Mordechai Vanunu from Mossad Dungeon!

Nearly ten years ago, Mossad agents kidnapped an Israeli nuclear technician, Mordechai Vanunu, in Rome and spirited him off to a secret trial in Israel. Vanunu was sentenced to 18 years in prison, where he has since been held in total isolation in a six-by-ten-foot cell. Vanunu's "crime"? He revealed to a British newspaper that the Israeli state had produced and stockpiled more than 200 atomic warheads. And the Zionist fanatics are fully capable of launching this arsenal of mega-death to exterminate every man,



Marlow/Magnum

Nobel Prize winner Joseph Rotblat.



After revealing massive scale of Israeli nuclear arsenal to London Sunday Times in October 1986, Mordechai Vanunu was abducted by Mossad, tried in secret and sentenced to 18 years.



AP

woman and child in the Near East. The worldwide campaign to free Vanunu recently received a significant boost when the 1995 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, nuclear physicist Joseph Rotblat, publicized Vanunu's case (*New York Times*, 21 May). Rotblat is the founder of the Pugwash Conferences, a movement of scientists opposed to nuclear weapons. At the award ceremony last December, Rotblat was interrupted with applause when he called for Vanunu's freedom. "I was a whistle-blower like him when I warned against the danger of radiation from the hydrogen bomb," Rotblat told an Israeli journalist. "It is the right and the duty of every citizen to report, and such whistle-blowers should be protected by law" (*Bulletin*

*of the Atomic Scientists*, January-February 1996). Born in Poland of Jewish parents, Rotblat moved to Britain in 1939 just before the German invasion. His wife, who stayed behind, perished in the Holocaust; one of his brothers fought as an anti-Nazi partisan on the Eastern Front. Desperate to do something to combat the Hitlerite scourge, Rotblat offered his services to the Anglo-American imperialist alliance. He initially participated in the Manhattan Project to build the first U.S. A-bomb but resigned in protest after learning "that the real purpose in making the bomb was to subdue the Soviets" (*Scientific American*, January 1996). For his courageous stance, Rotblat was hounded during the Cold War, threat-

ened with arrest and denounced as a "Communist dupe." While we do not share Rotblat's pacifist philosophy, we welcome his defense of Vanunu as a blow against the nuclear militarism of the war-crazed Israeli Zionist state and its even more dangerous godfather, U.S. imperialism, the only power to ever use nuclear weapons with its hideous obliteration of Hiroshima and of Nagasaki in 1945. The International Communist League has publicized Vanunu's case since the time of his abduction and imprisonment (see "Freedom for Mordechai Vanunu!" WV No. 429, 29 May 1987). We honor Mordechai Vanunu and demand his immediate freedom. The crimes of the crazed Zionist theocracy will be avenged by workers revolution.

Vrachev was handed orders removing him from his army and party posts and transferring him to Moscow to run a dairy collective. Vrachev was a signer of the May 1927 "Declaration of the 83" and a supporter of the Platform of the Left Opposition submitted to the 15th Party Congress in December 1927. For this he was expelled from the party by the congress. In January 1929, he was arrested.

Isaac Deutscher's three-volume biography of Trotsky contains a chapter entitled "The Year 1928" that vividly describes the rich correspondence carried on in exile by the Left Opposition. Vrachev took an active part in this correspondence. The Prometheus Research Library, the research and archival facility of the Spartacist League/U.S. Central Committee, has in its collection two fascinating manuscripts by Vrachev, one on the Tenth Party Congress in 1921, where he was a supporter of Trotsky's platform on the trade-union question, and one on the crucial 12th Party Congress in 1923, at which he was also a delegate. The collection also includes a transcript of our 1990 interview.

In July 1929 Vrachev capitulated to Stalin along with former Left Opposition leaders Karl Radek, Ivar Smilga and Evgeny Preobrazhensky. Failing to understand the centrality of the struggle for world socialist revolution to the Left Opposition's perspectives, they accepted the constraints of the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" and went over to Stalin when he embarked on his "left" zigzag of forced-march industrialization. Vrachev was restored to the party in 1930, dropped again in 1936 and eventually exiled to Siberia in 1937 for his Trotskyist past. By 1938 he was allowed to live under house arrest in the Moscow region.

When Hitler's army invaded in June 1941, Vrachev was evacuated to Moscow, where he telegraphed Stalin to insist on being mobilized for the front. Unlike the surviving Trotskyists in Siberian exile who demanded to serve at the front, Vrachev was not shot, but merely kept in limbo. When in February 1943 his oldest son died at

the front, Vrachev dropped everything and enlisted secretly. Beginning again as a 46-year-old infantry soldier, he worked his way up to battalion commander and returned to Moscow with several medals.

In September 1949, he was again arrested for "former Trotskyist activity" and sentenced to 25 years. He served seven years before being rehabilitated along with millions of others in the wake of the 1956 Khrushchev revelations. To his last days he sought to be reinstated to the CPSU. But for years the bureaucracy would not so much as issue this veteran of the October Revolution a personal pension. In 1989-90, however, Gorbachev's ideologues became eager to enlist Vrachev's name for the *perestroika* "market reforms" which paved the way to capitalist restoration, and the media suddenly descended upon him. But despite Vrachev's misplaced hopes in Gorbachev, at the age of 92 he did not pretend to involve himself in contemporary politics.

Our time with Ivan Vrachev was very limited. We recorded a lengthy interview with him and provided him with transcripts whose accuracy he confirmed. Vrachev was thrilled to receive the ICL's Russian-language edition of Trotsky's *The Communist International After Lenin* when we invited him to its public presentation in Moscow 1994, and he hoped then to write a review.

We will seek to incorporate what we have learned from Ivan Vrachev about the world's first proletarian revolution and its degeneration to arm future generations. As Vrachev said recalling his revolutionary period:

"The October Revolution was the greatest cause of the working class and had significance not just for our country, but for the working class of the entire world. Its influence was very significant and has not run out to today.

"We lived and breathed the world revolution. As Lenin wrote, 'We may die, but we will help the German Revolution!'"

We extend our condolences to Ivan Vrachev's family, especially to his daughter, Svetlana, who cared for him in his final years.

Victor G.

## On the Slogan "Restore the Soviet Union"

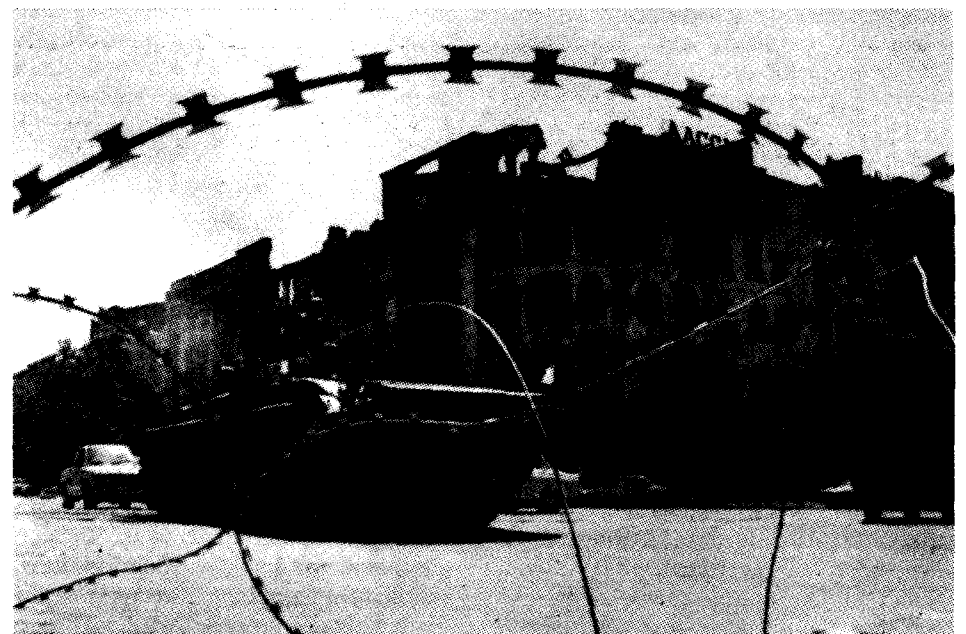
To the Editor  
Dear Comrades,

In *Workers Vanguard* (issue no. 638) it is asserted that Marxists should not call for the restoration of the S. Union and presumably that of Yugoslavia as well. Was the creation of the S. Union a historical step forwards and consequently its demise a step back into an era of war and barbarism? To not support the restoration of the S. Union as it once was Stalinist is tantamount to not supporting the restoration of union rights in a factory strike which has occurred and workers have lost their rights (e.g. recent Dockers strike in Liverpool, England). The demand and desire for peoples to live in peace and harmony in multinational wholes (which imperialism is currently seeking to destroy in order to rule over them more effectively) is correct.

The tragedy as you correctly point out is that the Stalinist fragments will be unable to defend/extend the gains of the workers movement.

Your current class analysis of the S. Union as one of a fully developed capitalist state means that the mistakes of the state capitalists of yesteryear are to be repeated in current phenomena. E.g. your refusal to support the Serbs in ex-Yugoslavia for more than three years of war and only after the NATO bombardments of August 1995 to take a half-hearted stance in their defence. Your current refusal to support the demand for the restoration of the S. Union because the remnants of Stalinism are currently associated with the demand is reminiscent of T. Cliff's refusal to support Korea against America as it was led by Stalinists.

continued on page 5



Russian troops patrol Grozny, Chechen capital devastated by Yeltsin's invasion.

DPA

# “Million Man March Appeases Racist Exploiters”

By Don Cane

Reprinted from

THE **BLACKSCHOLAR**

The following article is reprinted from *Black Scholar* Vol. 26, No. 1 (Winter/Spring 1996). Comrade Cane is a spokesman for the Spartacist League in the Bay Area and a member of the Labor Black League for Social Defense.

The rulers of America are conducting a one-sided class war against the working class, targeting as their main scapegoats the black ghetto masses. With barely a peep from the “leaders” of organized labor, they have gutted industry, busted unions and driven down wages. The wealthy few have condemned the impoverished many in the black ghetto as a “surplus” population. Permanent unemployment, the elimination of welfare, the assault on Medicare, intensified police terror, an overflowing prison population and the speedup on death row—all speak to the impulse to genocide inherent in the policies of the racist rulers.

Seeing no leadership willing to fight the Gingrich/Clinton reaction, many blacks grabbed at Louis Farrakhan’s Million Man March like a drowning man for a straw. The Million Man March dressed up a black constituency with the conservative trappings of anti-woman “family values” and segregationist bigotry. As journalist Don Terry noted in the *New York Times* (15 October 1995), “Mr. Farrakhan is a conservative and on the surface, at least, some of the rally’s themes echo those heard at Republican gatherings: God, loyalty, family, discipline.” In order to court America’s party of property (Democrats and Republicans) the black misleaders—Farrakhan, Jesse Jackson, Ben Chavis—condemn blacks for their own oppression and black women “to be the slave of a slave.”

Much is made of the march as a demonstration of “black operational unity”—a million black men standing together. In the 1960s, “I’m Black and I’m Proud” race consciousness, influenced by masses in struggle, was defiant of the racist capitalist rulers. Today we witness “I’m black and I’m not a criminal” race consciousness influenced by a desperate black middle class begging for “understanding” from the racist rulers. The black misleaders, branded by race themselves, can barely conceal their contempt for the black masses on whom they call to “atone.” I say *black people have nothing to atone for!* But the false prophets of the “American Dream” blame the victim for not “succeeding” and degrade the proud history of black working people who have struggled long and hard for freedom from the chains of racist oppression.

With the defeat of Radical Reconstruction the social revolution that launched the American Civil War remained unfinished. Chattel slavery was destroyed, but blacks were not free from ruthless political and economic subjugation. The social ferment unleashed by the Civil War harbored the underlying question: Who created the society’s wealth and who should rule? If the free slave demands 40 acres and a mule from the confiscated plantations why not the workers the factories? Why should these laboring classes not unite and overthrow the masters, South and North? In defense of private property, the masters (South and North) united to head off any incipient workers

struggle by withdrawing the Union army from the South (bringing it North to break strikes) and sanctioning race terror and the repressive Black Codes (the foundation of Jim Crow).

American capitalism was built on the forcible segregation and subjugation of blacks at the bottom of society. This is the fundamental fact that the civil rights movement crashed into when it came “up North” in the 1960s. This mass movement, built on the courage of millions of black and white activists, did overturn the “Jim Crow” system of *de jure* segregation of Southern blacks. But the liberal-led civil rights movement had no program to address the *de facto* segregation and ghetto poverty of blacks in the major Northern cities—all they could offer was utopian pie-in-the-sky: the “brotherhood of man” under the thumb of a genocidal racist ruling class.

The perspective of the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Spartacist League is one of revolutionary integrationism—for black freedom through socialist revolution. It is rooted in the understanding that the brutal oppression of blacks in this country is part of the very bedrock of American capitalism and it is one that guides our practical work. Together with the Partisan Defense Committee, we have sought to bring the social

standing that “because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution” (“Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom,” *Spartacist* No. 10, May-June 1967).

“Marxist utopian rubbish!” the liberal integrationist and the segregationist nationalists would both shout in unison. But let us see whose program is utopian. In an article in the *Nation* (30 October 1995), Eric Foner writes that his “vision of a nation transformed, one in which equality is a reality for all Americans” will “require not only the passage of new laws but a change of America’s hearts and minds.” Racism is a conscious tool of ruthless capitalist hegemony—it poisons class consciousness and divides to rule. It is the whip that drives American workers, white and black, to pull the capitalist cart through war, economic depression and social ruin.

The idea that racism can be fought by changing “hearts and minds” finds grotesque reflection in the whole premise of the Million Man March: racist oppression is the fault of blacks themselves. Louis Farrakhan recalls with nostalgia the Jim Crow era: “When civil rights broke down the segregation laws



Reuters  
Nation of Islam demagogue Louis Farrakhan speaking at Million Man March.

to endure the daily humiliation of racism and are watching the openings which they were afforded slam shut for their children. Their despair at the prospects for integrated social struggle against racism is conditioned by their lack of faith in the power of the multiracial working class as an instrument of change. For them the ghetto masses are a social weight “holding down the race” (them) from upward mobility. For them an integrated labor movement is a poor cousin compared to the powerful, wealthy patrons of the Democratic Party. These patrons made it clear they have no need for demanding blacks or bothersome workers when in 1992, Clinton’s New Democrats focused his campaign toward the “racist Reagan Democrats.”

