

“Market Socialism” and the Legacy of Mao

Exemplified by a revolt of 20,000 molybdenum miners in Liaoning province in the industrial northeast of the country in February, China has seen a rising tide of workers' and peasants' struggles this year. These struggles have been aimed against bureaucratic corruption, growing poverty and continuing inroads into the collectivized economy established as a result of the 1949 Revolution led by Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

In August, 20,000 peasants protesting extortionate taxes clashed with units of the People's Armed Police in Jiangxi province in southeastern China. The protest was reportedly touched off when local authorities banned a book written by members of the ruling CCP advocating a reduction in taxes on peasants. Earlier this year, a CCP internal report estimated that there had been over 2,000 violent protests in the countryside in 1999, and several million rural residents had joined in either demonstrations or petitions to Beijing.

The social turmoil has found an echo on the ideological and cultural plane. A Chinese television series about a mythic Soviet steel worker in the years after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, based on the Soviet novel from the Stalin years, *How Steel Is Forged*, has been immensely popular. Earlier this year, a small theater in Beijing staged a play about Ernesto “Che” Guevara which ended with the actors leading the audience in the singing of the “Internationale,” the international workers' anthem. One member of the audience later wrote in an Internet posting on the neo-Maoist Web site “China and the World”:

“We want to shout out at the top of our lungs: only when the working class united together fights against all the imperialists, revisionists and reactionaries and those spineless traitors can we workers not lose our jobs, can we truly become the masters of the state.”

Such sentiments are increasingly voiced in China today, if often in more muted form, including among sections of the CCP itself. An article in the *New York Times* (2 July) reporting on the arrest of a retired party cadre who had led protests against the local government in Shenyang, capital of Liaoning province, was headlined “Old-Line Communists at Odds with Party in China.” A popular campaign to secure his release, observed the article, “reflects widespread popular disillusionment with the Communist Party over corruption and lost ideals, even among its rank and file.”

The molybdenum miners revolt last February was triggered by massive layoffs resulting from the shutdown or privatization of their formerly state-owned workplace. A few months later, in May, some 3,000 workers at a metal alloy fac-

Whither China?

Defend China Against Imperialism, Counterrevolution!

For Workers Political Revolution!



Bradshaw/SABA

State-owned steel plant in China. Beijing regime's moves to shut down or privatize many state enterprises have provoked wave of workers' struggles.

tory in the city of Liaoyang, also in Liaoning province, clashed with police as they protested unpaid wages and pensions. In July, nearly 50,000 miners, railway workers and others demonstrated in Liupanshui in the southern part of China. Again there were battles reported with the police, as protesters attacked the City Hall and chanted, “For another revolution in China!”

The People's Republic of China is heading toward either proletarian political revolution or capitalist counterrevolu-

tion. As it pursues “market reforms” and opens the door to exploitation by Western and Japanese imperialists and the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie, the Beijing regime is paving the way for capitalist restoration. It is simultaneously preparing the ground for a new revolutionary proletarian explosion—not a *social* revolution which would overturn the economic foundations of society as in 1949 but a *political* revolution to oust the ruling bureaucracy and to place political power in the hands of workers, soldiers and peasants

councils (soviets). Such a political revolution is premised on *unconditional defense of the planned, collectivized economy* which is the social foundation of the (bureaucratically deformed) workers state.

Social Roots of the Bureaucracy

Last year, the *Wall Street Journal* (1 November 1999)—the premier mouthpiece of American finance capital—ran an article on Jiang Mianheng, son of Chinese president and CCP leader Jiang Zemin. Jiang Mianheng was until recently the dominant figure in the rapidly growing China Netcom Corp., the country's largest privately owned telecommunications company, and currently heads several other private firms. The same article pointed out that the son of Chinese premier Zhu Rongji is an executive in a joint venture with the giant Wall Street investment bank Morgan Stanley.

The implicit message of the *Journal* article is that since the sons of China's top leaders—the so-called “princelings”—are high-flying entrepreneurs and even partners with American financiers, the restoration of capitalism in China is proceeding smoothly. Every day China is supposedly becoming more and more capitalist. The fact that the ruling party still calls itself Communist and pays lip service to “Marxism-Leninism,” in this view, has little significance in terms of the realities of China's politics today.

But the realities of China's politics today are very different, far more complex and contradictory. At the same time the *Journal* article appeared, a Beijing journal published an article by one Wei Wei, “At the Doorstep of a New Century.” The article stated:

“The Russian October Revolution led by Lenin was of undeniable historical significance.... It opened the road to a bright future for the whole human race and it demonstrated the possibility of rooting out private property, eliminating all exploitation and oppression and realizing the ideal world.”

Wei's article ends with a political call to arms:

“One must deeply understand that those who have already tasted the sweetness of socialism and become the masters of the state will not keep silent for long as they are losing their status as masters and their lives are deteriorating. Those conscious communists who have been educated by Marxism will also consolidate their own forces, again firmly unite together, and lead the masses to wage a resolute struggle against the representatives of the capitalist class. It must be

continued on page 8

Young Spartacus Eyewitness Report

“Velvet” Police State Repression in Prague

See Page 4



L.A. Transit Strikers Battle Union-Busting

OCTOBER 3—As we go to press, the strike by 4,300 members of the United Transportation Union (UTU) which has shut down the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) is at a critical point. The union is fighting MTA plans to shift 400 drivers to a four-day work-week—forcing them to be on duty for 13 hours a day at ten hours' pay—and to transfer many operations to "regional transportation zones" which would be run by low-wage outfits. The drivers have been joined on the picket lines by transit clerks and Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) mechanics. On Sunday, Democratic governor Gray Davis signed a measure long demanded by the union tops ensuring that the proposed regional spin-offs would be covered by the existing contracts for four years. ATU president Neil Silver immediately announced the price tag for this measure, ordering mechanics to scab: "If there's a picket

line, it shall be crossed."

ATU mechanics answered Silver this morning by turning out en masse at the central maintenance facility to help UTU drivers stop any scabs from entering. WV reporters said the few mechanics who showed up for work turned back at the sight of the solid picket lines; only one scab was spotted going in. One worker said, "You don't cross a line. This is a tradition." In fact, it appears that 99 percent of the ATU members throughout the city refused to break ranks with their UTU brothers and sisters. Later in the morning, about 45 angry mechanics converged in the parking lot to confront an ATU official in an impromptu meeting. Someone had made a big sign that read, "United We Will Stand, Divided We Will Fall. ATU Members Must Remain United. Impeach Neil Silver!" Our reporters were told that discussion centered on how to fight the union-busting transit zones, with some

WV Photo



September 21: Transit workers at L.A. strike rally chanted, "No contract, no buses!" and "Union, union, union!"

people saying that Davis' bill does nothing but postpone the fight.

Republican mayor Richard Riordan, who appeared at the strike negotiations for the first time over the weekend, admits that the sole purpose of the "regional transit zones" is to undercut the power of the unions. A similar scheme acceded to by the transit unions in 1987 led to the creation of Foothill Transit in San Gabriel Valley, whose drivers make lower wages and have fewer benefits than full-time MTA drivers. Privatization of transit further fragments the unions, already divided along craft lines. While Foothill's Teamster-organized drivers have not taken over entire MTA lines as they did during the 1994 transit strike, Foothill Transit and UTU-organized Santa Monica buses have been driving into the struck Gateway transit plaza to let passengers off. What's needed is a single industrial transit union from Santa Monica to Foothill, San Fernando Valley to Long Beach!

One of the issues keenly felt by the transit workers, who are subjected to multi-tier wage scales—including many forced to work part-time for \$8 an hour—and have to support families on as little as \$20,000 a year, is the threatened loss of overtime pay. Black Congressman Maxine Waters demagogically said, "Their whole economic family structure has depended on the dollars they learned to earn." The answer to a dismal standard of living is not to work until you drop while others have no jobs at all, but to fight for a hefty wage increase coupled with a full cost-of-living escalator and a shorter workweek to create jobs for all. Down with multi-tier wages—Equal pay for equal work!

The strike remains enormously popular among the city's working people, despite the fact that the heavily working-class and minority MTA ridership has had to scramble for alternative means of transport. On Friday, September 29, more than 2,000 transit workers and other trade unionists rallied outside City Hall. At this rally, the union tops handed the stage over to an array of Democratic Party politicians—including Waters, no fewer than seven City Council members, eight state legislators and two mayoral candidates—who led chants of "Mayor Riordan, end the strike!" As black city councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas addressed the rally, one black transit worker turned to a WV salesman and said, "This is a bunch of crap. They've done nothing for us." In fact, the most vociferous opponents of the UTU during this strike have been liberals on the MTA board like black Democratic county supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke.

The trade-union tops preach reliance on legislation by Democratic politicians, but the capitalist Democratic Party is no "friend of labor," and the government in a capitalist society is the agency for the suppression of workers and minorities. Workers can win only by exercising their power and mobilizing the support of the entire labor movement. Even as the pro-

capitalist union misleaders work hand in glove with the Democrats to bring the transit strike to an end, a number of other unions are poised to walk out. Last Thursday, the 43,000-member UTLA teachers union voted to authorize a strike. Yesterday, 47,000 SEIU Local 660 county workers launched a series of rolling strikes and threaten an all-out walkout beginning October 11. But the rolling strike planned for tomorrow includes jail guards in the SEIU. Prison guards and cops are the hired thugs of the capitalist state. They have no place in the labor movement! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

The current wave of labor struggle has shaken the capitalist establishment in this historically "open shop" town. In the last few years, there have been significant organizing efforts among the many Mexican and Central American workers who are exploited in low-wage, back-breaking jobs, including the unionization of over 90,000 home health care and other workers last year. A column in the *Los Angeles Times* (29 September) was headlined: "Building Up a Head of Steam in Striketown USA." Another article in the same issue reported, "Not for at least a generation have so many strikes and potential strikes converged in Los Angeles in one season." Noting that the recent strikes have been a "great unifier" cutting across racial and ethnic lines, the article added that "the wave of unrest has brought with it a new sense of unity and common purpose."

But the determination and sense of class unity shown by the workers in struggle are undermined by the class collaboration of the union bureaucrats. Putting teeth in the County Federation of Labor's call to honor the UTU pickets means shutting down all mass transit within the city. But that would immediately alienate the Democratic Party politicians who lined the podium at last Friday's rally. The fight for jobs for all and the defense of even the most basic workers' interests point to the need for a struggle to sweep away the entire system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression. It is necessary to forge a class-struggle leadership of the unions which recognizes that the interests of labor and capital are irreconcilably counterposed. We fight to break working people and minorities from the Democratic Party and build a multiracial revolutionary workers party. Victory to the L.A. transit strike! ■

Permanent Revolution vs. "Socialism in One Country"

In elaborating his theory of permanent revolution for countries of belated capitalist development, Leon Trotsky stressed that the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship could only be completed through the spread of socialist revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. Repudiating this internationalist perspective which animated the October Revolution of 1917, the Stalinists embraced the anti-Marxist dogma that socialism could



TROTSKY



LENIN

be built in a single country. This nationalist "theory," justifying the accommodation to imperialism which ultimately paved the way to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, is even more patently false in a country like China, which is far more economically backward than was the Soviet Union.

The passing of power from the hands of Tsarism and the bourgeoisie into the hands of the proletariat abolishes neither the processes nor the laws of world economy. To be sure, for a certain time after the October Revolution, the economic ties between the Soviet Union and the world market were weakened. But it would be a monstrous mistake to make a generalization out of a phenomenon that was merely a brief stage in the dialectical process. The international division of labour and the supra-national character of modern productive forces not only retain but will increase twofold and tenfold their significance for the Soviet Union in proportion to the degree of Soviet economic ascent....

