

## Smash Feds' Vendetta Against Teamsters!

# Unchain the Unions!

Union leaders in chains like black slaves in the Old South. So opened the 1980s. Reagan's crushing of the PATCO air controllers strike, just a few months after becoming president, set the tone for a decade of union-busting. Greyhound, Hormel, Massey Coal—hard strikes ending in bitter defeat. Pickets run over and killed by scabs. Miners militants sentenced to 45 years in prison. The largest union in the country, the Teamsters, targeted by a government takeover. The giveback contract and "union-free environment" became the hallmarks of the '80s, where the new "growth industry" is in union-husting outfits. Membership in major unions has declined by over a third since the '70s, from 10 million to 6.5 million.

The massive assault on the union movement has gone hand in hand with a racist offensive against black people, rolling back the minimal and token gains of the civil rights movement. Hospitals are closed, public education is a cruel farce—and increasingly segregated Philadelphia cops and black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, in cahoots with Reagan and Meese, firebombed the MOVE commune. Unemployment among black youth has been over 30 percent for the past 15 years.

The American ruling class and its mouthpieces are proclaiming the death of the labor movement. "U.S. Labor's Lost Clout" headlines a recent piece in the *New York Times*. Writing in *Business Week*, liberal economist Gary Becker tells American workers to scrap their existing unions and replace them with Japanese-style company unions. Collaboration between labor and capital is preached as the only salvation for the American economy with its massive foreign debt and a shrinking industrial plant.

But American working people have not embraced the cult of corporate greed. There is real class hatred for the Wall Street operator flaunting his BMW and his 65 credit cards. This was captured in the popular film *Wall Street*, which pits the sleazeball corporate raider Gekko against the upright leader of a local airline mechanics union. (Typically, though, the honest union man aims only to negotiate a less giveback contract with a less sleazy raider.)

The spectacular discrediting and unraveling of the rabidly right-wing Reagan regime with the Iran-Contra scandal created an opening for workers and the black and Hispanic poor to strike back at the misrulers of this country. And whether the yuppie

### Bury Reagan Reaction—Screw the Democrats! Fight for a Workers Party!



PATCO leaders in chains as Reagan crushes 1981 air controllers strike. Right: Philadelphia Teamsters in support of hard-fought 1983 ATU strike against Greyhound.

technocrat Dukakis or Ivy League wimp Bush wins in November, workers won't be facing a "strong" president in the White House. Under these conditions working-class discontent is beginning to make itself felt in the unions. A fighting labor leadership is desperately needed to translate this opening into some real victories.

To paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of the death of the American labor movement are greatly exaggerated. As *Business Week* (18 July) notes:

"Everyone knows that labor has lost its clout at the bargaining table. Everyone, that is, but rank-and-file union

members. In the past few months members of several large unions have angrily rejected contracts negotiated by their officers. The resulting turmoil has threatened to unseat several union leaders and caused confusion for employers."

At General Electric (the company which launched Reagan's political career) local union officials recommended rejecting the new contract. Rubber workers at Goodyear sent their officials back to the bargaining table. Over 60 percent of truck drivers voted down the latest national contract (which didn't prevent the bureaucrats from shoving it down

their throats). And workers in the heart of the "military-industrial" complex—at General Dynamics' Electric Boat yard in Groton—defied the Pentagon and have gone out on strike.

But it will take more than an upsurge of union militancy to turn things around in this country. The disastrous decade for labor is not simply a result of presidential union-busting, unrestrained corporate greed and sellout bureaucrats. The capitalists have run this country's economy into the ground. The average age of an American industrial plant is now 17 years (compared to ten years in Japan). Over 13 million workers were thrown into the streets by plant closures, while overall two million industrial jobs have disappeared in the last decade. Basic industries like steel and auto have been gutted, turning much of the Midwest into a rust belt. The U.S. is being turned into a "service economy" with Wall Street yuppies earning \$100,000 at one end and black ghetto youth slaving for subminimum wages at the other. Moreover, a recent government survey reports that 45 percent of the working-age population in

continued on page 10

### Behind the Bombing of Hiroshima

### Racism, Anti-Sovietism and Atomic Holocaust....7

120,000 Japanese Americans Interned in WWII

### The Infamy of America's Concentration Camps....6



# Pakistani Women March Against Zia's Islamic Terror

Women's organizations in Pakistan are marching in protest against military dictator Mohammad Zia ul-Haq's recent move to impose full "Islamization." In Karachi and Lahore in late June, police tried to block women's marches with barbed-wire barricades, attacking the protesters with steel-tipped batons, kicking and beating many of the women. But several hundred courageously marched again the next week in Lahore, chanting angry slogans against the "Sharia Ordinance," General Zia's latest effort to put Pakistan under Islamic law.

In West Berlin, the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands, German section of the international Spartacist tendency, joined Pakistani demonstrators in a united-front protest on June 30 against Zia's crackdown. The TLD's signs included: "Down with the Veil! Down with Islamic Reaction!" and "For a Socialist Federation of the Indian Subcontinent!" Opposing racist attacks on immigrants in West Germany, the TLD also demanded: "Smash Fascist, Anti-Semitic Terror! For Worker/Immigrant Mobilizations!"

When Zia first seized power in a military coup in 1977, he introduced barbaric laws including such "Islamic punishments" as public whipping, cutting off the hands of convicted thieves and stoning to death women convicted



Pakistani women march through Lahore protesting Islamic law, which enslaves them to the veil.

of adultery. He also proclaimed the Haddood Ordinance, which equates adultery and rape, denies women the right to testify in these matters and requires proof of four male witnesses for both. Now, after eight years of serving as a conduit (and taking his own cut) of massive U.S. aid to the reactionary Afghan mujahedin fighting the Soviet-backed Kabul regime, Zia is trying to steal the fundamentalists' thunder to prop himself up.

Following his abrupt dismissal of the tame government in late May, the fanatical dictator announced on June 15 that Islamic law ("Sharia") must prevail. Islamic fundamentalists especially want to overturn the 1961 Family Laws Ordinance, which fixes a minimum age of marriage (to abolish the practice of child brides), gives the right of divorce to women, undercuts divorce by repudiation (men could previously divorce their wives simply by saying "I divorce you" three times), as well as providing some rights regarding custody of children and inheritance for women. Already the Islamic religious leaders, the *ulema*, have begun censoring television ads, banning any that show women wearing makeup or even walking (!), while women are to be allowed on stage only if covered in thick chadors (veils).

The women protesters are drawn from largely urban and professional upper-class layers. As in Iran before the fall of the bloody, CIA-backed dictatorship of the Shah, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois women in Pakistan have had some freedoms such as being allowed to go to university and enter professions, and the right to vote (when the dictatorship allows elections). But the fragility of such secular, modern practices was demonstrated by the coming to power of Khomeini's religious theocracy in Iran in 1979.

The inability of the weak native bourgeoisies of countries such as Iran or Pakistan to undertake thoroughgoing modernization, to carry out land reform or guarantee simple legal equality for women, proves the burning need for workers revolution to achieve the most

basic democratic rights. Pakistan itself was founded as a "Muslim state," artificially carved out in the bloody forced partition of India in 1947, and today is an unstable mosaic of different tribes and peoples, from the Baluchis in the west to the northwestern Pashtoon tribes.

The most popular opposition politician in Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, the daughter of former prime minister Ali Bhutto (who was arrested and later killed by Zia in 1979), has carefully stayed away from "women's issues," according to Pakistani women's groups. Though she has reportedly criticized the Islamization program, nonetheless her father's Pakistan People's Party based itself on "Islamic socialism," and she too as a bourgeois politician seeks deals with the forces of ultra-reaction in Pakistan.

According to the *New York Times* (14 June), Bhutto "recently concluded an informal understanding with the most powerful of Pakistan's fundamentalist religious parties, the Islamic Party, which used to be more or less allied with General Zia." Bhutto even undertook an arranged marriage to appease the reactionary *ulema*. Ironically, she joked then that the surest way to get Zia to call new elections would be for her to become pregnant, since this would presumably prevent her from campaigning. Zia dissolved the government only four days after her family announced she was pregnant!

Zia, to maintain his power, is quite prepared to condemn the women of Pakistan to the pre-feudal conditions faced by women in Afghanistan prior to the Soviet Army's occupation in 1979. Gorbachev's pullout today is a bitter betrayal of the liberation of those women. As one of our TLD comrades' signs at the June 30 West Berlin demonstration demanded, "Afghanistan: No Withdrawal, Red Army Must Win!" We noted last year:

"General Zia's Pakistan is highly unstable. Baluchi and Pashtoon peoples separated by an imperialist border from their tribal brothers to the north already are attracted by overtures from Kabul, and there are reportedly thousands of Pakistani oppositionists in exile in the Afghan capital. And smashing the Afghan Islamic fanatics could revive revolutionary agitation among the working class in neighboring Iran, now suffering under the theocratic, clerical-feudalist regime of Khomeini's ayatollahs no less than it did under the hated Shah."

—WV No. 420, 23 January 1987

The current unrest and new assaults on women in Pakistan show that the fight for women's liberation is a great motor force for social revolution, which must be led by the proletariat. Pakistani women's fate, and that of the entire working class, is bound up with that of the powerful proletariat of the Indian subcontinent. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For a socialist federation of the Indian subcontinent! ■



TROTSKY

defended the Japanese Americans and exposed the hypocrisy of America's "war for democracy."

Soon after the shooting stage of the war with Japan began, these citizens, in flagrant violation of their civil rights, were yanked from their farms and homes and were herded into virtual concentration camps, known officially by the polite name of relocation centers. This illegal repression was carried out by the law-enforcement agencies after a campaign by the capitalist press to whip up racial prejudice under the guise of national patriotism....

The Japanese people are intelligent and alert, and beneath their external racial characteristics they are indistinguishable from any other human, be he white or black. The working class in Japan is economically enslaved and driven to war by Japan's four ruling industrial families, whose lust for profits and power is the same as that of America's sixty and Britain's thirteen richest families.

The Japanese-American workers are not only our comrades in the world class struggle for socialist liberation, but they are also our brothers through oppression in this capitalist "democracy."

Let us not fail to rally to their side and fight back against the attacks of the common enemy!

—"Plight of Japanese-Americans," *Militant* (10 March 1945)



LENIN

## Imperialist War Crime Against Japanese Americans

The incarceration of Japanese Americans in concentration camps at the outbreak of World War II flowed from the same mixture of racism and capitalist greed as the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of that imperialist war. While the Stalinists supported both these war crimes of U.S. imperialism, the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS Liz Gordon

EDITOR Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER Noah Wilner

CIRCULATION MANAGER Jon Lawrence

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West Berlin,  
June 30—  
German  
Trotskyists in  
united-front  
demonstration  
against  
Zia's terror.  
Signs say:  
"Afghanistan:  
No Withdrawal—  
Red Army Must  
Win!" and  
"Down with the  
Veil! Down  
with Islamic  
Reaction!"