Farrakhan denounces the small Jewish, now Arab and Asian ghetto shopkeepers as “bloodsuckers.” The new Booker T. Washingtons seek to be the *real* bloodsuckers—the capitalist exploiters—of “their own” people, claiming the ghetto as their illusory “exclusive market.” In their political role as overseers for their capitalist patrons the language of fascism serves to divert black anger from the real enemy, the capitalist White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ruling class, to the hapless small change “foreign” shopkeeper. For the ghetto masses and even the middle class the “empowerment” of “Black capitalism” is a fraud—old wine in new bottles. It is utopian to believe that this ruling class will share any part of its market with a yet unformed black capitalist class. Farrakhan’s cockroach capitalism is premised on the benevolent acquiescence of the white power structure while at the same time feeding off of segregation.

Farrakhan’s is a program to sweep up the crumbs that fall from the capitalist table for a price. He advertises himself as an alternative to revolution: “if black people rise up in an evil manner, we could foment revolution inside this country and so weaken America that she could not entertain war with her enemies on the outside” (*Back Where We Belong*, 1989). Indeed, the “Mission Statement” of the Million Man March Organizing Committee offers “the Black community...in a partnership with government” to form “the salvation army of the world”—to make the world safe for Wall Street profiteering and plunder.

Malcolm X once said of American capitalism: “The system in this country cannot produce freedom for an Afro-American. It is impossible for this system, this social system, this system, as it stands, to produce freedom right now for the black man in this country.”

What Malcolm said also goes for the average American workers, who are being squeezed by the system. We cannot reform the racist capitalist system. It threatens us with total annihilation. It must be overthrown. It is socialism or barbarism. ■



WV Photo  
Spartacists and Labor Black Leagues protest Jim Crow racism at Denny’s restaurants, July 1993.

power of the integrated working class to bear in mobilizations demanding freedom for black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and the abolition of the racist death penalty. The perspective of an integrated revolutionary fight for black freedom was what guided the PDC-initiated labor and black mobilization against an attempted Klan provocation in Springfield, Illinois on Martin Luther King Day in 1994. Organized labor, led by the Chicago transit unions, was the hard core of this mobilization which spiked the KKK lynch mob.

Revolutionary integrationism is a program for building a fighting labor movement that champions the cause of all the oppressed and a revolutionary multiracial workers party that acts as the tribune of all the people in the fight for an egalitarian socialist America. Revolutionary integrationism recognizes that black oppression is the Achilles’ heel of American capitalism, with the under-

we began to lose black businesses and spend our money with white businesses. So throughout the South the economic advancement that we gained under Jim Crow is literally dead” (*Emerge*, August 1990). Economic advancement for whom? Surely not the sharecropper chained by debt to the plantation store and the rural capitalist’s land. Surely not the “last hired, first fired” urban worker who fought tooth and nail for a decent paying job in industry. Surely not the youth who studied in dilapidated class rooms with outdated books because public tax money was needed for projects to enhance business opportunity.

Today 20 percent of black families earn half of all black income. This is the black middle class created by Johnson’s “War On Poverty” as a buffer against black unrest exemplified by the 1960s ghetto upheavals. This layer was the main beneficiary of the civil rights revolt, although its constituents continue



# Letters...

(continued from page 3)

The workers movement in Russia which you seem to be so dismissive of lately will inscribe on its banner the restoration of the S. Union and the vote for the Stalinists is not a vote for the past (in the same way as the recent large vote for the French left) or a vote for the leaders of these parties (like Zyuganov who beyond any doubt are Western puppets) but a vote for a change in the whole of society. Just as the recent election in France led to the December events so the recent elections in Russia will inevitably lead to social struggle of immense proportions. The struggle between the working class and the remnants of Stalinism is where the coming future class battles will emerge and the long-awaited historical accounting of this remains to occur. The road for conflict against capitalism and Stalinism is inevitable.

Fraternally,  
V.N. Gelis

*WV replies:* The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were multinational workers states based on a collectivized economy but governed by a parasitic bureaucratic caste. These states were destroyed in 1991-92 through capitalist counterrevolution in large measure fueled by the splintering of their respective Stalinist bureaucracies along antagonistic national lines. What now exists in the former Soviet Union and the Balkans is a multiplicity of bourgeois states, each under the control of its dominant nation and, in many cases, engaged in internecine feuding with one another.

The call to "restore the Soviet Union" on the part of Stalinist-derived Russian "patriots" like Gennadi Zyuganov, leader and presidential candidate of the bourgeois-nationalist Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), is in reality a call for a modernized version of the Russian empire of the Romanovs. Similarly, talk of "restoring Yugoslavia" by the Communist Alliance—Movement for Yugoslavia of Mirjana Markovic, the wife of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic, can only mean a modernized version of the post-1919 Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

The progressive character of the former Soviet Union lay in its collectivized economy *not* in its particular national composition. There is nothing inherently progressive about a state incorporating in its boundaries Russians and Uzbeks, Ukrainians and Chechens, etc.

If there were, then the tsarist empire, which Lenin called a "prison house of peoples," would have to be judged no less progressive than the USSR.

As is well known, Lenin strongly and clearly advocated the right of national self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form independent states, for the non-Russian subject peoples of the tsarist empire. In this way the Bolsheviks gained the sympathy and support of the non-Russian toilers, which was vitally important for their victory over the White Guard counterrevolutionaries and Western/Japanese imperialist forces in the Civil War of 1918-21.

At the end of the Civil War, the Red Army controlled most of the territory of the former tsarist empire. However, as we wrote in "Why Marxists Do Not Raise the Call 'Restore the Soviet Union'" (*WV* No. 639, 16 February):

"The Bolshevik leadership did *not* maintain that the various nations and peoples of the former tsarist empire had to be reorganized within the framework of a *single* federated Soviet (workers) state. Lenin was open to the prospect of an alliance of Soviet states in the region if the non-Russian workers and peasants so desired."

Thus, against the opposition of Stalin, Lenin insisted that the right of national self-determination be incorporated into the founding constitution of the USSR.

When the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy disintegrated under Gorbachev in the late 1980s, various non-Russian petty-bourgeois nationalists, notably in the Baltic republics—acting in concert with Western imperialism—demanded secession from the USSR as a cover for capitalist restoration. At the same time, the Russian Stalinist "patriots" increasingly appealed to traditional Great Russian chauvinism. Hence the "red-brown" coalition.

The fundamental task facing communists in Russia, the Ukraine and other former Soviet republics today is to work for proletarian socialist revolution to overthrow these new bourgeois states. Whether future workers states in this region will form a multinational federation and what its configuration would be is a historically open and, at the present time, rather abstract question. What is sharply and directly posed at present is the defense of non-Russian peoples against renascent Russian imperialist ambitions, including those would-be Russian imperialists who call for "restoring the Soviet Union."

Here it's significant that V.N. Gelis' letter does not so much as mention the Chechen war in which the Russian Army has already killed tens of thousands of

Caucasian people in a region conquered by the tsarist empire in the early 19th century. We call for the defeat of the Russian invading and occupying forces and for the right of Chechnya to decide its own fate. The KPRF nationalists, while criticizing Yeltsin's handling of the war, predictably *oppose* the independence of Chechnya.

Similarly, the European and American imperialists support the "territorial integrity" of the new Russian bourgeois state and therefore have endorsed Yeltsin's bloody colonial war against the Chechens. Clinton made this perfectly clear on his recent visit to Yeltsin, when he grotesquely drew a parallel between the Russian rape of Chechnya and the Union struggle against the slavocracy in the U.S. Civil War, claiming that the common principle was "that no state has a right to withdraw from our union." This clearly refutes Gelis' false assertion that "imperialism is seeking to destroy" multinational states in the former Soviet Union and the Balkans. The imperialist powers have in the past and will in the future support and even create multinational states when this serves their perceived interests.

Thus the original Yugoslav state, ruled by the Serbian monarchy, was created by British and French imperialism at the 1919 Versailles Congress. The Communist International rightly recognized that this new Yugoslav state was by its very nature one in which the dominant nationality, the Serbs, oppressed the other South Slavic peoples. During the 1920s, the Yugoslav Communist Party militantly championed self-determination especially for the Croats, Slovenes and Macedonians. Precisely because they did so, the Communists became the only genuinely pan-Yugoslav party in the country, with its leadership and cadres containing members of all South Slav nationalities.

The victory of Tito's Communist Partisans over the German Wehrmacht and reactionary Serbian and Croatian nationalist forces during World War II laid the basis for the creation of a bureaucratically deformed workers state, in which nonetheless a real effort was made to ensure political equality among the constituent national republics. However, especially after Tito's death in 1980, the Yugoslav bureaucracy increasingly fractured along national lines. Thus Serbian Stalinist leader Slobodan Milosevic came to power seeking to create a "Greater Serbia," beginning with trampling on the Albanians in Kosovo.

We have taken a position of *revolutionary defeatism* toward all of the contending bourgeois-nationalist forces in

the territorial wars—marked by mutual communalist massacres—precipitated by the breakup of Yugoslavia. As V.N. Gelis notes, we did defend the Bosnian Serbs when they came under direct attack by the NATO powers, including last year's massive air assault carried out in league with the Croatian and Bosnian Muslim forces and with the complicity of the Milosevic government.

While Gelis argues for support to the Serbs in the wars of ex-Yugoslavia, he offers no principled or other reason for this position. Does he believe that Milosevic's Serbia is still a deformed workers state while Croatia and the Bosnian Muslim polity are nascent bourgeois states? Or does he think the Serbs are a "progressive" people compared to the Croats and Bosnian Muslims? Or is he reflecting the pro-Serbian sympathy prevalent in Greece?

It is a basic principle that for communists the main enemy is the bourgeoisie of their own country, which in Gelis' case is the Greek bourgeoisie. However, his positions here are in harmony with those of the Greek ruling class. Not only do Greece, Russia and Serbia share the Eastern Orthodox religion, but the Greek bourgeoisie is also driven by its ongoing nationalist conflict with Muslim Turkey, which backs the Bosnian Sarajevo regime. Today, the Greek government is the only member of NATO which has consistently and conspicuously supported the Serbian cause in the wars of ex-Yugoslavia. This fact alone should cause V.N. Gelis and his comrades to reconsider whether their views on the Balkans and the former Soviet Union are governed by the principles of proletarian internationalism or other considerations.

## On South Korea Coup Generals Trial

22 May 1996

To the Editor:

The headline "South Korea: Regime Puts Coup Generals on Trial" (*WV* No. 646, 24 May) could give the false impression that we accept the South Korean regime's "democratic" pretenses and think the capitalist state is willing to put *itself* on trial. The excellent article itself didn't do that. Rather, it made clear that the South Korean bourgeoisie is trying to polish up its image after decades of military corruption and bloody crimes against the working class.

Comradely,  
Damon L.

## Labor Black League for Social Defense

**1** Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

**2** A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting, keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

**3** Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality healthcare for all!

**4** Full citizenship rights for all immigrants; everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

**5** Down with anti-gay laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom!

### What We Stand For

**6** Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the organized power of the unions against the racist terrorists, in and out of uniform! Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

**7** Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and all victims of racist, capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense; support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

**8** Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high quality, integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

**9** Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend Cuba, Vietnam, China and North

Korea against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures!

**10** Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! Take industry away from its incompetent and corrupt owners—all the wealth belongs to the working people who created it! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

For more information write the  
Labor Black Leagues:

CHICAGO  
Box 6938  
Chicago, IL 60680

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

OAKLAND  
Box 751  
Oakland, CA 94604

Membership pledge is \$3/year unemployed;  
\$10/year employed

# U.S. Hands Off the World!

## French Troops Out of Africa!



Grossman/NY Times

French troops occupy Bangui, capital of Central African Republic, after perpetrating bloody massacre to suppress revolt.

An army mutiny in the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) last month turned into a popular revolt against the French neo-colonial military occupation. On May 18, rank-and-file soldiers demanding back pay rebelled against the puppet regime of President Ange-Félix Patassé for the second time in two months. French troops responded with a brutal assault on the capital, Bangui, using Mirage jet fighters and helicopter gunships. The rebellion in the army triggered a week-long explosion of looting, as the desperately poor population ransacked downtown offices and shops and destroyed scores of villas in the affluent suburbs. But with the bloody French intervention, the plebeian upsurge became focused on opposition to the French military presence. For several days, thousands of people defying a ban on public gatherings marched through the streets of Bangui, chanting slogans like "Death to the French!"

Behind the ferocity of French imperialism's assault on what is one of the poorest countries on earth is the fact that the C.A.R. is a key link in the French military presence in Africa. France has some 8,000 troops stationed in seven African countries, including Gabon, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Senegal, Chad and Djibouti (as well as on the Indian Ocean islands of Reunion and Mayotte). In addition, French arms and training provide the backbone of the local armies in a number of other countries, with shadowy French "advisers" lurking be-

hind the local generals.

France has used its troops repeatedly to prop up its despotic satraps—an average of once every two years since its former colonies acquired formal independence in the 1960s. In 1979, French troops removed Jean-Bedel Bokassa, the self-crowned Central African "emperor," a notorious tyrant known as the "French-speaking Idi Amin." Paris had propped up Bokassa even as he personally participated in the slaughter of 200 high-school students jailed for holding a protest demonstration. His successor was flown into Bangui and sworn in aboard a French military transport. Three years ago, the French army directly organized the elections in the C.A.R. which brought in Patassé, Bokassa's former prime minister.

French imperialism's record of military intervention in its self-appropriated "back yard" rivals that of the United States, which has intervened countless times in Latin America, most recently in Grenada, Panama and Haiti. Several years ago, France participated along with the U.S. and others in the "humanitarian" occupation of Somalia, where the racist imperialists indiscriminately gunned down residents of Mogadishu. In Rwanda, Socialist president François Mitterrand sent arms, helicopters and 700 troops in the early 1990s to help prop up the Hutu-dominated government of President Juvénal Habyarimana, whose lieutenants unleashed a genocidal slaugh-

ter of the country's Tutsi population.

In recent weeks, the American press has been going on about France's neo-colonial presence in Africa. A typical *New York Times* (22 May) headline declaimed, "France's Army Keeps Grip in African Ex-Colonies." This is pretty rich, coming from the mouthpiece for U.S. imperialism's "humanitarian" invasions around the world. But there is more than hypocrisy involved here, as the U.S. and French imperialists are today engaged in sharp competition for influence in sub-Saharan Africa.

With the counterrevolutionary restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and East Europe, the imperialist powers feel they have a free hand to ride roughshod over the entire planet. Conservative French president Jacques Chirac recently announced the gradual elimination of the draft in order to form a professional military capable of the sort of "rapid intervention" carried out in Bangui. One of the factors which prompted Paris to streamline the military was its pique at having to play a subordinate role to its imperialist rivals—especially the U.S.—in the 1991 Persian Gulf slaughter and NATO's occupation in the Balkans.