The strength of Soviet economy lies in the nationalization of the means of production and their planned direction. The weakness of Soviet economy, in addition to the backwardness inherited from the past, lies in its present post-revolutionary isolation, that is, in its inability to gain access to the resources of world economy, not only on a socialist but even on a capitalist basis, that is, in the shape of normal international credits and "financing" in general, which plays so decisive a role for backward countries....

A realistic programme for an isolated workers' state cannot set itself the goal of achieving "independence" from world economy, much less of constructing a national socialist society "in the shortest time." The task is not to attain the abstract maximum tempo, but the optimum tempo, that is, the best, that which follows from both internal and world economic conditions, strengthens the position of the proletariat, prepares the national elements of the future international socialist society, and at the same time, and above all, systematically improves the living standards of the proletariat and strengthens its alliance with the non-exploiting masses of the countryside. This prospect must remain in force for the whole preparatory period, that is, until the victorious revolution in the advanced countries liberates the Soviet Union from its present isolated position.

—Leon Trotsky, Introduction to the German edition, *The Permanent Revolution* (March 1930); reprinted in *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects* (1969)

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EDITOR: Len Meyers

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Anna Woodman

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mara Cadiz

EDITORIAL BOARD: Barry James (managing editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer

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Philly Cops Terrorize Mumia Supporter

It could have been a scene straight out of *Mississippi Burning*, the movie depicting cop/Klan terrorizing of civil rights activists in the '60s. Except this time it took place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, not Philadelphia, Mississippi. On September 18, Ernest Ford joined in a weekly demonstration for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal near the Center City headquarters of the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.). Driving home, with a protest placard visible from his pickup truck, Ford noticed a police cruiser with three cops tailing him. As he got out in front of his home, the cops came up to him and loudly threatened, "Mumia is dead—and so are you!"

Ford's black and Latino neighbors started screaming at the cops, who left. Less than an hour later, the same cops were spotted cruising the block and checking out Ford's home, even as he was on the phone to register a complaint with the Philly Police Department. Ford's neighbors again emerged from their homes to scream at the cops, who drove away.

"This isn't something I'm taking lightly," Ford told the twice-weekly black *Philadelphia Tribune* (22 September). "I was scared. My wife is scared. Who knows what these cops have planned for me?" Ford and his wife have good reason to fear. His family fled from Haiti years ago after his father was marked for death by the death squad police of the U.S.-backed Duvalier dictatorship. And as Ford told *Workers Van-*

guard, "The cops in America are henchmen like the Tontons Macoutes in Haiti." Speaking of the Philly cops, he added: "Police here are terrorists. They terrorize anyone who speaks out for Mumia. Where I live is the cradle of terror, torture and lynching."

Ford has been active in Jamal's defense since the protests in 1995 when Mumia faced an imminent threat of execution. Ford initiated the Caribbean American Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and has promoted Jamal's fight for freedom in neighborhood newspapers. He has exposed the cop threats against him through articles in the *Tribune* and an interview on WHAT radio and has called a noontime demonstration at the corner of Kensington and Allegheny for October 7. Ford told WV, "I'm not going to just lay down and let them walk all over me."

The Philly cops are notorious for their racist frame-up and killing machine—from their vendetta against Mumia and other Black Panthers in the 1960s to the 1985 Mother's Day bombing in which eleven black MOVE members were murdered to the videotaped beating of a black man by a horde of cops shortly before the Republican National Convention (RNC). Employing the same sort of "red squad" surveillance carried out against the Panthers and other radicals in the '60s, for weeks before the RNC police photographed and infiltrated just about every leftist event in the city.

During the convention, protesters were swept off the streets by a massive police

dragnet. Many of them were thrown into jail and some held for weeks on bail of up to \$1 million. Refuse & Resist spokesman Clark Kissinger is threatened with prison for speaking at a Mumia rally out-

this century was innocent.

The decades-long vendetta against Jamal by the cops, courts, media and capitalist politicians refutes those, like Refuse & Resist, who promote liberal illu-



Screaming for Mumia's blood, Philly cops besiege hospital workers union hall in 1995.

side the RNC, supposedly for violating probation conditions stemming from an earlier mass arrest of Jamal supporters during a civil disobedience protest at the Liberty Bell last year (see "Outrageous Persecution of Mumia Supporters," WV No. 737, 2 June). Meanwhile, a state agency is withholding charitable status to the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal in a continuing effort to cripple fundraising for Jamal's legal defense.

To grease the skids for Jamal's execution, the F.O.P. has spearheaded a sinister campaign aimed at intimidating Mumia's supporters. Ernest Ford is but the most recent target of this campaign. Following a 1990 Partisan Defense Committee rally for Jamal in Philly, F.O.P. chief Richard Costello ranted that Mumia's defenders were "misfit terrorists" who deserved an "electric couch." Aiding the F.O.P. are bourgeois mouthpieces like ABC News, the yuppie *Vanity Fair* magazine and right-wing rags like the *New York Post* and *Philadelphia Daily News*, which have repeatedly churned out Big Lie propaganda seeking to demonize Jamal and to silence the growing ranks of his defenders. A Web site titled "Justice for Daniel Faulkner"—the policeman for whose 1981 killing Jamal was falsely convicted—baldly promotes the racist death penalty with patently absurd lies like the claim that not one of the thousands of people executed in the U.S.

Mumia can win his freedom through a "new trial" in the bourgeois courts or through pressuring the Democrats. That no reliance can be placed in the "justice" system which sent this innocent man to death row in the first place was underlined by the latest court ruling in Jamal's case. In a decision currently being appealed, in August federal judge William Yohn rejected four "friend of the court" briefs in support of Jamal's *habeas corpus* petition to have his conviction overturned which were submitted by the NAACP, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the American Civil Liberties Union and British Members of Parliament, among others. Yohn dismissed these briefs—which pointed to racist jury-rigging and other blatant frame-up procedures in Jamal's 1982 trial—as "unnecessary and unhelpful," bringing to mind the 1987 U.S. Supreme Court *McCleskey* decision that overwhelming evidence of the racist application of the death penalty was "irrelevant."

Mumia is innocent and should be free. The power that must be mobilized in the fight to win his freedom lies in the multi-racial working class, which in taking up this struggle will strike a blow against the entire capitalist system that is predicated on the brutal exploitation of labor and in which the racist oppression of black people is rooted. Hands off Ernest Ford! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■



San Francisco, May 13: Revolutionary Contingent built by SL, SYC and Labor Black League called for mobilizing labor's social power in fight to free Mumia.

Down With Union-Busting Against Philly Teachers!

On September 28, Democratic mayor John Street decreed the unilateral imposition of a giveback contract on the 21,000 members of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT), who have been working without a contract since schools opened last month. Hundreds of angry teachers protested outside the Board of Education that night as it implemented the dictate, tearing up even the pretext of "collective bargaining." If allowed to stand, this union-busting move poses a dangerous threat to public employee unions around the country.

The dictated "contract" would gut teachers' seniority rights, increase medical co-payments and add an hour to the

workday and two days to the school year—a 16 percent increase in work hours. At the same time, the five-year contract grants an insulting "raise" averaging just over 3 percent a year, with a wage freeze the first year, with Philly teachers even now earning 20 percent less than those in the suburbs. And the 8,000 non-teaching PFT members—secretaries, nurses, counselors—would get even less. One teacher who comes from Uruguay told the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (29 September), "I came from a country where we are used to fighting back dictatorships. If we have to work, you should have to pay."

A 10,000-strong union rally on Sep-

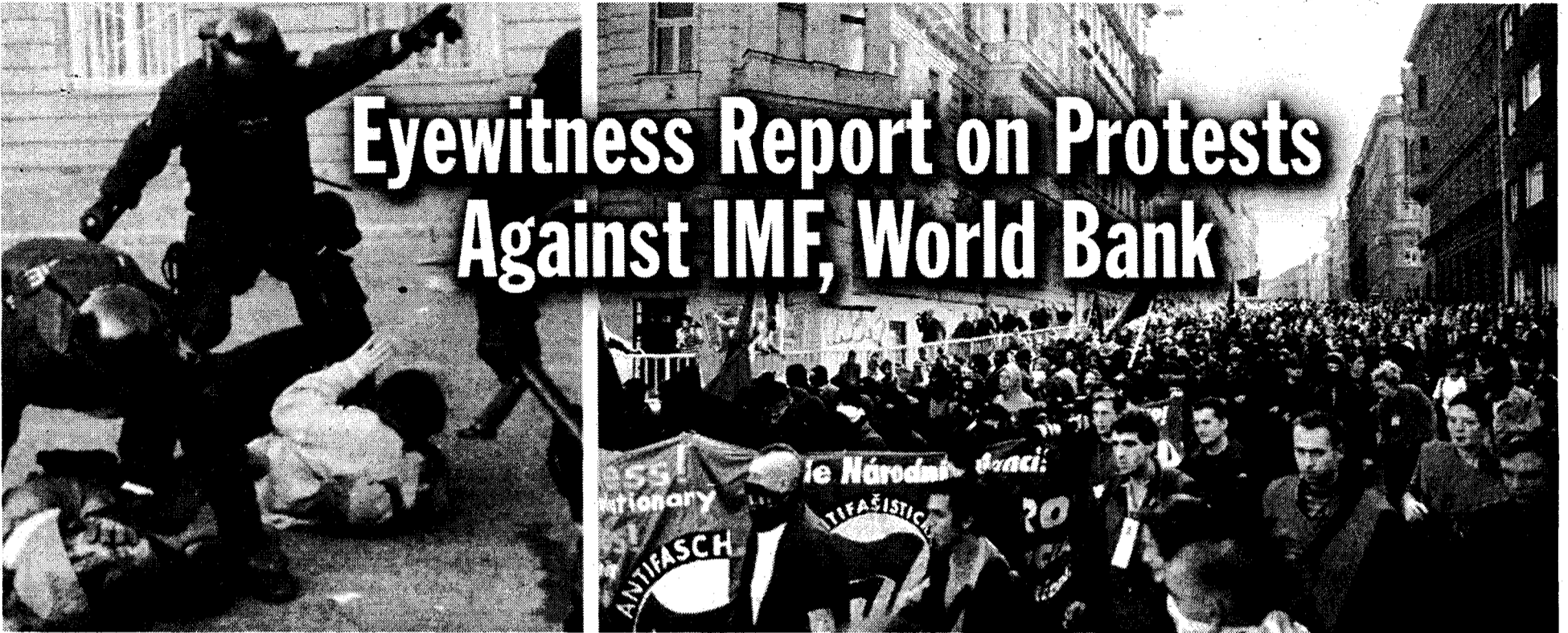
tember 5 voted unanimously to strike, but PFT head Ted Kirsch repeatedly refused to call out the membership, hiding behind Governor Ridge's threat to take over the school district and deny certification and pensions to any teachers who went out on strike. Black Democrat Street worked hand in hand with Republican Ridge against the PFT, whose membership is nearly 40 percent black or Hispanic. Street was elected last year with the support of the PFT tops and the Philadelphia AFL-CIO. But Street had demonstrated his anti-union stand long before the election. As a city councilman in 1981, Street acted as a scabherder against the last teachers

strike in Philly. He also helped force giveback contracts on the city's municipal unions as an aide to former Democratic mayor Ed Rendell in the 1990s.