WORKERS VANGUARD



# Over the Berlin Wall— Escape from the “Free World”

WEST BERLIN—It was a “world turned upside down,” according to the Deutsche Presse Agentur, West Germany’s principal news agency. In the early morning of July 1 they were presented with the spectacle of around 200 West Berlin youth clampering over the Berlin Wall into East Berlin in order to escape a brutal assault by the cops of the “free West.” Using police barriers as makeshift ladders to get to the top of the Wall, the youth waved the East German flag in defiance of the cops below. Those arch-villains of Cold War propaganda, the East German border guards, then took the 200 “refugees” off for free coffee, breakfast and cigarettes before escorting them to the exits back to West Berlin.

As one youth said, “If the Amis [Americans] see all this jumping the Wall on television today, then they can just forget the whole crap about the Wall. It throws everything out the window for them.” Indeed it was a most entertaining blow to the anti-Soviet propaganda machines of the West Berlin Senate, West German government and Washington.

How did all this come about? In May about 40 “Green” activists and anarchist types occupied a small piece of overgrown land on the West side of the Wall, which the West Berlin Senate had bought from East Germany



200 West German youth, escaping brutal cop attack, scale Wall into East Berlin.

last year in order to build a four-lane highway through the city. When some youths wanted to save the shrubs, they came up against the full power of the capitalist state.

The Ed Meese of West Berlin, right-

wing Christian Democrat Interior Senator Kewenig, considering the area a “lawless zone,” decided to make it safe for the “free world.” Using as a pretext that one of the occupiers was playing around with a toy gun,

Kewenig’s cops declared the camp dangerously armed and sealed off the whole area with harricades. On June 20, for two and a half hours the cops launched a barrage of tear gas against the camp, only interrupted by the firing of water cannons at the occupiers. Three were seriously injured and had to be hospitalized. Small wonder the protesters climbed over the Wall to East Berlin, fleeing further police assaults.

For more than 25 years the Berlin Wall has been the Western imperialists’ favorite Cold War symbol. At this site in 1963 John F. Kennedy declared, “Ich bin ein Berliner.” And Reagan went to the Wall in 1987 in his first visit to West Germany since saluting the Nazi killer elite at Bithurg two years earlier. To prevent West Berlin youth from protesting the anti-Communist warmonger from Washington, 10,000 police occupied the city as Reagan, surrounded by barbed wire and bullet-proof glass, spoke on the “free world” side of the Brandenburg Gate.

The imperialists hate the Berlin Wall because it was erected as a barrier to the capitalist reunification of Germany. The Wall was a measure, albeit a bureaucratic one, to defend the collectivized economy against imperialist pressure, specifically the massive hemorrhaging of state-trained East German professionals and skilled workers to the West in the early ‘60s. But today thousands of East German émigrés are returning from the West, disillusioned by the impossibility of finding jobs in the “free world.” And now West German youth scale the Wall to find refuge from the club-swinging cops unleashed by their own “free world” bourgeoisie.

## Smash the Racist Witchhunt—Drop the Charges!

# FBI “Terrorist” Scare Targets Arabs

On July 20, the FBI rounded up eight people in the D.C. area, Denver and Ann Arbor, dragged them into court in chains and ordered them held without bail. The gutter rags howled, “Plot to Kill Ollie North Foiled” (*New York Post*, 21 July). An FBI agent testified that Libyan agents were gathering personal information about a highly placed government official in order “to kill this government official.” A government spokesman “revealed” a lurid made-in-Libya conspiracy to avenge the 1986 bombing of Tripoli, complete with “hit lists” naming over a thousand U.S. federal employees, including former Lt. Col. Oliver North of Contragate fame.

When North appeared before the Congressional Contragate committee, he played for sympathy by claiming the shadowy “Abu Nidal” was out to ice him for his “anti-terrorist” efforts. Now with North facing indictment, his pals point the finger at a Jordanian-born American, Mousa Hawamda, who runs a Washington travel agency! Even a Justice Department official sneered, “If we have information that shows this guy was plotting to kill North, we should charge him with it. We haven’t!” (*New York Times*, 23 July). The only charge the government has come up with is that the eight allegedly violated the U.S. trade embargo against Libya by using funds intended for support of Libyans studying here to finance demonstrations, pro-Qaddafi T-shirts and travel by American radicals to Libya. Yet hail for Hawamda was set at an extortionate \$250,000! The six Libyans indicted have now been released on bail.

This is an obscene farce straight out of the Reaganauts’ looking-glass world

Oliver North is a terrorist, whose crimes include masterminding the bombing raid aimed at assassinating Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi. And North had more than a couple of grenade-toting commandos at his disposal. He dispatched a squadron of supersonic F-111 bombers from Britain and the Sixth Fleet to blow away a hundred Libyan civilians including Qaddafi’s baby daughter. Now they’re targeting anybody who solidarized with Reagan/North’s victims: within days, the feds had extended their net to include black and American Indian activists who had traveled to Libya or demonstrated opposition to the U.S. terror bombing. Smash this vile racist witchhunt! Drop the charges now!

The arrests capped a yearlong FBI “Operation Friendly Skies,” ordered by Reagan’s recently departed top cop/crook, Ed Meese (whose crony, Henry Hudson, is the prosecuting attorney). Hawamda himself has been subjected to government persecution for over three years, subpoenaed by an earlier grand jury investigating Libyan “terrorism” from which no charges resulted. According to Hawamda, his only connection to Libya was in the sale of airline tickets to the regime for Libyan-sponsored students studying here. Now the FBI says he cooked the books to funnel the funds into trips by American activists to Tripoli. In the meantime, the government is dredging up claims of unpaid back taxes and student loans (Hawamda came here in 1974 as a student, getting a PhD in nuclear physics from Georgetown University). Some “terrorist conspiracy”!

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination

Committee (ADC) president Abdeen M. Jahara blasted the witchhunters for attempting “to smear the reputation of innocent individuals and the entire Arab population.” The ADC reports that it has received “a rash of calls” from people who have been “visited” and intimidated by the FBI. As Jahara’s statement noted, Arab people in this country have been the repeated target of racist “anti-terrorist” campaigns by the terrorists in the White House, including the FBI’s “Operation Boulder” in the ‘70s and the “Libyan Hit Squad” scare in the early ‘80s. In 1984, following the Beirut fiasco, Reagan even blocked the entrance to the White House with sand-filled dump trucks and let it be known that the presidential guard was equipped with Stinger surface-to-air missiles! The government’s racist “terrorism”-baiting campaign has led straight to hideous anti-Arab terrorism by sinister ultrarightist forces, including the October 1985 assassination of Alex Odeh, West Coast ADC head.

In March 1987, Dr. M.T. Mehdi, secretary general of the National Council of Islamic Affairs, was stripped of his U.S. passport and had his papers and notes seized by immigration officials after “violating” a ban on travel to Lebanon—where he had gone to negotiate for release of American hostages! Seven Palestinians and a Kenyan—supporters of the Palestinian nationalist PFLP—were arrested and dragged into court in Los Angeles last year, charged under the McCarthyite McCarran-Walter Act for “advocating Communism.” And now, on August 5 an Appeals Court ruling has upheld Reagan’s unconstitutional 1987 closing of a

PIO information office in Washington, D.C.

On August 2, 50 people gathered outside the U.S. Court House in Alexandria, Virginia to protest the witchhunting grand jury, which had subpoenaed All-African Peoples Revolutionary Party activist Bob Brown and American Indian Movement leaders Bill Means and Vernon Bellecourt for traveling to Tripoli. For refusing to appear before this star chamber, the three have been threatened with jail on contempt charges to be heard August 17. Brown told the protesters, “We proudly traveled to condemn this government’s barbarous act and to confirm our First Amendment right to free association.” Bill Means added that they were “representing all Americans who feel they have a right to travel, feel it’s illegal and immoral to bomb innocent women and children.”

In March 1986, the AAPRP called an emergency united-front protest against the Sixth Fleet attack on Libya in the Gulf of Sidra. This was followed by a second protest at Howard University following the murderous bombing raid on Tripoli, which was one of the only campus protests against Reagan’s atrocity. The Spartacist League (which, immediately after the U.S. attack, sent a journalistic team to Libya in solidarity) participated in both those protests, as well as agitating within the labor movement for action protesting Reagan’s murder missions. That fall several members of the Howard student government traveled to Libya and reported back on their trip to Howard students. Now the government is trying to launch a vendetta against black and other minority activists for daring to oppose U.S. racism abroad and at home.

The lame-duck gang in the White House is pretty zany, but U.S. imperialism’s global terrorism is hipartisan policy. This bizarre witchhunt targets all opponents of America’s war on the peoples of the world. Hands off pro-Libya activists! Drop all charges now! Smash the witchhunt! ■



## Bitter Legacy of Reutherism

# GM/Toyota, UAW Tops Team Up Against Workers

OAKLAND, California—At GM/Toyota's joint New United Motors Manufacturing Inc. plant in Fremont, members of United Auto Workers Local 2244 say that "NUMMI" really means "No Union Militant Members Included." This is the "showcase" of the "team concept" of production. It's not done with high-tech robots and Japanese management techniques, but plain old union-busting and speedup, where the "production teams" are used to make workers enforce their own exploitation. NUMMI workers got another dose of it when the UAW tops rammed through a rotten contract last month.

The "team concept" at NUMMI is being replicated throughout the GM empire, as local is pitted against local in a desperate scramble for jobs. At GM's Van Nuys plant in Los Angeles, two years ago workers narrowly accepted, under threat of a plant closure, the massive job combination and speedup engineered by this company unionism. Last winter GM, with the aid of the Solidarity House tops, tore up seniority at Van Nuys during a layoff, rather than break up the "teams." In May, both UAW Local 645 shop chairman Pete Beltran and vice president Michael Velasquez were fired in a transparent move by GM and the UAW tops to get rid of critics of their speedup schemes.

The "team concept" is being ballyhooed as some exotic Japanese device which will rescue the decaying U.S. auto industry by eradicating "antagonism" between labor and capital. Bullshit! The only difference between the "team concept" and the company unionism of 60 years ago is that this time it is being sold by the traitors in "Sacrifice House," who are more protectionist than their capitalist bosses, bashing Toyotas in union parking lots and not a peep on the racist murder of Vincent Chin. The fight against the GM/Solidarity House team requires the construction of a militant, internationalist leadership which can unite workers in class struggle, from Detroit to Mexico to Japan.