The French bourgeoisie has always regarded absolute control of its former colonial empire in sub-Saharan Africa as key to its pretensions of being more than a second-rate imperialist power. In his recently published memoirs, De Gaulle's sinister aide Jacques Foccart (who is now working for Chirac) describes how he kept up constant phone links with African heads of state like an all-powerful Mafia don. Mitterrand pursued the same approach, with his son Jean-Christophe as the don. Today, Washington is seeking to extend the tentacles of its "New World Order" into this traditional French *chasse gardée* (private hunting ground). While on a visit last year to oil-rich Gabon, Chirac vituperated against the "Anglo-Saxons" who "dream of pushing France out of its position in Africa" (*Economist*, 12 August 1995).

The savagery of the French attack in Bangui was intended to send a message throughout its African "sphere of influence" that local rulers will be anointed by the French government and by it alone. As the mutineers began calling for Patassé's removal, Paris mobilized 2,300 troops, including forces rushed in from Chad, Gabon and France, in addi-

tion to those permanently stationed in the C.A.R. Two columns of paratrooper commandos and Foreign Legion troops with armored cars, cannons and heavy machine guns, supported by jet fighters and rocket-firing helicopter gunships, overwhelmed rebel troops around the national radio station and the presidential palace in the city center. As many as 200 rebel soldiers and civilians were killed and hundreds more were wounded.

The racist imperialists then arrogantly pushed aside their own puppet president, negotiating an amnesty agreement (with the benediction of the local archbishop) directly with the rebels. French troops armed with automatic rifles and machine guns fanned out through the devastated capital, arresting suspected "rebels." When protesters marched to the French embassy, the troops dispersed the demonstration with gunfire. Outraged protesters attacked the lavish French cultural center and set it ablaze.

Paris exercises virtually total economic control of its former colonies through the CFA (African Financial Community), a direct carry-over from colonialism which ties the currencies of the 14 African member states to the French franc. As part of an austerity drive in response to German pressure within the European Union, in 1993 Mitterrand arbitrarily decreed a massive 50 percent devaluation of the CFA franc. The consequences have been catastrophic throughout Central and West Africa, where this has meant a doubling of the price of food, medicine and other imported goods.

While the plebeian revolt in the C.A.R. reflected a deep wellspring of popular anger and bitterness against neo-colonial exploitation, it also starkly revealed the lack of social power necessary to throw off the yoke of capitalist imperialism. The movement coincided with a wave of strikes by public service employees (who also have not been paid for months). But it could not harness the power of an industrial working class—the only force capable of overthrowing capitalism—because such a class simply does not exist in countries like the C.A.R., which are so terribly underdeveloped because of imperialist exploitation that they do not even possess a railroad.

Just as the Russian Revolution of 1917 opened up the perspective of revolutionary change in the backward regions of Central Asia, the overthrow of capitalism in those parts of Africa whose development has been so dreadfully retarded must be linked to the international struggle of the working class for socialist revolution. Proletarian revolution in South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria or other industrialized countries in Africa will be a liberating force which will produce social transformation reaching into the most backward areas of the continent. What is necessary is the forging of internationalist Trotskyist vanguard parties standing at the head of the proletariat and leading behind it the peasantry and all the oppressed. ■



Der Spiegel

U.S. imperialism's "humanitarian" invasion of Somalia unleashed racist massacres against civilian population.

### Spartacist Events

#### NEW YORK

##### Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Alternate Saturdays, 3:00 p.m.

Next classes, June 29: *Principles of*

*Communism*; July 13: *State and*

*Revolution*; Spartacist Public Office

41 Warren Street (one block below

Chambers St., near Church St.)

For more information and readings:

(212) 267-1025

#### SAN FRANCISCO

##### Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.

Next classes, June 27: *The State*; July

11: *The Bolshevik Revolution*; New

College, Room 2, 777 Valencia Street

(between 18th & 19th Streets)

For more information and readings:

(415) 777-9367 or (510) 839-0851

## Polish Fake-Lefts: Still Praying at Solidarność Shrine

WARSAW—After ushering in the restoration of capitalism—and mass unemployment, widespread immiseration and a sharp rise in attacks against the rights of women and minorities—Solidarność is widely scorned among working people here, who voted its founder Lech Walesa out as Polish president last December. Solidarność serves as the battering ram for capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe made it the favorite “trade union” of the CIA, the Vatican and the imperialist bankers. Today, the Frankfurt and Wall Street financiers have shifted their bets to the ruling ex-Stalinist Social Democrats of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). But Solidarność continues to serve as a key instrument for the promotion of virulent Polish nationalism, anti-communism and anti-woman, anti-gay and anti-Semitic bigotry in the working class.

None of this has stopped various Polish leftists from continuing to tail after this reactionary outfit and wallowing in the backward prejudices it promotes. Most brazen are the supporters of Tony Cliff’s British Socialist Workers Party (represented in the U.S. by the International Socialist Organization), who even call themselves “Solidarność Socjalistyczna” (Socialist Solidarność). Recently, the Cliffites grotesquely tried to turn a Warsaw anti-fascist demonstration on April 27—protesting an anti-Semitic provocation earlier that month at the site of the Nazi death camp in Auschwitz—into a platform for anti-Semitic Solidarność. “A Solidarity union banner was on the demonstration,” boasted the British *Socialist Worker* (25 May). But it failed to report that the handful of Cliffites who tried to place themselves at the head of the march carrying red-and-white Solidarność flags were sent scurrying to the back as a result of angry denunciations by the Spartakowska Grupa Polski (SGP) and other anti-fascist protesters.

In early May, Solidarność was also the focus of a sharp political debate at the annual “Guevariada” youth conference in Katowice organized by the Radical-Progressive Movement, which publishes the anarchist-oriented journal *Barykada*. This is a lash-up which includes the Revolutionary Left Current (NLR), associated with the late Ernest Mandel’s United Secretariat (Usec), and the Initiative Group for a Workers Party (GIPR), connected to the International Workers League of the late Argentine adventurer Nahuel Moreno. But far from offering anything vaguely “radical” (even Che Guevara’s name was barely mentioned, much less the anti-imperialist struggle he is identified with), the conference sponsors and the sole Cliffite in attendance attempted to outdo one another in justifying their erstwhile or current sup-

port for Solidarność.

Yet many of the youth who attended were looking for a way forward out of the glaring injustice, bigotry and oppression of the “new” capitalist Poland, and eagerly bought copies of *Platforma Spartakusowców* and other literature of the International Communist League. Also, Rachel Wolkenstein, general counsel of the Spartacist League/U.S. and a defense attorney for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, was given time to

fascist insignia, several supporters of the Mandelite NLR chatted amicably with these scum. But other conference participants were rightly alarmed by this open rightist provocation, and together with comrades of the SGP finally forced the fascists to withdraw.

The supposed keynote of the conference was a presentation by former Usec supporter and Solidarność activist Józef Piniór in defense of Solidarność’ 1981 call for a “self-managed republic.” Piniór



Gamma

**Lech Walesa’s CIA-backed counterrevolutionary movement bowed to Vatican, was supported by opportunist leftists.**

speak to the conference about the international campaign for Mumia’s freedom. It was the SGP which brought the fight for Mumia’s freedom to Poland.

The political lines at the conference were quickly drawn when the Solidarność Socjalistyczna spokesman got up to crow about their despicable action on April 27. An SGP supporter responded that it was under these same red-and-white Solidarność banners that a reactionary mob in Warsaw last year clamored for “gas chambers” for the Social Democrats.

What the opportunist’s quest for “common ground” with Solidarność means in practice was shown when one self-proclaimed “anarchist” hanging around the conference boasted of having participated in a right-wing attack on a workers’ May Day demonstration several days earlier. The Guevariada sponsors ignored vigorous protests by the SGP that this creep had no place at the conference. Even when he returned the next day with his cronies, one of whom was wearing

was once lauded by Mandel (during the latter’s 1994 debate with the SL/U.S. in New York City) as “the most brilliant revolutionary intellectual and mass leader in Eastern Europe.” But the “brilliant revolutionary” showed his true colors at the Guevariada, offering a “god that failed” anti-communist lament that “the ideological division between left and right is *passé*” and urging radical young activists to find a “new language.”

In the early 1980s, Mandel’s followers, among others, claimed that the “self-managed republic” was simply a synonym for a workers state based on soviet democracy. In order to justify marching in lockstep with the imperialists in “solidarity with Solidarność,” they argued that a movement supported by 10 million Polish workers couldn’t possibly lead to the restoration of capitalism, no matter what the intentions of openly pro-capitalist leaders like Walesa were. Self-styled “socialists” like Piniór were held up as evidence of a mythical “left current” inside Solidarność. In contrast, the international Spartacist tendency (now the ICL) uniquely warned that a victory by Walesa & Co. would directly pose the restoration of capitalism. Six years after the triumph of capitalist counterrevolution spearheaded by Solidarność (and abetted by the former Stalinist bureaucracy), its fake-Trotskyist cheerleaders are still trying to cover up this simple fact.

To believe the learned theoreticians of the Usec, “Capitalism has not yet been restored in Poland.” With Walesa discredited, these consummate opportunist now look to the pro-capitalist Social Democrats, urging “Let’s keep the pressure on the SLD.” What pressure? When Walesa and his patron Cardinal Glemp launched a hysterical crusade which led to a ban on abortion, the spineless Mandelites caved in to the bigots by calling

“for the right to choose motherhood.” Last year in Katowice they joined with the Morenoites in building an “anti-clerical” demonstration under the slogan “Jesus is with us, not with the priests!” Most recently they offered a “left” cover to a right-wing witchhunt which assailed former SLD prime minister Oleksy for supposedly being a KGB agent, with a screaming front-page headline demanding, “Disclose Everything in the ‘Oleksy Affair’ ” (*Dalej*, February-March 1996). In contrast, the SGP has been forthright in opposing the anti-communist witchhunt, while refusing to give any electoral or political support to the SLD. The SGP fights for free abortion on demand.

The newspaper of the Morenoite GIPR, *Głos Robotniczy* (Workers Voice), meanwhile, campaigns permanently for the “self-managed republic” as a way to avoid mentioning such “unprintable” terms as socialism, Marxism or Leninism. This aversion is not surprising since the GIPR has a track record of capitulating to the most backward prejudices fostered by Solidarność and its offshoots and sneers at the Leninist struggle against special oppression, dismissing the fight against anti-Semitism, and the defense of abortion rights and of Roma (Gypsy) immigrants, as “secondary questions” of no interest to workers. *Głos Robotniczy* recently carried a misogynist attack on Ewa Szychalska, the woman chairman of the social-democratic OPZZ trade-union federation. At the Guevariada, an SGP comrade denounced this disgusting smear, noting that the Morenoites had earlier attacked the Spartacists for calling on the working class to fight in defense of women’s rights.

Opportunists in the tradition of Mandel, Moreno and Tony Cliff are nothing if not experienced in selling alibis for Solidarność. After all, they churned out “leftist” excuses to tail every counterrevolutionary imperialist-sponsored movement against the former Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe—from applauding Hitler’s World War II Estonian “Forest Brothers” to cheering the reactionary rabble on Boris Yeltsin’s White House barricades in August 1991. And, as the SGP noted in a polemic against the Morenoites, “those who opened the road for capitalist counterrevolution are incapable of leading the struggle to get rid of it” (“A ‘Workers Party’ Fit for Pilsudski,” *Platforma Spartakusowców* No. 4, Summer-Fall 1993).

The key to leading the historically combative Polish proletariat to the conquest of power in its own name lies in the fight for a Trotskyist vanguard party as part of a reformed Fourth International, which combats all manifestations of clerical nationalism, anti-Semitism and anti-woman bigotry. Such a party will reclaim an internationalist heritage stretching back to the heroic Proletariat party of Ludwik Warynski, the SDKPiL of Rosa Luxemburg, Feliks Dzerzhinsky and Leo Jogiches and the early Polish Communist Party. The political struggle to expose today’s “left” apologists for counterrevolution is part of the fight to build this party. ■



Platforma Spartakusowców

**Polish Spartacists at 1992 May Day march in Warsaw call for workers to fight anti-Semitism and attacks on abortion rights.**

### NOTICE

**Workers Vanguard will skip alternate issues in June, July and August.**

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



# Richard Pipes: Exorcising the Russian Revolution

While alive, Leon Trotsky was feared and reviled by capitalist rulers everywhere. They hated him for being the co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 Russian October Revolution, organizer of the Petrograd insurrection and founder of the Red Army, and for his unceasing fight for world socialist revolution. Fanatically anti-Communist British Conservative Winston Churchill, who later inaugurated the Cold War with his 1946 "Iron Curtain" speech, denounced Trotsky as "The Ogre of Europe" when the Bolshevik leader was forced into exile by Stalin in 1929. And when a Stalinist secret police agent in Mexico City assassinated Trotsky in 1940, America's rulers would not even allow his body into the U.S.

Now the hired pens of imperialist reaction are seeking to bury Trotsky—and the cause of international communism he embodied—yet again. The publication earlier this year of an English translation of Russian historian Dmitri Volkogonov's *Trotsky: The Eternal Revolutionary* (Free Press, 1996) was greeted with rave reviews in the capitalist press. A key figure in the Russian counterrevolutionary regime until his death last December, Volkogonov's aim was to smear Trotsky as the architect of the bureaucratic terror regime that the Bolshevik leader died fighting against. Volkogonov's aim is to denigrate and denounce any struggle for the emancipation of the exploited and oppressed. One reviewer, economist Marshall Goldman, acclaimed Volkogonov's hack job as "bold," "daring" and "brilliant," because it supposedly showed how the Stalinist regime's "adoption of violence and terror as a basic tenet, the same form of terror that ultimately did Trotsky in, came largely at his initiative" (*Boston Globe*, 17 March).

This scurrilous lie was given an insidious twist by Harvard historian Richard Pipes, who claimed in the *New York Times Book Review* (24 March): "Trotsky and Lev Sedov, his son and closest aide, frequently said and wrote that Stalin's regime had to be overthrown and Stalin himself assassinated.... The obsessive charges of 'Trotskyism' levied against the defendants in the show trials of 1936-38 and the bloodbath of 1937, it now emerges, were inspired by an irrational yet genuine fear of internal subversion." This grotesque justification of Stalin's horrendous blood purges echoes the slanders of Stalin himself. Yet its author is not only the "distinguished" Baird Professor of Russian History at Harvard, but a longtime Cold War "hawk" who braintrusted Pentagon schemes for the nuclear annihilation of the Soviet Union. Why would this die-hard anti-Communist solidarize with Stalin's bloody terror?

The collapse of Stalinist bureaucratic rule in August 1991, in the absence of any decisive intervention by the Soviet working class, led directly to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state. Imperialist publicists hailed this as the "death of communism," proclaiming final victory in the military, economic and propaganda war which the capitalist powers waged for most of this century against the Soviet Union. Yet, in the last few years, if any-

thing an even *greater* number of turgid tomes have been churned out with the aim of maligning the October Revolution and Bolshevik leaders Lenin and Trotsky.