The bipartisan assault on the PFT is sanctioned by Pennsylvania's anti-union Act 46, passed two years ago. New York State's Taylor Law, which outlaws strikes by all public workers, was recently used to railroad Buffalo teachers union president Philip Rumore, who was fined \$1,000 and sentenced to 15 days in jail for leading an "illegal" strike. Drop all charges against Rumore! Down with Act 46 and the Taylor Law!

The teachers have won support among many working people who are fed up with dilapidated schools, bad hospitals, crumbling infrastructure and the concessions wrung out of their unions through successive Democratic mayors. Street's union-busting underscores the need for working people and minorities to break with the racist capitalist Democratic Party and forge a party of their own, a workers party that fights for a workers government.

Young Spartacus



Eyewitness Report on Protests Against IMF, World Bank

Thousands of youth who turned out for anti-“globalization” protests in Prague were met with a massive mobilization of police. Of the more than 900 arrested, many were brutally mistreated and some are still being held.

“Velvet” Police State Repression in Prague

An international team of young ICL comrades from Germany, Poland and the U.S. went to Prague to intervene in and report on the recent protests against the IMF/World Bank which drew youth from all over the world. These protests were advertised as the continuation of the “Battle of Seattle.” Our purpose was to counterpose our revolutionary proletarian internationalist perspective to the illusion that the imperialist powers can be pressured to serve the interests of the exploited and oppressed around the world. The opening paragraph of the ICL statement for the Prague protests had great impact on those who were able to make it in to the Czech Republic:

“Turn Prague into Seattle”? Were it not for the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed East Europe and the former Soviet Union a decade ago, the World Bank and the International Monetary

Fund would not be meeting in Prague! The ‘velvet revolution’ ripped Czechoslovakia apart and now the working people, women and national and ethnic minorities suffer the raw exploitation, impoverishment and depredations of the capitalist market. As for the illusions of ‘freedom,’ today police forces specially trained by the American FBI and backed up by NATO threaten labor and leftist demonstrations with a brutal enforcement of ‘law and order’ for the imperialist bankers.”

Youth who tried to come to Prague to participate in these protests got an object lesson in the class nature of the police forces that “serve and protect” the Czech capitalist state. The Czech border was heavily policed, and countless people were held or turned away, either because their names were supposedly on a list of “undesirable persons” or simply for looking like potential demonstrators. In the train our team was on, police ransacked

all luggage in the second-class compartments. These actions severely reduced the numbers who might have attended. Among those who did make it in, over 900 were arrested. As reported in the ICL statement demanding the release of these protesters (see page 5), those arrested were subjected to police torture and many are still being held. Since the statement was issued, there have been further reports of Israeli prisoners being subjected to brutal anti-Semitic attacks; of widespread vicious beatings resulting in broken bones and teeth; women being forced to perform sexual acts for prison guards; and police letting in a group of Nazi skinheads to join in “the party.” In Italy, Switzerland, England, Germany, Sweden and elsewhere, demonstrations have been held protesting the arrests and the brutal mistreatment of the imprisoned youth by the Czech government. Free all imprisoned leftist protesters in Prague now!

What follows is based on reporters’ notebooks by our comrades who were in Prague for the protests.

Sunday, September 24: Our team arrived in Prague and went immediately to a Workers Power (WP) meeting on “Global Trade Union Work.” While nominally claiming to be a Trotskyist organization, i.e., to be fighting for a world party of socialist revolution that can lead the working class to victory in smashing imperialist exploitation and oppression, Workers Power’s actual positions have put them in the camp of imperialism. WP backed the forces of counterrevolution that destroyed the former Soviet Union and the former deformed workers states of East Europe. Last year, they stood on the side of the Kosovo Liberation Army which served as a tool for the NATO imperialists during the terror bombing of Serbia.

When comrades from our German section intervened in the meeting to argue that WP’s claims to fight against the ravages of capitalism are belied by their support to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution, we were threatened and silenced by the chair of the meeting. Outside the meeting, several people bought copies of our English-language *Spartacist* (No. 55, Autumn 1999) with its article exposing those who took the side of imperialism, opposing the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states. Today this fight is centered on the defense of the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution against capitalist restoration and for building a Trotskyist party that can lead the Chinese workers in a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats who have undermined these gains and opened the door to imperialist penetration.

Workers Power’s international, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI), declares that “China’s long march to capitalism has been completed” (“Make Red September a Month to Remember! A Manifesto for Revolutionary Change,” 27 July). Yet the current issue of *Revolution* (the paper of their youth group *Revo*) calls to “Halt the market ‘reforms’ that are restoring capitalism in Eastern Europe, the former USSR, China, Vietnam, Korea and Cuba. For working class democratic socialism based on the rule of workers’ councils.” In the short time our comrades had to speak at the WP meeting, we exposed this contradiction. Obviously this stung the leaders of Workers Power. In a demo marking the conclusion of the “counter summit” later that day, they tried to physically intimidate and verbally harass us as we pursued discussion with their youth members. Such thuggery is commonly resorted to by those who cannot defend the contradiction between their



Rally point before march on September 26 at Namesti Miru.

Young Spartacus

claims to Marxist revolutionary politics and their actual practice.

In the evening we went to Strahov Stadium, where many of the activists who had come to the Prague protests were staying. There we encountered a wide divergence of political views, from those who thought capitalism could be reformed, to a youth who described himself as somewhere between anarchism and Marxism, because he was disaffected with the reformism of groups like the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP). This would not be the last time that we encountered protesters who had disdain for the SWP and other left groups that posture as Marxists while supporting social-democratic governments. We had an impact in driving home the basic tenets of Marxism, the understanding that the social power to genuinely defeat imperialist exploitation lies in the hands of the working class mobilized behind a revolutionary leadership.

Monday, September 25: Workers Power held another meeting, this one called "World Revolution Youth Forum." We ran into Revo members who obviously thought that their organization did, and should, defend the Chinese deformed workers state; they were not able to explain the contradiction between this and the official position of their international that China is already a capitalist state.

The meeting centered on tactics for the demo and people's "experiences" in the anti-"globalization" movement. It was so apolitical and boring that participants didn't pay much attention to the presentation. Instead several were poring over ICL literature they'd gotten beforehand. We had spoken to several Czech members of their youth group who either didn't know or couldn't believe that WP had supported the forces of capitalist counter-revolution and had gone so far as to join the reactionary rabble—who were the spearhead for the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state—on Yeltsin's barricades in August 1991. The following day, while we were continuing this discussion with a Revo member, proof was provided as just at that moment their very representative on the barricades walked by! In contrast to the traitors of Workers Power (who now claim that they never supported counterrevolution) the



Young Spartacus

Cliffites hailed capitalist counter-revolution in East Europe, peddled illusions in Prague that imperialism could be made more humane.

ICL said the Moscow workers should have cleared out the pro-capitalist forces on the barricades, which would have opened the road for a proletarian political revolution (see Spartacist pamphlet *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*, August 1993).

During the discussion at this meeting, the WP chair once again tried to censor our politics. He gleefully crowed that since we don't support the call for the demonstration, we should not be allowed to speak and should leave the meeting. We argued that we should have the right to put forward our revolutionary program, which is indeed counterposed to the efforts of the leaders of the so-



Krist/Lidové Noviny

Italian "autonomes" of Ya Basta (left) in face-off with cops. Anarchists enter demo on morning of the 26th.



Young Spartacus

called anti-"globalization" movement to amnesty imperialist rulers who are the authors of the mass poverty and oppression of the "Third World." Reinforcing such illusions, Workers Power published an appeal which they signed along with the Czech Komsomol (Communist Party youth group) calling to "Establish a democratically controlled international development bank which would provide needed investment to education, health service, infrastructure and housing!" Good luck creating an imperialist institution that doesn't serve the interests of the imperialists!

Faced with our protests against WP's political censorship, the chair had to take a vote. The overwhelming majority of the audience voted to hear our views. Our speaker pointed to our resolute opposition to agencies such as Polish Solidarność—a counterrevolutionary "union" backed by the Vatican, the CIA, and the Western banks. He pointed to the struggle waged by our international tendency in 1989-90 for proletarian political revolution in the former East German (DDR) deformed workers state against the capitalist annexation of the DDR by the Fourth Reich of German imperialism. Workers Power argued at the time that all tendencies in Solidarność sought the restoration of capitalism...but supported it anyway!

In the midst of whispers of disbelief that their organization had supported Solidarność and literally stood on the Yeltsin barricades, the chair of the meeting tried to shut us up. But a member of their Czech organization who was the translator at the meeting insisted that there be silence so he could finish translating our remarks. Our speaker continued, noting that WP's support for the forces of capitalist restoration derives from accommodation to the rule of their own bourgeoisie, as is expressed particularly in their fealty to the social-democratic parties, like Tony Blair's Labour Party, who are enforcing the dictates of capitalist austerity throughout Europe. We exposed their support to Blair's Labour Party in the war against Serbia, which they gave in the name of defending the national rights of the Kosovar Albanians. The ICL had defended these rights long before the rest of the left had taken up their cause to line up behind NATO's call for war against Serbia. But during the war, the defense of the right of self-determination for the Kosovar Albanians was subordinate to, and became the clarion call for, the NATO imperialists' terror bombing. The ICL called for defense of Serbia and the defeat of the NATO imperialists, while not giving any political support to Serbian nationalist strongman Milosevic.

There was a meeting later that day to "Refound the Fourth International," with speakers from the Italian group Proposta and the Greek Workers Revolutionary Party, which would have been comical if it hadn't been so pathetic. As we argued in the meeting, these groups are a walking repudiation of Trotsky's Fourth International, whose purpose was to forge the revolutionary leadership of the world proletariat in the fight to overthrow capitalist imperialism. Having stood in the camp of imperialist anti-Sovietism, at the meeting they made clear that they have

now dumped any defense of the Chinese deformed workers state, which they declare to be capitalist.

What really got their goat was when we pressed them to answer a question about their position on the "anti-pedophilia" witchhunts in Britain and Italy which are direct assaults on the rights of gays and women. As Lenin argued, a revolutionary party is a "tribune of the people," defending the rights of those victimized by the capitalist state. After trying to ignore the issue of this reactionary bourgeois campaign, when asked again what their position was the Greek translator left the room in apparent disgust, and then returned to the room to claim that we Spartacists abstain from struggle on behalf of the working class and oppressed!

That night at Strahov, we met an Italian student who had been put off by what she understood to be Trotskyism based on her experience with the United Secretariat and its support to the refor-

mist parties who have joined in capitalist governments. She was thrilled to see the front page of our Italian newspaper, *Spartaco*, calling to break with the class-collaborationist policies of Rifondazione Comunista, which had supported the Italian government and continues to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie as particularly exemplified in its grotesque arguments for the racist expulsion of refugees from North Africa and the Balkans from Italy.

Tuesday, September 26: Demonstrators gathered at Namesti Miru in the center of Prague at 9 a.m. The crowd was made up of various left organizations, anarchists and independent activists. Slogans ranged from "Make Love not Trade" to "WB&IMF Cause Poverty" to "Unity Is Strength." Some 13,000 cops were brought from around the Czech Republic. Three marches pulled out around 11 a.m. with the stated goal of trying to get as close as possible to the Congress Center (the meeting place of the IMF)

continued on page 6

Free Imprisoned Leftist Protesters in Prague!

We publish below a protest letter sent by the International Communist League on September 30 to Czech president Vaclav Havel, the Ministry of the Interior and Czech embassies in various countries.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) demands the immediate release of all leftists arrested while protesting against the World Bank and IMF summit in Prague on September 26 and 27, 2000. We further demand that all charges against them be dropped. The Czech-based OPH (Obcanske Pravni Hlidy) legal observers report 859 overwhelmingly Czech prisoners and most are being denied legal recourse. Other reports indicate that the actual number of prisoners may be much higher.

