



Reuters



Dennis Brack

Vacationing Bush orders war mobilization from his golf cart. Is this the face of World War III?

U.S. Oil Pirates Out of the Persian Gulf!

Break Blockade of Iraq!

SEPTEMBER 4—What's going on in the Middle East right now is a bald attempt by the United States to seize control of the world's oil supplies. Having lost its economic predominance, Washington is now trying to reassert its role as imperialist global policeman through brute military force. That's what George Bush means when he talks about a "new world order," echoing Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. But in fact, the American invasion is setting the stage for a new world war.

The consequences of Bush's war moves are incalculable. Perhaps a quarter million U.S. troops are in or heading for the Persian Gulf region right now. Ships are being taken out of mothballs, and tens of thousands of reservists are being called up from civilian life. It's a war mobilization on a scale not seen since the height of the Vietnam War. Now they're talking of launching an air war in a matter of weeks, and Bush is to meet Soviet leader Gorbachev in a hastily called summit in Helsinki next weekend.

The bipartisan U.S. crusade against former U.S. ally Saddam Hussein is hardly about resisting aggression or "making the world safe for democracy." Certainly not coming from the people who recently slaughtered thousands of civilians to install a puppet regime in Panama. Bush says it's about defending "our way of life." What he means is a war to make the world safe for the feudalism of the oil sheiks and the profiteering of Big Oil.

After proclaiming victory in the Cold War, U.S. imperialism is now seeking to dictate terms to its imperialist rivals. Meanwhile as Gorbachev prates about "collective security," Bush has used the fig leaf of UN sanctions as a green light for a massive U.S. military operation less than 700 miles from the Soviet border. A deadly noose is tightening around the USSR. We call on the Soviet Union to rescind its arms embargo against Iraq.

The trip wires for World War III are pulling taut in the volatile Near East.

French president Mitterrand declares, "We have entered into the logic of war." The deranged Zionist rulers in Jerusalem are itching for a pre-emptive strike against Baghdad with "non-conventional weapons." And the concentration of American firepower could blow the whole region sky high. The workers of the world have a big stake in defending Iraq against this imperialist onslaught. Break the Yankee blockade!

War, as Lenin said, is the mother of revolution. The imperialist invasion will set the Middle East aflame as the Arab masses surge into the streets in angry protests that could topple the kings, sheiks and colonels throughout the region. And in this country, we have a big opportunity to stick it to this vicious, dangerous ruling class which first and foremost exploits the American working people and minorities.

Bush has jumped into a quagmire with both feet. The Arabian sands could well be quicksand for U.S. rulers. Remember what happened to Carter's Delta Force in Iran and the Marines in Beirut. In the name of the American young men and women who will come back in coffins, in the name of millions of Arabs facing the imperialist war machine, we call for sharp class struggle to bring down the bloody-minded American capitalists.

A War for Big Oil

It all started when Iraq's Hussein sent his army into the emirate of Kuwait on August 2 in a grab for the oil fields and to fulfill Iraq's historic claim to a port on the Gulf. Previously the U.S. had supported Iraq in the squalid eight-year Iran-Iraq war, supplying satellite intelligence and tanker escorts, even overlooking the Iraqis' Exocet missile attack on the USS *Stark*. But now suddenly the Iraqi strongman was sitting on 20 percent of the world's oil reserves. Overnight Saddam Hussein was transformed into a new "Hitler" by the servile U.S. media. War propaganda against "insane Hussein"

escalated violent anti-Arab racism at home.


Bush vowed the seizure of Kuwait "will not stand," and after strong-arming the feudalistic Saudi monarchy, U.S. troops started pouring into that desert country. Kuwait's considerable assets abroad were frozen, a trade embargo was placed on Iraq, and four U.S. aircraft carrier battle groups were mobilized to enforce a blockade (labeled "interdiction" to disguise the fact that this is a blatant act of war). The stated goal was to defend the house of Saud and restore Sheik Jabbar al Ahmad al Sahah to the Kuwaiti throne.

Bush & Co. just cut the ground out from under naive liberals and pacifists who thought they would collect a "peace dividend" in the "post-Cold War" world. Instead of cuts in the "defense" budget, supplemental appropriations are being rushed through and virtually every military boondoggle that was under the budget ax has been resuscitated. The entire massive mobilization is being accomplished without even a pro forma Congressional debate, much less lip service to the War Powers Act as the Democrats snap to attention whenever Bush waves the flag.

To justify the American invasion, State Department ignoramus Margaret Tutweiler harps on "Iraqi aggression." Yeah, like when Saddam Hussein went into Grenada? Iraq's takeover of Kuwait is no historical aberration: all states are built on acts of aggression. What about William the Conqueror? And Iraq's Hussein had more justification than most when he pointed out in an August 10 speech that "the colonialists, to ensure their petroleum interests...set up those disfigured petroleum states."

The statelet of Kuwait was an imperialist legacy created by drawing artificial "lines in the sand," as Glenn Frankel wrote in the *Washington Post* (31 August). The former Ottoman Empire was

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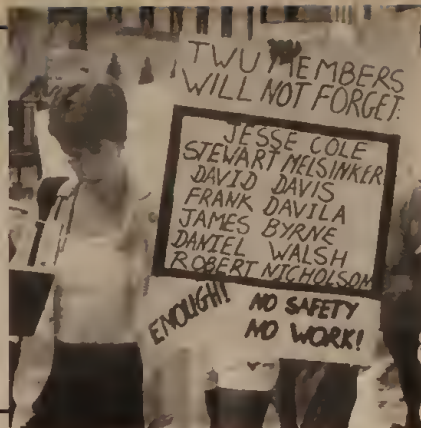
Commemoration in Coyoacán

50 Years After Assassination of Leon Trotsky

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NY Transit Workers Protest Firing of 300

Track Cuts Kill Riders and Workers



WV Photo

As the Wall Street banks reap almost \$2 billion in interest payments alone from the NYC budget, city workers and welfare recipients are facing massive cuts—imposed by black Democratic Party mayor David Dinkins, the choice of the city's union tops. Attempting to unload a \$300 million 1990-91 deficit onto transit workers' backs, the NYC Transit Authority (TA) has begun to slash jobs, attack working conditions and cut service, and is threatening another huge fare increase. And every step of the way they have been aided by the bureaucracy of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100. Led by President Sonny Hall, the union tops have paved the way for the

TA to impose the cuts, while trying to chain transit workers to the dead end of pleading with the courts and state legislature in Albany.

In contrast, the Committee for a Fighting TWU (CFTWU), a class-struggle opposition in the union, has fought to bring out the entire workforce in a *strike action* against the cuts and firings. At an August 22 union meeting, just hours before the TA fired 300 provisional track workers, and in two leaflets on August 27 and 31, the CFTWU called for a system-wide meeting to organize a strike to win immediate rehiring of the fired workers and for elected safety committees throughout the industry to halt the epidemic of

deaths and injuries on the tracks.

At an August 24 demonstration at Brooklyn Supreme Court, called by the TWU bureaucracy, a Committee supporter responded to Hall's hot air by calling for using union power for strike action. Hall replied that this would be "suicidal," and added that "as long as I'm the elected president of this union, we will not go out on strike." The CFTWU responded in a leaflet calling to "shut down the system," and suggesting: "Since Hall is so loyal to the bosses, why doesn't he volunteer to join Bush's Persian Gulf oil grab to make the world safe for Exxon's profits."

But some so-called "militants" can't bring themselves to utter the "s" word and fight for a strike. "Workers' Voice," a newsletter of the Marxist-Leninist Party, called for workers to attend an August 27 protest against the firings at the TA's Jay Street headquarters in Brooklyn, but aside from the empty "fight back" rhetoric they have no program for struggle. In particular, these fake militants don't raise demands for union action. Thus in practice they go along with Hall's program to blow off steam. By not challenging the leadership, they leave it in the hands of the pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucracy.

After the 300 workers were fired, on August 23 the TA moved to wipe out the seniority rights and working conditions of hundreds more—using the excuse that they didn't have enough workers! Transit militants say: "Enough! Let's use our union power!" We reprint below excerpts from the August 27 leaflet issued by the Committee for a Fighting TWU.

* * *

Last week 300 provisional trackworkers, mostly black and minority, were fired. For more than two years these brothers did the most vital repair jobs for the system under the most grinding conditions—dodging trains in the tunnels in the dead of night, working on the elevated lines in the snow and rain, and always menaced by the deadly 3rd rail.

Track cuts mean death for us and the riders! Six brothers were killed on the tracks over the last two years: Daniel Walsh, Robert Nicholson, Stewart Melsinker, David Davis, Frank Davila, James Byrne. No more! The TA, aided and abetted by the union tops, jeopardizes the lives of thousands of passengers and workers and then blames the inevitable tragedies on dead transit workers. This is *our* union! The Committee for a Fighting TWU says the membership must mobilize *now* to defend *all* jobs. Any of us could be next.