By and large, the new barrage of imperialist propaganda takes off from the Cold War Big Lie that Stalinism—with its police-state repression and stul-

historically justified with a virtual flood of books and articles attacking the rationalist values of the Enlightenment. At the same time, from the multiracial upheaval in Los Angeles over the Rodney King case in 1992 to the massive strike wave in France last fall, the victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression have made it clear that they will not

capitalism is propelling humanity in a headlong rush toward high-tech barbarism, intent on wiping out every advance achieved by the working people through two centuries of struggle. More than ever, the future of humanity hinges on the re forging of Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution.



V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky (at center), co-leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution, on its second anniversary, 7 November 1919.

tifying censorship, its bureaucratic privilege and economic mismanagement—was the natural offspring of Leninism. This hoary myth willfully buries the fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy came to power through a *political counterrevolution* in 1923-24 which destroyed Lenin's Bolshevik Party. But now that Stalinism is discredited and deposed, *those who seek to exorcise the Russian Revolution from history are particularly aiming their fire at Trotsky*, who carried forward the fight for Lenin's internationalist program against the anti-revolutionary Kremlin bureaucracy.

And that is where Richard Pipes comes in. While crowing that they have "prevailed" in their decades-long effort to "roll back Communism," the imperialist rulers and mouthpieces like Pipes today seek to extirpate any memory of authentic communism. In the introduction to his latest book, *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), Pipes wrote: "All this now seems safely relegated to the past. Yet to prevent it from recurring, it is essential to know how such things happened." How "such things" happened, per Pipes, is that the working masses and oppressed were given far too free a rein to assert themselves—and he's not just talking about Russia in 1917! This fanatical counterrevolutionary wants to "roll back" even the great bourgeois-democratic French Revolution of 1789 and the Enlightenment which preceded it.

Richard Pipes is a fitting ideologue for the American imperialist bourgeoisie in this era. The destruction of the Soviet Union ushered in a period of all-sided capitalist reaction. The push for retrograde social policies has been

simply roll over and die because the racist rulers decree "the end of history." As the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) proclaimed in the face of rampant imperialist triumphalism: Stalinism is dead, but communism lives. We fight to build the revolutionary proletarian vanguard which can lead the struggles of the working people to victory.

Today, while the bourgeoisie in its decay disowns the rationalist and democratic aims it once espoused, and the dregs of Stalinism openly proclaim their allegiance to the stinking capitalist order, we Trotskyists stand out not only as the party of the Russian Revolution but the champions of the liberating goals of the French Revolution. In its death agony,

## Even Slander Should Make Some Sense

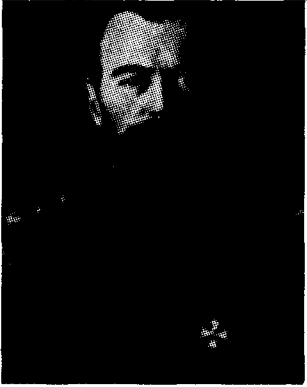
The workers state which issued from the Bolshevik Revolution was based on proletarian internationalism and soviet democracy, the rule of workers councils whose delegates were democratically elected by the workers themselves. But three years of civil war and imperialist strangulation devastated the economy and decimated the proletariat, particularly its most conscious layers, gutting the soviets while allowing the growth of a bureaucratic layer in the party and state apparatus. Not only the Bolshevik leaders, but the working masses as a whole, saw the key to survival of the soviet republic in the extension of socialist revolution abroad. However, numerous proletarian uprisings in Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and elsewhere were suppressed, due largely to the weakness and inexperience of the Communist parties there. The Bolshevik seizure of power, in contrast, was prepared by a years-long struggle which cohered a steeled cadre of professional revolutionaries.

Seizing on widespread demoralization following the defeat of a revolutionary opportunity in Germany in late 1923 and with Lenin on his deathbed, the bureaucracy—led by the "troika" of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev—asserted its control at the Thirteenth Party Conference in January 1924. Months later, the political program of this conservative layer was given expression, as Stalin and his then henchman Nikolai Bukharin proclaimed the anti-Marxist doctrine that international revolution was no longer an iron necessity, that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society presupposing a level of production far higher than that existing even in the most advanced capitalist countries—could be built in backward Russia alone. This was the Stalinist lie of "socialism in one country," which was



Stalin's prosecutor Vyshinsky (second from left) pushed vile slanders of Trotskyists at Moscow show trials in late 1930s to justify bloody purges.





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**Anti-communist fanatic Richard Pipes (top left) hails Edmund Burke (top right), reactionary opponent of 1789 French Revolution. Their idols, last Russian tsar, Nicholas II (bottom left) and Louis XVI, who was beheaded by French revolutionaries.**

propagated as Zinoviev and Kamenev were spinning off of the party leadership.

While Stalin claimed Lenin's mantle, Lenin's last political struggle was in fact waged—seeking a bloc with Trotsky—against Stalin and the nascent bureaucracy, particularly over manifestations of high-handed arrogance and Great Russian chauvinism as well as against Stalin's attack on the monopoly over foreign trade, a key economic bulwark of the isolated workers state (which Pipes dismisses as a "minor issue"). Thus, both in terms of its immediate prehistory and, more fundamentally, in its defense of the Bolshevik program of revolutionary internationalism, the Left Opposition of Trotsky carried on the struggle for Leninism against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Pipes' monstrous smear to the contrary, in every public utterance on the question, Trotsky made clear his Marxist opposition to individual terrorism as a means of removing Stalin. For example, writing on the 1934 assassination of Leningrad party leader Sergei Kirov, which provided the justification for the bloody purges (and is now widely accepted to have been ordered by Stalin himself), Trotsky explained: "Individual terrorism is in its very essence bureaucratism turned inside out.... Bureaucratism has no confidence in the masses and endeavors to substitute itself for the masses. Terrorism works in the same manner" ("The Stalinist Bureaucracy and the Kirov Assassination," December 1934).

This is the heart of the matter. As Trotsky wrote in *Their Morals and Ours*, addressing the bourgeois hobbyhorse that communists resort to any means, no matter how vile and violent, to suit their ends: "When we say that the end justifies the means, then for us the conclusion follows that the great revolutionary end spurns those base means and ways which set one part of the working class against other parts, or attempt to make the masses happy without their participation; or lower the faith of the masses in themselves and their organization, replacing it by worship for the 'leaders'." The assassination of Stalin in and of itself would not have served Trotsky's end, which was to oust the Soviet bureaucracy as a whole, to restore political power to the Soviet working class and to further the ability of the international proletariat to fight for socialist revolution. Individual terror as a weapon against Stalin and the bureaucracy was counterposed to the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition's entire perspective, which looked to the revolutionary mobilization of the masses to defend the socialized foundations of the workers state and to extend them internationally.

This understanding informed Trotsky's attitude toward every question. Thus, in the late 1920s Trotsky opposed a "left-right" bloc with Bukharin—

whose conciliation of the peasantry opened the door to capitalist restoration—and argued against the slogan "Down with Stalin," raised by a group of former Right Oppositionists in 1932, because such a call could appeal as well to the forces of counterrevolution. Until 1933, the Left Opposition fought to remove Stalin and his gang by winning the membership of the Soviet Communist Party back to the program of Leninism; when it became clear, following Hitler's unchallenged rise to power in 1933, that the CPSU had become nothing more than "an apparatus of domination in the hands of an uncontrolled bureaucracy," Trotsky raised the call for a new party to lead a proletarian political revolution to oust the Kremlin oligarchy.

### The Pipes School of Falsification

Yet Pipes insists that Trotsky and Sedov "frequently said and wrote" that Stalin should be assassinated. While presenting not so much as a shred of evidence, Pipes insinuates that this is substantiated by "documents cited by Volkogonov," who as director of the Military History Institute under Gorbachev had unique access to the Soviet archives. Anyone in the U.S. who has reviewed their own FBI files under the Freedom of Information Act knows that "revelations" found in secret police files have to be taken with a huge grain of salt. And given the prevailing economic

chaos and deprivation in the former Soviet Union, it is possible these days to hire virtually anyone from among the disaffected intelligentsia to write anything—and find "supporting evidence" for it in the archives.

Yet even Volkogonov offers nothing to support Pipes' outlandish assertions. Volkogonov cites two secret police reports by the notorious Stalinist agent Mark Zborowski—who infiltrated the Paris headquarters of the Left Opposition and became an assistant to Sedov—claiming that Trotsky's son called for Stalin's assassination. Volkogonov himself does not give much credence to either of them. Of the first, dated 8 February 1937, he writes: "Possibly the report was a fabrication designed to add fuel to the prosecution's arguments at the forthcoming trial." Yet, as Volkogonov notes, this supposedly inflammatory "evidence" was never even used in the Moscow show trials. Zborowski's second report, dated February 1938, claimed that Sedov had repeatedly (but not "since 1936") "stressed that the murder of Comrade Stalin was necessary." Speculating that this too was either an outright fabrication, or that "Zborowski was simply fantasizing" or that Sedov might even have "become obsessed by the idea of murdering Stalin," Volkogonov concludes: "Whatever the explanation, there is not a single shred of evidence that the Trotskyists carried out or prepared for any high-profile act of terrorism."

Volkogonov dismisses two other, equally spurious pieces of archival "evidence" on this question. Referring to a January 1938 report by the Soviet embassy in Washington, D.C., purportedly quoting a speech in which Trotsky said that the only way to replace Stalin is "by murdering him," Volkogonov comments bluntly: "Trotsky had said nothing of the kind." Finally, Volkogonov refers to a 19 November 1935 report about a letter supposedly written by a Trotsky supporter:

"The letter, which contained a proposal 'to kill Stalin,' was seen by the Trotskyists as a blatant provocation. The myth of an attempt by the Trotskyists on Stalin's life provided a satisfactory justification not only for the mass terror in Russia, but also for the activities of the Foreign Section of the NKVD abroad."

These "activities" included the murders of Trotsky, Sedov and their closest supporters. In fact, Trotsky's assassin, an NKVD agent named Ramon Mercader who had wormed his way into the Bolshevik leader's household in Mexico City, claimed he perpetrated the murder because Trotsky had planned to liquidate



V. Deni and M. Cheremnykh

**1920 Soviet poster depicts Bolshevik aim of world revolution: Lenin sweeps away capitalists, royalty and clerical reaction.**

Stalin. From Mercader's lips to Pipes' ears!

It's just as well for Pipes that honesty is not one of the requirements for tenure in Harvard's hallowed halls. Pipes' own writings are positively littered with lies. In his *Concise History*, Pipes writes, for example, that Feliks Dzerzhinsky, the first head of the Cheka, was motivated by a hatred of Russians "in the spirit of Polish nationalism." In fact, Dzerzhinsky's entire political career prior to 1917 was spent as a leading cadre and organizer of Rosa Luxemburg and Leo Jogiches' SDKPiL, which was so hostile to Polish nationalism that it even wrongly opposed Poland's right to independence. Pipes also asserts that American Communist John Reed "joined the Comintern but soon quit, disenchanted with its authoritarian practices." Even someone who has seen the Hollywood film *Reds* knows this to be a lie: Reed remained a Communist until his death in 1920 and was buried with full honors in the Kremlin.

A truly breathtaking example of the Pipes school of falsification is his charge that the Bolsheviks were no better—or even worse—than the tsarist White Guards when it came to anti-Semitism, and that the "only prominent figure" in Russia to condemn the 1919 Ukrainian pogroms "outright and unequivocally was the head of the Orthodox Church." Even the most hard-bitten anti-Communist Zionist would laugh at this. The Russian Orthodox hierarchy was and always has been a spearhead of anti-Semitic agitation. As we detail in our article, "Revolution, Counterrevolution and the Jewish Question" (*Spartacist* No. 49-50, Winter 1993-94), the Jewish masses flocked to Bolshevism precisely because it was the only force which fought against the Ukrainian nationalist and White Guard pogromists. Where the rules of Trotsky's Fourth International insist on the need "to be true in little things as in big ones," Pipes' apparent rule of thumb is to lie about all things concerning the Russian Revolution.

### Trotsky and the Spectre of Revolution

Pipes is not the first anti-Communist to regurgitate Stalinist lies about Trotsky. In the 1930s, when Trotsky was still alive and seen as a palpable threat by the imperialist rulers, numerous bourgeois commentators acted as apologists for Stalin. *New York Times* Moscow correspondent Walter Duranty and U.S. ambassador Joseph E. Davies were among the prominent bourgeois figures who, as Trotsky put it, "assayed the Moscow trials as unalloyed gold." The conservative Kremlin *vozhd* (leader) was, after all, seen as a "reasonable" alternative to the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition. Stalin's support to "democratic" imperialism via the so-called "People's Front" and his brutal suppression of the 1936-38 Spanish

continued on page 10



May Day 1917: Revolutionary workers march through Petrograd with banner reading, "Arm the People! Long Live the International!"

Planeta

# Pipes...

(continued from page 9)

workers revolution more than amply vindicated Trotsky's characterization of him as the "gravedigger of revolution." Indeed, in a 1936 interview with American journalist Roy Howard, Stalin explicitly disavowed the early Communist International's aim of world socialist revolution as a "misunderstanding" (see Trotsky, "The Stalin-Howard Interview," March 1936).

Today as then, Trotsky is singled out for opprobrium and slander precisely because he remained "the eternal revolutionary"—at war not only with the entire capitalist order but with the Stalinist police-state perversion of the Bolshevik Revolution—an object lesson in the supposed futility and evil of revolutionary struggle. In his introduction, Volkogonov writes:

"To the end of his life, Trotsky did not see that many of the fundamental tenets of Marxism, which he never doubted, were profoundly wrong. But it was precisely the false ideas of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of class war that lay at the root of the future tragedy, and it was the process of making these postulates into immutable principles, to which Trotsky remained faithful all his life, that led the country to its historic failure. A political portrait of Trotsky, therefore, is also an account of the fate of freedom in Russia, without doubt a tragic story."

For Volkogonov, Pipes, et al., there is nothing tragic about the millions of working people throughout the former Soviet Union who are today on the brink of starvation as a result of capitalist counterrevolution, nor about the countless people slaughtered in nationalist bloodletting and in Yeltsin's brutal invasion of Chechnya. In the eyes of the apologists for imperialist reaction, the only "tragedy" is that the working class managed to seize power from their rapacious capitalist overlords in 1917—and the bourgeois rulers intend to prevent a repeat of workers revolution at any price.

Pipes and Volkogonov both work off a template etched out years earlier, most notably by British Cold War historian Leonard Schapiro, that Lenin's Bolsheviks were a gang of power-mad fanatics



Left Opposition leaders in Russia, with Trotsky at center, 1927. First issue of James P. Cannon's *Militant*, 1928, announced support for Trotsky's fight for revolutionary internationalism, against Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration.

in Volkogonov's words.