Released prisoners and other witnesses have reported extreme police brutality. The Italian *Liberazione* (30 September) reports that one woman, Silvy Jolanda Machova, was thrown from the window of a Prague police station and required surgery (police reports say that she "fell"). Other reports, including in the German *junge Welt*, indicate severely violent beatings, denial of water and food, "disappearance" of prisoners, denial of medical attention to injured demonstrators as well as medicine to the sick, extreme overcrowding with reports of 22 demonstrators crammed into a 4 square meter cell while 30 demonstrators were kept in an outdoor courtyard overnight without blankets or food. *Liberazione* reports that the police released 500 foreign prisoners yesterday, leaving them in the middle of desolate countryside. Eyewitness reports by released prisoners also

describe processing rooms where groups of 40 to 60 people were spread-eagled while being beaten, their heads knocked back, groins kicked and punched, while handcuffed protesters were thrown downstairs.

The police brutality was obviously long planned. The Czech government worked overtime before the protests to seal the borders against protesters. FBI and Scotland Yard advisers provided lists of potential demonstrators. The Czech government banned the demonstrations while borrowing tear gas grenades from Germany and water cannons from Greece. Some 12,800 armed police were mobilized, twice as many as the official police count of demonstrators. This was clearly aimed at punishing the demonstrators to prove that this former deformed workers state has a reliable bourgeois state apparatus to defend capitalism against its working class and plebeian victims. This inhuman treatment of young leftist demonstrators exposes the lies of "freedom" of opinion and press put forward as bait by proponents of the so-called "velvet revolution" which was actually a social counterrevolution which has brought widespread misery through the restoration of capitalism. Capitalist counterrevolution has led to a surge in anti-Semitism and terror directed at the Roma people.

We stand as proletarian internationalists in the tradition that "an injury to one is an injury to all." Once again we demand the immediate release of *all* the leftist demonstrators and the dropping of all charges against them. We will publicize these atrocities to the working classes throughout Europe, the Americas and Asia.

Columbia Spectator Witchhunts Edward Said

We publish below a leaflet headlined "Edward Said, Eloquent Champion of Palestinian Rights—Spectator, Apologists for Zionist State Terror" which was issued by the New York Spartacus Youth Club on September 21 and submitted for publication to the Spectator Opinion page.

On September 5, Columbia students read a scurrilous attack on noted scholar and Columbia professor Edward Said in the *Columbia Daily Spectator*. The *Spectator* takes Said to task for tossing a stone (!) into Israel from across the border with Lebanon. An editorial goes on about Said's "violent act." Another piece, by professors Awi Federgruen (a senior vice dean of the Graduate School of Business) and Robert Pollack (a former Columbia College dean), denounced as "abhorrent and primitive" Said's "gratuitous act of random violence...aimed at innocent bystanders." Federgruen and Pollack threaten: "Here at Columbia, the 'Rules of University Conduct' would classify the same act committed on the Columbia campus as a 'serious violation' and would sanction it with suspension or dismissal from University service."

The hysteria in the *Spectator* about Said's "violent act" is a Zionist witch-hunt. In his response, Professor Said properly indicted "the enormous ravages and suffering caused by decades of mil-

itary occupation and dispossession." The Zionist rulers hurl not stones but bullets and bombs at innocent civilians. For 18 years, Israeli troops and their Lebanese mercenaries occupied Southern Lebanon. Israel has repeatedly bombed Lebanese towns and cities, killing thousands and driving hundreds of thousands more from their homes. In 1982, the Israeli rulers orchestrated the massacre of well over a thousand Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. Thousands of Palestinians languish in Israel's torture chambers, and thousands more have been killed by occupation forces in the West Bank and Gaza. But the only "violence" the Zionist apologists at the *Spectator* see is a stone falling on empty ground in Israel. The Spartacus Youth Club says: Defend the Palestinian people against Zionist state repression! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories!

What chutzpah for Columbia to preach about "violence" to Edward Said over his courageous, symbolic act of defiance in solidarity with the oppressed. This elite institution, infamous racist slumlord in its own backyard, whose business is training the next generation of capitalist ideologues and exploiters, is up to its elbows inflicting suffering and death abroad. Who knows what services the School of International and Public Affairs and

its graduates have rendered to rapacious U.S. imperialism as it starves and terrorizes workers and peasants abroad?

The *Spectator* is in bad company. The July 14 *Daily News* featured a version of this attack on Said by Jaime Sneider, editor of the *Spectator* editorial page, in the op-ed section. Then Federgruen and Pollack, charging "a pattern of misrepresentation and deception," picked up from the execrable right-wing Zionist *Commentary* a smear about "lies" in Said's autobiography.

These types hate Said not least because he has refused to go along with the U.S.-sponsored "peace" sham in the Near East, which means the continued subjugation of the Palestinian people, now in collusion with Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority. In his 1996 book *Peace and Its Discontents*, Said called the Palestinian Authority a "kingdom of illusions, with Israel firmly in command." Said, in admirable contrast to most political figures in the Near East, does not wallow in the communalist particularisms of religion and nationality, but advocates a single, binational, and thus secular Palestinian state.

Unfortunately, no such solution is possible within a capitalist framework. Israel/Palestine is a case of interpenetrated peoples: two or more peoples occupying the same territory. Under capitalism the democratic right of

national self-determination cannot be achieved for one people without violating the rights of the other. The only road to peace in the region lies through socialist revolution. Zionist Israel, which counts on its American protectors and its nukes to preserve its "right" to lord it over a hundred million or so Arabs in the region, is a deathtrap for Jews. It must be shattered from within by workers revolution led by a Leninist vanguard party which breaks the Hebrew-speaking workers from Zionist racism and wins the Palestinian Arab masses from petty-bourgeois nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism, uniting them in struggle against their common capitalist enemies. Not Jew against Arab, but class against class! For a socialist federation of the Near East!

Professor Said lends distinction to Columbia's prestige as an institution of higher learning. But he falls too far afield of the politics of the American ruling class for his worldwide reputation as a scholar and author to protect him much. We are glad to see some Columbia professors now coming out in defense of their colleague. The Spartacus Youth Club also stands with Edward Said against the vicious slurs raised by the *Spectator* editors, who seek to silence any criticism of the Zionist rulers and their senior partners in Washington and to whitewash their truly violent crimes.

Prague...

(continued from page 5)

and blocking roads leading to it. The marches took different routes and had different ideas for what actions to take.

Cops began attacking the demonstrators at 1:10 p.m., a battle that lasted for hours. Two thousand demonstrators, later swelling to three thousand, held a bridge against a line of cops for several hours. At 3:24, the first flaming barricades built by demonstrators went up. Czech TV reported that the delegates inside the conference center were "very nervous." Police were using water cannons and tear gas. At 4:28, Czech president Václav Havel denounced the demonstrators. At 5:15, police charged into demonstrators near the conference center and demonstrators threw cobblestones from the street. Video footage has shown agents provocateurs dressed as anarchists smashing shop windows and then scurrying safely through police lines, to be seen arresting demonstrators later. At 6:30, INPEG (Initiative Against Economic Globalization) organizers called to stop the blockade of the conference center, and demonstrators went to the State Opera to prevent delegates from attending a scheduled performance, which they succeeded in doing.

That night at Strahov, reactions to the events of the day varied widely. There was a lot of talk about tactics; whether the most effective protest is to engage in street battles, or if the fighting detracted from the "message" of peaceful appeals for the reform of the IMF and World Bank. Most were easily persuaded to discuss the politics of the demo, and they were very up front about their goals, which were often simply to build larger and more frequent demos. Protesters were surprised to hear that on that same day, two thousand truckers in Berlin had succeeded in completely shutting down the city in protest over high fuel prices, while the protests in Prague had simply caused a disturbance, leaving them to hope that someone had noticed.

A group at Strahov were thrilled that

there had been a comparison made in the media between the Prague protests and the student protests in Paris in 1968. But '68 wasn't simply a matter of throwing cobblestones and building barricades. Rather, what happened was a general strike, a mobilization of the proletariat which directly posed the possibility of working-class revolution. That opportunity was betrayed by the Stalinist misleaders of the working class, whose class-collaborationist politics preserved the rule of the bourgeoisie. Those are the lessons that need to be learned by a new generation of youth who genuinely do want to fight the depredations of imperialism around the globe.

Groups like the International Socialists (Socialist Workers Party in Britain) call to "Stop the IMF/WB." Similarly, Workers Power states in the July/August issue of their British paper that "We don't need to reform the IMF, we need to get rid of it." These outfits believe that somehow these institutions have transcended the imperialist powers. And by that token, they peddle the illusion that we would have a just and humane world if the IMF and World Bank ceased to exist. This is a lie! Even before the existence of these institutions, the division of the world between competing imperialist powers meant brutal exploitation and oppression, and the competition for markets resulted in bloody world wars where the working class was sent out to fight and die for the interests of their capitalist rulers.

The activists who engaged in street battles with riot cops in an effort to blockade the Congress Center and make demands on the IMF/WB in Prague were courageous in seeking to make a fight against injustice. But for all their militancy, their politics simply come down to pleading with the world bourgeoisie to reform itself and to stop acting like capitalist exploiters. An Italian anarchist was quoted as having declared to the Russian news agency ITAR-TASS: "This is a general storming. We are attacking so as to break into the palace and lock up there the World Bankers until they adopt the decision of self-dispersal of the IMF and the WB." As we argued, this sentiment is

an utterly utopian dream. It is the system of capitalist imperialism in its relentless drive for profit that causes poverty and exploitation.

The anarchist and idealist youth in Prague were handed a big lesson: there's something called "the state" and it stands between them and human freedom. Without a Marxist program, they have no way

to get rid of it and even less of an idea of how to replace it. Our task is to build the revolutionary party that seeks to mobilize the working class as an independent political force against the capitalist exploiters of each country, on the road to world socialist revolution, which is the only possible way to bring an end to the ravages of imperialism. ■

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Immigrants...

(continued from page 12)

construction and landscaping jobs in the eastern Long Island town of Farmingville and other Suffolk County suburbs. Living in fear of *la migra*, the hated Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), such undocumented workers are vulnerable to the most vicious exploitation and racist abuse.

Many of those who hire these workers for 12-hour jobs at \$100 (when the workers aren't short-changed or stiffed outright) are cockroach capitalist contractors or well-heeled yuppies too lazy to clean their own swimming pools or weed their own gardens. After a day's work, these immigrants go back to apartments where they are forced to pay extortionate rents and live with 15 or 20 others. As hundreds stand every morning at the corner of a 7-Eleven parking lot, waiting desperately to be picked up for a day job, the *esquineros* (from the Spanish word for corner) are subjected to insults, harassment and racist slurs. Every Saturday, the Sachem Quality of Life (SQOL) group, local affiliate of the sinister Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), stages a racist "picket" at the Farmingville corner with signs reading "Go Home!" and "Stop the Crime!"

The attack against the two Mexican laborers came only a few weeks after the Suffolk County legislature narrowly voted down a bill pushed by SQOL to force the INS to carry out raids in Farmingville. A few years ago, the legislature passed a measure to impose an "English only" policy in the county, which was spiked only through an executive veto. A scurrilous column in the liberal Long Island *Newsday* (25 September) following the Farmingville attack was headlined "Immigration—Synonym for Lawlessness" and ranted that "illegal immigrants descend on certain communities" and create a "state of anarchy."