The provisional trackworkers were hired and fired in a TA "budget cut" scheme to degrade the title to "Laborer" and pay lower wages. They were lied to every step of the way: hired off the 1984 trackworkers list after it expired, they were told they'd be made permanent by the TA and the TWU bureaucrats. When they reported to work last Wednesday night they were told—without prior notice—"clear out your locker and return your pass or no check."

We've got a contract coming up in '91 and if we take these cuts lying down then we're dead meat next year. They need skilled workers to keep the subways running. We can bring NYC—the center of world finance capital—to a halt. Management should have learned a lesson a long time ago. Back in 1919 they tried to run the system with scabs and killed 99 passengers in the infamous Brooklyn Malbone Street tunnel wreck. The public was so furious that the street name was changed to Empire Boulevard! Already management has victimized four trackworkers at East 180th Street in the Bronx for organizing against safety violations. Two of them face dismissal and the response of our union "leaders" has been to issue a leaflet denouncing these brothers! We say: Hands Off! No Disciplinary Actions!

Sonny Hall and our union misleaders knew of the cuts in track and not only failed to fight them but kept it a guilty secret between themselves and the bosses. A union leader worth his salt would

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TROTSKY

To the Memory of Leon Trotsky

Fifty years ago, on 20 August 1940, Leon Trotsky was struck down by the blows of an assassin acting on Stalin's orders. Co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the Russian Revolution, intransigent fighter against the Stalinist bureaucracy's betrayal of that revolution, Trotsky founded the Fourth International in 1938. His legacy lives on in the internationalist political program he fought for, while the heirs of Stalin collapse under the weight of their own bankruptcy. Today we fight to

reforge the Fourth International, destroyed by liquidationist forces in 1951-53, as the indispensable prerequisite for the victory of world socialism. Below we reprint remarks by American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon at the memorial meeting in New York on 28 August 1940.

Comrade Trotsky's entire conscious life, from the time he entered the workers' movement in the provincial Russian town of Nikolaev at the age of 18, up till the moment of his death in Mexico City 42 years later, was completely dedicated to work and struggle for one central idea. He stood for the emancipation of the workers and all the oppressed people of the world, and the transformation of society from capitalism to socialism by means of a social revolution. In his conception this liberating social revolution requires for success the leadership of a revolutionary political party of the workers' vanguard....

He once wrote: "It is not the party that makes the program (the idea); it is the program that makes the party".... Trotsky, a disciple of Marx, believed with Marx, that "an idea, when it permeates the mass, becomes a material force." Believing that, Comrade Trotsky never doubted that his work would live after him. Believing that, he could proclaim on his death bed his confidence in the future victory of the Fourth International which embodies his ideas....

The betrayers of the revolution knew that the revolution lived in him, the tradition, the hope. All the resources of a powerful state, set in motion by the hatred and revenge of Stalin, were directed to the assassination of a single man, without resources and with only a handful of close followers....

Comrade Trotsky not only struggled for a new social order based on human solidarity as a future goal; he lived every day of his life according to its higher and nobler standards. They wouldn't let him be a citizen of any country. But, in truth, he was much more than that. He was already, in his mind and in his conduct, a citizen of the Communist future of humanity.

—James P. Cannon, "To the Memory of the Old Man" (August 1940)



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SEPTEMBER 2—Some 5,000 angry demonstrators stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in the streets of Washington today. District, U.S. Park and Capitol police had mobilized a massive presence with thousands of cops in riot gear, helicopters, horses and dogs. But eight years after the KKK was stopped in its tracks by a powerful labor/black mobilization, the hooded terrorists still cannot take the streets of this 70 percent black city. Coming on the heels of the federal government's failure to railroad black D.C. mayor Marion Barry out of office and into a jail cell, it was a clear rebuke to the racist rulers and their dogs of war, the KKK.

The Klan had planned a "rally" at the Washington Monument, and then to march one mile to the Capitol building. But by the time the KKK event was scheduled to begin, thousands of angry demonstrators, both black and white, were in the area. The reformist All-Peoples Congress (APC) was begging people to protest "peacefully" and "say no to racism," but young black protesters clearly wanted to stop the Klan then and there. Even the mayor's wife, Effie Barry, showed up with their son Christopher and a sign saying "Smash the KKK." One provocative racist who entered the demonstration waving a Confederate flag was unceremoniously boot-ed out, and his flag hurned with relish.

In a spontaneous move, a section of the crowd took over the intersection of 14th and Constitution, right in the Klan's intended line of march, and there they stayed. For over two hours, the demonstrators stood their ground, toe to toe with the police without incident, despite provocative bullhoming by the Progressive Labor Party. The Revolutionary Communist Party, which veered between debating "rights for racists" and crazed calls to "prepare for revolutionary war," ended up with the ritual flag-burning that's become their trademark.

Meanwhile, the cops had the Klan stashed in the Pentagon parking lot. Sizing up the anti-Klan protest, the police decided to bus the fascists straight to the Capitol. When the word got out, demonstrators took off down Constitution Avenue for the Capitol. At Third and Constitution, they were stopped by riot police who, finally given an opportunity to vent their wrath, moved in. Five people were reportedly arrested. We de-

D.C. Protesters Block KKK From Marching



Despite massive cop presence, angry Washington residents stop KKK from marching in this 70 percent black city.

mand: drop all charges against the anti-Klan protesters!

The Klansmen held a brief "rally" on the Capitol steps, sealed off from the public, hurling racial epithets into the air for the benefit of their ACLU lawyers and the media. Klan "grand dragon" Horace King ranted against communists and blacks, threatening: "We're gonna take Washington, D.C. away from them." This gutter racist filth echoes the sentiment coming straight from Barbara Bush in the White House, who says "every-one" (in her social set) wants to "get our

city back." The Klan vowed to return every year at Labor Day.

The Klan has been trying to present a "moderate" image recently, such as "ex"-KKKer David Duke running for Senator from Louisiana. Virgil Griffith's outfit, the "Christian Knights," have business cards and a "new image." The *Washington Post* (31 August) quotes one Juanita Gibson saying, "We don't do any of that mean stuff," like cross-burnings. What an obscenity! Griffith was ringleader of the KKK/Nazi killers who gunned down five leftists in broad daylight in Greensboro,

North Carolina in 1979! The only thing "new" about these lynchers is that they now carry out their murder like one of the death squads the U.S. sponsors in Central America.

Bush conservatives and *Washington Post* liberals alike were stung when a majority-black jury in Washington refused to go along with the feds' witch-hunting show trial by videotape of black mayor Marion Barry. But the black Democratic Party politicians are part of the same racist system, calling out the cops against anti-Klan demonstrators and acting as front men for the "war on drugs." Marion Barry's complicity in this war on black America and Latin America mirrors the hypocrisy of Reagan and Bush, whose contras were conduits for drug traffickers.

Missing from today's demonstration was organized labor—particularly notable on the day before "Labor Day." Mobilizing that power is key to stopping the all-sided racist assault against minorities in this country. In November 1982, a Labor/Black Mobilization, initiated by the Spartacist League, with the endorsement of dozens of union locals and officials, mobilized 5,000 militant protesters who stopped the Klan at its gathering point. The KKK was whisked out of town by the cops as the anti-Klan demonstrators triumphantly marched down the route to the White House the Klan had threatened to march. Now the capitalist media tries to rewrite that history, claiming what happened was a "riot" by black youth, who in fact were set upon by the cops after escaping from the APC's diversionary gabfest for Democrats a couple miles away from where the Klan met.

The reason the bourgeoisie is still smarting over 27 November 1982 is that was a taste of real working-class social power, based on organized labor, led by reds, mobilizing blacks. The fact that, eight years later, the Ku Klux Klan still cannot march in Washington is a victory. What's needed is a program and revolutionary party to lead the fight against the all-sided assault on the ghettos and barrios, to sweep away the racist rulers in the White House and Congress, who still treat black Washington like their colony, and to finally bury the "ghosts of the Confederacy" in their white sheets. Finish the Civil War through socialist revolution! ■

Bloody Prison Guard Rampage at Rikers Island

Rikers Island, the largest prison colony in the U.S., was the scene of a naked display of racist police power August 14. Chronically overcrowded due to the huge increases in drug-related arrests, lacking any facilities for recreation, and tyrannically ruled by notoriously brutal guards, the island has long been a festering sore of pent-up tension. But for the nearly 14,000 mostly black and Hispanic prisoners, the August 14 rampage by prison guards will be remembered as a nightmare—even in this hell.

That night the vicious warders, having sealed off the island by hocking the only bridge, vented their psychopathic rage on the terrified prisoners, who had barricaded themselves in their dormitories for protection and to protest the denial of visitors and the lack of food. After flooding the area with tear gas, guards forced the inmates to strip and run a gauntlet along a 45-foot corridor, beating them until the hallway ran with blood. At least 142 were injured, and one man died from lack of medical attention. The savagery

of these beasts in uniform knew no bounds; even emergency medical technicians attempting to cross the bridge to treat the wounded were attacked, beaten and stabbed! Many were reminded of the bloody massacre at Attica in 1971, where prisoners protesting racial discrimination were mowed down by then-governor Rockefeller's troops.