Volkogonov's own contribution to this arsenal of counterrevolutionary literature is to add a voice of "authenticity," less for his knowledge of the Soviet archives than as a former "Communist" turned anti-Communist, serving a purpose similar to the "god that failed" diatribes by embittered ex-Stalinists in the 1950s. Already in 1988, when the Gorbachevite intelligentsia was promoting Bukharin as the real alternative to Stalin, Volkogonov denounced Trotsky as "the dictator who never was" (see "Trotsky and the Gorbachev School of Falsification," *WV* Nos. 464 and 466, 4 November and 2 December 1988).

Contrasting the powerful three-volume biography of Trotsky written by Polish Marxist historian Isaac Deutscher in the 1950s and '60s with Volkogonov's book, writes Daniel Singer in a trenchant review in the *Nation* (25 March), is "like reading Proust in the original and then in comic-strip form." Volkogonov's assessment of the Left Opposition's defeat—that "the functionaries and Party members preferred to give their allegiance to successful leaders, and Trotsky

dress the profound questions of international strategy which rent the revolutionary workers movement in the 1920s and '30s. He devotes barely two pages to a slipshod presentation of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, two paragraphs to a garbled account of the Left Opposition's fight against Stalin's disastrous capitulation to Chiang Kai-shek in China in the 1920s, and not a word to the 1926 British General Strike, when Stalin annulled the sellout policies of the Labourite Trades Union Congress misleaders. Volkogonov denies the real "tragedy," in his words, of the Bolshevik Revolution—its betrayal and undermining by Stalin and his heirs.

To seriously take up the very real prospects which existed for extending the October Revolution would fly in the face of Volkogonov's philistine dismissal of Trotsky's fight for world socialist revolution as at best a "mirage," a "false prophesy." This reflects Volkogonov's own schooling in the Stalinist-nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country." And, as his evolution shows, it is not much of a political leap from opposing the spread of revolution in the name of "socialism in one country" to opposing "socialism" even in Russia from the standpoint of capitalist reaction.

## Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Enlightenment

But even Volkogonov's repeated anti-Bolshevik diatribes are too tame for Pipes, who chastises him for not being able to "quite rid himself of sympathy for Communist ideals" (*New York Times*, 24 March). As evidence, Pipes offers the following statement by Volkogonov: "The search for a system in which the people exercise real power and where humanism and justice prevail does not have to end because it failed universally in its 20th-century Communist guise." For the likes of a Richard Pipes, even this tepid exposition of 18th-century liberalism is "pinko," "com-symp" talk. To be consistently counterrevolutionary, argues Pipes, it is necessary to root out even the rationalist ideals of the Enlightenment. In *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution*, Pipes rants:

"Communism failed because it proceeded from the erroneous doctrine of the Enlightenment, perhaps the most pernicious idea in the history of thought, that man is merely a material compound, devoid of either soul or innate ideas."

Once again, Pipes' thinking is hardly original. Early on in the Cold War, liberal Israeli philosopher J.L. Talmon characterized Bolshevism as a "totalitarianism of the left" derived from Jacobinism, the radical-democratic wing of the French Revolution. In his book, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (Norton, 1970), Talmon argued that "the history of the last hundred and fifty years looks like

a systematic preparation for the headlong collision between empirical and liberal democracy on the one hand, and totalitarian Messianic democracy on the other." But Talmon conceded that "the starting-point of totalitarianism of the Left has been and ultimately still is man, his reason and salvation," and thus it has "the character of a universal creed, a tendency which totalitarianism of the Right altogether lacks." Writing in the shadow of the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust, he was at least compelled to distinguish between Communism and fascism.

Not so Richard Pipes, who criticizes Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* for attaching "exaggerated importance...to anti-Semitism as an attribute of totalitarianism." Pipes repeatedly and grotesquely equates Lenin with Mussolini and Bolshevism with Nazism. He even tries to blame the Holocaust on the Russian Revolution (albeit as an "unanticipated and unintended" consequence)! In a truly demented amalgam, he rails that "Lenin hated whomever he perceived as the 'bourgeoisie' with a destructive passion that fully equaled Hitler's hatred of the Jews." But for Pipes, Hitler was clearly the "lesser evil"! "Only Bolshevik Russia at the height of Stalinism qualifies as a fully developed totalitarian state," he lectures, because "Neither the Fascists nor the Nazis destroyed their respective social structures"—i.e., they maintained capitalism. Such rantings led liberal British journalist Jonathan Steele to observe that, now that his "enemy is a corpse," Pipes has gone from "history as polemic" to "history as tirade" (*Guardian Weekly*, 21 January).

In fact, Pipes' arguments are a carbon copy of German "revisionist" historians like Ernst Nolte in the so-called *Historikerstreit*, who seek to justify the Nazi regime as the last bulwark of "Western civilization" against the "Bolshevik hordes." Thus in his first "revisionist" piece, in 1980, Nolte writes: "Auschwitz is not primarily a result of traditional anti-Semitism and was not just one more case of 'genocide.' It was the fear-borne reaction to the acts of annihilation that took place during the Russian Revolution" (*Forever in the Shadow of Hitler?* [Humanities Press, 1993]). But Pipes is not just some crackpot right-wing academic. Born into a wealthy Jewish family in Poland, Pipes parlayed his hatred for communism and Russia into a career at the most sinister levels of the U.S. government. His job at Harvard was pretty much a sideline to his real work braintrusting U.S. imperialism's drive to eradicate the Soviet Union. A *Boston Globe* (18 May 1991) article described Pipes as a "lifelong Cold Warrior" who was "the brains behind Ronald Reagan's 'evil empire' doctrine."

In 1976, Pipes was chairman of the CIA's "Team B," which justified an American nuclear first strike by claiming that the USSR was striving for strategic superiority. Five years later, he served as head of East European and Soviet Affairs in Reagan's National Security Council. His attacks on the Enlightenment as the "original sin" of communism



Reuters

Anti-Trotsky "biographer" Dmitri Volkogonov (above) was Yeltsin's military adviser during bloody assault on Russian parliament in October 1993.

intent from the outset on creating a one-party tyranny (see "Leonard Schapiro: Lawyer for Counterrevolution," *Spartacist* No. 43-44, Summer 1989). This falsification of history is woven from lies, half-truths and deliberate obfuscations, willfully confusing, for example, the "dictatorship of the proletariat"—the Marxist terminology for the class rule of the workers, as opposed to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie which exists in even the most "democratic" capitalist society—with a dictatorial form of government. They paint the struggle between Trotsky and Stalin as a power feud between two personally ambitious politicians, both "typical Bolsheviks, obsessed with violence, dictatorship and coercion,"

came across in the political battle as a loser"—sheds little light on the situation inside the CPSU in the 1920s but says much about the outlook of its author. Volkogonov was the quintessential bureaucratic careerist: a loyal Brezhnevite under Brezhnev, an advocate of pro-capitalist "market reforms" under Gorbachev and, finally, a key aide to Boris Yeltsin in the new counterrevolutionary regime. As Yeltsin's "military adviser," Volkogonov oversaw the would-be tsar's bloody tank and artillery assault on the Russian parliament in October 1993, which killed hundreds of people. So who is "obsessed with violence, dictatorship and coercion"?

Volkogonov cannot and does not ad-

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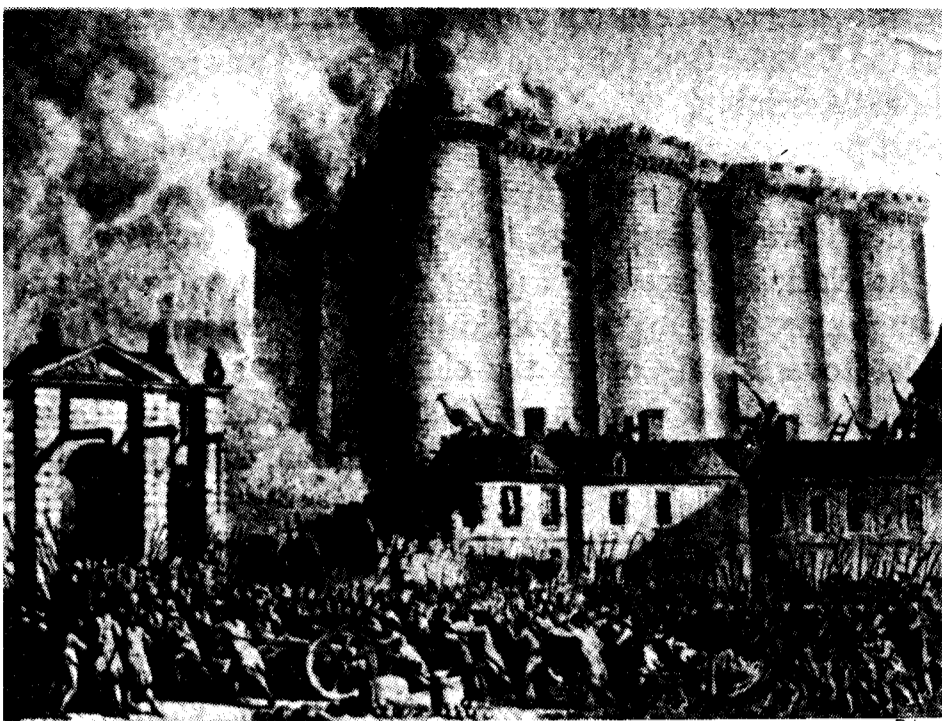


were given flesh and blood by the CIA's support for the Vatican-inspired Solidarność in Poland and the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. He has been an Executive Committee member of the "Committee on the Present Danger" since 1977 and seems to have a seat on the boards of virtually every "intelligence review" and right-wing "think tank" in the country.

Not all "post-Communist" imperialist ideologues share Pipes' venom for the Enlightenment. Francis Fukuyama, the State Department planner who proclaimed that the West's triumph over the USSR represented "the end of history," for example, foresees a universal evolution toward liberal capitalist democracy based on "the principles of liberty and equality" which "animated the French and American revolutions" (Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* [Free Press, 1992]). Fukuyama sees in the French Revolution the ascendance of the bourgeoisie to power and the institutionalization of bourgeois property rights, whereas Pipes sees in it the uprising of the plebeian masses, the *sans-culottes*, and the spectre of radical social upheaval. The bicentennial of the French Revolution in 1989 was marked by an outpouring of "revisionist" denunciations of this key liberating event (see "In Defense of the French Revolution," WV Nos. 484 and 486, 1 and 29 September 1989).

But the difference between Fukuyama and Pipes is not primarily a matter of differing interpretations of French history. Rather, what is at issue is different policies for the American ruling class here and now. The "death of communism" has only made Pipes and his ilk salivate for "rolling back" the entire liberal and humanist political tradition. His *Concise History* and the two volumes of which it is a distillation, *The Russian Revolution* (1990) and *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime* (1993), seethe with contempt not only for the socialist aims of the working class but for the rationalist and democratic ideals of the early bourgeoisie. Pipes solidarizes with Hippolyte Taine and Edmund Burke—whose reactionary rantings against the French Revolution were inspired by aristocratic contempt for "the mob." Pipes praises "the genius of Burke" for condemning the destruction of "existing institutions," i.e., the decadent French monarchy.

Pipes attacks the French *philosophes* for laying the ideological basis for Robespierre's terror. In fact, some of the most



Paris masses storm the Bastille, 14 July 1789. Pipes denounces French Revolution and rationalist Enlightenment.

prominent *philosophes*, like Voltaire, were not democrats, much less Jacobins, but rather argued for an "enlightened despotism." Pipes evidently prefers *unenlightened* despotism, like the "relatively benign" dictatorships of Pilsudski's Poland and Salazar's Portugal. He dismisses any thought that the downtrodden Russian peasantry saw serfdom "as an intolerable injustice" while devoting a whole chapter in *The Russian Revolution* to the Bolsheviks' "regicide" of the brutal, blood-drenched tsarist royal family—an act which, he rants, meant "crossing the threshold of genocide"!

Pipes longs for "the sixteenth century, before science had overwhelmed both religion and the philosophy of humanism." He castigates the idea "that man is not a unique creature endowed with an immortal soul." He rails at Alexandra Kollontai for her "unconstrained sexual license." He fumes that Trotsky's depiction, in *Literature and Revolution*, of the heights to which humanity will rise in a truly communist, classless society shows that Marxists "aimed at nothing less than reenacting the Sixth Day of Creation and perfecting its flawed product." He fulminates against a Bolshevik decree separating church and state and denounces another mandating "open admissions" to education, recalling that this was also "advocated by some American radicals in the 1960s."

"Sexual license," separation of church and state, open admissions? Richard Pipes is not a scholar of history, but an ideologue for the agenda of the far right. Abroad, U.S. imperialism does not much care whether its client states practice liberal democracy or authoritarian despotism, so long as they remain "safe" for exploitation. Domestically, Pipes' "historical" ravings fit right in with the reactionary onslaught against abortion rights and the drive to dismantle even the most minimal social welfare measures in the name of opposition to governmental "social engineering." It is a measure of the times that Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia, supposedly charged with safeguarding the Constitution and its mandate for separation of church and state, publicly vituperates against the "worldly wise" who "will not have anything to do with miracles" and "do not believe in the resurrection of the dead."

#### Materialism vs. Obscurantism

Fevered attacks on the Enlightenment are never solely the domain of the far right these days. British Labourite Robin Blick traces the "seeds of evil" to Enlightenment radical Jean-Jacques Rousseau, denouncing "Rousseau's disciples and Lenin's mentors, the Jacobins" (see "Robin Blick: Menshevik Dementia," *Spartacist* No. 49-50, Winter 1993-94). And the supposedly liberal leader of Czechoslovakia's "velvet" counter-

revolution, playwright/president Vaclav Havel, declared that "the end of Communism...has brought an end not just to the 19th and 20th centuries, but to the modern era as a whole...an era of belief in automatic progress brokered by the scientific method" (*New York Times*, 1 March 1992).

Havel's sneering dismissal of the scientific method aside, human progress has been far from automatic. Indeed, as Karl Marx noted, only with socialism "will human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain" ("The Future Results of British Rule in India," July 1853). As the *Communist Manifesto* explained almost 150 years ago, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." But ideologues of counter-revolution like Pipes believe that if they can exterminate communist ideas, they will thereby wipe out the movements of the exploited and oppressed for emancipation and social justice. Against such reactionaries, Lenin wrote in "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism" (March 1913):

"The enemies of democracy have, therefore, always exerted all their efforts to 'refute,' undermine and defame materialism, and have advocated various forms of philosophical idealism, which always, in one way or another, amounts to the defence or support of religion....

"Just as man's knowledge reflects nature (i.e., developing matter), which exists independently of him, so man's *social knowledge* (i.e., his various views and doctrines—philosophical, religious, political and so forth) reflects the *economic system* of society."