This demonstrates the racist reality of the supposedly new, liberal climate for immigrants in the U.S. touted by the capitalist media. As often happens during periods of economic expansion, the American ruling class has loosened some of the draconian immigration restrictions enacted during the 1980s and '90s, and the INS has cut back on its gestapo-like roundups of undocumented factory workers. But when the economy turns down, especially in a prolonged and deep depression, the bourgeoisie will move to round these workers up en masse and throw them out. The capitalists use these vulnerable, superexploited workers to keep wages down for all workers. At the same time, they seek out highly trained computer and software specialists from India and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the militarization of the border with Mexico continues apace, driving scores of desperate immigrants to their death through drowning or in desert wastelands every year.

Despite their precarious situation, the

Suffolk County laborers have sought to defend themselves against the racists. A few weeks before the attack on Escamilla and Perez, the immigrants chased off the SQOL rabble with yells of "fascistas!" On September 19, hundreds marched through Farmingville to protest the murderous assault. Another protest was held in New York City's Union Square on September 26, organized by the Workplace Project and the Tepeyac Association. A central demand raised by the protest organizers was to call on the Justice Department and FBI to investigate the Farmingville attack, sowing illusions in the very government that has enacted and enforced draconian anti-immigrant legislation.

A call issued by the Coordinadora 96-2000 coalition for an immigrant rights rally in Washington, D.C. on October 14 appeals to the federal government for a series of reforms, including unconditional amnesty for all undocumented immigrants. But the unvarnished aim of the Coordinadora, endorsed by CASA Aztlán, La Raza and other Latino and immigrant groups as well as a handful of labor organizations, is to pressure the Democratic Party in the lead-up to the November elections and, implicitly, to hustle Latino votes for this racist capitalist "lesser evil." The call amnesties the Latino and other Democratic Party politicians who voted for the bipartisan 1996 Illegal Immigrant and Immigrant Responsibility Act signed by Clinton, claiming they never "imagined the devastating effects"—i.e., the deportation of hundreds of thousands of undocumented workers. Coordinadora explicitly appeals to Clinton to "execute an Executive Decision" to give immigrant workers and their families "full human and civil rights" under the provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, while cynically asking: "Did we even exist in the eyes of the leaders and participants of the Civil Rights movement?"

This thinly veiled attack on the struggle for black equality serves only to further the capitalists' schemes to pit one sector of the oppressed against another, in particular black and Latino workers competing for the same miserable, low-wage jobs. The forcible segregation of the majority of the black population at the bottom of this society is the cornerstone of racist American capitalism. The color bar is a fundamental dividing line, a key prop for obscuring the irreconcilable divide between labor and capital. The fight for immigrant rights and the emancipation of the working class as a whole can only go forward hand in hand with the fight for black freedom. **For black liberation through socialist revolution!**

Appealing to the capitalist Democratic Party and the agencies of the same capitalist state which terrorizes and deports immigrants is a dead end. The proletariat is the one force in this society with the social power and class interest to defend immigrant rights. Immigrant workers—many with traditions of combative class



WV Photo
Protest outside New York City INS office against detention of immigrants, September 1999.

struggle in their homelands—now make up at least 12 percent of the workforce, heavily represented in such industries as construction, hotel and restaurant, garment, agriculture and meatpacking. The multiracial labor movement must be mobilized to defend immigrant workers, on and off the job. Anyone who has made it to this country should have the right to stay here! Labor must demand: **Full citizenship rights for all immigrants, "legal" or "illegal"!**

In a letter to the *New York Times* (29 September) on the Farmingville outrage, NYC Central Labor Council president Brian McLaughlin, whose base is in the construction trades, wrote, "For us in the labor movement, this is a call to act." But the only "action" McLaughlin proposed is to support an AFL-CIO resolution calling for amnesty for three million undocumented immigrants and "to push for improved public policy to protect the rights and enhance the lives of immigrant workers in New York." What is needed is to unleash the kind of power seen on the streets of New York two years ago, when 40,000 construction workers fed up with the increasing use of non-union contractors surged through Midtown Manhattan, sweeping aside an army of cops as they chanted, "Here comes the union!" and "Whose city? Our city!" A militant rally of NYC area unionists in Farmingville could quickly put a stop to the anti-immigrant attacks and act as a launching pad for organizing day laborers with full union wages, benefits and working conditions.

The organization of immigrant workers, from Los Angeles to North Carolina, has accounted for much of the recent increase in trade-union membership. After decades of supporting tighter immigration controls and INS roundups, under John Sweeney the AFL-CIO bureaucracy has been forced to take notice of this vibrant new component of the working class, if largely to maintain its dues base. But far from championing the cause of undocumented immigrants, the pro-capitalist labor tops propose "an alternative policy to reduce undocumented immigration and prevent employer abuse": an amnesty for immigrants currently in the country, the better to keep out future immigrants.

Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO misleaders

continue to push chauvinist protectionism—like the Teamsters' crusade against a NAFTA provision allowing Mexican truckers to operate on U.S. highways—which further fuels anti-immigrant racism. The labor tops seek to line up U.S. workers behind the interests of the American ruling class and against their class brothers and sisters in Mexico. We communists stand for joint class struggle on both sides of the border and oppose NAFTA from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism. NAFTA means U.S. imperialism's "free trade" rape of Mexico, driving millions of workers and peasants there into even greater poverty.

What is needed is a massive organizing drive around the country, both to defend immigrant and minority workers against racist abuse and discrimination by the capitalists and to strengthen the unions, which today cover barely 10 percent of all workers in private industry. A successful organizing drive would cost the employers billions in increased wages and benefits. To win, it would have to defy and defeat Southern "right to work" laws and the whole panoply of anti-union legislation enforced by the cops and courts of the capitalist state. This is anathema to the AFL-CIO tops, who act to chain the unions to the capitalist class enemy and the capitalist state, particularly through their support to the Democratic Party. The fight to organize the unorganized and defend the unions can only go forward in a struggle to oust the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and build a class-struggle leadership of labor.

Full and equal rights for immigrants, blacks and other minorities, decent housing and jobs, free quality health care and education for all can only be achieved through a workers revolution which smashes the capitalist profit system and ushers in an egalitarian socialist society. That is the aim of the Spartacist League. As we wrote in "Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks, Immigrants" (WV No. 653, 11 October 1996) on the eve of a mass immigrant rights march initiated by Coordinadora 96: "Workers and minorities do not need a 'lesser' evil party of racist capitalism but a revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed, fighting for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants!" ■

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China...

(continued from page 1)

pointed out that, in this struggle, Mao Zedong's theory of anti-revisionism, preventing revisionism, anti-capitalist restoration, will be the most powerful and effective weapon."

This article was not published in an obscure underground journal put out by a handful of old-line dissident Maoists. It was published legally in the *Central Current*, a nationally known and widely read journal founded in 1990 with the approval of the CCP's Central Department of Propaganda. Despite a recent crackdown on political opposition and dissent, *Central Current* continues to appear. Clearly, this publication, whose stated intent is to "use Marxism-

PART ONE OF TWO

Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought as guidance," has friends and protectors in very high places. The existence of this kind of journal is a surface manifestation of factional differences within the Chinese bureaucracy. And those differences are undoubtedly sharpening in the face of the current mass upsurge in worker unrest, as hundreds of thousands of workers are being laid off from state-owned factories and other enterprises.

These divisions within the CCP illustrate the Trotskyist understanding of China as a deformed workers state. From the time it seized power in 1949, the CCP patterned its rule on the bureaucratic regime which usurped political power from the proletariat in the Soviet Union in 1924 through a political counterrevolution led by Stalin. The rise of this relatively privileged layer grew out of the backwardness and poverty inherited by the Soviet state from tsarist Russia and the failure of the socialist revolution to spread to the advanced capitalist countries, particularly Germany. While not overturning the proletarian property forms established as a result of the October Revolution of 1917, the Stalinist regime repudiated the revolutionary internationalism that animated the Bolsheviks and embraced the anti-Marxist dogma of "socialism in one country."

Common to the Stalinist bureaucracy which ruled the Soviet degenerated workers state and that which has ruled the Chinese deformed workers state from its inception is its nature as a brittle, contradictory *caste*, not a possessing *class*. Parasitically resting on the proletarian property forms from which it derives its privileged position, the bureaucracy simultaneously acts as a transmission belt for the pressures of the capitalist world market on the Chinese deformed workers state. Thus, in anticipation of China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), Beijing has accelerated the pace of privatizations and retrenchment of state-owned enterprises. At the same time, the regime has attempted to mollify the angry workers and peasants through "anti-corruption" campaigns, even executing some high-ranking officials, and has occasionally

reversed some of its own "free market" measures. This is *not* because the Stalinists are irrevocably committed to defense of the collectivized economy. As Trotsky wrote of the Soviet bureaucracy in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), "It continues to preserve state property only to the extent that it fears the proletariat."

"Market Socialism" and Neo-Maoism

To be sure, Wei's article does not openly denounce the Jiang/Zhu regime and its pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist policies, e.g., China's drive to join the WTO. That's not permitted in a public journal which has to have at least the unofficial sanction of the Communist Party. But readers of *Central Current* get the message—written, so to speak, between the lines. While exalting Mao as a great revolutionary, Wei's article does not even mention his successor, Deng Xiaoping, who introduced "market socialism"—which he called "socialism with Chinese characteristics"—and invited large-scale investment by Western, Japanese and offshore Chinese capitalists in Taiwan, Hong Kong and elsewhere. Deng is thus condemned by conspicuous omission.

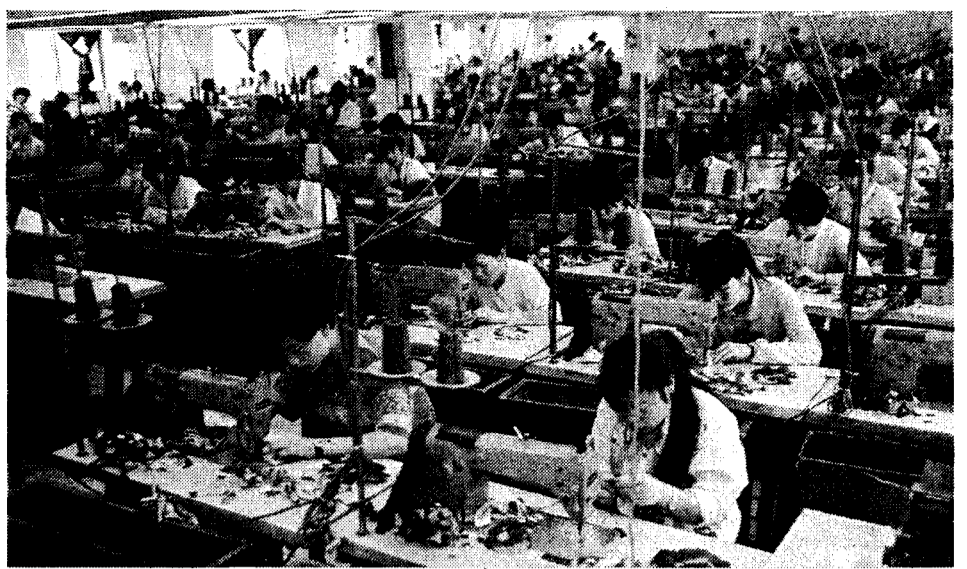


Ming Bao

Women workers in Hanchuan, Hubei province protest layoffs. Banners read: "We Want to Eat" and "We Want to Live."