NYC mayor David Dinkins' response to the cop mayhem on Rikers Island was to try to conciliate the increasingly honapartist prison guards—negotiating with them even as they held thousands hostage. Facing criticism for his handling of the blockade, Dinkins denied that he had granted the guards' demands for amnesty—he took away one of their vacation days! The immediate spark for the August 14 riot was the guards' demand for elimination of the 27-page "use of force directive," so they could beat, maim and kill prisoners without fear of punishment. The result of a 1988 suit charging the city's notorious prison

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Rikers guards block bridge to prison, cutting off medical care, food and visitors.

Commemoration in Coyoacán

50 Years After Assassination of Leon Trotsky

August 20 marked the 50th anniversary of the murder of Leon Trotsky by an agent of Stalin. Around the world there was heightened interest in the slain internationalist revolutionary. And nowhere more so than in Mexico, where the assassin carried out his bloody deed. In more than a week of commemorative activities, scores of articles on Trotsky appeared in the Mexican press.

At the house in the suburb of Coyoacán where Trotsky lived and worked during the 43 months of his political asylum, and where he was killed with a mountaineer's pickax, the Museo León Trotsky was reopened after careful restoration work under the aegis of the Mexico City federal district administration. The Museum is now associated with a newly founded Institute for the Right of Asylum and Public Liberties, housed next door in a modern facility including a library and conference center.

From August 20 to 24, the Museum was the site of a five-day colloquium on Trotsky which involved a number of international participants, including Pierre Broué, of the Institut Léon Trotsky in France; Ernest Mandel, of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International";

Aleksandr Podshchekoldin, of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Moscow; Jake Cooper, a former Trotsky bodyguard now with Socialist Action in the U.S.;

Olivia Gall, of the National University of Mexico; Octavio Fernández, leader of Mexican Trotskyists in the 1930s; the painter Vlady, son of Victor Serge;

Esteban Volkov Bronstein, grandson of Trotsky; and others.

The topics covered in a series of nightly roundtable discussions included: Mexico at the Time of Trotsky; Trotsky and the Contemporary World; Trotsky in the USSR; Art and Revolution, an Interwar Polemic; and Testimonies About Trotsky in Mexico. Of particular interest was the presentation by A. Podshchekoldin documenting the dramatic growth in power, size and privilege of the apparatus during the nine months of 1922 between Stalin's appointment as CP general secretary and Lenin's call for Stalin's ouster. Podshchekoldin's conclusion: the data confirm, 100 percent, Trotsky's accusation in *The New Course* that a bureaucracy was strangling the party.

In the framework of this series on Trotsky, a speech on "The Meaning of Trotsky in the Soviet Union Today" was given at the Museum on August 21 by Jan Norden, editor of *Workers Vanguard*, newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S. Esteban Volkov also spoke at this event, which received press coverage in the Mexico City newspapers *La Prensa* and *El Universal*. Their edited presentations are printed below.



Lev Davidovich Trotsky in his military train during the Civil War.

The Meaning of Trotsky in the Soviet Union Today

To begin with, I would like to express, on behalf of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), our pleasure in being present here during this reinauguration of the Leon Trotsky Museum. Our Spartacist

By Jan Norden

tendency has been unique among the international tendencies in materially contributing on a regular basis for some years to the support of the Trotsky Museum, under the care of the grandson of the great international revolutionary, Esteban Volkov, who is here with us today. And now we see with great satisfaction how much careful work has been done on the house and in adapting these facilities by the Federal District Department. Which is certainly appropriate, since Trotsky was, without any doubt, one of the most remarkable human

figures to have been in Mexico, thanks to the asylum granted to him by General Lázaro Cárdenas in a principled manner and when no other government in the world would accept him.

Fifty years after the assassination of Leon Trotsky, we are seeing the collapse of Stalinism throughout East Europe and a deep crisis in the Soviet Union itself. This has led the ideologues of imperialism to proclaim the "death of Communism" and even, in the case of a State Department pseudo-scientist, "the end of history." But even though they have already written the chronicle of this death foretold, as Gabriel García Márquez would have put it, and despite the triumphalist bombast of the capitalist media, as the American writer Mark Twain ironically remarked, this announcement of its death is exaggerated.

What is Trotskyism? It is communism, it is the continuity of Leninism and Marxism in the face of its antithesis,

Stalinism. And as such it constitutes the revolutionary program for the survival of the Soviet Union, by returning to its revolutionary and internationalist roots. Today, everyone calls themselves anti-Stalinist, except the notorious Nina Andreyeva or perhaps the followers of Lombardo Toledano, who still want to label Trotsky as "egotistical, obscene and conceited." Today Trotsky is often presented, as an article in yesterday's *La Jornada* said, as "the prophet of perestroika," which he definitely was not. That is, after demonizing him, now they want to make a false icon out of him. What is true is that Lev Davidovich fought, up to his death at the hands of an agent of Stalin, against the perversion of Bolshevism by this usurper, while other party leaders were silent, capitulated, became accomplices in vile crimes against the working class.

Behind the supposed anti-Stalinist unity there are deep class divisions.

Some, like the new mayors of Leningrad and Moscow, Anatoly Sobchak and Gavril Popov, not only reject Stalin but also Lenin and the October Revolution. Thus followers of Sobchak are trying to replace the very name of Leningrad with that it had under the tsars. And now it is reported that two of the most renowned "anti-Stalinist" historians, Yuri Afanasyev and Dmitri Volkogonov, are participants in an official "investigation" which with utter shamelessness attempts to declare illegal the Bolsheviks' seizure of power in 1917! Although Afanasyev was among the first to speak of Trotsky, of this "blank space" in Soviet historiography, with his social-democratic politics it is evident that he is pursuing clearly counterrevolutionary aims.

Distorting him, they can swallow a Leon Trotsky, the first anti-bureaucratic fighter, but Trotsky the author of permanent revolution, who called for proletarian opposition to the Popular Front of

WORKERS VANGUARD

class collaboration, who fought Stalin because the latter was the assassin of the Bolshevik Party and gravedigger of the Communist International, him they hate.

Today the "reform" bureaucrats in the Kremlin are betraying the struggles of the oppressed, from Afghanistan and Central America to South Africa and Angola. And in the Persian Gulf they are going hand in hand with U.S. intervention which is trying to seize the oil. There you have the fruits of so-called "peaceful coexistence," the attempt by the Yankee imperialists to take over the whole world, which could well unleash a war that also threatens the Soviet Union. And among the prime targets of these self-proclaimed cops of the world is Mexico, where they shamelessly kidnap doctors and seek to take over the economy through a North American Common Market. We of the International Communist League are strong defenders of the independence of Mexico, and while we denounce the anti-Communist, anti-Shi'ite and anti-Kurdish murderer Saddam Hussein, we defend Iraq against imperialist aggression.

The Gorbachevites who deny the heritage of Bolshevism soon erected as their idol Nikolai Bukharin, in whom they see a precursor of perestroika. In fact, right now as we are meeting here at the site of Trotsky's assassination, in Hollywood Soviet filmmakers are shooting a movie about the life of Bukharin. It is logical: while Trotsky advocated a policy of organic industrialization and voluntary collectivization in the countryside, Bukharin put forward the slogan to the kulaks, the rich peasants, to "enrich yourselves." And these petty-bourgeois elements coming out of or belonging to the bureaucracy—a layer of Soviet "yuppies"—are eager to enrich themselves. Of course, those who today see in the market economy, i.e., the introduction of capitalism, the way out of bankrupt Stalinism do not say that Bukharin was seconded by Stalin and that they brought the USSR to the brink of disaster. If Bukharin had won with his policy of conciliating pro-capitalist elements, the Soviet Union would not have survived the Nazi invasion, with incalculable consequences for human history.

For Soviet workers who want to keep the gains of the Bolshevik Revolution in order to develop genuine socialism, the alternative to the heavy burden of bureaucratic planning which ruined the economy is not the chaos of capitalism, with its unemployment and destruction of the productive forces, but rather a planned economy with soviet democracy, where the workers themselves decide and not a parasitic caste of privileged bureaucrats. This, they will discover, was the program of the Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky.

The Devil Is Still Called Trotsky

Among Soviet researchers there is great interest today in studying the previously off-limits areas of their history. And, of course, the principal "blank space" that Gorbachev spoke of is Leon Trotsky. For the most part, we can say that little by little they are rediscovering what Max Eastman spoke of in his book *Since Lenin Died*, which was written already in 1925. Here I want to deal with only one of the ongoing discussions, to wit, the curious fact that even though the gross lies of the Moscow Trials have been discredited, they go on condemning Trotsky. This is no accident.

For decades, for Stalinists of all stripes, from the "orthodox" pro-Moscow Communist parties to the heterodox Mao Tse-tung and Fidel Castro, "The Devil Was Called Trotsky," as the title of a book by the cartoonist Rius put it. In the era of glasnost, this evaluation has not changed all that much. So that in response to an article which appeared in the West German magazine *Spiegel* in the middle of 1987—which asserted that "the ghost of Trotsky continues to wander through the halls of the universities and studies of Russia, where the world-

Spartacist talk at Leon Trotsky Museum in Coyoacán, Mexico, September 21, part of series marking 50th anniversary of the Russian revolutionary's death. Speaking (front center) is painter and muralist Vlady, standing before his work on the assassination of Trotsky.