Enlightenment rationalism was the ideological expression of the struggle of the nascent, and then revolutionary, capitalist class to destroy the feudal barriers to capitalist development. Similarly, Marxism—scientific socialism—is the expression of the historic interests of the

proletariat, the only revolutionary class in modern capitalism, to break the fetters of the outmoded and decaying capitalist mode of production—constrained by the bourgeois nation-state—and replace it with the international collectivization of the means of production. Reflecting the retrograde character of its class rule, the bourgeoisie today embraces the reactionary outlook it once combated.

Approaching the 21st century, a considerable sector of the imperialist ruling class seems prepared for a leap back to the social thinking of the 16th century. And what were the ancestors of Richard Pipes and his fellow vicarious lords doing in the "glorious" pre-Enlightenment period before "science overwhelmed religion"? They were serfs slaving in the fields or Jews locked up in the ghettos, consigned to a life of unremitting toil and nasty oppression.

Of course, capitalist imperialism is not about to return to the Middle Ages. Rather, what is being promulgated is an ideological justification for regimenting the population and reversing a whole array of social welfare measures achieved by working people and minorities in the postwar era. The destruction of the Soviet Union has led to an intensification of inter-imperialist rivalry. Accompanying this is an intensified drive by the competing capitalist ruling classes to force down wages and eliminate the so-called "welfare state." As always, the first target of such attacks are minorities—in the U.S., primarily black and Hispanic people; in West Europe, dark-skinned immigrants. Thus, there has been a sharp rise in racist reaction and national chauvinism in the past few years.

The continued existence of capitalism can only lead to yet another world war—this time likely ending in the nuclear annihilation of civilization—as the imperialist powers scramble to redivide their spheres of influence. At the same time, a new generation of youth, unencumbered by the baggage of Stalinism, is moving into struggle against the horrors and racist injustices of capitalist imperialism. To fight for a decent future, they must learn from the lessons of the past, particularly of the greatest victory for the working class and human progress to date, the Bolshevik Revolution. And the key lesson is the need for intransigent Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties as sections of a reformed Fourth International. As we wrote in an earlier article (*Spartacist* No. 49-50, Winter 1993-94):

"In its accelerating slide into decadence, imperialism has not only succeeded in destroying the socialist gains of the Russian Revolution, but ever more aggressively assaults the democratic conquests of the French Revolution.... Today, the Trotskyists stand not only as the true heirs and continuators of Bolshevism, bearing a program to gain proletarian state power and free humanity from the miseries of racism, war, colonial oppression and capitalist exploitation, but also as the defenders of the rational and universalist values of the Enlightenment and the gains achieved in centuries past by the bourgeoisie's victory over feudalism." ■



Monument outside Kremlin Wall erected after Bolshevik Revolution to honor previous generations of revolutionaries.

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# Mexico...

(continued from page 1)

the alleged Zapatistas Javier Elorriaga and Sebastián Entzin, it was sending a clear message intended to intimidate all those who want to fight to change the misery, exploitation and racism of the current world served up by capitalism. This is a message of state terror directed especially to the organizations of the working class and against the youth. This same state terror was brutally carried out on May 23 against the teachers in Mexico City. The Spartacists say: Freedom now for Elorriaga, Entzin, and all the alleged Zapatistas! Freedom now for the SUTAUER eleven! Stop the repression!

Workers here do not need a lot of examples to demonstrate the havoc wreaked on their standard of living by the brutal economic offensive of capital and the imperialist plunder of NAFTA, nor to be shown how the misery of the countryside pushes millions of peasants and indigenous peoples into desperation

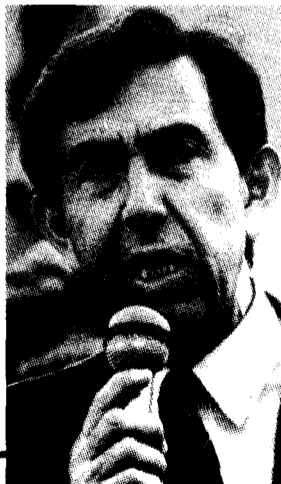
## ESPARTACO

Newspaper of the  
Grupo Espartaquista de México

and death by starvation. They have known these things for a long time and are fed up! As Lenin taught, the main aim of a revolutionary Marxist party is not to merely detail grievances and describe the difficulties and anxieties of the everyday life of the working class. Its objective is to organize the vanguard of the working class, through revolutionary propaganda, to lead the proletarian revolution to overthrow the state power of the capitalist class—to lead a victorious socialist revolution that will organize the resources of society and productive labor for the benefit of humanity and not the enrichment of the capitalists.



Zapatista supporters march on International Women's Day in Chiapas. Petty-bourgeois Zapatista movement seeks to be radical face of bourgeois-populist PRD of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas.



Dorantes/Syigma

From the combative strikes of Cananea, Sicartsa, Ford, Volkswagen, and SUTAUER to the indigenous rebellion in Chiapas, we have seen in the last few years unceasing attempts—many of them heroic—by the oppressed to fight against the exploitation of the capitalist system and the calamities it generates. The burning question is why those defensive struggles of the working class in Mexico and the rest of the world have not been able to halt the bourgeoisie's repressive assaults and its economic offensive. The answer lies completely in the role played by the current political leadership—traitorous, opportunist and anti-proletarian—foisted on the backs of the working class.

With the collapse of Stalinism, the counterrevolutionary destruction of the

### Spartacists protest outside Mexican consulate in New York City against bloody army repression in Chiapas, 1994.



Soviet Union and the imperialists' noisy, triumphalist "death of communism" campaign, pseudo-leftist groups in Latin America have completely embraced the old Menshevik and social-democratic program of the "democratic revolution." The task now, they say, is not the struggle to place the working class in power, but to share power with the bourgeoisie and to seek democratic "posts" in state institutions. This policy has been recognized within the workers movement over the last century as *reformism*: not to fight for the historical objectives of the working class but to be content with crumbs from the table of the bourgeoisie.

In fact, the last period has seen a wave of social discontent and popular anger throughout Latin America's principal cities against the International Monetary Fund's plans. In Europe, the French workers strike, even with its traitorous leadership, taught their arrogant rulers a lesson. In Mexico, there are protests and mobilizations almost every day. This past May Day, for example, witnessed a demonstration so huge that it took several hours to pour into and occupy the *Zócalo*. That human tide epitomized the spirit and will to fight on the part of millions of workers who await the oppor-

fundamental pillar holding up the ruling PRI regime in recent decades. This was the legacy that General Lázaro Cárdenas, with the help of the Stalinist Mexican Communist Party, bequeathed to future bourgeois governments to keep the working class in chains.

This corporatist pillar is rapidly fracturing, and the most prominent split—although not the only one—is the faction of the 21 "forista" unions, led by the "neo-charro" bureaucracy headed by Hernandez Juarez of the telephone workers union and Elba Ester Gordillo of the teachers union. These "neo-charros" have long since sensed the crisis which the plans of the IMF would cause for the big bureaucratic confederations, whose enormous power was based on their stranglehold over important sections of the unionized working class. Now these "neo-charros" seek with their "independence" and more radical and demagogic language to better betray their own unions; they fight for a form of "free unionism" more in accord with neo-liberal monetarist plans which seek the destruction of all the social gains won by the working class through great struggles.

The volatile situation is demonstrated by the May Day march and the mobilizations that have followed it, by the brutal repression of the Mexico City teachers, as well as by the dirty war waged by the army and paramilitary groups against peasants in Guerrero and the indigenous people of Chiapas. The powers-that-be rely on the absence of a genuinely revolutionary party of the working class, which would give leadership and a socialist, working-class program to all the mobilized workers, the peasant masses and the indigenous peoples who can no longer tolerate the situation. But as recent events demonstrate, the working class continues to be subordinated to the "charro" and "neo-charro" bureaucracy as well as to the bourgeois politicians of the opposition PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution).

### The Zapatista Front: Cardenism with a Radical Mask

This January, the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army) issued its "Fourth Declaration of the Lacandon Forest," announcing its transformation into a Zapatista National Liberation Front (FZLN). The declaration calls on "various forces and citizens to build a broad opposition front that unites the democratic will against the state-party system: the National Liberation Movement" (*La Jornada*, 2 January). The announcement of its gradual transformation from an armed group into a "civil and peaceful organization" was hailed by the main bourgeois parties (the PRI, the right-wing PAN and the bourgeois-populist PRD) with the expected reservations and greeted with jubilation by almost the entire spectrum of leftist and pseudo-Marxist organizations that politically tail the PRD.

In the early days of January 1994, when the government threatened a bloodbath against the uprising, the Spartacists were the first to demand "Stop

the massacre! Army out of Chiapas!" We hailed the heroic Chiapas insurgents "with the red flag of the world proletarian revolution," while pointing out the central importance of the working class—with its organized social power—forcefully entering the arena of struggle. We said at the time: "It is clear that the uprising in Chiapas can be a spark that animates the oppressed and extends to the heavy battalions of the working class, generating a class battle with revolutionary perspectives. The question of questions is program and leadership" (*Espartaco* No. 5, Spring 1994).

Because of its social composition, its petty-bourgeois nationalist program and its method of guerrilla struggle—alien to the organization and struggles of the working class—the EZLN does not represent (nor does it claim to represent) the revolutionary socialist leadership that the proletariat urgently needs in order to struggle successfully against capital. For the very same reason, neither can it win a military war against the bourgeois state. For its own survival, the Chiapas insurrection urgently requires the combative mobilization of detachments of the urban proletariat in order to check the repressive machinery of the capitalist state. No paper agreement will be able to hold back the repressive forces of the state and its dogs of war when they go into action. The Mexican proletariat must embody the old working-class principle that "an injury to one is an injury to all" and urgently mobilize in solidarity with the indigenous uprising in Chiapas!

The fundamental point is that the only realistic way forward for the struggles of the impoverished peasants and indigenous peoples in a semicolonial country like Mexico, marked by its dependence on and economic and political oppression by imperialist capital, is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. This is a program for a revolution where the industrial working class mobilizes its powerful social muscle and leads a revolutionary alliance with the millions of oppressed in the countryside as part of a socialist revolution throughout the American continent. Only socialist revolution can offer a future and point the way forward for the struggle of the oppressed and exploited in the countryside.

In the present epoch, there is no "third road" of "democratic" revolution (whether labeled "anti-PRI" or whatever) which does not point to future frustration and a terrible defeat for the masses. The Nicaraguan revolution is a case in point. When the Sandinistas brought down the murderous Somoza dictatorship in 1979, they refused—because of their petty-bourgeois program—to take the road of expropriation of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. Instead, they fought for a "mixed economy" which only meant years of hardship and misery for the masses. The bourgeoisie wrested power away from them through a miserable electoral defeat which transformed the Sandinista guerrillas into the current servants and guardians of the lands and capital of Nicaraguan president Chamorro & Co. This same perspective has brought all the guerrilla groups into profound crisis, which, like the Colombian M-19 or the Salvadoran Farabundo Martí group, have ended up entering the same bourgeois state institutions against which they once took up arms.

Now, as in 1988 with the emergence of the National Democratic Front (FDN) of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, writers and journalists of the old nationalist left, along with a whole gamut of pseudo-socialist and pseudo-Trotskyist organizations which also bought the lie of the "death of communism," have spilled untold amounts of ink to paint the FZLN as a unique alternative—novel and fresh, both organizationally and ideologically—that offers new hope in the face of increasing misery and repression by the PRI government. Special mention here is merited by the magazine



Ruben R. Ramirez

**Left: February 1995 strike at RCA Thomson plant in Ciudad Juarez. Maquiladora workers' combativity is fueled by poverty-level wages, miserable living conditions.**



Dunleavy/Maryknoll

*Viento del Sur* (South Wind)—made up of a bunch of intellectuals (ex-Posadistas, ex-Mandelites, ex-Morenoites, etc.) frustrated and disillusioned by Cardenism. Now, following the same petty-bourgeois impressionist method which led them to join the FDN in droves in 1988, they seek to give the PRD a more radical face.

With its Fourth Declaration, as well as its previous calls for the formation of the National Democratic Convention and the National Liberation Movement, the EZLN has given the PRD a new pat on the back and impetus to its old plan to resurrect the National Liberation Movement (MLN) founded by General Lázaro Cárdenas. The EZLN's disastrous and fatal opposition to the political independence of the working class is known in the Marxist movement as the popular

for the formation of the Convención Nacional Democrática (CND), thus deciding to set aside the strategy of armed struggle and discouraging, or rather warding off, new revolts that were already hatching in different parts of the country." Any unprepared reader might think that the exalted Morenoites of the POS-Z have been hardened supporters of the guerrilla struggle. Not at all—this is only a new Morenoite trick to hide their own opportunist appetites and their scandalous history of parliamentary cretinism and rotten deals.

Far from raising the Marxist criticism of the method of guerrilla warfare, as a petty-bourgeois method alien to the working class, the Morenoites of the POS-Z "discover" that it is the abandonment of guns—and not the Zapatistas' nationalist petty-bourgeois program—which has led the EZLN to capitulate to the bourgeoisie and its state. With this they try to hide their own political capitulation to the Cardenista popular front, exemplified by their innumerable appeals to Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas to struggle against the foreign debt or to lead mobilizations. Now we see the POS-Z Morenoites distributing a ridiculous and cowardly flyer on May Day calling for the workers to cover their ears (!) when Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas got up to speak. They say: "The POS-Z calls on the workers, in a peaceful and orderly way, to reject Cárdenas' speech in the Zócalo—simply do not listen to him and leave the meeting, or don't applaud." What a show of petty-bourgeois cowardice!

We see the height of their opportunism in the same issue of their paper, where despite their belief that the FZLN, adhering to a "strategy of a government for reforming the regime" and a bloc where "workers and their exploiters are able to unite," they say: "Regarding the FZLN, the POS-Z, without entering into it, will seek accord with this front on those issues where agreement exists, principally in those actions which favor the working class" (*El Socialista*, No. 213). Yet, while sitting in cafés criticizing the EZLN for their call to join the Zapatista front (but not for its popular-frontist program), they still want to hold onto their invitation to appear in the next photo-op with EZLN spokesman Subcomandante Marcos. This has nothing to do with the principle of Trotsky's Fourth International: to always speak the truth, no matter how bitter, and to call things by their name.