Wei also praises Mao for opposing the "revisionism" of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in the late 1950s and early '60s. But Wei's real target is the post-Mao Chinese "revisionist" leaders Deng and his successor, Jiang. At least the older generation of Chinese know that during the "Cultural Revolution" of the 1960s, Mao branded Deng as "the second leading person in authority taking the capitalist road" and stripped him of his political power for several years.

Wei Wei is not just a nostalgic, old-line Maoist intellectual whose writings have no bearing on power politics in Beijing. *Central Current* is the public voice of conservative Chinese Stalinist bureaucrats, like former propaganda minister Deng Liqun, who worry that the restoration of "free market" capitalism will produce massive and incalculable social dis-



Lansner/Black Star

Garment factory in China. Influx of imperialist and overseas Chinese capital has meant brutal exploitation for millions of workers.

locations. It could even lead once again to the subjugation and dismemberment of China at the hands of Western and Japanese imperialism.

Many top Chinese government officials and military men look at what happened to the Soviet Union with genuine horror. As a consequence of capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, a "superpower" second only to the United States was broken apart along national lines, its industrial base dismantled, its military power gutted, its society beset by political turmoil. They see demobilized former Soviet military officers reduced to penury and homelessness. They see former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, once a respected world figure, now acting as a public relations man for an American pizza company!

But even more than they fear the unhappy fate of their former Soviet counterparts, Beijing Stalinist bureaucrats fear the Chinese working class. And rightly so. The protesting molybdenum miners and their families literally took over the town of Yangjiazhangzi for three days before being quelled by the army. According to one police report from the central province of Anhui, it has become common to see "workers collectively besieging enterprise leaders, hurling abuse at them, and even detaining them under duress." The Chinese Labor Ministry reports that there were more than 120,000 labor disputes last year—14 times more than in 1992—from petitions to strikes.

The Chinese bureaucracy instinctively knows that it cannot suppress this level of labor unrest just by using the police and army. Some army units, mainly consisting of the conscripted sons of poor peasants, might even go over to the side of the rebellious workers. So the bureaucracy also tries to *politically pacify* the workers by promising them a better future. Jiang, Zhu & Co. promise prosperity through China's greater integration into the world capitalist economy. But having experienced the ravages of "market reforms" for over two decades now, much of the Chinese working class is skeptical or outright hostile toward the advocates of a "socialist market economy."

So other sections of the bureaucracy present a left face as represented by *Cen-*

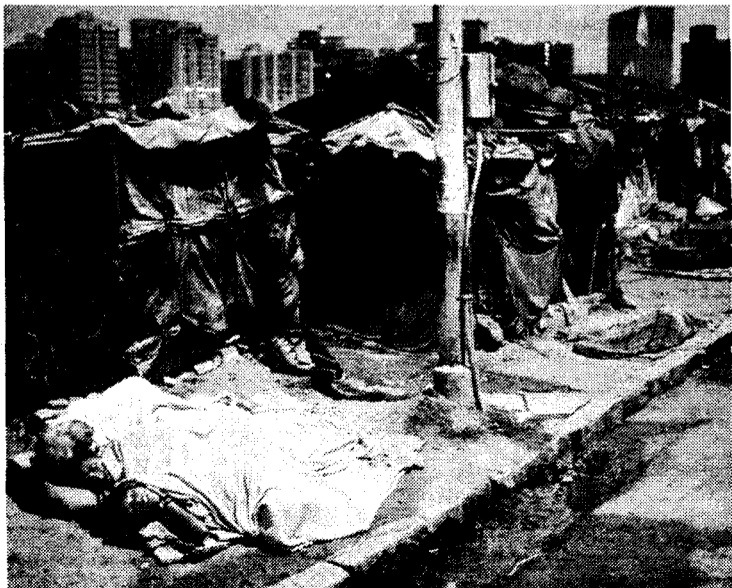
tral Current. This neo-Maoist journal offers a kind of reformism of the left. It says in effect that there are influential figures in the CCP who, if they gained the upper hand, would eliminate the rampant corruption and nepotism and curb the increasing economic power of Western, Japanese and offshore Chinese capitalists. They might even reconstruct the "iron rice bowl" (guaranteed lifetime employment in state-owned enterprises) and return to the supposedly more egalitarian policies of the Mao era.

In reaction to the extreme inegalitarianism promoted by Deng, who once declared, "To be rich is glorious," an idealization of the Mao era has developed in the popular consciousness of Chinese society. During the 1989 student-centered demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, a contingent of young workers who joined the mass protests carried placards with Mao's picture. The London *Independent* (24 May 1989) commented at the time: "While few would relish any return to dogmatic Maoism, the past does offer an appealing if highly romanticized vision for many Chinese: prices were stable, crime was low and unemployment was unheard of."

Stalinism with Chinese Characteristics

Such idealization of the Mao era is certainly understandable. But Mao's regime was far from egalitarian and far from socialist. Mao's "Great Leap Forward" in the late 1950s was an insane economic adventure, exemplified by backyard steel furnaces, which ended in total collapse and widespread starvation. The destructive frenzy of the "Cultural Revolution" which began in the mid-1960s—a decade-long, convulsive factional struggle within the bureaucracy—took many more lives than the massacre carried out by the Deng regime to crush the Tiananmen protests.

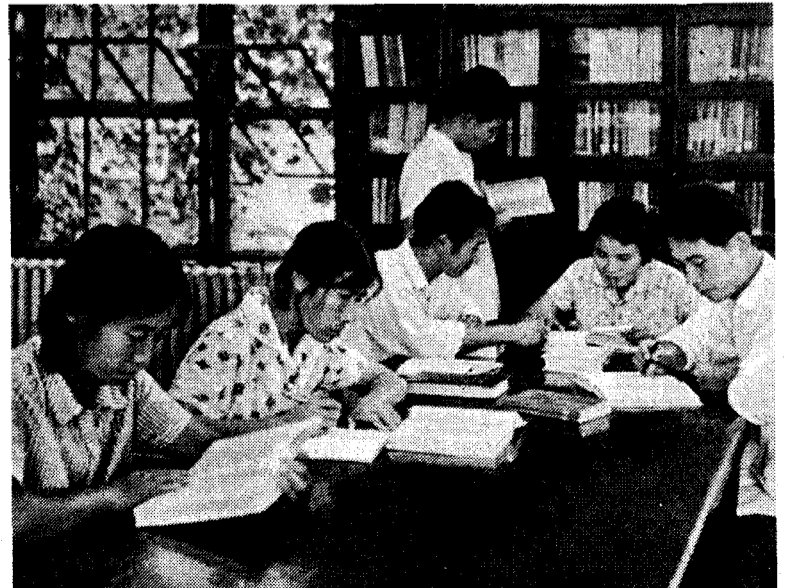
In both China and the West, Mao and Deng are viewed as polar opposites, the one a communist visionary, the other a pragmatic modernizer. In reality, both represented the interests of the parasitic bureaucracy which has governed China since the 1949 Revolution and rests on the planned collectivized economy



Mehta/Contact



Joseph Abeles Collection



China Pictorial

Bombay slum (left): India remains mired in poverty more than 50 years after independence. In China, 1949 Revolution overthrowing capitalist rule brought enormous economic and social gains. Woman with bound feet in prerevolutionary China, students at Qinghua University in contemporary China.

ushered in by the revolution. That revolution shattered capitalist rule, seized the land from the rapacious landlords and threw off the yoke of imperialist subjugation. The creation of a planned economy laid the basis for enormous gains for the workers and peasants.

But there was a qualitative difference between the 1949 Chinese Revolution and the Russian Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. The October Revolution was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat which saw the seizure of power as the first step toward world socialist revolution. In contrast, Mao's CCP came to power through peasant-based guerrilla war and propounded the nationalist Stalinist dogma of building "socialism in one country" from the outset.

Writing in the mid-19th century, Karl Marx explained that in the absence of an international socialist society based on the highest level of technological and industrial development, "only what will be generalized, and with what the struggle for necessities begins again, and all the old crap must revive." Flatly repudiating Marx, the Stalinists preach the idiocy that socialism, which both Marx and Lenin identified as the lowest stage of classless communist society, could be built in a single country if only imperialist military intervention were thwarted. In practice, "socialism in one country" meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally. It expressed the nationally limited interests of the bureaucratic caste which usurped political power in the Soviet Union in

1970). That alliance was sealed in 1972 when U.S. president Richard Nixon visited Beijing and embraced the Chairman at the very moment that U.S. warplanes were bombing Vietnam!

The alliance with the U.S. was continued and deepened under Deng. In 1979, Deng ordered the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to invade Vietnam, the main Soviet ally in East Asia, with the approval and encouragement of Washington. The Vietnamese resisted effectively and inflicted 20,000 casualties on the PLA, which retreated across the border. During the final years of the Cold War in the 1980s, *China bolstered American imperialism in weakening and undermining the Soviet Union*—for example, giving aid to the CIA-backed *mujahedin* cutthroats fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan—thereby furthering the counterrevolutionary drive which destroyed the USSR. So when the neo-Maoist Wei now laments that this was "the greatest tragedy of this century," he is being deeply hypocritical.

Chinese workers and left-wing intellectuals must be won to the understanding that it is Trotskyism—not Maoism, i.e., Stalinism with Chinese characteristics—which genuinely represents the revolutionary Marxism of today. The Trotskyist International Communist League stands for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. Our defense of China against the class enemy does not depend on the prior overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy nor on the circumstances and immediate causes of a mili-



U.S.A.F.



Magnum

Beijing, 1972: Mao fêtes U.S. president Nixon as American imperialists rain death and destruction on Vietnam.

institutions and values inherited from the Mao era." And he goes on:

"For the savage capitalism that operates under the cloak of a socialist market economy is bringing about enormous social transformations and upheavals—massive proletarianization, more intensive forms of exploitation, greater alienation, enormous gaps between rich and poor, and growing economic and social differences between town and countryside."

In his article, Wei cites Meisner's work with approval, especially for his positive attitude toward Mao's ideas and toward China during the Mao era. Nonetheless, there are very important differences between them. As can be seen from the above quote, Meisner contends that capitalism—he calls it "bureaucratic capitalism"—was restored to China under Deng, although he concedes that "glaringly absent is a developed system of private property." Wei maintains that China is still "socialist" although threatened by the forces of capitalist restoration.

This difference reflects something far more important than the theoretical outlooks of these two particular leftist intellectuals. Because of his geographical location and social role, Wei seeks to appeal to the Chinese working class which is now engaged in elemental struggles against the effects of a "socialist market economy." Chinese workers know that the privatization of state-owned enterprises will result in mass unemployment and destitution for many of them.

Following the closure of much of the state-owned molybdenum mine in Yangjiazhangzi in February and the sale of the remainder to the managers' friends, one worker declared: "We miners have been

working here for China, for the Communist Party, since the revolution. And now my part of the mine is private." He is expressing the attitude of many Chinese workers, who understand that such state property belongs to the working class. If, as Meisner contends, state property in China belongs to the bureaucrats, why should workers protest if it is taken over as private property?

Nonetheless, Meisner's work should be considered seriously, for it is well regarded among Chinese students and other intellectuals who are opposed to or critical of the existing regime from the left. It purports to be a theoretical analysis of China, from a "critical Marxist" perspective, from the 1949 Revolution through the last years of the Deng regime.