WW Photo



renowned revolutionary is remembered as legendary"—the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (17 September 1987) published a bestiary signed by Professor V. Ivanov, under the title "Repainting Judas," in which they spew out all the old Stalinist "Short Course" rubbish.

But the "anti-Stalin" military historian, Col. Gen. Dmitri Volkogonov, writes a long article on Trotsky a year later (*Pravda*, 9 September 1988) under the title, "Demon of the Revolution." This is how he describes the co-leader, together with Lenin, of the October Revolution, the chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, military leader of the insurrection and later founder of the Red Army! Volkogonov is the high priest of the new anti-Trotsky demonology. Recently, Volkogonov himself revealed, in an interview with the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* (26 July), that he had discovered a document in which Stalin ordered the assassination of Trotsky. The order, which was found in the archives of the NKVD, dates from 1934, i.e., the time of the assassination of Kirov, and is countersigned by Voroshilov, Molotov and Ordzhonikidze, then

members of the Soviet Politburo, who thus share personal responsibility for the crime.

But even though he recognizes Trotsky as "the second figure of the Revolution and the Civil War," the "enlightened" general arrives at the conclusion, which he calls "paradoxical," that "the greatest Trotskyist was Stalin." And today we read in the newspapers a similar evaluation by the ambassador of the USSR in Mexico, who claims that "the bureaucratic system of command which was established in the Soviet Union under Stalin was a faithful copy of the ideas put forward by Trotsky." This is by no means the view of all Soviet historians. Present here at this Trotsky Series, for example, is comrade Aleksandr Podshchekoldin of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Moscow, who wrote an introduction to Trotsky's *New Course* when it was published last year by *Moloday Kommunist*, in which he pointed out how Trotsky was the victim of and fought against the Stalinist bureaucratization of the Communist Party.

But this equation of Trotsky and Sta-

lin is repeated so insistently that we must ask, why such a strange evaluation? Leaving aside the demonization, the accusations of "egocentrism" and similar denigration ("the failed would-be dictator," Volkogonov called him), we find rejection of Trotsky's policies.

Volkogonov says Trotsky "was prisoner of a grand, false idea, the idea of the world revolution." This is the same accusation which Stalin made against him in rejecting "the export of revolution." This is the distortion of the program of worldwide proletarian revolution which was the *raison d'être* of the Communist International, the very reason for the October Revolution, put forward by Lenin in his brief speech announcing the taking of power: "We must now set about building a proletarian socialist state in Russia. Long live the world socialist revolution!" It was this perspective which gave sense to the Russian proletariat seizing power in the backward empire of the tsars. Thus it is the Bolshevik Revolution itself which the Volkogonovs deny with the defamatory equation of Trotsky with Stalin, which feeds anti-communism. Our audience, then, is to be found among those who defend this revolution.

We say, together with James P. Cannon, founder of American Trotskyism, in a 1939 speech on the October Revolution, "We are, in fact, the party of the Russian revolution. We have been the people, and the only people, who have had the Russian revolution in their program and in their blood. That is also the main reason why the Fourth International is the only revolutionary tendency in the whole world."

A few days ago, Gorbachev issued a decree for the comprehensive rehabilitation of the victims of Stalin. Although it is specific about the kulaks, the name of Leon Trotsky is not mentioned. Yesterday it was reported that a petition was handed in to the Soviet Embassy here calling for his "political rehabilitation" by the government of the USSR. Similar campaigns have been sponsored in recent years by different self-proclaimed Trotskyist tendencies. In the interview with *La Stampa*, in response to a question about a possible rehabilitation of Trotsky, Volkogonov affirmed that this would be an "insult" to the irreproachable revolutionary. We say emphatically, Leon Trotsky does not need a good conduct certificate from the heirs of Stalin! The only thing we demand of the government of the USSR is that it permit the publication and free circulation of his works, so that the Soviet people may know the truth. As we have insisted over and over, it is the bureaucracy which in this hypocritical way is seeking to rehabilitate itself.

Defense of the USSR—Cornerstone of the Political Revolution

The question of defense of the Soviet Union is particularly important these days as counterrevolution is striking in every direction. This was seen recently

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Soviet Archives Confirm Stalin Signed the Order

On July 26, the *Torino, Italy* daily *La Stampa* published an article under the dramatic headline, "Kill Trotsky, Signed Stalin." The piece by their Moscow correspondent Enrico Singer was an interview with Colonel General Dmitri Volkogonov, director of the USSR Institute of Military History, who last year published a biography of Stalin and is now working on a book on Leon Trotsky. Although the *New York Times* has continued to place in doubt Stalin's ordering of Trotsky's murder, Volkogonov only confirms what Trotsky himself repeatedly stated: "Stalin Seeks My Death." While Volkogonov talks of the duty to tell the truth about Trotsky, his attempt to blame Trotsky for the forced collectivization and to make the necessary repression of the Civil War into a crime is part and parcel of the lying campaign to paint Trotsky as a would-be dictator. We print excerpts from the *La Stampa* article below:

"It was Stalin who ordered the assassination of Trotsky. The proof is in a document I found in the archives of the NKVD and which I photocopied. It is an unequivocal order which Stalin had countersigned by Voroshilov, Molotov and Ordzhonikidze in order to share with the three

Politburo members the responsibility for the death sentence of the man that was number two of the October Revolution and who, even in exile, continued to make him [Stalin] afraid." There is a touch of emotion in the voice of General Dmitri Antonovich Volkogonov, Director of the Institute of Military History of the USSR. His words are solving a mystery that has lasted fifty years.

La Stampa: But the documents that you found in the archives, what do they reveal about the speed and the methods of the decision to physically eliminate Trotsky?

Volkogonov: The first decision was taken in September '31. But it had a general character, while in '34 a special group was created to hunt down Trotsky. In '31, Stalin did not want to do it with his own hands, he wanted to do it through the men of the Comintern. In '31 the strategy was to track him down and to take measures that would favor an attempt on his life. In '34, instead, full disposition was granted to the group formed especially for this purpose. The special group was concerned with the liquidation of

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Esteban Volkov, Grandson of Trotsky

Trotsky Against Falsifiers of Marxism

Unfortunately, the history of mankind up to our times has always been one of exploitation by minorities. They have made use of cunning, they have made use of force, of deceit, to subjugate the majorities and achieve a far higher standard of living with many privileges. It was in the middle of the last century when Karl Marx and Frederick Engels for the first time developed a scientific ideology, a powerful arm for the defense, for the liberation of the exploited. It shouldn't be surprising that, ever since, Marxism has been the target of innumerable and continuous attacks. Now, the information media—or perhaps it would be better to call them, in most cases, the *disinformation* media—are tolling the bells for the burial of Marxism.

The tactic of the exploiters from the privileged minorities has always been to confuse and disorient the exploited masses. From the last century on, from the beginning of the century until now, this has been the tactic. The best way to subjugate the masses is to disorient them and to keep them away from a powerful revolutionary theory which can guide them in their struggle. The whole history of the class struggle since the last century has been along these lines.

Karl Marx himself had to fight vigorously, as did Frederick Engels, against a whole series of deviations, of falsifiers and alterers of Marxism, in order to keep the full validity and vigor of this ideology. Initially the brunt of the attack, if you will, of those who sought to divert and falsify Marxism was from the anarchists, from the social democrats. And as the outbreak of the Russian Revolution approached, the most important, key task in this work, in this historical undertaking, was to denounce the social democracy, which had replaced the class struggle, the revolutionary processes, with class collaboration. And in this work, Lenin and Trotsky were the most significant actors. In fact, it was this struggle which made possible the victory of the October Revolution, maintaining the vitality of Marxism.

Unfortunately, some years after the victory of the first proletarian revolution on the planet, based on Marxist theory, there came again one of the greatest betrayals and falsifications of Marxism, which was the Stalinist regime. During the last days of his life, Lenin became

Esteban Volkov Bronstein (right) speaking at talk on "Meaning of Trotsky in the Soviet Union Today."



aware of this new process of falsification, of diversion of the Marxist socialist revolution, and he attempted during his last hours to wage a struggle which he unfortunately could no longer carry out. Trotsky was the one who picked up the burden, and he fought the bureaucracy.

Trotsky's whole life cannot be separated from Marxist thought. In the deformation of the October Revolution, Marxism was turned into a dogma, into a religion by Stalin, into an ideology totally opposed to what it originally was. Trotsky was among the first to pick up on this phenomenon, and without vacillation he energetically and valiantly undertook one of the most heroic and courageous fights in history. The Left Opposition confronted the powerful bureaucratic state. He was exiled, expelled from the Soviet Union, his supporters were deported, and Trotsky untiringly pursued this fight.