### "If You're Not Going to Use the Union Hall Why Don't You Sell It!"

While the Big Three contracts grant a miserly 3 percent wage increase the first year, and lump-sum bonuses and wage

freezes the next two, the NUMMI contract doesn't fork over the 3 percent until the third year, continuing until 1990 the wage freeze at Fremont which started in 1985. The ratification "vote" was held on company property in full view of management observers. No

Caucus, the usual collection of out-bureaucrats. Both caucuses support the "teams," the trashing of seniority rights, and one of the worst contracts in the UAW's history.

At NUMMI the team system has reduced all job categories to essentially



Margaret Moulton

GM/Toyota's Fremont NUMMI plant: "Showcase" for speedup and company unionism.

microphones were set up, so there was no discussion. Workers were given a hastily written three-page summary sheet and expected to vote in 30 minutes. Ballots were passed out like leaflets—a boss' son was seen with five! One worker, irate over the abomination that was being carried out, shouted, "If you're not going to use the union hall why don't you sell it!" The Oakland Tribune described this farce as an "informational" meeting. It certainly wasn't a union meeting, and to no one's surprise the contract passed.

Local elections, which preceded the contract expiration, were held on June 1. The Administrative Caucus, the hand-picked traitors who run the local, were challenged by the People's

one—whatever the boss tells you to do that day. Relief workers are gone—it's back to pre-union days of workers pissing in their pants on the line. Off-the-line jobs for older workers have disappeared, contracted out for less money to a workforce of predominantly non-English-speaking Hispanic women. The cafeteria workers are organized into a separate UAW local for a lot less money. Gone is the old CIO principle of one union under one roof.

The present union leadership of the "reconstituted" Local 2244 at GM/Toyota was hired before the plant opened so they could screen new applicants and weed out former union militants, leftists and workers with medical problems. For production workers it's work like hell, and when the line slows down workers are pulled off to maintain the hellish pace. Skilled classifications have been eliminated, and there is backbreaking overtime. Safety went out the window on day one. Production workers are doing burning and welding jobs after seeing a 30-minute video! Through brutal speedup and job combinations GM has slashed the labor necessary to assemble a car at NUMMI from 22 to 14 hours.

All this has happened because the union has given the company a free hand. "Team leaders" (who are in the union) are groomed for management, and the company simply threw out seniority in the selection procedure so they could hand-pick their favorite stooges. Teams don't make decisions—the team leader is called in, told what to do, and that's it! Area committeemen are rarely seen on the floor, and local union affairs have been moved from the

hall across the street to the labor relations office, where Local 2244 officials share desk space with the hated company labor reps! During the recent local union elections it was reported that the incumbents had won only ten grievances in three years. That came as a surprise to many NUMMI workers, who didn't think they had won a single one.

Racism has reared its ugly head again. In the predominantly white stamping department (management's showcase), a black inspection worker was harassed by threatening racist notes. The company tried to fire the victim, claiming incredibly that he wrote these notes to himself! With the union off the shop-floor, KKK types have begun to crawl out from under their rocks, prompting some black workers to refer to the stamping department as "Klansville." The stamping department was exempted from rehiring provisions that brought back black production workers from the Oakland area.

### Democrats and Givebacks

How did the union which seized GM's plants and brought the auto giant to its knees in the Flint sitdown of 1937 become such craven enforcers of labor discipline at plants like NUMMI? For years, Walter Reuther's "Treaty of Detroit" gave auto workers their annual 3 percent increase, while the union bureaucracy guaranteed the capitalists free rein on the shopfloor, labor peace and support for U.S. imperialism. The UAW tops stood behind GM boss Charles Wilson's slogan, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country"—as long as they got their "piece of the pie." To maintain class peace in the late 1960s and early 1970s Reuther and his lieutenants crushed a revolt in the auto plants led by radicalized black workers.

In the late 1970s, after raping the industry of its value for decades, the auto companies turned to Reuther's apprentice, Doug Fraser, for the givebacks that would destroy decades of union gains—and the livelihood of hundreds of thousands. The smashing of PATCO and union-busting concessions are now synonymous with the Reagan years. But it was the givebacks extracted by Chrysler and the UAW tops at Chrysler in 1979 which began a wholesale assault on industrial unionism in this country. And like the plans to crush the air controllers union, concessions began under the Democratic Party of Jimmy Carter.

The bosses were in trouble and the workers were going to pay through the nose to restore "profitability." The AFL-CIO, and especially the UAW misleaders, ran point for the capitalist austerity program, whipping up poisonous anti-Japanese protectionism. With saber rattling in the interest of the bourgeoisie's trade wars, they forked over billions in givebacks, while arrogant auto bosses like Lee Iacocca raked in millions in bonuses and stock options. The UAW tops, led by Fraser, became outright cops for the capitalists, joining the Chrysler board of directors. What auto workers got was a job massacre: UAW membership dropped from 720,000 in 1979 to 527,000 in 1984; black Detroit was decimated.

The latest contracts with the Big Three threw a few bucks into auto workers' paychecks, but most of this was lump-sum "bonus" payments that will cost UAW members millions in overtime premiums and shift differential payments. And the job slashing continues. While UAW chief Owen Bieber's PR reps churn out lying press releases about "job security," the companies are streamlining their operations using the same "job security" provisions to ax jobs. Current contracts say that layoffs can "only" occur if sales sag! That's about as useful as the Democrats' bill for workers to get 60 days notice before being thrown on the street.

The bogus "plant closing morato-



WV Photo

Pete Beltran, former shop chairman at GM's Van Nuys plant, fired last May for opposing speedup.



# French Printers Roll Back Union-Buster

In one of the first significant labor struggles since Cold War "Socialist" François Mitterrand was elected to a second term last May, French printers rolled back a major union-husting provocation in the Parisian suburb of Massy in late July. Print boss Jean Didier known as the "Rambo" of the industry, boasted at the height of the struggle that the name "means that I do what nobody dares do: take on the CGT." But the pro-Communist CGT union took Didier on—and won! By occupying the plant, the CGT printers local at Massy forced a notorious anti-union employer to back down, demonstrating again that seven years of popular-front betrayals have not succeeded in sapping the combativity of the organized French proletariat.

The action started on June 13, when Didier fired two workers (with 38 years seniority between them), allegedly for fighting. In response to protests and work stoppages Didier escalated the attack directly against the union, firing 19 elected union officials (whose jobs were supposed to be "protected" by the contract) and three other CGT militants. When the union occupied the factory, he cut off water and electricity and succeeded in locking out the workers.

At the end of July, after six weeks of lockout, Mitterrand's minister of labor called on Didier to reopen the plant "without preconditions"—i.e., without insisting on firing the 24 workers. Didier was recalcitrant, vowing that he would refuse to obey any government orders or court injunctions and would rather close the plant than cave in to the CGT. Having announced that work would begin again on Monday, July 25 (without the fired workers), he barricaded himself inside the plant over the weekend, together with some 60 "security guards" (hired from a Paris agency that specializes in bodyguards) ostensibly to enforce "order" when production began. At this point, the CGT decided to take decisive action.

Early on the morning of July 25, as three busloads of elite CRS riot police stood by, about 500 CGTers, mainly union officials, converged on the plant. Inside were Didier and his mercenaries—armed with air rifles, rubber bullets, buckshot, tear gas grenades, steel bars encased in rubber, numchaku, bulletproof vests and more. The union forces, armed only with iron bars, ax handles and slingshots, gradually drove the "security guards" upward through the plant. In the middle of all this, the minister of the interior announced in a radio interview that the CRS would not

## 500 Unionists Occupy Plant



CGT printers and union officials occupy Massy plant after driving off boss Didier's goons.

intervene in the fighting. Only after Didier and his mini-army had retreated to his rooftop office did the CRS show up to negotiate their release and evacuation from the plant through two rows of CGT militants.

Didier has built his small but growing press empire through modernization and virulent anti-unionism. His confrontationist tactics against the CGT and his declared aspiration to become No. 1 in the industry do not endear him to the giant Hersant empire or the other French press magnates. The CGT controls what amounts to a closed shop—a rarity in France—in the daily papers, but is much weaker in the rest of the printing industry. In fact, Massy is the only one of Didier's plants that is significantly unionized.

In 1984, with the blessing of the Mitterrand government, Didier bailed out the Massy plant's former owners, slashed the workforce almost by half, cut wages by as much as 30 percent and increased each shift from six to eight hours. Now Didier no doubt thought he could take advantage of the Mitterrand

government's efforts at an "opening to the right" to strike a decisive blow against the only CGT stronghold in his empire. But he miscalculated.

The industrial power of organized labor expressed in militant tactics was not the only factor in the printers' victory. Despite his appeals to the rightist bourgeois parties, Mitterrand still needs Communist Party (PCF) support. The Socialist Party failed to get a clear parliamentary majority in the June elections following Mitterrand's victory and the PCF got a somewhat higher vote than expected (though still the lowest totals since the 1920s). The PCF announced it would support the government on a case-by-case basis. For the government, it was cheap to stand off to one side and let the CGT win a small victory if it could.

After the CGT had reoccupied the plant, the government appointed Jean Miot, a key figure in Hersant and president of the Employers' Association of the Parisian Press, as mediator. This Hersant representative had no love for the upstart Didier. Miot's "settlement"

provided that the Massy plant would go back to work on August 1, with the reinstatement of all but the two workers fired for lighting, and a reference to the "permanence" of the plant (which Didier had threatened to close).

Didier's defeat is a clear victory against outright union-husting. But the CGT tops acted carefully to keep the struggle within well-defined boundaries. Typically CGT leader Roger Lancry denounced Didier's private army not primarily as strikebreaking thugs, but on the grounds that it was composed of foreigners: "It isn't normal that French workers are prevented from working by armed foreign goons." In a country where immigrant workers have become an integral part of the proletariat, while suffering acute social persecution, the PCF and CGT have repeatedly appealed to racist and chauvinist sentiments with the slogan "produce French" and the 1981 hulkdozer attack by a PCF mayor on a dormitory housing African workers in Vitry.

As was also shown by the militant month-long rail strike in defense of working conditions which rocked the country at the start of 1987, the French working class remains ready to fight to protect its gains—many of which, such as paid vacations, originated with the June 1936 general strike. In Gardannes, in the south of France, miners have been waging a hard-fought strike over wages since April.