Meisner, now in his 60s, is a representative of that current of Western leftist intellectuals (e.g., Paul Sweezy, Charles Bettelheim) who endorsed and publicized Mao's idealist criticism of both Marxism and of "orthodox" Soviet Stalinism. The Soviet variant of "socialism in one country" always involved a large element of technological dynamism: a faith that backward Russia, through its planned economy, could catch up with the advanced capitalist countries in a generation or so. Stalin's *Problems of Leninism* (1933) asserted, "We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in ten years."

Mao's China in the 1950s was qualitatively more economically backward than was Stalin's Russia in the 1930s. The

continued on page 10



Scott/BBC

Workers in 1989 Tiananmen Square protests carried portraits of Mao Zedong, looking back to his claims of egalitarianism as they protested effects of "market reforms."

1923-24 and turned the Communist International from an instrument of the world revolution into a tool for the bureaucracy's illusory search for "peaceful co-existence" with imperialism. Leon Trotsky's Left Opposition fought against the Stalinist betrayers to restore the revolutionary, proletarian, internationalist principles which animated the October Revolution.

Within the nationalist framework of "socialism in one country," which is counterposed to the perspective of international proletarian revolution, the regimes of Mao and Deng pursued different policies in different international contexts. Nonetheless, in one very important respect their policies were substantially identical: *the alliance with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet Union*. Thus it is both ironic and hypocritical that today the neo-Maoist Wei Wei writes: "The change of the nature in East Europe and the breakup of the USSR in the late 1980s and early '90s was the greatest tragedy of this century." In the late 1960s—and Wei certainly knows this—Mao labeled the Soviet Union a "social imperialist" power even more dangerous to China than the U.S. New Left radicals around the world hailed Mao's China as a revolutionary alternative to the stodgy Kremlin bureaucracy at the time. We Trotskyists described Maoism as "Khrushchevism under the gun." We insisted that given the Mao regime's hostility to the Soviet Union, "the danger of an imperialist alliance with China against the Russians cannot be dismissed" ("Chinese Menshevism," *Spartacist* No. 15-16, April-May

tary conflict. The parasitic bureaucracy which is paving the way to capitalist restoration must be ousted through a proletarian political revolution. It is urgently necessary to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party in China to lead the combative proletariat to the conquest of political power.

There is no nationally limited road to socialism in China. The modernization of China—providing the basis for a decent life for all its inhabitants on the basis of access to the advanced technology and productive resources now concentrated in North America, West Europe and Japan—requires proletarian revolution in the imperialist centers, laying the basis for an *internationally planned socialist economy*.

Maurice Meisner and Neo-Maoist Idealism

The regime of Jiang Zemin has to date effectively suppressed organized political opposition, whether from the left or right, and even widespread intellectual dissent. A neo-Maoist like Wei Wei can publish only by presenting his views in a highly guarded manner. Given the absence of open political debate in China itself, the most comprehensive and systematic analysis of present-day China from a neo-Maoist standpoint turns out to be the work of an American academic, Maurice Meisner's *The Deng Xiaoping Era: An Inquiry into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978-1994* (1996).

Whereas Wei cannot publicly attack the leaders of post-Mao China, Meisner operates under no such constraint. He condemns Deng for "the indiscriminate sweeping away of all the quasi-socialist

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China...

(continued from page 9)

gulf between the productive capacity of the Chinese and American economies was so vast that bridging it in any politically meaningful time period was inconceivable. "Socialism" was therefore *redefined* as imminently achievable in one of the most impoverished nations on earth. Encapsulating his anti-materialist outlook, Mao stated in 1960, "Lenin said: 'The more backward the country, the more difficult its transition to socialism.' Now it seems that this way of speaking is incorrect. As a matter of fact, the more backward the economy, the easier, not the more difficult, the transition from capitalism to socialism."

Maoist ideology was characterized by extreme *subjectivism*, including a belief that socialist relations could be attained through a "cultural revolution." Sweezy, Meisner et al. took the ideological posturing of Mao's Cultural Revolution at face value as an attempt to create an egalitarian and non-hierarchical society whose members eschewed individual acquisitiveness in favor of the collective well-being. Sweezy wrote in the mid-1970s: "It was only in China, where of all countries in the world conditions were most favorable for revolution, that Marxism could finally be purged of its (essentially bourgeois) economic taint" (*Monthly Review*, January 1975). Or as Meisner puts it in his book on the Deng era: "Mao not only gave primacy to social and ideological factors over economic ones; he also believed that backwardness offered special advantages for social progress and creative development."

Meisner is in important respects more Maoist than Mao. In fact, he is consistently and often severely critical of the Chairman for not practicing what he preached. As an American academic without any political affiliation, he is not constrained in taking such ideas to their logical conclusion. Implicit in the doctrine of "building socialism in one country" is the view that there is no prospect or even possibility of proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. Falsely claiming the mantle of Leninism, Stalin and Mao could not say this openly. But Meisner can and does:

"In the developed capitalist countries, where the Marxian-defined social and material prerequisites for socialism are present, the road to revolution has been closed. Modern historical experience, thus far, has yielded little to support the Marxist belief that socialism is the logical and necessary historical outcome of industrial capitalism and that the urban proletariat is the truly revolutionary class in the modern world."

In other words, if China is to achieve socialism, however conceived, it will have to go it alone. There will be no material aid from proletarian revolutions in North America, West Europe and Japan, which are supposedly fated to remain capitalist forever.

This view was common among North American and West European New Leftists, who saw themselves simply as an auxiliary of "Third World" revolutionary



Xinhua

Li Zhensheng

Backyard steel furnaces exemplified Mao's catastrophic "Great Leap Forward" in 1950s. In 1960s "Cultural Revolution," Mao mobilized student Red Guards in humiliating attacks against opponents in intrabureaucratic fight.



struggles. In fact, even in those years, the Marxist understanding that the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie inevitably leads to revolutionary crises was dramatically confirmed in the May-June 1968 general strike in France and a number of other prerevolutionary situations.

Far more categorically than Mao, Meisner identifies socialism with egalitarianism and communal values and capitalism with maximizing production and productivity. At times he treats socialism as if it were almost a religious faith inspiring the brotherhood of man. Thus he condemns the Deng regime for bringing about "a spiritual impoverishment of unprecedented depth." One is here reminded of Marx's comment in the *Communist Manifesto* on what he called "feudal socialism": "Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism a Socialist tinge."

On the other hand, Meisner not only contends that capitalism was restored to China under Deng but that Deng's "bureaucratic capitalism" was responsible for China's relatively high rate of economic growth in this period. At this point, Meisner's views come close to converging with those of the *Wall Street Journal*: "What China's quasi-capitalist regime has done," he writes, "as capitalism in general is adept at doing, is to enormously expand production and productivity."

Even among those Chinese youth or intellectuals of leftist sympathies who don't subscribe to Meisner's position that the Chinese economy of today is one of "bureaucratic capitalism," many share his

view that there is a fundamental antagonism between maximizing economic production and technological progress on the one hand and egalitarianism and socialist values on the other. Such intellectuals are thus conflicted over China's prospective entry into the WTO. They believe that increased foreign competition will force state-owned industry to become more efficient and increased foreign investment will bring with it new and more advanced technology. At the same time, they recognize that China's entry into the WTO would result in mass unemployment with millions of workers thrown onto the streets, many of them forced to become beggars, their daughters turning to prostitution to survive.

The belief that there is an intrinsic conflict or at any rate a necessary trade-off between economic growth and social egalitarianism is profoundly false. Under a government based on workers democracy and led by a Leninist-Trotskyist party, a centrally planned and managed collectivized economy would optimize economic growth while eradicating the extremes of rich and poor so evident in China today. The Western-style affluence enjoyed by the top officials and their "princeling" sons is sheer parasitism. It has nothing to do with economic rationality and efficiency.

We oppose WTO intervention in China not because we favor economic autarky—the Maoist doctrine of "self sufficiency"—but because it would further undermine the collectivized economy. As an integral component of a planned,

socialized economy, the state monopoly of foreign trade could and should be operated to take full advantage of the international division of labor, promoting a high level of both exports and imports. Such a policy in no way entails opening China's state-owned industries to untrammelled competition from Western and Japanese corporations.

Capitalism, Socialism and the Workers State

Meisner operates with just two categories—capitalism and socialism—which supposedly describe all socio-economic formations in the modern world. Furthermore, he invests the term "socialism" with two different, mutually exclusive meanings. For the most part, he uses socialism as a synonym for what Marx called full communism, accurately described by Meisner as "conditions of economic abundance [which] would allow people to free themselves from the tyranny of the division of labor, permit the shortening of the workday, and thereby yield the free time for the emergence of new 'all-round' people who would freely, cooperatively, and creatively develop their true human potentialities."

But he also describes China under Mao as "socialist" in a much more limited and conditional sense:

"In the course of a revolution that took place in so primitive a rural environment, values and institutions were forged, albeit in rudimentary and embryonic forms, that pointed to the goals that Marxist theory attributed to an urban proletarian revolution. If China was almost entirely lacking in the material preconditions for socialism, this condition in no way diminished the socialist vision and will of China's Communist revolutionaries."

Since China lacked the material preconditions for socialism, once the Communist leaders abandoned their "socialist vision and will," China became *ipso facto* capitalist. That is the crux of Meisner's argument.

Meisner falsifies Marx's understanding of the relationship between capitalism and socialism by omission and selective quotations. In one of his best-known works, the 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Marx states: "Between capitalist and communist society lies the transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*." Both the term and, more importantly, the underlying concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat (or workers state) is completely *absent* from Meisner's analysis of the People's Republic of China.

The theoretical core of the *Critique of the Gotha Program* concerns the economic structure and dynamics of the transition period. Lenin addressed these same questions in *The State and Revolution* (1917), which drew heavily on Marx and Engels' earlier works. The Marxist understanding of the fundamental *difference* between the workers state, in which economic scarcity still prevails, and socialism bears directly on Meisner's contention that capitalism has been restored in China and, moreover, even existed in

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SEE PAGE 21

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Trotsky's Fight Against Stalinist Betrayal of Bolshevik Revolution
SEE PAGE 33

Revolutionary Regroupment or Centrist Alchemy?
SEE PAGE 55

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SEE PAGE 9

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rudimentary form under Mao. Meisner writes:

"The Deng Xiaoping regime inherited from its Maoist predecessor many of the necessary (but not sufficient) features of a capitalist economy. Among them was a relatively well-developed modern industrial and technological base; a hybrid mode of economic development that had separated the immediate producers from the means of production; the predominance of wage labor, formally in the cities, in disguised form in the countryside; and an efficient system for capital accumulation—through the state's extraction of surplus value, especially from the countryside."

He goes on to argue that the Deng regime introduced certain features into the economy which amounted to the formation of "bureaucratic capitalism." The "most important" of these features was "the full commodification of labor-power—and that has largely been accomplished through the proletarianization of a good portion of the peasantry and the 'smashing of the iron rice bowl' in the cities."

Differential wages and a labor market are and will be essential features of *any and every workers state*, even in the most advanced industrial countries governed according to the most perfect workers democracy. As Marx explained in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*:

"What we are dealing with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society, which is thus in every respect, economically, morally, and intellectually, still stamped with the birth-marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions have been made—exactly what he gives to it.... He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such and such an amount of labour (after deducting his labour for the common funds), and with this certificate he draws

from the social stock of means of consumption as much as the same amount of labour costs....

"Here obviously the same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities, as far as this is the exchange of equal values."

The only alternative to such a wage system under conditions of economic scarcity would be the *militarization of labor* in which the government assigns and compels people to do specific jobs. Under the Mao regime, as Meisner points out, peasants were legally prohibited from migrating to the cities while periodic *xia-xiang* campaigns forcibly dispatched millions of urban youth to live and work in the countryside. It would appear that Meisner prefers such policies to the greater use of the labor market, and with it more personal freedom, introduced by the Deng regime.