Fifty years later, we are fully aware of this work. Stalinism is really coming to the resting place which Leon Trotsky had predicted for it: the dustbin of history. And thanks to the labors of Trotsky and Trotskyism, despite—perhaps we have to mention criticisms, like that of Isaac Deutscher, who felt that one of Trotsky's errors was the founding of the Fourth International—I think that the work of denouncing and fighting against one of the biggest falsifications

of Marxism, justifies 100 percent the cause and the *raison d'être* of the Fourth International, as well as having been the best school and spokesman for revolutionary Marxism.

Obviously there aren't revolutionary processes every day—in a given country it may come in 50 years, in a century—and a Marxist party does not necessarily have to lead the seizure of the Winter Palace. These revolutions don't take place every day. The work of a revolutionary party is to unconditionally defend the working class and to educate the masses to understand what Marxism is, to maintain the vitality of Marxism. Clearly, at the moment when the revolution breaks out, its job is to lead it and to seek to take it to victory. But that is not a day-to-day task, but rather a task which sometimes comes only once in a century.

As far as what we are witnessing today: everywhere we hear of "the bankruptcy of Marxism," "the defeat of socialism"—on the contrary, today is a great day of celebration. We are witnessing not the defeat of Marxism, we are witnessing the burial of one of the greatest falsifications of Marxism to ever emerge. The greatest enemy of the working class is in its death agony, Stalinism. And in large part this is thanks to the work of Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International. ■

Juan Morales García



Trotsky's study as it was the day he was murdered by Stalin's agent. With Museum renovation, a handsome brochure has been published.

Trotsky...

(continued from page 5)

in East Germany where our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany fought down the line to defend the social and economic gains and the very existence of the DDR workers state, as bureaucratically deformed as it has been, against the imperialist onslaught for reunification with capitalist West Germany. In contrast, many ostensible Trotskyists, under the mantle of the democratic right of national self-determination, have placed themselves at the tail of the *Anschluss* (annexation) express train, which is hurtling toward a Fourth Reich, a new empire of Greater Germany.

Unconditional defense of the degenerated (in the case of the USSR) and deformed workers states and rejection of support to capitalist reunification was at the origin of a recent fusion of the Grupo Espartaquista de México with the Trotskyist Faction, expelled by the POS. The comrades are present here and the joint bulletin which we published on this fusion is on sale, so that we can go into this subject more later. Here I want to emphasize the continuity and current relevance of Trotsky's work in this respect. It is well known that Trotsky's last political fight inside the Fourth International was against the petty-bourgeois opposition of Shachtman and Burnham, in the American SWP, who abandoned defense of the Soviet Union on the eve of World War II. They thus yielded to the ideological pressure of the bourgeoisie which was howling for "poor little Finland" while it served as the spearhead of imperialism against the USSR.

Many are not aware, however, that defense of the Soviet Union was a constant of Trotsky's politics, in fact it was the basis of his call for throwing out the bureaucracy which criminally undermined this defense. In the third volume of his biography of Trotsky, *The Prophet Outcast*, Isaac Deutscher notes that the Bolshevik leader "was never to compromise over...or to yield an inch from" his defense of the USSR. "Thus, during the first half of this term of exile he preached reform, not revolution, in the Soviet Union; whereas in the second half he was to maintain that political revolution was the only answer to bureaucratic absolutism.... But even then he was never to waver in his insistence that the Soviet Union was a workers state; he declared the 'unconditional defence of the Soviet Union' against its bourgeois enemies to be the elementary obligation of every member of the Opposition; and he was repeatedly to disown friends and adherents who were reluctant to accept this obligation."

This question was posed at the very beginning of his exile, during the summer of 1929, over the dispute with Chiang Kai-shek about the Soviet-owned Manchurian Railway which had been inherited from the tsarist empire. Trotsky debated with the German Leninbund, headed by Hugo Urbahns, with the French syndicalist group around the magazine *Révolution Proletarienne* and also with those in the ranks of the Left Opposition who wanted to support bourgeois China against the USSR. In his article, "Defense of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition" (September 1929), Trotsky insists that "it is necessary to adopt the position of the most resolute and unconditional defense of the USSR" against the threat of war.

The same article has an abundance of comments which could not be more current in their relevance. He says, for example, that "from the proletarian standpoint, neither democracy as a whole nor national self-determination as an integral part of it stands above the classes; nor does either of them supply the highest criterion of revolutionary policy." Apply this today to the case of the Baltic republics, where many ostensible Trotskyists proclaim "Hands off

Conference of
Union of Toilers
of the Kuzbass,
September 1989,
and Programmatic
Declaration of
the UTK.

Union of Toilers of the Kuzbass



ПРОГРАММНОЕ ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ
СОЮЗА ТРУДЯЩИХСЯ КУЗБАССА

Принято IV конференцией Союза трудящихся Кузбасса
18-19 ноября 1989 года

Вопросы, поставленные на IV конференции Союза трудящихся Кузбасса, являются наиболее острыми и актуальными в настоящее время. Они касаются судьбы нашей страны, ее будущего, судьбы трудящихся. В ходе конференции были рассмотрены и приняты следующие основные положения Программного заявления Союза трудящихся Кузбасса:

Lithuania" —such as the British Workers Power group and both wings of the followers of the late Nahuel Moreno—while the nationalist Lithuanian leadership seeks to re-establish capitalist rule under the mantle of independence. Last fall, the United Secretariat published a disgusting article praising the Estonian fascists, the so-called Forest Brothers, who fought together with the Nazis against the Red Army during the Second World War! They represented, said the USec, "armed struggle against Stalinism." For our part, we salute the Soviet veterans who recently mobilized to prevent the fascist Forest Brothers from marching for the independence of Estonia.

Trotskyism—Program of the
Soviet Working Class

The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International, better known as the Transitional Program, written in 1938, remarks that "If we are to examine 'Trotskyism' as a finished program, and even more to the point, as an organization, then unquestionably 'Trotskyism' is extremely weak in the USSR. However, its indestructible force stems from the fact that it expresses not only revolutionary tradition but also today's actual opposition of the working class. The social hatred stored up by the workers against the bureaucracy—this is precisely what from the viewpoint of the Kremlin clique constitutes 'Trotskyism.' It fears with a deathly and thoroughly well-grounded fear the bond between the deep but inarticulate indignation of the workers and the organization of the Fourth International."

More than half a century later, we can state that today more than ever Trotskyism represents the real interests of the Soviet working class, and as such it offers the proletarian solution to the present crisis which the USSR is experiencing. In the growing chaos which is registered daily, from the Kuznets coal basin, the Kuzbass, in Siberia to the Baltic Coast, it's not that the workers are absent. On the contrary, ever since the great miners strike of last summer, when hundreds of thousands of workers occupied the coal mines and set up strike committees with the character of soviets, replacing all state authority, the spectre of a new working-class explosion has been ever present. But so far great confusion reigns in the ranks of the working people.

This was seen recently in the 24-hour miners strike which took place on July 11, the last day of the 28th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Many of its demands were against the CP, demanding that party cells in the pits be dissolved and the property of the CPSU be nationalized. In Moscow, a representative of the Kuzbass strike co-

ordinating committee spoke before the biggest anti-Communist demonstration in memory, some 400,000 according to some estimates, in which there were many monarchist—i.e., tsarist—forces and there were slogans such as "Cure Russia of Bolshevism."

Many of the Kuzbass and Donbass miners support the populist demagogue Boris Yeltsin, who praises Ronald Reagan and the "dynamism" of American capitalism. Certainly, the Mexican miners in Cananea and their American fellow workers in Morenci, Arizona can tell Soviet miners a lot about this "dynamism," which is based on massive layoffs, breaking strikes, closing plants and deploying the military to protect capital. In Leningrad, on the other hand, diehard Stalinist bureaucrats have taken over the workers' protests against the havoc wreaked by perestroika. Sinister Russian nationalist forces are also at work, linked to the anti-Semitic fascists of Pamyat. But in the Baltic republics, the predominantly Russian workers of the Internationalist Movement have raised traditional Bolshevik slogans in confronting the pro-capitalist nationalists.

In other words, the principal characteristic of the Soviet workers movement presently is the lack of coherence, and as we have noted in *Workers Vanguard*, "this is possible only because there does not exist today in the USSR a genuine communist party of the working class."

The same pro-capitalist forces are conscious of their weakness. Gavril Popov, the mayor of Moscow and a fervent advocate of the "market economy," noted that "The masses long for fairness and economic equality. And the further the process of transformation goes, the more acute and the more glaring will be the gap between those aspirations and economic realities." Popov foresees "waves of workers fighting for their own interests" which "will break up the forces of perestroika." He fears the rebirth of a left-wing populism which he calls "the New Communists" (in capital letters). And to counter this danger he says that the "purely democratic model" is inadequate. In calling for "new mechanisms of political power," this notable spokesman for the "liberal" current is calling in effect for a dictatorial regime.