#### **Militant Group: "Marxist" Kangaroos**

While the Morenoites of the POS-Z juggle "orthodox" Marxist language in an attempt to justify their capitulation to the radical face of the Cardenista popular front, the pseudo-Marxists of the Militant group (known for selling little PRD flags at demonstrations) simply and plainly entered the bourgeois PRD. Their crude justification, typical of opportunists, was that "we must be where the masses are." The Militant group over and over again tramples on the basic princi-

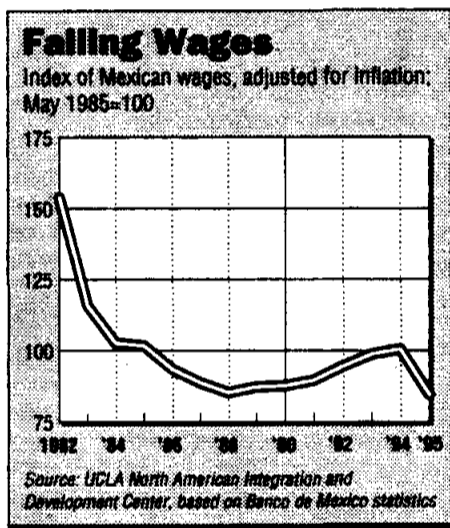
ple of Marxism and Leninism: the political independence of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard.

Now, as "compañeros" of PRD founders Cárdenas and Muños Ledo and as supporters of former PRIista López Obrador in the current internal fight for the leadership of the PRD, these pseudo-Marxists put forward a call in their newspaper saying: "The PRD and the FZLN must struggle to transform the unions" (*Militante*, March/April 1996). In other words, they call on a bourgeois party and a popular-frontist guerrilla organization to do what is the job of the working class alone. This is not an accidental political position, since this group and the international current to which it belongs (the Militant tendency) have always acted as a tail within reformist parties like the British Labour Party or the Spanish PSOE. Just like newborn kangaroos, these fake-Trotskyists have always sought to lodge themselves within the pouch of other reformist parties, enemies of the working class.

In a really dirty and blatant act of intellectual plagiarism and misrepresentation, in the *Militante* of March-April 1996, these pseudo-Marxists "killed" whole paragraphs of one of Trotsky's classic writings on the trade unions in order to justify their politics of betrayal and capitulation, which are in total opposition to the basic Trotskyist and Leninist conception of the revolutionary party and the working class.

The Trotskyists of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM) fight to educate the working class in the central importance of the revolution as the sole weapon for victory over the bourgeoisie in the class struggle. That is why we are committed as a Leninist organization to exposing the currents which abuse the name of Marxism by capitulating to forces hostile to the proletariat. The present situation opens up big opportunities for the working class to free itself from the ball and chain of the *charro* trade-union federations. The recent fissures within the *charro* leadership can be an excellent opportunity, if the working class puts its trust in a program and revolutionary party determined to take up the struggle.

The current glorification of "trade-union struggle" is another danger which Marxists must combat in order to build a bridge from defensive economic struggles to a political struggle for working-class power. The promotion of "revolutionary syndicalism" as a substitute for building a Leninist party offers only a dead end to the workers. This was the case with the terrible defeat inflicted on the combative SUTAUR workers, whose MPI political leadership displays a false and cheap anti-electoral "radicalism," while in practice always opposing political combat against the PRD. The Grupo Espartaquista de México and the Juventud Espartaquista (Spartacist Youth) are committed to forging the nucleus of a Leninist party which fights for international socialist revolution. ■



Wall Street Journal

**IMF austerity, 1994 NAFTA treaty mean plummeting wages for Mexican workers.**

front. This policy was combated by Lenin's Bolshevik Party in 1917 and by revolutionary Leon Trotsky. The popular front seeks to preserve the basic structures of the bourgeois state (police, army, prisons, courts, etc.) in the face of growing workers mobilizations and the ensuing crisis of the bourgeois regime (the "abandonment" of its nationalist principles, as the PRD currently describes it). This bourgeois policy of class collaboration led directly to the Pinochet military dictatorship in 1973 in Chile and, further back in history, was to blame for the rise of Franco in Spain in 1936 and the bloody defeat of the Chinese revolution in 1927 at the hands of the butcher Chiang Kai-shek.

#### **POS-Z: Opportunists and Coffee House Guerrillas**

In the late January issue (No. 213) of *El Socialista*, the cynical opportunists of the Partido Obrero Socialista (POS-Z—Zapatista Socialist Workers Party) complain of what they call "the EZLN's capitulation." Insisting that the EZLN's decision to abandon armed struggle is the reason for this capitulation, they say: "What must be remembered is that the EZLN leadership was tempted in this direction only a few months after its revolt began, when it called

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# Bay Area...

(continued from page 16)

parent who has since the incident moved in with relatives elsewhere in the San Francisco Bay Area. Yet the state has refused to let the boy return to his mother, and is instead keeping him in Juvenile Hall "until suitable group housing can be found."

The treatment of Toliver's son contrasts sharply with a similar case in San Francisco 25 years ago known as the "crucifixion murder." When two brothers, seven and ten years old, in the wealthy white neighborhood of Pacific Heights confessed to the grisly killing of a 20-month-old child in 1971, they were never charged with a crime. Instead, they were placed in foster care and given therapy, while a gag order was issued to protect the brothers' privacy and their futures. But today in the largely poor and heavily minority city of Richmond, the D.A., the cops and the media are whipping up a racist frenzy against a troubled little black kid with a learning disability.

## Rotten Schools, No Jobs, More Prisons

A decaying capitalist economy has left Richmond with only crumbling remnants of the shipbuilding and related industries which drew blacks from the South during and after World War II. Surrounded by the hostile, mostly white commuter suburbs of Contra Costa County, Richmond has seen resources stripped away over the years. In 1991, the schools were taken over by the state, which imposed some \$30 million in cuts. The county D.A. boasts of bringing more people to trial per capita than any other county in the state, zealously applying California's "three strikes and you're out" law to send minority defendants away for 25 years to life for the pettiest of charges, in one case for shoplifting \$37 worth of merchandise from Montgomery Ward. Deputy D.A. Douglas Pipes headed "a special unit that sought reparations from parents whose children were locked away as wards of juvenile hall" and that hounded "hard-luck cases, including a blind woman barely eking out a living on disability" (*Express*, 3 March 1995).

The treatment of young kids as "hardened criminals" is part of a national trend described in the *New York Times* (12 May): "In the most drastic changes to the juvenile justice system since the founding of the first family court a century ago, almost all 50 states have overhauled their laws in the past two years, allowing more youths to be tried as adults and scrapping longtime protec-

tions like the confidentiality of juvenile court proceedings. The thrust of the new laws is to get more juveniles into the adult criminal justice system, where they will presumably serve longer sentences under more punitive conditions."

In the process, legal assumptions about children going back centuries are being thrown out the window. Under English common law, children under seven could not be charged with committing a crime; under a "presumption of infancy," children from 7 to 14 were deemed too young to know right from wrong. The turn of the century in the U.S. saw the introduction of juvenile courts, which were supposed to be civil rather than criminal in nature and whose role was conceived as prescribing treatment rather than meting out punishment. Now the director of Virginia's Department of Juvenile Justice baldly declares, "The thinking behind the juvenile court, that everything be done in the best interest of the child, is from a bygone era."

This reactionary, racist offensive—carried out under the cruelly hypocritical rubric of "family values"—is bipartisan to the core. One of Clinton's campaign promises is to try children as adults. Meanwhile, in the California state assembly, there are three separate bills in the works to greatly expand the number of youth who can be prosecuted as adults. Already so many kids are being

Recently in the Detroit suburbs, a mother and father were convicted of criminal misdemeanor charges for "failing to control" their 16-year-old son (*New York Times*, 10 May). At the same time, there has been an escalating drive to impose indiscriminate curfews on teens around the country. In a campaign stop in New Orleans last week, Clinton hailed a New Orleans curfew which forces teenagers to be off the streets by 8 p.m. on school nights and by 9 p.m. during the sweltering summer. This vindictive ruling class seems intent on literally turning homes into prisons and kids and parents into prisoners!

The racist assault on youth goes hand in hand with the speedup on death row. Some states, like Arkansas—where, as governor, Bill Clinton rushed home during the 1992 election campaign to oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black man with a mental age of 12—have black teenagers on death row. In some states it is legal to execute children as young as ten; others have no limit. The youngest person on record to be executed was a 13-year-old black youth in South Carolina during the Jim Crow period of legal segregation—the racist death penalty is indeed *legal lynching*. The racist equation "black equals criminal" used to refer to the overwhelming bulk of black teenagers, who got out of lousy schools and had no prospects for a job; now it's



Margot/AP  
**Ignacio Bermudez, with older son, reached out to family of black six-year-old jailed for beating his infant son, defying racist D.A. vendetta.**

crime" and its attacks on blacks and other minorities.

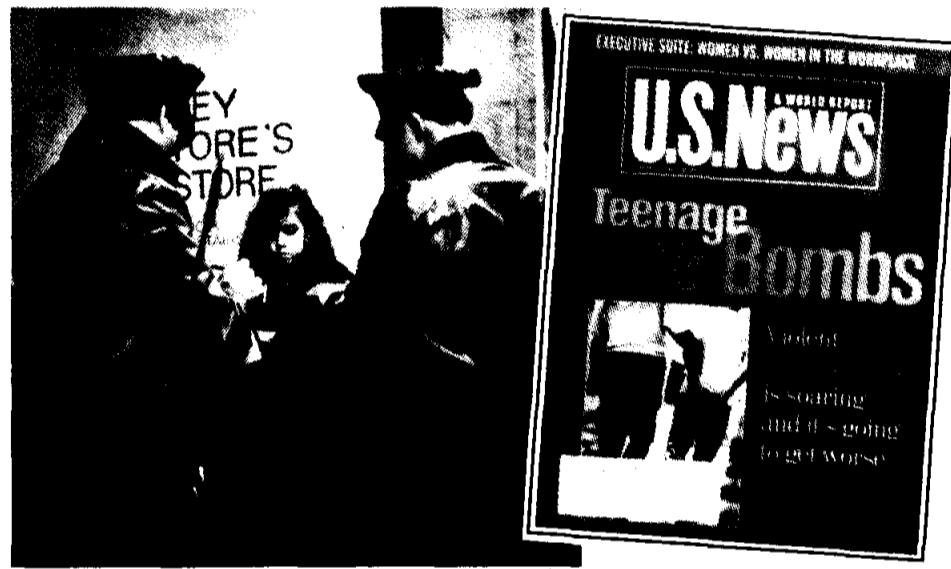
From the start, the local powers-that-be have sought to exploit the Richmond tragedy to foster divisions between blacks and Latinos. They have been hampered by the courageous and decent response of the anguished father of the victim, Mexican immigrant worker Ignacio Bermudez Sr. "I don't want to see anything happen to that child because he also has a mother and she would suffer very deeply as we are suffering," he said in his first public statement after the incident. Outside the courtroom, both blacks and Latinos have protested the decision to prosecute the boy, while Bermudez and Lisa Toliver have publicly embraced.

Yet at a May 2 rally in support of the kid and the Bermudez family, Charles Muhammed, president of the Iron Triangle Neighborhood Council and a Nation of Islam minister, called on the police to investigate the 18-year-old Bermudez daughter, who was babysitting at the time (and was briefly out of the room when the baby was injured)! The NOI seeks to aid the capitalists' attempts to split working people along racial lines by driving a wedge between Richmond's black and Latino residents. This flows directly from the NOI's reactionary doctrine of racial separatism, in which they parasitically feed off of the segregation of blacks on the bottom of American society.

It is precisely integrated class struggle that the ruling class fears, as demonstrated by their alarm over the multiracial 1992 upheaval in L.A. over the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King. The campaign for the racist, anti-immigrant Prop. 187 two years later sought to pit blacks against Latinos and Asians. But as we warned at the time, "Immigrant-bashing and anti-black racism go hand in hand" (*WV* No. 608, 14 October 1994). Prop. 187 laid the basis for the racist assault on affirmative action currently under way in California—both have been spearheaded by Governor Pete Wilson.

The attacks on blacks and Latinos take place in the context of the decay of capitalism and the deindustrialization of America. With no jobs to offer for black youth, the bourgeoisie no longer bothers with education and health care for the lowest layers of the working class. Instead of schools and hospitals, they are building prisons where the minimum wage is 30 cents per hour. All across California—as across the nation—urban hospitals are closing or suffering drastic cutbacks in cruel disregard for the medical care of the poor and minority population.

For the racist exploiters, there's not much left to do except put more and more blacks in prison, at increasingly lower ages, and throw away the key. We need an integrated revolutionary workers party that can sweep away the whole rotten edifice of capitalism and provide decent jobs, health care and education for all. Black liberation through socialist revolution! ■



Mary Ellen Mark  
**Minority youth are being criminalized by a society that offers them no education, no jobs, no future.**

put away that the California Youth Authority's prison system is overflowing. In fact, California has the highest juvenile incarceration rate in the country.

Accompanying this is a vicious vendetta against parents whose children fall afoul of the cops and courts. Last year, there was the notorious case in South Carolina in which a vindictive judge forced a mother to be chained to her daughter around the clock for 30 days.

been expanded to start at age six! How long before we see black grade-schoolers on death row?

## "War on Crime" Targets Entire Working Class

The criminalization of youth nationally is an extension of the ruling-class drive to strengthen the repressive machinery of the state, carried out under the cover of the "war on crime" and "war on drugs." In fact, as we have said from the outset, and as is now widely acknowledged, the "war on drugs" deliberately targets minorities. A particularly blatant example of this is that the penalty for possession of crack cocaine is equal to that for possession of 100 times that amount of the drug in the powdered form preferred by white yuppies—evidence, as well, of how the bourgeoisie seeks to split the population along racial lines. In California, today accelerated by the three-strikes laws, the anti-drug witch-hunt has put nearly four in ten black men in their 20s in jail, on probation or on parole. Now there are moves in Sacramento to abolish unanimous verdicts in jury trials. The Department of Corrections now projects that more than one out of every 150 citizens will be jailed within a decade—prison building is booming.

America's racist rulers are pushing for more cops and prisons, and for more repressive legislation, in order to buttress the state machinery to intimidate and crush any resistance by the whole working class, whose living standards are falling while profit margins rise. It is in the vital interests of the integrated labor movement to fight the "war on

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1

### Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 13

## Fight for Black Freedom, Fight for a Socialist Future!

**Million Man March Apposes Racist Exploiters**

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**Contents include:**

- What We Stand For **Labor Black League for Social Defense**
- Attack on Blacks, Immigrants, Women **Defeat Racist Assault on Affirmative Action!**
- International Outcry Wins Stay of Execution **Battle for Mumia's Freedom**
- Racist Backlash Against **O.J. Simpson Acquittal**
- Farrakhan's Reactionary **Dead End Million Man March Apposes Racist Exploiters**
- A Tribute **Conrad Lynn, 1908-1995**

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# Jamal...