Certainly, genuinely socialist policies would bring about a wage structure very different than that which exists in China today. But there would still be different levels of wages and a market for labor power. Some jobs are a lot harder, more unpleasant and/or dangerous than others. How many people would work in a coal mine or steel mill if they could get the same wages doing clerical work in an office? Similar factors operate in inducing workers to upgrade their job skills. How many people would spend their few hours of free time taking classes and studying technical manuals rather than enjoying themselves with their family and friends unless materially rewarded for doing so? Only when labor absorbs an insignificant amount of time and energy—and that will happen only under full communism—will individuals freely grant it to the social collective.

As indicated in the passage from Meisner quoted above, he maintains that the Chinese economy under Mao as well as Deng was characterized by "capital accumulation" and the extraction of "surplus value" from the direct producers. He here identifies capital with the means of production and surplus value with the economic surplus available after consumption by the direct producers. This is an elementary error for a self-considered Marxist, albeit an unorthodox and critical one. Marx clearly stated:

"Capital is *not* a thing, but rather a definite social production relation, belonging to a definite historical formation of society, which is manifested in a thing and lends this thing a specific social character. Capital is *not* the sum of the material and produced means of production. Capital is rather the means of production transformed into capital, which in themselves are no more capital than gold or silver in itself is money." [emphasis added]

—Capital, Volume III

The investment of a substantial portion of the economic surplus in expanding the means of production would be essential in any workers state. In the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Marx polemicizes against the notion put forward by the German socialist Ferdinand Lassalle that "the proceeds of labor belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society":

"Let us take first of all the words 'proceeds of labor' in the sense of the product of labor; then the collective proceeds of labor are the *total social product*.

"From this must now be deducted:

"*First*, cover for replacement of the means of production used up.

"*Secondly*, additional portion for expansion of production."

Without investing a substantial portion of the economic surplus in replacing and

expanding the means of production, there can be no introduction of new technology, no increase in the productivity of labor, no reduction in the workday or work-week. In short, there can be no transition to socialism.

Some leftist opponents of China's "market socialism" who argue that capitalism was restored in China under Deng point to the relative growth of capitalist enterprises compared to state-owned industry in recent years. This obscures the fact that *the Chinese economy is still dominated by state-owned industry*. Even in the countryside following decollectivization, land remains state-owned while distribution of agricultural products is controlled by the state. At bottom, the claim that capitalism has been restored is a rationale for refusing to defend the Chinese deformed workers state against the very real threat of capitalist counter-revolution.

China does not have a capitalist economy. For that to happen there would have to be a counterrevolution which smashes the deformed workers state and installs a new state committed to the defense of capitalist property forms. But neither is China a socialist society, nor could it be. China is a *deformed workers state*, that is, a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a backward country governed from its inception by a parasitic bureaucratic caste. Whether China is plunged back into capitalism or moves forward toward socialism will depend in the final analysis not so much on developments within China itself, monumentally important as these are, as on the future course of the class struggle on the international plane.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

West Bank...

(continued from page 12)

Benjamin Netanyahu and One Israel's Barak. Trading in Arab blood is nothing new for the butcher Sharon, architect of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and the premeditated slaughter that year of up to 2,000 defenseless Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps near Beirut.

As his cops and troops gunned down unarmed demonstrators, Barak arrogantly ordered Arafat to "restrain and control the outbreaks of violence." Barak was echoed by Meretz leader Yossi Sarid, spokesman for the Zionist "peace camp," who "demanded that Arafat make a supreme effort to return affairs to their normal course" (*Ha'aretz*, 2 October). Responding to Barak, the administrator of the Haram al-Sharif trust said, "We are not the ones who opened up fire." As head of military intelligence and army chief of staff, Barak oversaw death squads that hunted down Palestinian leaders. One Israel (formerly the "Labor" Party, a thoroughly bourgeois party despite its name) defeated Netanyahu in elections last year with a pledge to revive the "peace process." But Barak has continued expropriating Arab lands and defending the heavily armed fascistic "settlers" in the occupied West Bank.

At a funeral in Ramallah for one of those killed, one Palestinian said bitterly, "Sharon was the match. But there was already gasoline poured all over the situation." When Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Arafat and Labor prime minister Yitzhak Rabin signed the 1993 "peace" accord on the White House lawn, aimed at quelling the *Intifada* (Uprising) which began in late 1987, we headlined our article "Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto" (*WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993). In the years since, even as Arafat and his petty-bourgeois coterie were granted the trappings of "sovereignty," the walls of that ghetto have become ever more insurmountable for the Palestinian masses. Under both Labor/One Israel and Likud, the Zionist regime has repeatedly sealed

off the Occupied Territories for weeks at a time. Palestinian laborers have been denied access to the low-wage jobs in Israel which once provided a minimal economic lifeline for hundreds of thousands of people in Gaza and the West Bank. Zionist troops and "settlers" have perpetrated one massacre after another.

The *New York Times* (1 October) reported, "The Gaza protestors, many of them sympathizers of the radical fundamentalist Hamas movement, directed their fury not just at Mr. Sharon, but at Yasir Arafat, ripping apart posters of the Palestinian leader." It hardly takes the influence of Hamas for the downtrodden of Gaza to despise Arafat. As we warned in 1993, the "peace" deal placed "the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses." It is an indictment of the PLO's petty-bourgeois nationalism, which relied on the good offices first of the Arab capitalist regimes and then of U.S. imperialism, that a significant number of Palestinian workers and intellectuals, once among the most cosmopolitan elements in the Near East, have been driven into the arms of Hamas. This vilely anti-Semitic and anti-woman Islamic fundamentalist group was deliberately nurtured by Israeli intelligence in the 1980s as a counterweight to the secular PLO.

The Haram al-Sharif, sacred to Muslims, Jews and Christians alike, could rightly be called the Massacre Mount. Since Israel seized East Jerusalem in 1967, it has been the site of numerous atrocities by Zionist troops, including the slaughter of over 20 Palestinians in 1990 and another 62 in 1996. The current killing has provoked such fierce anger among the Palestinians that some of Arafat's cops have fired back against the Israelis, as they did in 1996. But if some satisfaction can be derived from the fact that the corpses are not all on one side, the Palestinians clearly cannot prevail in a military confrontation with the Zionist state. Nor, ultimately, can several million Israeli Jews prevail against the combined populations of the Arab and Islamic countries of the region.

Israeli workers have demonstrated substantial economic militancy against

their capitalist exploiters. If the Zionist rulers are not to take all the myriad peoples of the region down by unleashing a nuclear Armageddon, the Hebrew-speaking workers must be broken from the poisonous chauvinism which binds them to their exploiters and make common cause with their class brothers and sisters throughout the Near East against all the capitalist and feudal rulers. Palestinian militants must break from the dead end of petty-bourgeois nationalism and reactionary Islamic fundamentalism. The Israeli garrison-state must be shattered from within, through a socialist revolution led by a binational Leninist vanguard party which unites the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab workers around their *class* interests.

What fuels the horrendous bloodshed in Israel/Palestine, which has overwhelmingly targeted the Arab masses for more than five decades, is the fact that two peoples lay claim to the same

territory. Under the capitalist nation-state, one people must necessarily oppress or drive out the other. We defend the right to a national existence for both the Hebrew-speaking people and the Palestinian Arab people, which is oppressed not only by the Zionist state but by the Jordanian monarchy. The conflicting rights to national self-determination for the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab peoples, as well as national emancipation for the Kurds and the many other oppressed nationalities of the Near East, can only be equitably realized under proletarian state power. It is necessary to forge internationalist vanguard parties to lead the working masses of the region—and behind them the peasants, subjugated nationalities, women and all the oppressed—in sweeping away all the theocratic and nationalist capitalist butchers as part of the fight for workers revolution internationally. *For a socialist federation of the Near East!* ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. Local Directory and Public Offices

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 • (212) 732-7860
Web site: www.icl-fi.org • E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net

Boston

Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 454-4930

Public Office:

Tues. 5-9 p.m.
and Sat. 12-3 p.m.
328 S. Jefferson St.
Suite 904

Los Angeles

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

Public Office:

Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York

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

Public Office:

Tues. 6:30-8:30 p.m.
and Sat. 1-5 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland

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

Public Office:

Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor

San Francisco

Box 77494
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 395-9520

Public Office:

Tues. 6-8 p.m.
564 Market St., Suite 718

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

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

Vancouver

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

WORKERS VANGUARD

**Defend the Palestinian People!
All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!**

Zionist Massacre in West Bank, Gaza

OCTOBER 3—The true face of the U.S.-sponsored “peace process” is seen on the streets of East Jerusalem, Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron and Gaza. It was captured in the frightened gaze of a 12-year-old boy seeking shelter behind a cement block, as Israeli bullets pierced his body in full view of TV cameras while his anguished father cried out for troops to hold their fire. Tanks, helicopter gunships and troops firing automatic rifles and even anti-tank missiles have now slaughtered over 50 Palestinians and wounded several thousand more. In the last two days, the bloodshed and Arab protests have spread to cities within Israel, from the Negev in the south to Nazareth and Umm al Fahm in the north. It is urgent for workers and the oppressed internationally to raise the call: *Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops and settlers out of all the Occupied Territories now!*

The imperialist “peace” fraud lies buried beneath a mound of Arab bodies murdered with weapons paid for by the U.S., which continues its own methodical slaughter—from the skies or through the starvation blockade—of Iraqi men, women and children. Secretary of State



Reuters



Castelnuovo/NY Times

Dozens have been killed and over a thousand wounded as Israeli troops fire into crowds of Palestinians.

Albright scrambled to resuscitate the “peace process” by summoning Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority head Yasir Arafat to a meeting in Paris tomorrow. But the peace of the graveyard is all that imperialist capitalism can offer the Palestinian

people. *Down with the bloody anti-Palestinian “Pax Americana”—U.S. imperialist hands off the Near East!*

The signal for the slaughter came last Thursday, when ultrachauvinist Likud Party leader Ariel Sharon strutted around East Jerusalem’s Haram al-Sharif (also

known as the Temple Mount), the third-holiest site in the Muslim world, surrounded by a thousand gun-toting troops. Sharon’s calculated provocation was in part a cynical bid to position himself for the next election against Likud rival

continued on page 11

Labor: Mobilize to Defend Immigrant Workers!

Murderous Attack on Mexican Immigrants on Long Island

It didn’t take long for Magdaleno Escamilla, a 28-year-old day laborer from Hidalgo, Mexico working on Long Island, to figure out something was seriously wrong. Looking around the abandoned warehouse to which he and his friend, 19-year-old Israel Perez, had been lured by two white men claiming to be contractors, Escamilla remarked, “I don’t like this one minute.” The racist thugs then attacked the two immigrant workers with a crowbar, shovels and knives. Escamilla was left severely battered and Perez hospitalized with a severed tendon

in his wrist and a cut artery that could have resulted in his bleeding to death. But after struggling with their attackers, they managed to escape alive.

The near-murder of Escamilla and Perez is but the latest in a series of violent attacks on undocumented workers in this area, including a drive-by shooting last year that left 12 bullet holes in the front door of a house where immigrants live. Like thousands of other Mexican and Central American immigrants, Escamilla and Perez work at backbreaking

continued on page 7

**New York City,
September 26:
Union Square
rally to protest
brutal attack
on two
immigrant
workers in
Suffolk County.**



WV Photo

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Organize the Unorganized!