Program for the
"New Communists"

In the face of Popov's fears, we repeat that the strength of Trotskyism is rooted in its program, which expresses the real opposition of the Soviet working class. Take the case of the Siberian miners who last year shook the USSR. I have here the "Programmatic Declaration of the Union of Toilers of the Kuzbass" (UTK) dated November 1989. Although it makes sharp criticisms of the CPSU, of the

domination by this arm of the bureaucracy, it is not anti-communist. It speaks of "Soviet society, which has achieved since the October Revolution successes well known to all in the creation of an independent economy, in ensuring victory over fascism," but which has now fallen into "the most severe crisis." It denounces "the substitution of the power of a tight-knit group of persons...a bureaucratic clique" for "the socialist power of the people." It comes out for perestroika, while stating that up to now its course has been "extraordinarily slow and exceptionally painful for the workers."

Now, the economic platform of the UTK calls for "the liquidation of the bureaucratic-commandist system in the economy" and recognizes "the equality of all forms of property," including those of "individual labor, stockholding, mixed and private" property. It holds that "Market relations are a priceless experience of human civilization" and sees in the turning over of property to workers' collectives the solution to all evils. But how? After recognizing private property, it declares inadmissible the exploitation of the labor of others. It then calls for "equal rights between the mass of workers and management," and "the right...to remove all officials not warranting the confidence of the collectives" and "a procedure under which the directing apparatus would work at the behest of the workers' collectives."

The least that one can say is that they have no idea of how a market economy actually functions, in which by definition the producers are deprived of all these "rights" which are placed in the hands of capital. One only needs to look at what is happening these days in Poland, where Solidarność is re-establishing capitalism on the backs of the working people, exactly as we said nine years ago when we declared "Down with Solidarność counterrevolution!" and practically the entire left proclaimed its solidarity with Solidarity. A friend says that Soviet workers don't need political revolution but bread. But how are they to get the bread? Not from a market economy. Polish workers today don't have bread but soup kitchens, unemployment, poverty.

In other words, the miners reject the present bureaucratic regime but their "alternative" of a market economy is idealized, unreal, impossible. They say that "in the USSR, there is not and cannot be a power other than that of the Soviets of People's Deputies," and there is evident a yearning for soviet democracy, such as they understand it. To understand how this can be realized, we recommend that they read the "Platform of the Opposition," written by Trotsky in 1927, which says that to wage a determined struggle against bureaucratism one must return to the [1918]

program of the Communist Party which specifies the obligatory participation of every member of a soviet in administrative tasks, the regular rotation of such tasks, the increasing involvement of all the working people in administering the state. This is quite the opposite of the current political reforms which seek to turn the impotent "soviets" into bourgeois-style parliaments.

It is a regime of soviet democracy that can carry out, as the Transitional Program advocates, a "revision of planned economy from top to bottom in the interests of producers and consumers," in which "factory committees should be returned the right to control production" and consumer cooperatives can carry out an effective control of prices and the quality of products. But the question of the Stalinist bureaucracy is not limited to pervasive obstacles and a swollen administration; in the final analysis it is a question of the class role played by this privileged layer. The struggle for a proletarian political revolution is to overthrow the Thermidorian bureaucracy, which day after day "helps rot the foundations of the socialist elements of the economy and increases the chances for capitalist restoration." Trotsky warned against this danger half a century ago, and now we are seeing it in our times.

Today we can indicate as principal demands for a communist opposition in the USSR:

- For equality, more and better! For a Leninist-Trotskyist party!
- Build an anti-Stalinist, Leninist-Trotskyist party based on the working class and those sections of the Red Army with the least privileges and the most responsibilities.
- It is necessary to drive the parasites, exploiters and their ideologues out of the soviets.
- "Socialism in one country" is a defeatist myth. For proletarian revolutionary internationalism. For the military defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism which is relentlessly encircling the Soviet Union in a tightening noose.
- For democratic-centralist planning through soviets of the workers and their allies, such as that section of the bureaucracy, especially in the officer corps, which explicitly renounces in word and life their privileges; the collective peasantry and other oppressed; and that wing of the intelligentsia which, through the struggle by the "left-wing populists, the New Communists" (as Popov put it) find their way out of the maze of corrupt appetites.
- For the formation of a Trotskyist party across the Soviet Union.
- For the democratic reorganization of the Soviet Union and the right of any nationality with an anti-counter-revolutionary leadership to withdraw to the extent that they see fit. ■

For Unconditional Defense of the Soviet Union
A Program Of
Victory For The
Soviet Union

THE MILITANT

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY,
544-CIO LEADERS INDICTED



James P. Cannon,
leader of American
Trotskyists who
were jailed for
opposition to
imperialist war,
fought for defense
of Soviet Union.

Young Spartacus

Blacks Don't Buy Bush's War

Continued from page 12

300 sailors, mostly blacks, staged a sit-down on the *Constellation* while on a training exercise off the coast of California, protesting racist treatment and defending six black sailors who had been singled out for discriminatory discharge.

Black America hated the Vietnam War. Muhammad Ali's famous refusal to the draft board—"No Viet Cong ever called me nigger"—became a rallying cry for thousands upon thousands of radicalized black youth inside and outside the army, fed up with racist oppression at home and sympathetic to another nonwhite people who were at the receiving end of U.S. imperialism's brutality. Black GIs in Vietnam not only faced overt racist insults from their white officers, but were singled out to walk point on patrol and put into other positions where they'd be the first to get a bullet.

And soldiers who'd risked their lives in 'Nam came back to find their lives at risk at home for daring to demand equality, or worse yet, they were sent to Detroit or Washington to suppress black rebellion at gunpoint. Returning black veterans joined militant groups like the Black Panther Party. One black vet recalled, "Most of the Panthers then were veterans.... We had already fought for the white man in Vietnam. It was clearly his war."

Vietnam vets were spat on when they returned home—not by braless New Left girls but by the right-wing yahoos who

stayed at home waving the flag while working-class kids went off to die. In his *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72* (1973), Hunter Thompson describes the moving scene when the Vietnam Veterans Against the War protested outside the Republican convention in Miami in 1972:

"They were moving up Collins Avenue in dead silence; twelve hundred of them dressed in battle fatigues, helmets, combat boots.... a few carried full-size plastic M-16s, many peace symbols, girlfriends walking beside vets being pushed along the street in slow-moving wheelchairs, others walking jerkily on crutches."

They were sneered at by the assembled high fliers, including Rambo godfather John Wayne, and confronted by a horde of cops. One 20-year-old brat even tried ramming through the crowd of vets on her motorbike.

Among those present in Miami in 1972 was Ron Kovic, who spoke from a wheelchair because his legs were permanently paralyzed in Vietnam. Kovic's autobiography was the basis for the movie *Born on the Fourth of July*. When Kovic recently read out an open letter to Bush calling for the immediate withdrawal of American troops from the Gulf at a protest meeting in Los Angeles, this highly decorated vet was denounced by a flag-waving "business consultant" as a "self-pitying crybaby" who "doesn't care about American soldiers."

Or take the case of Geronimo Pratt, a Vietnam vet who joined the Panthers. He was wounded three times in Vietnam, received two purple hearts, two bronze



Black protesters against the Vietnam War, New York City, 1967.

stars for valor, one silver star, a soldier's medal, an army commendation medal, three combat infantry badges and master paratrooper's wings. Today he is fighting for his freedom after 19 years in jail on frame-up murder charges growing out of the FBI's COINTELPRO campaign to disrupt the Panthers and all radical black organizations.

As the Spartacist pamphlet "Black Soldiers in the Jim Crow Military" documents, it was only with the Korean War in the early 1950s that the American military was finally even integrated

(*Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 4). Before that, blacks were either confined to all-black combat units or sent off to die as unarmed servants for white officers.

Even now, 46 years after the fact, the government still refuses to consider reversing one of the most notorious racist victimizations in the history of the U.S. military. Fifty black sailors were court-martialed on charges of mutiny in Port Chicago, California in 1944 for refusing to load unsafe ammunition after 320 men—202 of them black—were literally blown to bits in an explosion.

In good measure, the radicalization of the '60s was influenced by the fact that the Vietnamese people were waging a revolutionary war. In contrast, Saddam Hussein is a sordid nationalist strongman who is an oppressor, not a liberator of workers and minorities in Iraq. But Hussein doesn't hold a candle to the racist, genocidal crimes of U.S. imperialism.

Many black youth seek a road out of poverty through an education financed through military service—a modern-day form of indentured servitude. They watch glowing ads on TV saying "Be all that you can be" by joining the army. And now they find themselves being yanked out of school and shipped out to die in the Persian Gulf. As far as the Pentagon is concerned, all they can be is cannon fodder for the racist war machine.

The only way out of a system that spawns poverty, war and racism is through international socialist revolution. And that is a cause worth fighting for. ■

Berkeley Students Protest U.S. Invasion of Persian Gulf

It's the biggest U.S. military mobilization since the bloody, dirty war against Vietnam—and youth today are beginning to worry that Uncle Sam could draft them to die in desert sands for the sake of Big Oil's profits. The capitalist press marches in lockstep with U.S. imperialist aggression, trying to whip up enthusiasm for war and featuring "opinion polls" to indicate that the whole country supports Bush.

But on August 29, the very day the *New York Times* crowed that at the University of California's Berkeley campus, "No turmoil occurs in the very cradle of campus turmoil," hundreds of students rallied at Sproul Plaza to listen to antiwar speeches at a protest organized by "Students for Peace in the Persian Gulf." Two days earlier, about 50 students rallied at the predominantly black Laney College campus in Oakland.