(continued from page 16)

actions. Last month, Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) führer Richard Costello vituperated against the Police Advisory Commission—a powerless “watchdog” body appointed by the mayor—when it gently slapped eight cops on the wrist with ten-day suspensions. The cops were implicated in the 1994 beating death of Hispanic tow-truck driver Moises DeJesus and had earlier been exonerated by police brass. Echoing Costello’s tirade were District Attorney Lynne “Madame Death” Abraham (the arraigning judge in Jamal’s 1982 frame-up) and Mayor Ed Rendell (the D.A. in 1982), who each held news conferences to rail at the commission.

It infuriates the F.O.P. and city officials that even under the threat of execution, Mumia has continued to speak out against racism and repression, including through his syndicated newspaper column and his powerful book of prison writings, *Live from Death Row*, which is now out also in paperback. As shown by the worldwide protests for Mumia last summer, for millions of workers and youth his case has become a rallying cry against the racist American injustice system—and a symbol of what the barbaric death penalty is all about.

## Systematic Cop Coercion

Veronica Jones was a 21-year-old mother of three young children at the time she was threatened by the two detectives. At the 1982 trial, she testified that the prosecution’s “star witness,” Cynthia White, had been offered a deal by the cops to say that Jamal was the shooter. Like Jones, White was working the street as a prostitute on the night of the shoot-

# Victory to Bay Area Janitors Strike!

SAN FRANCISCO, June 3—Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1877 (Justice for Janitors), representing over 5,000 janitors in four counties, today began a “rolling strike” against contractors that service many companies in the Bay Area, including over 75 percent of Silicon Valley. The union voted two days ago to strike the 25 firms, but are only targeting a handful of worksites at a time.

These heavily immigrant, largely Latino workers are striking to bring their wages up to the poverty level. They currently start at \$6.25 an hour and are demanding an increase to \$7.28 over four years. They are also demanding a master contract for all contractors (instead of the current three) and family medical coverage. Mostly part-time, temporary workers, the janitors are a combative, multiracial workforce that has fought hard to win union rights against tough odds in Los Angeles and the Silicon Valley. Most Silicon Valley companies are fabulously wealthy as sales, profits and stock prices in America’s high-tech homeland soar. Hewlett-Packard’s CEO makes more than the combined salaries of the 150 union janitors who clean his headquarters!

Victory depends on the organized solidarity of the other unions. *To win requires picket lines that nobody and nothing crosses!* No deliveries, no mail, no UPS or FedEx packages, no stationary engineers, no garbage pickup! Instead of limited “rolling strikes,” janitors should all go out together, including Local 87 in San Francisco whose contract expires next month!

Meanwhile, the pro-Democratic Party SEIU misleaders are trying to force a contract with a wage freeze and layoffs



SEIU janitors rally in Oakland, May 30.

onto Kaiser health care workers in Local 250. What’s needed is united struggle linking black, Latino and immigrant workers in a fight for decent jobs and free health care for all!

Fighting labor solidarity can not only deal a stinging defeat to the contractors and their rich clients, but also lay the basis for integrated class struggle to smash the capitalists’ bipartisan racist offensive, including divide-and-conquer schemes like Prop. 187. *Victory to the janitors strike!*

who had threatened me earlier were in plain view, standing in the rear of the courtroom. When asked by Jamal’s attorney to confirm what I had first told the police—that I saw two males run from the scene after the firing stopped—I steadfastly denied it for fear that I would be punished for helping the defense.”

After changing her testimony, Jones was released on bail and ultimately given probation. Jamal’s defense attorneys learned nothing of the jailhouse intimi-

from the scene. William Singletary testified at Jamal’s post-conviction relief (PCRA) hearing last summer that the shooter fled the scene and that Jamal was not the shooter. According to Singletary, police destroyed his statement at the time and forced him to sign a false one. The jury at Mumia’s 1982 “trial” never heard Singletary’s testimony.

Another eyewitness, cab driver Robert Chobert, testified last summer that at the original trial, after receiving a promise from the prosecution to help him reinstate his suspended driver’s license, he retracted his statement that he saw the shooter run away. Witness Dessie Hightower testified at the PCRA hearing that cops subjected him to a grueling five-hour interrogation and a “lie detector” test because he insisted that he had heard shots and then had seen a black male run from the scene. Deborah Kordansky similarly told police at the scene that she saw a man running after hearing shots—the defense could not call her to the stand in 1982 because the cops and prosecution withheld her address.

The police/prosecution collusion in framing up Mumia points to how the capitalist state—the cops, courts, prisons—is not some neutral arbiter but an apparatus for repressing minorities and working people. In this election year, the contending capitalist parties—Clinton’s Democrats and Dole/Gingrich’s Republicans—are seeking to outdo each other in escalating racist repression, from hiring more cops to building ever more prisons to accelerating and widening the use of the death penalty. Addressing a national F.O.P. gathering recently, Clin-

ton crowed about having put 44,000 more cops on the streets since his 1992 election and screamed for an automatic death sentence for anyone accused of killing a cop. Yet various liberals and reformists have appealed to Clinton’s Attorney General, Janet Reno—who conspired with Clinton to kill 86 people in the attack on the Branch Davidians near Waco, Texas in 1993—to intercede to assure “justice” for Mumia.

Mumia and his lawyers continue to pull every possible legal lever to win his freedom. But as we wrote in the Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, “The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal” (see WV No. 625, 30 June 1995): “From the time the Partisan Defense Committee took up Jamal’s case more than eight years ago, we have emphasized that the fight to save him cannot rely on the capitalist courts but rather must look to the mobilization of the masses, centrally the social power of the labor movement.” Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!

\* \* \*

Funds are urgently needed! The defense investigation continues. Tax-deductible contributions for Jamal’s defense should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked “Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense,” and sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Avenue, No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. For information on the campaign to free Jamal, contact the PDC at P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, (212) 406-4252. ■



Shadd/Philadelphia Inquirer

Racist Philly cops besiege hospital workers Local 1199C offices, denouncing union support for Mumia Abu-Jamal, July 1995.

ing. The cops promised to let White “work the area” without police harassment if she would testify that Mumia shot Faulkner. At the trial, White was the only witness to claim that she saw this, while Jones’ testimony about the cop coercion was stopped by Judge Sabo.

In her recent statement, Veronica Jones describes how the cops coerced her:

“Approximately one week before I testified, I was visited in jail by two white plainclothes detectives. I was initially shocked at seeing them since the jailers had told me my lawyer was visiting. The detectives began by speaking, not of the facts of my case, but of the Jamal case. They told me that if I would testify against Jamal and identify Jamal as the shooter, I wouldn’t have to worry about my pending felony charges. I repeatedly told the detectives that I didn’t see the shooting, but only heard the shots and then saw two men run away. But this didn’t satisfy them. The detectives threatened me by reminding me that I faced a long prison sentence—15 years on gun charges—all the while persisting that I testify to their version of events. Frightened, I told them I wanted my lawyer present. When they finally left I knew that if I did anything to help the Jamal defense I would face years in prison. “It was only a matter of a few days that I was brought to court.... Both detectives

dation of this witness until now. At the May 22 press conference, Mumia’s lead counsel, Len Weinglass, noted: “It was the prosecution’s theory in the case that only Mumia and his brother were present when Officer Faulkner was shot.” This “theory” of the prosecution was a tissue of lies.

Jones’ testimony corroborates the assertion made by Jamal and his defense team that the 1982 trial was a political frame-up engineered by the Philly cops in collusion with the D.A.’s office. As Mumia’s co-counsel, Rachel Wolkenstein, stated: “The trial court sought to dismiss the evidence of widespread police misconduct as implausible, but recent revelations demonstrate that such misconduct is pervasive in the Philadelphia Police Department. Jamal’s trial was riddled with police and prosecutorial misconduct: withholding of evidence and the existence of exonerating witnesses from the defense, along with fabrication of evidence, coercion and intimidation of witnesses.”

The new testimony adds even more weight to the accounts of several other witnesses who originally told the police that they had seen a man or men run

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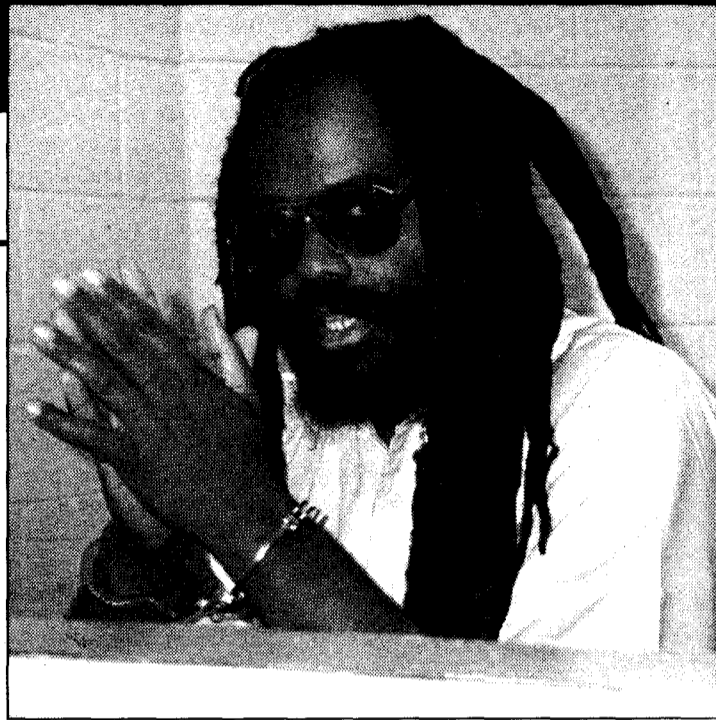
## New Evidence of Cop Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal Freedom Now for Mumia!

Attorneys for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal announced at a press conference in Philadelphia on May 22 that a key witness at Jamal's 1982 trial for the murder of policeman Daniel Faulkner has come forward with powerful new evidence of Mumia's innocence. The witness, Veronica Jones, has submitted a statement revealing that days before she took the stand in 1982, she was threatened and coerced into lying for the prosecution at the trial. Jones was in jail at the time, facing 15 years for felony armed robbery charges, when two Philadelphia detectives came to her and got her to repudiate her original true statement to police that she saw two men flee the scene immediately after the shooting. Mumia could not have been one of these men, because he was sitting, bleeding from a wound inflicted by Faulkner's gun, when police arrived at the scene. Veronica Jones' false testi-

mony at the trial seriously undermined Jamal's defense.

On the basis of this new evidence of police coercion, Jamal's defense team has applied to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to have his case remanded to the Court of Common Pleas to take additional testimony. Last summer, Jamal's petition for a new trial was refused by Judge Albert Sabo—the same "hanging judge" who oversaw Jamal's 1982 frame-up conviction. This February, Mumia's attorneys filed an appeal of this decision before the state Supreme Court. Over three months later, state prosecutors filed a 192-page brief in response to the appeal.

For 14 years, Mumia Abu-Jamal has battled against a frame-up conviction for a killing he did not commit. The forces of racist "law and order" targeted Jamal from the time he emerged as a 15-year-old spokesman for the Philadelphia Black Panthers in 1969, to his later work



WV Photo



Williams/Philadelphia Inquirer

**Ramona Africa outside Philadelphia courthouse where civil suit is being tried against city officials who helped carry out 1985 MOVE massacre.**

as an award-winning journalist and courageous spokesman for the oppressed and his subsequent support for the MOVE organization. The cops and their allies seized on the shooting of Faulkner in December 1981 to railroad Jamal to death row.

Less than four years later, in May 1985, the Philly cops, FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms carried out the horrendous bombing which killed eleven MOVE people, including five children, and burned an entire black neighborhood to the ground. The MOVE massacre is once again under the spotlight as the trial continues in the civil suits brought by Ramona Africa, the only adult to survive the bombing of the MOVE home, and two others against some of the city officials responsible for this atrocity.

The latest evidence of the cop/prosecution conspiracy that framed up Mumia emerges against a backdrop of a burgeoning police corruption and brutality scandal demonstrating that what was done to Jamal is standard operating procedure for

the Philadelphia Police Department. Cop frame-ups, shakedowns and brutalization of blacks and Hispanics have been so rampant for decades that in 1979 the U.S. Justice Department was compelled to file suit against the police and city administrations—the first action of this kind by the federal government. Now, a series of investigations over the past year has uncovered a widespread practice of intimidating witnesses and beating, robbing and framing up "suspects." And as the fascist ravings of former L.A. detective Mark Fuhrman during the O.J. Simpson trial last year showed, this is the case throughout the whole capitalist "justice" system. Most notorious in Philadelphia is the 39th police district, where revelations of such practices have already resulted in the reversal of 116 drug convictions and the imprisonment of five cops—and that's only the tip of the iceberg.

The Philly cops have repeatedly displayed their bonapartist appetite to slip even the most nominal restraints on their

*continued on page 15*

## Bay Area D.A. Jails Six-Year-Old Child

# Racist Rulers' War on Black Youth

OAKLAND—In a grotesque twist to the ever increasing campaign to criminalize black youth, prosecutors in Richmond, California have charged a 6-year-old child with attempted murder. The child was arrested for the near-fatal beating of a 5-week-old baby, Ignacio Bermudez Jr., when the boy and two eight-year-old companions entered a neighbor's home to steal a tricycle. If the Contra Costa County district attorney has his way, this terrible tragedy will be augmented by the crime of putting the kindergarten kid away for up to eleven years in the juvenile criminal "justice" system, while his two companions face up to six years

for stealing a Big Wheels tricycle.

The Richmond boy, from the impoverished black and Hispanic "Iron Triangle" neighborhood, is reportedly the youngest person in the country to ever be charged with attempted murder. In justifying this outrageous charge, Deputy D.A. Harold Jewett called the small child "a very angry young man." When the boy's attorney, John Burris, requested that he be placed in the custody of Child Protective Services, Jewett ranted that the six-year-old was "dangerous" and a "threat to the public." The judge agreed to jail the kindergarten in Juvenile Hall (*Oakland Tribune*, 27 April).

As Burris pointed out, "This is a boy who is still nested in the world of cartoons and X-men.... Reality is not his strong suit" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 May). In court, the child sat doodling on paper, without a clue as to what was going on around him. No child this age is capable of grasping life and death. Yet requests that he be placed in a therapeutic setting were summarily denied. Instead he has been kept "in a cell-like room where the floor is uncarpeted concrete," in a locked ward with "metal walls and a caged recreation area" (*Contra Costa Times*, 12 May). The iron fist of capitalist injustice is intent on teaching ghetto youth a lesson. We

demand that all criminal charges against these three kids be dropped now!

The local bourgeois press has joined in the hysteria by digging up old, unproven accusations against members of the boy's family in order to paint his short life as a hopeless picture of crime and violence. The big business media engages in racist demonization of residents of America's ghettos and barrios in order to obscure the reality that the nightmarish social conditions in the inner cities are the product of capitalist society in decay. The young child's mother, Lisa Toliver, is a working single

*continued on page 14*