What is needed is a leadership committed to the independent mobilization of the workers in defense of their class interests against the capitalist rulers. The PCF/CGT leaders seek a deal with the popular front in power, toward a new "Union of the Left" including the PCF. With Le Pen's fascists an ever-present danger and the capitalists and their "Socialist" lackeys intent on driving down the living standards of the workers, the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, section of the international Spartacist tendency, points the way forward for workers and immigrants—the fight for a revolutionary party. As the LTF's candidate in the recent parliamentary elections, Gilles Cazin, a militant CGT auto worker, said during the campaign:

"There is a revolutionary alternative, the extra-parliamentary mobilization of the workers, in the factories, in the streets, fighting for their own class power: a workers government. That is what the workers of the Paris Commune did in 1871, for a short instant. That's also what the Russian workers did in 1917, this time victoriously, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky." ■

rium" contract clauses also have reformists like the Communist Party and the social-democratic *In These Times* singing the UAW bureaucracy's praises. The Big Three allegedly "promise" not to close any plants during the life of the contract except those previously announced as slated to close. Ford and Chrysler had already closed 40 plants, so this "gain" is a bit late. But for GM, which is still operating with overcapacity, they are getting around this contract provision with a new twist. GM's Framingham, Massachusetts and Kansas City Leeds Assembly plants are shutting down, but management is calling this a plant "idling" and keeping on a skeleton maintenance crew. Ink on paper won't save a job—only class struggle can!

GM and the UAW International have already imposed the "team concept" at 15 out of the 36 GM assembly plants in the U.S. (*International Labor Reports*, Summer 1988). It is being used to pit plant against plant (whipsawing), as the locals that don't go for the teams are threatened with closure. The Norwood, Ohio local was pushed into a hiding war against their brothers and sisters at

the Van Nuys plant, offering to produce the same cars \$200 million cheaper. At Van Nuys, GM and the UAW International reps used the Norwood "threat" to tighten the screws and pass the speedup plan in May 1986. GM chained the gates at Norwood last year, throwing 4,300 workers on the street.

General Motors vice president Alfred Warren gloated to *Business Week* (24 August 1987), "if I have to put a new product somewhere, I'm going to put it where the attitude is most cooperative." GM then used the wedge to attack seniority at Van Nuys, rotating layoffs by shift in order to preserve the newly created "teams." The membership voted down this dangerous erosion of seniority. The International reps and their flunkies then forced a revote, and in February it finally passed. A 29-year veteran at Van Nuys said, "What happens if we don't vote for it this time?... Will we have to go four out of seven like the World Series?" (*Los Angeles Times*, 30 January).

### Auto Workers Need a Class-Struggle Leadership

The auto ranks have been screwed by the "Sacrifice House" gang because

there is no opposition within the union capable of leading a class-struggle offensive to smash the unholy alliance of the auto bosses and their company cops within the union. The New Directions Movement, a clot of house dissidents brain-trusted by Victor Reuther, support the same pro-capitalist program as Bieber & Co. Jerry Tucker, an International rep in Region 5 (St. Louis) for 14 years, tried to pull a palace coup, lost, got fired... and ran to the bosses' courts and the Labor Department. So the New Directions Movement is allied with the same union-busters from Meese's sleazy gang at "Justice" who are trying to break the Teamsters.

Along with the New Directions outfit, liberal and social-democratic critics of the UAW International have found a "safe" opposition in a group of local officials and hangers-on at Van Nuys Local 645, led by Pete Beltran and Eric Mann. Mann is currently touring the country promoting his book, *Taking On General Motors* (Center for Labor Research and Education, 1987), in which he recalls how he opposed sentiment for a plant occupation as "inappropriate." Instead Mann and

Beltran led a campaign to pressure GM to keep Van Nuys open with talk of a consumer boycott (trotting out Cesar Chavez who argues that strikes are outdated) and appeals to Democratic Party politicians.

Mann jumps on the protectionist bandwagon, while trying to dissociate himself from the more virulently racist anti-Japanese poison spread by the UAW bureaucracy. In an interview with *Against the Current* (November/December 1987) Mann points to low-wage Korean workers and lectures that "insurgents" in the UAW will "have to at least come to terms with the pressures of international competition." Mann joins

*continued on page 9*

**NOTICE**  
Workers Vanguard  
skips an issue  
in August.  
Our next issue will be  
dated September 9.



# 120,000 Japanese Americans Interned in WWII

## The Infamy of America's Concentration Camps

In one of the most wanton acts of U.S. imperialism in World War II, 120,000 Japanese Americans were rounded up in 1942 and imprisoned behind barbed wire for the duration of the war. These American concentration camps were run by the U.S. Army under the orders of the Roosevelt administration. Because this unprecedented act of wartime racism was carried out at the highest levels of government, and by "New Deal" liberal Democrats to boot, it was a taboo subject for decades afterward. Now, some 46 years later, at least part of the U.S. government appears prepared to offer a formal apology to those so savagely wronged.

On August 4 the House of Representatives approved a bill worked out with the Senate to give an apology and \$20,000 to each of the over 60,000 surviving internees (and lesser payments to some 450 Aleut Indians who were sent to detention camps by the U.S. Army). The White House demanded "modifications" to limit payments and stretch them out over another decade—so presumably even more survivors will die without any compensation—and Reagan has finally agreed to sign it. However, there is a bitter hook embedded in these reparations: any former internee, who accepts the money must give up any other claims against the government. Aiko Yoshinaga, who was married and bore her first daughter inside the barbed wire of the Manzanar prison camp, explained, "I will not be able to accept reparations.... Because no matter how nice money is, it cannot pay you for the loss of your liberty" (*Washington Post*, 4 August). She and others are continuing a class-action suit to force the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse its 1944 decision upholding the legality of the government's wartime prison camps.

The minimal decency of a formal apology comes too late for thousands of men and women who have gone to their graves still feeling the ignominy of being imprisoned and branded untrustworthy. The bill's main advocates in Congress were themselves victims of WWII racist hysteria. "My father was not able to talk about this for 40 years," said California Democratic Representative Robert T. Matsui during last summer's House debate.



Elisalon/Life

The mass internment of Japanese Americans provided a vent for chauvinist frustration after the stunning attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, and also intersected decades of savage anti-Asian racism on the West Coast. White businessmen bitter at the growing economic success of Japanese American farmers saw an opportunity to crush their competition—banks froze the Japanese Americans' accounts, liquor licenses were revoked under "trading with the enemy" laws, and the licenses of "alien" professionals were rescinded. Homes and farms were "repossessed" and loans were extended to white businessmen to seize what Japanese American farmers had so painfully built up by decades of hard work. The Japanese American prisoners were used by the U.S. government as slave labor to harvest crops in the West, and given token wages they were forbidden to spend in the towns they passed through on the grounds they would "subvert" the countryside!

At the war's end, the Japanese Americans were unceremoniously dumped out of the camps and told to "go home"—though most had nothing left



Carl Iwasaki

**San Francisco family rounded up under FDR/Earl Warren evacuation order (above); barracks at Manzanar prison camp (left).**

to return to. Further, the desperate mass renunciation of citizenship many internees had been forced into during their last months in the camps became the focus of lengthy battles as families sought to avoid deportation to Japan. The searing tragedy of smashed lives and hopes has dragged on for almost half a century after the "deactivation" of the concentration camps.

Many American blacks realized that the violent racism and police-state repression which sent the Japanese Americans to concentration camps could easily be directed against them. Black writer Chester Himes has the protagonist of his 1945 novel *If He Hollers Let Him Go*, a black shipyard worker, exclaim:

"... maybe it wasn't until I'd seen them send the Japanese away that I'd noticed it. Little Riki Oyana singing 'God Bless America' and going to Santa Anita [concentration camp] with his parents the next day. It was taking a man up by the roots and locking him up without a chance. Without a trial. Without a charge. It was thinking about it if they ever did that to me, Robert Jones, Mrs. Jones's dark son, that started me to getting scared."

This infamy was not "a democracy's mistake," as the media would have it. It was conditioned by decades of U.S. capitalist racism: the war years starkly exposed the truly bloodthirsty and vicious character of American imperialism. The U.S. provoked Japan into World War II by protectionist barriers against their imports and emharging oil and steel shipments necessary to the Japanese economy. Following Pearl Harbor the U.S. entered the war with

this barbaric atrocity against Japanese Americans at home. And it concluded with the criminal atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, destroying these ancient cities and massacring their civilian populations (including tens of thousands of Korean forced laborers) in a racist slaughter.

Among the very few who stood up for the Japanese Americans at the time were the Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party, themselves jailed and persecuted for their revolutionary opposition to imperialist war. In stark contrast, the American Communist Party, in the service of Stalinist class collaboration, dropped its Japanese American members and did nothing as they were taken to the camps, while the *Daily Worker* slandered Japanese Americans as "enemy alien Fifth Columnists" (see "The Agony of Japanese Americans in U.S. Concentration Camps," *WV* No. 139, 7 January 1977). The CP also hailed the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—even though this atrocity was also a threat to the Soviet Union that U.S. imperialism intended to dominate the world!

It did happen here, and it can again—look at the protectionist Japan-hashing and race-hatred being whipped up by U.S. capitalists who've run this nation's industry into the ground, leading to the murder of Vincent Chin in Detroit by an ex-Chrysler foreman and his stepson because Chin "looked Japanese." Today it's cheap for Congress to shed tears of remorse over the "mistake" and make some token compensation, even as decaying American capitalism is heating the drums of war once again. In the tradition of the Trotskyists during World War II, today the Spartacist League fights against the growing anti-Japanese protectionist poison being sold to the U.S. working class. We fight for defense of the Soviet Union, and for workers revolution to put an end to such racist savagery forever. ■



Wayne M. Collins

Security police raid barracks at Tule Lake concentration camp.

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

#### National Office:

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

#### Atlanta

Box 4012  
Atlanta, GA 30302

#### Boston

Box 840, Central Sta  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 492-3928

#### Chicago

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

#### Cleveland

Box 91037  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
(216) 881-3700

#### Detroit

Box 441794  
Detroit, MI 48244

#### Ithaca

Box 6767  
Ithaca, NY 14850

#### Los Angeles

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

#### Madison

Box 2074  
Madison, WI 53701  
(608) 251-6431

#### New York

Box 444, Canal St. Sta  
New York, NY 10013  
(212) 267-1025

#### Norfolk

Box 1972, Main PO  
Norfolk, VA 23501

#### Oakland

Box 32552  
Oakland, CA 94604  
(415) 839-0851

#### San Francisco

Box 5712  
San Francisco, CA 94101  
(415) 863-6963

#### Washington, D.C.

Box 75073  
Washington, D.C. 20013  
(202) 636-3537

#### Toronto

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

### TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA



# Behind the Bombing of Hiroshima



Der Spiegel



U.S. Army

A-bomb dropped on Hiroshima, 6 August 1945. Three days later Nagasaki was bombed into irradiated rubble (right).