Erik Larsen, a college student and lance corporal in the Marine Reserves, addressed the Berkeley rally and bashed the hypocrisy of U.S. imperialism: "Eight years ago, the U.S. encouraged the sale of chemical weapons to Saddam Hussein...and said nothing when Hussein used them on his own people." Larsen drew the most applause from the crowd when he declared himself a "conscientious



August 29—Berkeley students gather in Sproul Plaza to hear speakers against U.S. war for Big Oil.

objector" and called on UC Berkeley to open its doors as a sanctuary for others in the armed forces who refuse to go.

As Marxists we oppose conscription for the imperialist army. But as against calls for draft resistance, which separates off middle-class radicals from the mainly black and working-class draftees, revolu-

tionaries would not "refuse" the draft but instead seek to organize class opposition within the imperialist armed forces. And if the capitalist rulers, many of whom saved their hides from going to Vietnam through the class privilege of student deferments, decide to institute a draft, then this time let it be the Neil Bushes

and Dan Quayles who get sent!

The various and sordid "leftists" (SWP, RCP, Socialist Action, etc.) present at the Berkeley rally tried to bring back the days of Vietnam antiwar protests when "Bring Our Boys Home" was the popular-frontist rallying cry. The illusion peddled by these groups is that U.S. imperialism was defeated by their peace crawls presided over by Democratic Party "doves." They join even the likes of Richard Nixon in bleating, "No More Vietnams," because that was a losing war for the American ruling class.

In the Vietnam War "our boys" were the NLF and North Vietnamese soldiers who fought a revolutionary social struggle to rid their country of imperialist bondage and capitalism. We say "Vietnam was a victory—two, three, many defeats for imperialism!" In the Persian Gulf today we are for the defense of Iraq against the designs of U.S. imperialism, which seeks to seize control of the world's oil. We look not to the butcher Hussein, but to a revolutionary mobilization of the Iraqi workers, Kurds and leftists who have been his victims.

The Spartacus Youth Club fights to win students over to the side of the international working class and to become active partisans in its struggles. With the spectre of bloody imperialist war before us, it is more urgent than ever for students to ally themselves with the social power of the labor movement to forge a revolutionary vanguard party that can topple capitalism, which even as it trumpets victory in the Cold War now drives toward a very hot war. ■

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

carved up between the English and French in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. Part of Basra province until London recognized it as a protectorate in 1899, Kuwait was separated off after World War I in order to deny Iraq access to the sea, which was War Office policy to "limit its influence in the gulf and keep it dependent on Britain."

"We, the British, cobbled Iraq together," admitted British diplomat Sir Anthony Parsons. The boundary with Kuwait contested by Saddam Hussein was dictated in 1922 by British high commissioner Sir Percy Cox. And indeed, the British drew the frontiers and designated rulers throughout the region, installing loyal tribal leaders as monarchs as T.E. Lawrence did with Ibn Saud. And the French carved up their Syrian mandate territory to create the artificial state of Lebanon as a pro-Western Christian-dominated enclave in the Levant. The last 40 years of bloodletting in the Middle East go back to this cynical imperialist carve-up.

Another Washington hattle cry is Saddam Hussein's refusal to let Westerners leave Iraq, turning them into hostages. Why, he even sent some to Iraqi military bases and dams which would be obvious targets of U.S. air strikes. What savagery! War is indeed a savage business in which enemy aliens are often subjected to repression. And the citizens of any country participating in the blockade of Iraq certainly qualify as enemy aliens. As Hussein pointed out, in World War II, in an act of racism utterly without military justification, the U.S. threw hundreds of thousands of Japanese Americans, many of them U.S. citizens, into concentration camps.

And then there is the matter of Iraq's poison gas, "the poor man's atom bomb." Having for years turned a blind eye to Hussein's vicious use of nerve gas and mustard gas against Iranian troops and thousands of Kurds inside Iraq, now Washington objects. Forget that the U.S. has a vast chemical warfare arsenal, and that Bush has fought Congress to continue production of "binary" nerve gas. American warships in the region surely carry atomic weapons, and we are morally certain the Pentagon is already updating operational plans to nuke Baghdad.

"New World Order"

When Hitler took power in 1933 proclaiming a "New Order," he proclaimed it would last a thousand years. In taking up the same rhetoric, Bush is desperately trying to revive the "American Century" which, as we have put it, was buried in the jungles of Vietnam. Hitler's "New Order" lasted 12 years; Bush's could blow up in his face in a matter of weeks.

This is no longer 1945, when America was undisputed master of the capitalist world. German imperialism is forming a Fourth Reich by taking over East Germany and establishing the domination of the D-mark in East Europe on the road to economic hegemony throughout Europe. Japan is forming a new "co-prosperity sphere" in East Asia having already become the U.S.' main creditor. The "dollar zone" is being challenged by the yen and D-mark.

Today the American imperialists talk of protecting the oil "life line." In the 1800s, British interest in Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) was based on defending the "life line" to India. This was also the rationale for grabbing Suez, and once they had Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, that paved the way for the Cecil Rhodes "Cape to Cairo" types. While Britannia ruled the waves and grabbed the lion's share of Africa, the Germans dreamed of a Berlin-to-Baghdad railroad. When these two imperial ambitions clashed, the result was World War I.

U.S. rulers want to regain the position of imperialist top cop by seizing the oil, which they can then dole out to their economically more dynamic rivals. Significantly, Washington's Japanese and



Nelson/AF



Der Spiegel

U.S. power behind the thrones of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd (left) and Emir of Kuwait. Iraq strongman Saddam Hussein (right) is target of Bush's Imperialist "new order."

German "allies" have hung back from military commitments in the Persian Gulf adventure, no doubt hoping to maintain friendly connections in the Arab world. As the world's chief bursars, they would like to have the U.S. act as mercenaries to guard "their" oil supplies.

But if the junk-bond-bloated Yankee rulers are short on productive capacity these days, they're trying to make up for it with brute military force. In the first

unplanned: the Army Corps of Engineers has spent \$17 billion over the years for military infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, including "hardened airfields where fueling, maintenance and ordnance loading are done well underground" and runways were specifically designed for large U.S. transport planes (*Navy Times*, 27 August). And "Operation Desert Shield" could be implemented so quickly because the Joint Chiefs of Staff simply

we walked out of tiny Lebanon after 250 dead, are Americans ready to bear the burden of pacifying Iraq and Iran, with 70 million people."

To keep their profits flowing, they're prepared to spill the blood of millions of impoverished Arabs and thousands of black and working-class American youth in uniform. The Vietnam War brought down two American presidents. Bush & Co. will soon enough find out that the Vietnam syndrome is still alive.

American military (aircraft, ships, troops) have moved in to stay, in bases throughout Arabian peninsula, to grab Mideast oil supplies.



New York Times Map

place, the U.S. mobilization is far more than necessary to "defend" Saudi Arabia: the Pentagon has moved in "ground and helicopter forces expressly geared to offensive operations," just the mix that computer wargame analysis indicates for an air/land attack on Iraq, notes the authoritative *Aviation Week* (27 August).

But a war with Iraq's battle-hardened army of nearly a million men with over 5,000 tanks will not be a walkover like Panama or Grenada. No war has ever been won through a blockade, as was tried against the Southern Confederacy and Germany. And as Hussein himself pointed out, no war has ever been won through air power. So they're gearing up for "the big one." Right now they're in a phase of "phony war," letting UN secretary general Pérez de Cuellar show that shuttle diplomacy is worthless. It will take another few weeks for the U.S. to get the full complement of forces in place. And then inexorable pressure will mount to "use it or lose it."

The current "crisis" was not entirely

presented Bush with a modified version of "Plan 90-1002" for a massive air- and seafight of U.S. forces to the Gulf.

It's clear that U.S. forces are being moved into the Persian Gulf to stay. Heretofore, the Saudis have been reluctant to grant the Pentagon base rights. But in the last weeks, American combat aircraft have been stationed in all the Gulf states of the Arabian peninsula. Defense Secretary Cheney makes no bones about it: the U.S. military commitment is "long term," and "we do not know how long we will have to stay." With this invasion the U.S. has taken a big step toward a strategic objective: a military stranglehold on the Middle East. But now they may have to pay the price in blood.

While the Democrats march in lockstep with Bush, however, elements in the Republican right wing (such as Patrick Buchanan) have doubts about the U.S.' military capacity to bring this off. These "Fortress America" types want to concentrate on dismantling the ex-Soviet bloc. Attacking Bush, Buchanan asks: "If

Mideast Cauldron

If during the Vietnam War, protesters sang "One, two, three, what are we fighting for?" that question will be repeated more loudly today when this war can't be justified as part of the crusade against Communism. Who wants to die so that the Kuwaiti Emir can live a life of luxury in a state where only 70,000 men out of a population of over 2 million have the right to vote for a "parliament" which is dissolved as soon as it meets? Or for the feudal house of Saud which lords it over its one-family state where women are denied the right to drive, much less vote, and even princesses are beheaded for adultery. Saudi Arabia is the largest remaining state where chattel slavery still exists.