## Racism, Anti-Sovietism and Atomic Holocaust

"People in the open air were turned into charcoal.... Some of them were hurnt to death as [they] kept standing with good balance because the heat waves caught them instantly like lighting a flash-bulb.... I could see a procession of people fleeing from the direction of the hypocenter.... The skin on faces of people, who had been facing the light, hung from the tip of the jaws like putting a mask off."

—from the testimony of a Japanese *hibakusha*, or nuclear bomb victim, Yasu Tsuchida, who survived the atom bombing of Hiroshima, in a pamphlet distributed at the "disarmament" march June 11 in New York

President Harry Truman was aboard the cruiser *Augusta* in the Atlantic when he received word that a U.S. Air Force plane had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on the morning of 6 August 1945. "VISIBLE EFFECTS GREATER THAN IN ANY TEST" the message read in part. Truman exulted, "This is the greatest thing in history!" Three days later the U.S. dropped another A-bomb on Nagasaki. When a reporter questioned the propriety of the celebration surrounding the bombings, Truman snapped back unapologetically. "When you have to deal with a beast you have to treat him as a beast." Thus the atomic mushroom cloud, which has come to symbolize one possible fate for mankind, was brought into the world in a fit of racist slaughter by a liberal Democratic White House.

Years later, when the horror of what happened at Hiroshima and Nagasaki had become known around the world, Truman offered a supposedly more "humanitarian" defense of the bombing by claiming that "the dropping of the bombs stopped the war" and thereby "saved millions of lives" by avoiding the alleged necessity of a U.S. invasion of Japan (*Truman Speaks* [1960]). This

encapsulated popular opinion in the matter, formed by years of war propaganda, from endless movies of the Japanese "sneak attack" on Pearl Harbor to footage of Hitler's vicious bombing of civilian London, which were supposed to contrast with the Allies' "civilized" restraint. In reality the "democratic" imperialist Allies chalked up quite a record of criminal atrocities, notably the firebombings of Hamburg, Dresden and Tokyo which created devastation comparable to that of a nuclear weapon.

Indeed, the incendiary bombing of Tokyo alone on the single night of 9-10 March 1945 killed some 100,000 civilians—"scorched and boiled and baked to death," in the words of General Curtis Le May, who bragged he would bomb the enemy "back to the stone age." (Twenty years later, run-

ning for vice president on a ticket with Alabama's segregationist Democratic governor George Wallace, Le May revived his genocidal threat, vowing to do the same to the Vietnamese.) The subsequent A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945 slaughtered 140,000 and 70,000 respectively. The use of atomic weapons is rightly regarded as a quantum leap in savagery, not only because of their immense destructive power but also due to the deadly radiation, which continues to kill the survivors even today and presents untold dangers to future generations.

And the argument that dropping the bombs "saved millions of lives" was a flat lie. It was recognized at the time by top U.S. leaders that the new weapon was not needed to end the war. Even bloodthirsty General Le May felt in

April 1945 that the war could be ended by September or October *without* an invasion. U.S. forces already had full control of the air and sea around Japan in midyear. As early as May 1945 William Donovan, director of the Office of Strategic Services (precursor of the CIA), reported to Truman that Japan was sending out peace feelers, and by July the Japanese emperor's personal envoy was talking with the Russians in Moscow. As General Dwight Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, later noted, "Japan was, at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of 'face'" (quoted in Gar Alperovitz' landmark 1965 study, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*, updated and expanded in 1985).

The reason the A-bomb was used could not be military, it was *political*. As we wrote eight years ago: "With racist calculation the already defeated Japanese were chosen as the human testing ground to prove to American imperialism's opponents—especially the USSR—that the USA will stop at *nothing* to maintain world dominion" ("Hiroshima Day: To Remember Is Not Enough!" *WT* No. 263, 5 September 1980). The letter from *WT* reader Dimir Z. printed on page 8 expands on this point. But there is even more.

Secretary of War Henry Stimson first briefed Truman at length on 25 April 1945 about what he anticipated would be "the most terrible weapon ever known in human history." Consideration of how to use the bomb was left to a so-called Interim Committee, including Truman's personal representative Secretary of State James Byrnes. There was also a Scientific Panel of the committee which included scientists who actually built the bomb. An immense literature has documented the struggle of some of these scientists, Leo Szilard

continued on page 8



Potsdam conference, July 1945: Truman (center) delayed meeting with Churchill and Stalin so he could use A-bomb as a threat against Russia.



# Atomic Holocaust...

(continued from page 7)

among others, to prevent the use of the A-bomb. But the Interim Committee's main discussion revolved around the selection of targets which would cause "a tremendous shock" to the Japanese, in Stimson's words.

With this in mind, Stimson considered the best target to be a "war plant employing a large number of workers closely surrounded by workers' houses," according to Alperovitz; this guideline was formally proposed to the committee by Byrnes and adopted, with the added proviso that the bomb be used "as soon as possible and without warning." (Another factor in these cold-

blooded calculations was finding a target which had not yet been bombed, so as to be able to accurately measure the A-bomb's effects, and Hiroshima fit the bill.) Historian Gabriel Kolko explains the refusal to question the bomb's use as follows:

"From the moment work began on the construction of the atomic bomb in 1941 until the Americans dropped it on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, none of the American leaders involved ever had any doubt that they were building the bomb to be used. This assumption was axiomatic at the time, and it was only later revulsion that led to the artificial investigation of the relatively unimportant spring 1945 debate on the moral problems of using the bomb."

—*The Politics of War* (1968)

A number of historians, like André Fontaine (*History of the Cold War* [1968]), try to alibi the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the result of

bureaucratic inertia—a desire to show off the fruits of a two-billion-dollar investment—involving "no discussion" among top military and political leaders. (Similar explanations of everything from the B-1 bomber to Reagan's "Star Wars" blame everything on the "military-industrial complex," an apt term coined by Eisenhower which has since become the hobbyhorse of Stalinist and liberal peace lobbyists.) This might explain the decision to proceed with the bomb program in the spring of 1945. But it is insufficient to explain the sudden, conscious rush to test the bomb in July and drop it in August. This was a decision from the top, which can only be explained by two other factors: first, an especial racist hatred for the Japanese (don't forget FDR sent Japanese Americans to concentration camps, and not German Americans); and second, the desire to threaten the Soviet Union.

## America's Racist War Propaganda



H. Melzian

U.S. government poster, 1942.

## Racism and the Bomb

Breaking a longstanding taboo, in his 1986 study *War Without Mercy*, John W. Dower documents the racist mentality which permeated the American war in the Pacific. There was, first of all, the "responsible" bourgeois press: *Time* magazine after Pearl Harbor described the American response as, "Why, the yellow bastards!" The *New York Times* said the Bataan incident revealed the enemy as "a beast which sometimes stands erect." *Life* magazine published a full-page photo of an attractive blonde posing with a "Jap" skull sent to her by her boyfriend. One Hearst paper editorialized that whereas the war in Europe against the Nazis was only "a family fight" between "white nations," the war against Japan was against an enemy of "unexampled ferocity."

And, of course, Hollywood joined in the anti-Japanese propaganda campaign. In *The Purple Heart* (1944), based on the Japanese trial of the Doolittle raiders who bombed Tokyo in 1943, the Japanese emerge as thor-

oughly evil, sadistic torturers. One of the American aviators on trial sums up the American attitude by telling the court that American bombers will "blacken your skies and burn your cities to the ground.... [The war] won't be finished until your dirty little empire is wiped off the face of the earth!"

Following racist stereotypes, the media often pictured the Japanese as ape-like creatures in cartoons printed in "respectable" papers. Dower traces the "evolution" of this cartoon figure: from silly little monkeys hanging from trees (a 1941 cartoon, before Pearl Harbor) to apes crushing little people in their hands (an illustration in the *New York Times Magazine* in mid-1943). Whether they were pictured as subhuman or superhuman, Dower notes, the main point was "the Japanese were rarely perceived as being human beings." Ernie Pyle, the GI reporter who described the war at the front to Americans at home, reflected the racist attitude when he transferred from Europe to the Pacific in 1945: "In



Takeo Ishikawa

Firebombings of Tokyo in early 1945 killed over 100,000 civilians.

# Letter on Atom Bombing of Japan

November 11, 1987

The Editor  
*Workers Vanguard*

I would like to add a footnote regarding the U.S. atom bombing of Japan mentioned in the two-part series "Japan Inc. vs. Wall Street" (*WV* Nos. 424 and 425, 20 March and 3 April 1987) and in the recent article "The Crash of '87" (*WV* No. 439, 30 October 1987).

We have regularly pointed out that the U.S. atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was militarily superfluous, carried out less to bring about Japanese surrender—Japan had been blockaded at this time for over a year, its economy was in a shambles and more far-sighted elements among the ruling class had been putting out peace feelers via the Russians and the Swiss—than as a threat to the victorious Soviet Union not to stand in the way of war aims of U.S. imperialism.

Testimony to the bourgeois defeatism by then widespread in Japanese ruling circles was the February 1945 Konoe Memorial, drafted by leading politicians including Shigeru Yoshida, the future prime minister, who was, with MacArthur's assistance, to crush the Japanese general strike of 1 February 1947. Central to the Memorial was a fear of a revolutionary uprising by the combative but long-suppressed Japanese working class, which these politicians saw as a likely concomitant to an Allied invasion:

"More than defeat itself, what we must be most concerned about from the standpoint of preserving the *kokutai* [national polity, i.e., the family state with the emperor as its supreme symbol

and head] is the communist revolution which may accompany defeat."

—cited in Joe Moore,  
*Japanese Workers and the Struggle for Power, 1945-1947*  
(Madison, 1983)

For this reason the Memorial urged an early surrender as the best means of keeping the Japanese state (and in particular its repressive apparatus) relatively intact.

Such worries could only have intensified in the course of 1945, as both Japanese and Americans saw the spontaneous creation of factory councils and workers soviets throughout Germany that followed hard on the defeat of the Nazis. These workers councils were then suppressed by all four powers, the Soviet Union in particular fearing the challenge such independent proletarian

organizations posed to imposition in its zone of bureaucratic rule via their imported "Ulbricht Group."

Thus, as the Pacific War drew toward its inevitable close, the ruling classes of Japan and the USA tended to be drawn together by their fundamental aim of preserving capitalist rule in a defeated Japan. Indeed, there had always been those in top U.S. government circles who, like former ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew, had favored preserving the Japanese imperial state as a future reliable (but properly subordinate) ally, with, as a sop to "public opinion," a purge of the most overt militarists through show trials of a few "war criminals."

So it seems that a subordinate (but equally anti-communist) motive may

well have stood behind the U.S. atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the need to deliver a blow that would dictate an immediate surrender by Japan over the objections of its fanatical militarists who, even as the second bomb exploded over Nagasaki, were plotting a military coup to depose the "weak-willed" Emperor and fight on to a Nipponese *Götterdämmerung* (after all, Goebbels had proclaimed the Japanese to be "honorary Aryans")—a struggle that would have torn apart the Japanese state and left the way open for proletarian revolt. (For an account of these last-ditch machinations see the book *Japan's Longest Day*, compiled by The Pacific War Research Society [Tokyo, 1980].)

As it was, the Japanese bureaucracy was able, in the interval between the surrender declaration and the American landing, to destroy incriminating records, to imprison leftists and transfer government funds to the *zaibatsu* as a base for future economic growth. The Emperor was preserved as the ideological linchpin of class rule, while the U.S. avoided having to create a new bourgeois state *ex nihilo* (as with the West German rump state), with the further advantage of having available all the manifold organs of repression and control staffed by the old Japanese central and prefectural bureaucracy, through which the "Allied" (i.e., U.S.) occupation worked.... And the Russkies would be properly intimidated to boot (or so the U.S. thought). For all this, America's imperialist rulers figured, the immolation of a few hundred thousand innocent civilians was a small price to pay.

Comradely,  
Dimir Z.



AP

General MacArthur with Japanese emperor Hirohito, 1945. American occupation maintained Japanese ruling class against Communist-led workers movement.



Europe we felt that our enemies, horrible and deadly as they were, were still people," he wrote. "But out here I soon gathered that the Japanese were looked upon as something subhuman and repulsive; the way some people feel about cockroaches or mice."

The racist attitude permeated not only the media but the scientific-military establishment as well. One of the reasons the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a "surprise" was that many Western military leaders could not believe the Japanese were capable of designing and manufacturing such a powerful plane as the Mitsubishi Zero, even though the plane was effectively used against the Chinese in 1940. Moreover, American "scientists" believed the Japanese as a race suffered from defects of the tubes of the inner ear and were generally myopic, hence they could not make good pilots! The curator of the Division of Physical Anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution even claimed in a letter to FDR that the Japanese were "as bad as they were" because their skulls were "some 2,000 years less developed than ours."

This racist claptrap came from the very top of the political establishment, and led to exterminationist attitudes not unlike the Nazis'. Admiral William F. Halsey, commander of the U.S. South Pacific Force, was fond of saying things like, "the only good Jap is a Jap who's been dead six months" (1944 press conference). And Truman noted in his diary that he decided to go ahead with dropping the A-bomb because the Japanese were "savages, ruthless, merciless, and fanatic." Only exceptional individuals would dare stand up against this tide of murderous racism in 1945.

## Russia and the American Bomb

Once it was clear to top U.S. officials in the spring of 1945 that the A-bombing of Japan would go ahead, there was an added imperialist impetus to drop the bomb right away: *stop Russia*. After the Red Army had broken the back of the Nazi war machine—at the cost of some 20 million Soviet dead—the Western capitalist powers lost interest in their reluctant alliance with Moscow, and were mainly interested in containing the spread of Communism and salvaging a capitalist world. (At this point the Soviets occupied much of Eastern Europe and were about to fulfill their promise to declare war against Japan and invade Manchuria.) Thus there was a rush to test and drop the bomb so that Truman



Communist Party supported American government in WWII as a "war for democracy": *Daily Worker*, August 1945, hailed Truman's A-bombing of Hiroshima.

would have an extra club behind his back in his diplomatic dealings with Stalin.

Truman deliberately postponed the planned Potsdam meeting with Stalin and Churchill until July, so he could be sure the bomb worked (the Alamogordo test took place on July 16, one day before Potsdam). As Gar Alperovitz notes, "top U.S. officials began to realize [the bomb] could strengthen their hand diplomatically against the Soviet Union—and they developed their strategy on the basis of this calculation, postponing major negotiations, and the Potsdam meeting itself, until the bomb could be tested." Secretary of War Stimson explicitly recorded in his diary the reasons he wanted postponement of a meeting with Stalin on the Far East:

"Over any such tangled weave of problems, [the atomic-bomb] secret would be dominant, and yet we will not know until after that time probably, until after that meeting, whether this is a weapon in our hands or not. We think it will be shortly afterward, but it seems a terrible thing to gamble with such big stakes in diplomacy without having your master card in your hand."

At another point in his diary Stimson suggested that among the "quid pro quos which should be established" with the Russians, in exchange for taking them into a "partnership" in atomic matters, would be "settlement of the

Polish, Romanian, Yugoslavian, and Manchurian problems."

Similarly, when A-bomb scientist Leo Szilard had a meeting with Secretary of State Byrnes in May 1945, he recorded that Byrnes "did not argue that it was necessary to use the bomb against the cities of Japan in order to win the war.... Mr. Byrnes' view [was] that our possessing and demonstrating the bomb would make Russia more manageable in Europe." Other key scientists corroborated this point: J. Robert Oppenheimer, the mastermind behind the whole Manhattan Project, noted that "we were under incredible pressure to get it done before the Potsdam meeting"; and Vannevar Bush, Stimson's scientific adviser on the bomb, said right out that the bomb was "delivered on time so that there was no necessity for any concessions to Russia at the end of the war."

Hiroshima was bombed on August 6, two days before Russia declared war on Japan, and Nagasaki came the day after the Soviet entry into the war in the Pacific. The mushroom clouds were an American "message" to the Soviet Union, and a sample of how far imperialism would go to hold on to its empire. As soon as Truman had confirmed that the A-bomb test worked in July 1945, the Joint Chiefs of Staff began drawing up the first of endless plans to "nuke"

Russia. Repeatedly in the postwar years the U.S. used atomic threats against the Soviet Union and others, and was most arrogant when it knew its opponents had no nuclear capability. In March 1946, for instance, Truman demanded that the Soviets pull their troops out of Iran within 48 hours or else "we're going to drop it on you." Truman reportedly told Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko, "In the period 1946 to 1980, the U.S. made at least twenty-five such atomic threats (see Michio Kaku and Daniel Axelrod, *To Win a Nuclear War—The Pentagon's Secret War Plans* [1987])."

Only proletarian revolution could have prevented the horrible slaughter of World War II which culminated in the first atomic holocaust and the subsequent nuclear saber rattling by the U.S. imperialists. But during the war the struggle for revolution was thwarted with the help of the Communist Party, which called on American workers to support the capitalist government in the name of the so-called "Grand Anti-Fascist Alliance." By the end of the war the CP's flag-waving betrayal was so grotesquely complete that they applauded the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In contrast, the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, while militarily defending the Soviet Union, stood in revolutionary opposition to both capitalist sides in the imperialist war. For courageously exposing the lie that this was a "war for democracy," 18 SWP and militant union leaders were jailed by FDR.

In a statement published just days after the atomic bombing of Japan, the American Trotskyists wrote:

"Let the cataclysmic horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki serve as a clarion call to the working class! The workers must wrench the power from the hands of the blood-drenched capitalist criminals and take their destiny in their own hands. The fight for socialism is now more than a fight to end poverty and inequality, to abolish the exploitation of man by man. Today the fight for socialism is a fight to prevent the annihilation of the human race. Mankind must now exterminate the capitalist system—or be exterminated!"

—*Militant*, 18 August 1945

The title of the SWP's manifesto summed up what was then and remains today the only road to preventing another Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "THERE IS NO PEACE! Only World Socialism Can Save Mankind From Atomic Destruction In Another Imperialist War. Workers Of America! You Must Take Power Into Your Own Hands!"

## GM/Toyota...

(continued from page 5)

the protectionist chorus of reformists against the "export of American capital," like the Communist Party, which says, "The real problem is that Chrysler is taking our jobs to Mexico" (*People's Daily World*, 14 January). Often directed against the growth of "maquiladora" plants in northern Mexico, this racist crap feeds the UAW tops' "America first" poison and campaign to sell NUMMI-style speedup in the name of competitiveness.

In *Taking On General Motors* Mann barely mentions that while Van Nuys is open, its "whipsaw" competitor at Norwood is closed. With his "reasonable" defense of GM's profits Mann has become the darling of that voice of the out (and not so out) bureaucrats, *Labor Notes*. Mann's book is fulsome in its praise of Walter Reuther, whose UAW contracts Mann calls the "envy of unions throughout the Western capitalist world." Parroting Reuther's class collaboration, Mann tells auto workers:

"As Walter Reuther used to say, our fight has been over the size of the slice of the pie. Now it's necessary for GM workers to understand that the pie is really shrinking and GM may be the primary casualty."

—*Against the Current*, November/December 1987

The classic AFL business unionist Samuel Gompers at least demanded "More!" The latter-day Reutherite says "Less!"

Mann seals his endorsement of Reuther's class collaboration by uncritically quoting Victor Reuther's defense of the Reuther machine "as a legitimate weapon in our battle with the communists" (*Taking On General Motors*). Victor Reuther was International Affairs Director of the UAW during the Cold War, and used CIA money to split Communist Party unions in postwar Europe.

In the class battles which forged the UAW and the mass CIO unions, the Auto Workers pioneered the sit-down

strikes which broke the back of company unionism and the open shop. But this class-struggle militancy was throttled through the consolidation of a pro-capitalist bureaucracy, the Reuther machine, which chained the union to the Democratic Party. As we wrote in our article "How the Reuthers Tamed the UAW" (*WV* No. 128, 8 October 1976):

"Reuther's key role was as consolidator of a bureaucracy sufficiently homogeneous to become an effective guarantor of labor discipline for the capitalists. ... decisive was Reuther's avid lining up with the American bourgeoisie in support of Cold War policies and the witchhunting of Reds in the labor movement.... The elimination of the one-year contract, replacement of shopfloor methods of resolving grievances by arbitration and the virtually unchallenged control by management of crucial shopfloor conditions like line speed eventually followed suit."

What ties all the sellout artists together, from "Sacrifice House" incumbent Bieber to "house" dissidents Victor Reuther and Jerry Tucker and the popular-front Jesse Jackson supporters like Eric Mann, is their implacable hatred of class struggle and their allegiance to the American ruling class and the profit system. Victor Reuther paved the way for the "giveback" war on labor when he enlisted in the Cold War to "roll back" Communism.

The militant unions of the CIO were built with the weapons of hard class

struggle—sitdowns, hot cargoing, flying picket squads. And it will take a class-struggle, internationalist leadership to unite the workers of America, Mexico and Japan in common battle against their exploiters, and their "team" partners in the labor bureaucracy. Above all this requires the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead the fight for a workers government. ■

## CORRECTIONS

In *WV* No. 456 (1 July), in the article "Mexico: Starvation Elections," we erroneously stated that the election platform of the Unidad Popular electoral coalition led by the PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party) did not call for a sliding scale of wages. The UP platform does call "for wage increases in the same proportion as prices increase."

In the same issue, the article "Leon Trotsky: Fighter for World Revolution," contains a translation error. We quoted the 14 June *Izvestia* report on the rehabilitation of Zinoviev and Kamenev as saying, "Everyone knows today that Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin was another Lenin...." The phrase actually said that "Bukharin was a friend of Lenin."

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# Unchain the Unions...

(continued from page 1)

New York City, and even more in other cities such as Detroit, have completely dropped out of the labor market in despair of finding a job.

The nation's productive wealth has been diverted into the massive military buildup. Two-thirds of all research and development is funded by the Pentagon. The best scientists and engineers are engaged in "Star Wars" and other weapons systems to destroy the Soviet Union in the name of "free world" capitalism. And this is not just "Reaganomics." The anti-Soviet war drive is bipartisan policy. Dukakis has publicly supported a nuclear first-strike option against Russia and is campaigning to beef up conventional U.S. armed forces and for an array of new nuclear weapons on the Stealth bomber to the D-5 submarine-launched missile.

While the Democrats blame Reaganomics for "the decline of our industrial, natural resource and mining base," their only "solution" is flag-waving protectionism and Japan-bashing. Dukakis' running mate, Lloyd Bentsen, is not only a Dixiecrat racist but a leading trade-war hawk in Congress. And Jesse Jackson, the Democrats' "left face," peddles a soft-core version, railing at the export of jobs to "slave labor" markets abroad. Far from saving jobs, protectionism will fuel inflation,



Bobby Kennedy's vicious attacks on Teamster leader Jimmy Hoffa set up 1959 anti-labor Landrum-Griffin Act.

have abandoned any pretense of defending workers' rights and have given back what it took decades of hard class struggle to achieve.

## Feds: Hands Off the Teamsters!

Forty years ago, C.E. Wilson, the head of General Electric and a member of the Truman administration, said, "The problems of the United States can be capiously summed up in two words: Russia abroad, Labor at home" (quoted in Richard O. Boyer and Herbert M. Morais, *Labor's Untold Story* [1955]). Like the war drive against the Soviet Union, union-busting on the home front is the policy of both partner parties of

Reagan, to finish the job begun by Kennedy, is trying to place the Teamsters union under the direct control of the capitalist state. On June 28 the Justice Department filed a civil suit against the 18-member exec board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). The 113-page suit, using the sinister RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act, claims IBT officials have entered a "devil's pact" with organized crime. What the sleazy gang in the Reagan administration—the big-time organized criminals—are up to is to break the country's most powerful union. Chuck Mack, president of Teamsters Joint Council 7 (Bay Area), noted, "Attacking the Teamsters has been an American tradition," and pointed to Minneapolis (where Trotskyists led the strikes and organizing drives that laid the foundation of the Teamsters' power, and were later jailed by FDR for their revolutionary opposition to imperialism in World War II).

"Minneapolis Teamster leaders were later prosecuted by the Roosevelt administration for alleged subversive activities. From these Smith Act prosecutions to the civil RICO action filed this June, we have enjoyed a special status with the Department of Justice." —Oakland Tribune, 3 August

Under the RICO law, the union can be put in "trusteeship" and the entire leadership replaced if the feds can show a "pattern of racketeering activity" by proving any two charges (some of which are 30 years old), including mail fraud and moving untaxed cigarettes! One of the feds gloated to the *Washington Post* (4 July), "This is your classic RICO case. This is what RICO was designed to do." RICO charges have already been used to take over Jersey City Teamsters Local 560, and cases have been filed against seven other unions. Anti-labor columnist Don Feder revealed the feds' real appetite, which has nothing to do with corruption: "With or without the squashed-nose set, unions are violence-prone.... The problem isn't simply the Teamsters' criminal associations, but the coercive nature of unions themselves" (*Boston Herald*, 11 July). Hands off the Teamsters!

Labor must clean its own house!

If someone were looking for worthy targets for criminal prosecution, consider the Reagan administration's supply-side thugs who have "privatized" everything from arms for the Ayatollah to the Pentagon budget. And under former Teamster president Jackie Presser, who died last month, it was hard to tell the feds from the mob without a scorecard. Presser (FBI alias "All Pro") was a government informer since 1974, regularly "clearing" his union appointments with Washington.

The suit comes with the union in turmoil. The concessions-laden Master Freight Agreement negotiated in April was overwhelmingly rejected by the Teamster ranks. But the IBT tops imposed it anyway, under an anti-democratic, anti-militancy rule requiring a two-thirds vote to reject a contract. The IBT tops then split over the election of a successor to Presser. New England Joint Council head William McCarthy (who opposed Presser's contract) narrowly defeated Weldon Mathias, and has moved to demote his opponents within the union. The union is threatened with a return to the regional fiefdoms that characterized the IBT before Hoffa won the first master contract.

Before the long-awaited RICO indictment was announced, the IBT tops hoped that anti-Communist appeals comparing the Teamsters to Reagan's favorite "union" Solidarność would convince the bourgeoisie to hack off. And with an eye to election year contributions from the union, a majority of Congressmen came out against the Justice Department suit. But support for Reagan didn't save PATCO, and reliance on capitalist politicians won't save the Teamsters.

The feds have inside help in their campaign to take over the Teamsters union—help from the union's own fake-radical "opposition." Under the cover of "democracy," the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) has run point for the government's union-husting. The "TDU Membership Newsletter" (Summer 1988) lands the feds: "So by calling for a limited trusteeship and elections in its RICO suit, the Justice Department has begun to move toward the TDU stand." Critical of a government trusteeship because it won't remove enough (!) of the union leadership, the TDU sent the Justice Department attorneys a plan in April 1987 which calls for the capitalist government to run Teamster elections for the next nine years! Even the TDU's call for the "one-man, one-vote" referendum election of national officers is a hoax. This pseudo-democratic "reform" would let incumbent bureaucrats (and the capitalist press) manipulate union elections. Instead there should be elected, delegated conventions, where a union's leadership and program can be debated.

The reformists and bureaucrats in the TDU have made a career out of dragging the Teamsters into the bosses' courts, supposedly to "clean up the union." They try to justify crossing the class line by pointing to the feds' intervention in the United Mine Workers. According to TDU national organizer Ken Paff (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 July) the UMWA ranks, saddled with the corrupt and murderous regime of Tony Boyle:

"...organized Miners for Democracy, demanded an election supervised by the Department of Labor and finally got it. Boyle was swept out of power in a one-member, one-vote election. The members went on to rewrite their constitution to ensure a future of democratic unionism."

Veteran miners will get a bitter laugh from the happy ending to this fairy tale. What the UMWA ranks actually got from Nixon's Labor Department-run election was Arnold Miller as union president. When Miller took office in 1972 virtually the entire reformist left claimed it was a victory for labor. It was left to the Spartacist League to tell the simple truth: "Labor Department Wins



Former Teamster president and FBI informer Jackie Presser being carried into IBT convention in Las Vegas, 1986.

provoke retaliation against American exports and accelerate the industrial rot.

What's desperately needed is a workers government which will rip the productive wealth out of the hands of corporate moguls and Wall Street raiders and rebuild this country on a socialist basis. Workers need to break with the two parties of capitalism and build their own party, a workers party based on the trade unions. And they need to oust from the leadership of those unions the sellout bureaucrats who in recent years

capitalism. One of the most sustained assaults on an American union, the 30-year vendetta against the Teamsters union, was initiated by Democrats—the Kennedy brothers. Fearful of the truckers union's ability to paralyze the country in a national strike, McCarthyite witchhunter Robert Kennedy jailed union president Jimmy Hoffa, forced the Teamsters' expulsion from the AFL-CIO and rammed through the anti-labor law (Landrum-Griffin) which "outlaws" real labor solidarity ("hot-cargoing").

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Effective immediately, the new subscription price of *Workers Vanguard* is \$7.00 per year (24 issues). For nearly seven years (beginning with WV No. 289, 25 September 1981) a year's WV sub has been priced at \$5.00. During this period, postage has gone through the ceiling while printing costs have also risen steadily, necessitating this modest sub price increase



Mine Workers' Election" (WV No. 17, March 1973). Miller rammed a sellout contract down the members' throats in 1974 and broke three major wildcat strikes before betraying the 110-day national walkout of 1977-78, the most important American labor struggle in 30 years. Miller became so hated in the course of that strike that he went into hiding to escape the miners' wrath.

Today the UMWA is "led" by attorney Richard Trumka who, early this year, signed a contract worse than anything even Miller ever came up with. In 1984, Trumka rejected the union's tradition of an industrywide walkout, in favor of "selective strikes." Militants from Kentucky who fought for their union in these strikes were railroaded on federal "terrorism" and "conspiracy" charges and were sentenced to terms of

35 to 45 years. Trumka & Co. have left them twisting in the wind. Broken strikes and broken lives: these are the fruits of government interference in the labor movement.

### Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win!

The misleaders who sit at the top of the unions in this country have been loyal "labor statesmen" so long they don't remember how to win a strike. To them, picket lines belong to another century. The union tops crawl before the Taft-Hartley injunctions and court orders limiting picketing. Instead of working-class struggle, there's a whole new language of defeat: consumer boycott, Corporate Campaign, "Inside Game" (that's where you stay at work without a contract). They have "selective strikes," where union locals get cut down one at a time. And after the scabs have taken your job, you can apply for one of Lane Kirkland's new "Associate Memberships" for unionists who don't have a union (but still pay dues).

The bourgeoisie is playing hardball. The militant picket lines of Morenci, Arizona copper strikers and Hormel meatpackers were broken by the National Guard. Scabs are taking the jobs of Colt Firearms workers in Hartford, paper workers in Jay, Maine and tugboat crews in New York harbor. Gun-toting mercenaries were unleashed on coal miners who struck A.T. Massey, while judges owned by the coal barons handed down injunctions to stop picketing. Every hard fight by labor to defend itself has confronted the cops and courts of the capitalist state. But at every point the labor misleaders counsel workers to rely on their "friends of labor" in the Democratic Party, and to place trust in the bosses' courts.

Labor's gotta play hardball to win. And that requires a class-struggle leadership that fights to break the chains that tie the labor movement to the bosses' parties and their state. James P. Cannon drew the lessons of the victorious Minneapolis Teamsters strikes of 1934, which were led by Trotskyists:

"All modern strikes require political direction.... The old fashioned trade



Miners burn Arnold Miller's rotten contract during 1977-78 coal strike.

## Contra Terrorists...

(continued from page 12)

claiming that the sole responsibility lies with the Sandinistas and their "new acts of oppression."

The Sandinistas' "new acts of oppression" amounted to stopping U.S. ambassador Richard Melton from blatantly organizing the internal contras in Managua, Melton, who previously worked directly under U.S. contra kingpin Elliott Abrams, was made ambassador in March immediately after the Sapó cease-fire accord engineered by Wright. While snubbing representatives of the Nicaraguan government, Melton attended a June meeting of opposition businessmen at which a plan for a "government of national salvation" was drawn up. On July 9 the contras abruptly walked out of negotiations with the Sandinistas, and a day later Melton was found running around with a mob of 2,000 anti-government rioters in Nandaimé. The Sandinista regime responded by temporarily closing the reopened CIA-financed newspaper *La Prensa* and the reactionary Catholic radio station. Melton and seven other U.S. diplomats were expelled from Nicaragua for "state terrorism."

Reagan "retaliated" by expelling eight Nicaraguan diplomats, and the Democrats saluted by overwhelmingly supporting Congressional resolutions denouncing Nicaragua. The *Washington Post* (15 July) editorialized that the Managua regime was "now acting very much the Communist police state" and urged the Democratic Party to be "vig-

orous and unequivocal," code words for military action. Meanwhile the CIA has been busily rearranging its contra command: "electing" Enrique Bermúdez to the contras' political directorate, in effect as the main contra leader. Bermúdez, a colonel in Somoza's bloodthirsty National Guard, dispenses with the "democratic" rhetoric of his predecessors and openly boasts the contras' policy is terrorism.

In fact the petty-bourgeois nationalist Sandinistas have bent over backwards, short of committing suicide, to acquiesce to American dictates. The Nicaraguan government's legal representative in the U.S., Paul S. Reichler, underscored that point in an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (4 August): "The Sandinistas have already accepted all of the points of the Central American peace plan, and the Reagan Administration simply refuses to take their yes for an answer." Reichler noted the Sandinistas say they would help prevent Cuba and the Soviet Union from establishing a "base" in Nicaragua and would "refrain from supporting guerrilla movements in other countries."

Even after the Democrats began putting together their new aid package, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto continued to express the regime's hopes to cut a deal with the Democrats: "Dukakis is very important to us.... A signal is being sent out that the United States is thinking of returning to the company of law-abiding nations" (London *Independent*, 25 July). This is an illusion, and a deadly dangerous one for the future of the Nicaraguan Revolution. It is one which most of the American left pushes as well, clinging to the coattails of Jesse Jackson while he fronts for the Democratic Party of war and racism.



It's not South Africa, It's the LAPD.

union movement, which used to deal with the bosses without governmental interference, belongs in the museum. The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn.... The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary set-ups. They put no reliance whatever in Roosevelt's Labor Board; they weren't fooled by any idea that Roosevelt, the liberal 'friend of labor' president, was going to help the truck drivers in Minneapolis win a few cents more an hour."

—*The History of American Trotskyism*, 1944

There will be a lot of "Unite Against Reagan" (vote Democrat) snake oil sold by the union tops and their flunkies on the reformist left (most notably the Communist Party) at Labor Day marches around the country this year. But it has been the "liberal" Democrats who have been most effective in imposing capitalist austerity (and war) on labor and minorities. It was Carter/Mondale who invoked the Taft-Hartley slave labor law against the coal miners in 1978, and later prepared the plan

which Reagan used to smash PATCO. It is the black Democratic Party mayors over America's cities, with their ghetto misery and racist cop terror. And Jesse Jackson is campaigning to keep black people chained to the Dixiecrat Democrats.

In the *Workers Vanguard* supplement, "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win," which we have distributed on picket lines across the country for the last four years, we pointed to the burning need to join labor and blacks in struggle:

"In white racist America the fate of organized labor and the oppressed black masses is closely bound together. The bureaucracy's accommodation to the racist status quo set the stage for the union-busting offensive of the Reagan years. And there will be no effective defense against this union-busting unless the labor movement becomes a powerful champion of black rights."

Above all, this requires a revolutionary workers party that will lead the fight to oust capitalism's labor lieutenants in order to unchain the power of labor and blacks. Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party to fight for a workers government! ■

The last time there was a "Boston-Austin axis" in the White House, JFK implemented Eisenhower/Nixon's Bay of Pigs invasion while LBJ carried out Barry Goldwater's war program in Vietnam. As we warned several months ago:

"Indeed, the Democratic Party has always been the primary party of imperialist war, succeeding with its 'friends of labor' rhetoric in mobilizing the population for war where the Republicans cannot. The Democrats are no less committed to the imperialist war drive against the Soviet Union than the Reaganites: today the Democrats try to bleed the Nicaraguan masses dry through negotiations and economic sabotage; on the morrow, it may be a Democratic administration that orders U.S. troops into Nicaragua."

—WV No. 446, 12 February

There will be no peace in Central America until imperialism is defeated by workers revolution throughout the isthmus, spreading to the powerful and combative Mexican proletariat and to the U.S. colossus itself. Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan Revolution! ■

## Iranian Airbus Massacre...

(continued from page 12)

unsuccessful attempts" to blast the plane earlier, but "human error delayed the firing of the supersonic missiles" (*Washington Post*, 4 August)! The bottom line is, as one colonel told the *New York Times* (6 August), "It's a lot easier to shoot first and then look."

When the Soviet Union shot down KAL 007, the U.S. used it to turn the

heat up on its anti-Soviet war drive to boiling point. But Soviet jets had tried unsuccessfully for an hour and a half to warn off the Korean plane, which had flown deep into Soviet airspace and refused to acknowledge any communication. The *Vincennes* shot down Iran Air 655, over Iranian airspace, just minutes after it took off.

These cowardly bullies with their high-tech behemoths want to prove they can barge in and smash anything in their way anywhere in the world. Vice President George Bush still viciously insists, despite all evidence to the contrary, that it's the civilians' own fault for getting in the way of a U.S. "combat zone." Dukakis, too, has defended the massacre. Now both Republicans and Democrats in Congress are balking even at Reagan's proposal to give some compensation to the families of the victims of this U.S. war crime. The racist arrogance of the American rulers is breathtaking. *Time* magazine (18 July), perhaps moved by its historically pro-Arab sympathies, was rare among bourgeois commentators in taking exception to the administration's refusal to even issue an apology, criticizing the government's "dry, formulaic expressions of official regret, the diplomatic equivalence of preprinted condolence cards."

The Spartacist League protested this inhuman war crime in New York City on July 7, demanding: "U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf!" and putting the blame where it lies: "Reagan, Democrats: Blood Is on Your Hands!" From their air-conditioned bunkers in Vietnam where they destroyed whole villages in order to "save" them, to the rape of Grenada to perpetrating this latest massacre, the arrogant, racist policy of this imperialist state is a danger to the entire globe. ■



## Democrats Push Aid for Contra Terrorists

The last hurrahs in Atlanta had scarcely died down when Senate Democrats started pushing a new aid package for the CIA's dirty contra war against Nicaragua. Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis has been going out of his way to demonstrate that he's just as much a certifiable warmonger as Reagan, even stating openly that he's prepared to launch a nuclear first strike against the Soviet Union. Sometimes, playing to widespread opposition among the American people to deeper U.S. military involvement in Central America, Dukakis has mumbled that aid to the contras is "illegal and immoral." But he gave the green light for the Democratic contra aid push by picking as his running mate Texas Tory Lloyd Bentsen, one of the staunchest advocates of contra aid on Capitol Hill.

The Democratic proposal would give the contra cutthroats \$27 million in so-called "humanitarian" aid and allow for the "filibuster-proof" release of another \$16 million in previously approved military funding later, if the administration were to decide that the Sandinistas had created an "emergency situation." White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater hailed it as a "very encouraging sign" and Reagan said he looked forward to a "strong, meaningful bi-



Civilian victim of contra terror in northeastern Nicaragua (left). Staunch supporter of contra aid Lloyd Bentsen chosen as running mate by Dukakis.



Reuters

Harrity/U.S. News & World Report

partisan package." Meanwhile, Republican Senator Robert Dole, hoping to fill the vice presidential slot on George Bush's ticket, continued to keep the squeeze on the Democrats with an alternative proposal specifically earmarking \$20 million for military supplies.

A few Republican election campaign taunts about the Democrats being "soft"

on Communism, and the Democrats were in some cringing disarray. House speaker Jim Wright and Capitol Hill "liberals" like Ted Kennedy continue to say they oppose outright military aid to the loser contras—still hoping to win at the bargaining table what their mercenaries couldn't win on the battlefield. Dukakis has demurely sidestepped the

issue; Bentsen can do the talking. They are all united to keep these killers armed and ready if the U.S. decides to invade. Democratic Senator James Sasser explained that the package "is intended to keep the Contras alive until the next administration has come in and decided how it wants to deal with the issue."

*continued on page 11*

## Iranian Airbus Massacre Made in Washington

The U.S. blew 290 men, women and children out of the sky last month, and then tried to blame the defenseless victims who happened to end up in their gunights. Now, after a "special investigation," Defense Department spokesmen say the shooting down of Iran Air Flight 655 by the USS *Vincennes* on July 3 was the result of "mistakes" made under "stress of combat" by inexperienced crewmen. But it wasn't "human error" that killed those people over the Persian Gulf—it was conscious policy made in the White House and Pentagon. The new report contradicts every single statement put out by Pentagon chief of staff Admiral Crowe on July 3, statements that were revealed daily to be lies, as we pointed out in our front-page story, "Massacre in the Persian Gulf" (WV No. 457, 15 July). And the story still stinks!

According to preliminary accounts, the Pentagon now claims its high-tech Aegis tracking system worked just fine: Aegis locked on to the civilian airliner almost at takeoff, tracked it on its course, targeted the plane with its Standard surface-to-air missiles, and blasted it out of the sky. The new line is it was some sort of "mass hallucination"—

every crewman aboard "saw" an attacking F-14 fighter where the computer said there was none. The "stress" which supposedly caused this involved the sinking by this floating fortress of a couple of 30-foot Iranian boats. The "inexperienced crewmen," with 18 months training on the Aegis system, had even undergone a simulation drill in which an innocent aircraft was mistaken for a hostile plane. But the powers that be have apparently decided to protect their multibillion-dollar investment in Aegis by throwing some low-level radar operators to the wolves.

The press continues to ooze sympathy for the *Vincennes* captain, just like they weep over the "agony" of cops who shoot down black youth in the ghettos and then get expensive psychiatric treatment for "stress." The captain, they claim, tried to warn the aircraft and waited until the last minute to shoot. But he never tried to contact the Bandar Abbas control tower nor did he contact the pilot on the commercial air channel, which U.S. military ships have done routinely in sheer harassment. Further, the investigation revealed that the *Vincennes* had made "several

*continued on page 11*



Conrad/NY Times



George Bush attacked victims of U.S. war crime for being in the way of USS *Vincennes*.