Already there have been incidents of "culture shock" as U.S. troops come up against the social straitjacket of Saudi medievalism. In one case, Saudi soldiers went crazy when a woman member of an F-15 ground crew took her shirt off to work in her T-shirt in the 120 degree heat. And take note that the Saudi dynasty was catapulted into power with the aid of the Wahabi sect. In Afghanistan, where they have been acting as mercenary *majahedin* (holy warriors), these Islamic fanatics are notorious for raping every "infidel" woman they come across.

Those are the U.S.' glorious "allies" in Bush's war for "freedom" and "our way of life." Iraq's Saddam Hussein, on the other hand, has won popular support throughout the area, justifying his takeover of Kuwait as an effort to take back the oil wealth from the lavish-living sheiks. He is also now seen by the Palestinians as a champion of their cause against the Zionists who have deprived

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Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

them of a homeland. Hussein is simultaneously trying to take on the mantle of Nasser as the unifier of the Arab nation against feudalism and imperialism, while putting himself forward as the new scion of Muhammad in calling for a *Jihad* to defend the Islamic holy sites from the Western infidels and their lackeys.

Of course, with his roots in the Ba'ath "Socialist" party, Saddam Hussein was supposedly secular. In reality, he is the kind of thug and murderer who would normally qualify as a U.S. ally. He might be compared to bloody Pakistani dictator Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, who helped funnel CIA aid to Afghan counterrevolutionary bands (in return for a big rake-off). Hussein actually was a U.S. ally for years. When the Ba'ath party came to power briefly in 1963, it may have been aided by the CIA, which reportedly supplied lists of Communists to be killed. After the Ba'athists took over again in 1968, they jailed and killed thousands of CPers, particularly among Kurdish oil workers in the region of Kirkuk.

This did not stop the Kremlin Stalinists from aiding Saddam, just as they gave support to both Shah Pahlavi and then Ayatollah Khomeini even as the Iranian rulers jailed Iranian Tudeh members. For years, Moscow has been supplying advisers and military hardware to Baghdad as part of its efforts to cultivate "Third World" nationalists. Now under Gorbachev's "new thinking," which evidently consists of giving in to every imperialist demand, and then throwing in some more, the Soviet Union has denounced

Letter to the Kremlin Rescind Arms Embargo of Iraq

9 August 1990

Embassy of the Union of
Soviet Socialist Republics,
Washington, D.C. and Paris
USSR Mission to the United Nations
Dear Ambassadors:

The American imperialists have seized upon a local disturbance in the Persian Gulf to vastly extend United States military might. In the face of this escalating imperialist provocation, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) demands that the Soviet government rescind immediately its arms embargo against Iraq. The U.S. provocation is a tripwire for world war, posing a grave danger to all humanity.

With unbridled hypocrisy and in the name of "freedom," the U.S. is seeking to assure its stranglehold over world supplies of oil. The establishment of American military bases in Saudi Arabia for the first time and a naval embargo aimed at starving Iraq into submis-

sion pose a danger not only to that volatile region but to the Soviet Union itself. The deployment of American might in the region has tightened the encirclement of the Soviet Union by the utterly hostile forces of imperialism.

In pursuit of narrow diplomatic concerns, the Soviet government previously signed a Treaty of Friendship with Saddam Hussein, the butcher of thousands of worker militants, Communist Party members, and members of the Kurdish minority. Yet now when Iraq is genuinely threatened by imperialism the Soviet government has supported United Nations sanctions against Iraq and seems willing to "cooperate" with the White House warmongers. This is a betrayal of the interests of the Soviet state and the Soviet and world working people.

The ICL(FI) believes the workers of the world are opposed to a squalid war between the reactionary sheiks and colonels over the oil fields. We have, however, great interest in the

profits sweated out of oil workers from the Persian Gulf to the North Sea to the Gulf of Mexico: our interest is that this wealth go to the working people of the world. We say: U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf! We Trotskyists, who stand in defense of the Soviet workers state against world imperialism, demand that the Soviet Union rescind its arms embargo of Iraq and send their former allies in Baghdad the weapons they need to deter Washington's oil grab.

The Soviet government fought to the end, successfully, to keep the oil fields of Baku out of the hands of the imperialists. We should make vigorous efforts in the current situation.

Fraternally,
Helene Brosius
International Secretary

cc: General of the Army B.V. Snetkov
Commander in Chief,
Group of Soviet Forces in Germany
Zossen-Wunsdorf

limits. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) has denounced this betrayal and in a letter sent to several Soviet embassies demanded "that the Soviet government rescind

Shamir & Co are itching for a "pre-emptive" strike against Iraq—a repeat of their 1981 bombing raid on Baghdad's unfinished nuclear plant, but this time on an apocalyptic scale with nuclear/chemical weapons to destroy Iraq at one blow and "solve" the "Palestinian problem."

"Israeli political and military leaders are saying that time is not on the side of the United States in the Persian Gulf crisis, and that it should act now," reports the *New York Times* (21 August). But with an arsenal of some 200 nuclear warheads, as well as chemical weapons and delivery systems, Israel might well try it on its own. But while the Zionist rulers with their Masada complex gird for Armageddon, they could touch off revolutionary upsurges throughout the Arab East. And this might even break the extreme chauvinist stranglehold over the Hebrew-speaking workers.

Meanwhile, the U.S. economy, which was already in a recession, is being tipped into depression by the rise in oil prices and the financial chaos of the war threat. While Bush's Big Oil huddies were laughing all the way to the bank as the price of East Texas crude virtually doubled to \$32 a barrel, other businessmen are not so sanguine. "The guns of August suddenly have darkened the economic skies," noted the *Wall Street Journal* (14 August). As stocks plunge and higher oil prices produce inflation, corporations see their profits evaporating, with the savings and loan industry already in crisis and commercial banks in trouble as well. "This could readily be the worst recession since the Depression of the 1930s," one senior securities firm execu-

tive told the *Journal*.

American workers and minorities, already ravaged by a decade of economic "growth" in which the rich got a lot richer and everybody else got poorer, now face outright depression and seeing their sons and daughters sent off to die for the greater profits of Exxon and Texaco and George Bush's way of life. While the bourgeois gloats about the "death of Communism," and the final triumph of capitalism, this latest imperialist adventure reveals how truly unstable the American capitalist colossus is. Washington is still haunted by its defeat almost two decades ago at the hands of a relatively small nation fighting for a social revolution. But a wounded imperialist beast is more dangerous than ever.

Working people in this country must stand on the side of Iraq against the warmongers and union-busters in Washington. And that means waging the *class struggle* at home. Even before the shooting has begun, millions of American working people know that our enemies are not in the Near East but right here: the greedy and vicious ruling class which is willing to spill the blood of thousands to protect its profits and its "right" to lord it over us and over the impoverished masses throughout the world. The workers of this country have the power to stop the system in its tracks and put an end once and for all to the imperialist war machine. Down with Washington's new war—a defeat for "our" rulers is a victory for us. American workers' militancy against Bush and the "Republican" party of property will go a long way to making the world a kinder and gentler place. ■



Spartacist contingent at demonstration outside Sydney, Australia naval base protests deployment of ships for imperialist blockade.

Saddam Hussein's takeover of Kuwait, endorsed UN trade sanctions, cut off arms shipments and eventually voted for the resolution okaying the U.S. war blockade of Iraq.

Recently it appears that the thick bureaucratic skulls in the Kremlin are awakening to the danger posed by U.S. imperialism's grab for hegemony in the Gulf, barely 700 miles from Soviet borders. "There are no guarantees that the United States will leave Saudi Arabia after the crisis is over," moaned Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov, while the chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact, General of the Army Vladimir Lohov, complained that the U.S. presence had dramatically altered the strategic balance (*New York Times*, 31 August). Just as Stalin couldn't believe Hitler had violated his "non-aggression" pact by invading the USSR in 1941, his heirs today can't understand why the imperialists don't play by the rules.

The fate of humanity could be at stake. Vietnam and Korea were limited wars because of the threat of Russian power. This is what kept the U.S. from invading Cuba. Now the Soviet Union is out of it, so the Americans don't recognize any

immediately its arms embargo against Iraq" (see box this page).

For Class Struggle Against the Warmakers

The media have made much of George Bush's "masterful" orchestration of a broad coalition that pits the world against Saddam Hussein. So far the only Western state leader to break ranks is Austria's Waldheim. The policy planners in the White House, State Department and Pentagon act like they're going to get it all on the cheap. But it's not an accident that most doomsday novels start with a war crisis in the Mideast. And among the prime players, who have been keeping their heads down so far in the Persian Gulf crisis, are the Israelis.

In fact, the Zionist rulers are about the only ones who have to gain from a shooting war. It has not gone unnoticed in Jerusalem that if the U.S. has permanent bases in the Near East, Washington will not be dependent upon Israel as its regional gendarmes. If the Israelis think the flow of dollars may dry up they could just decide to blow the region away. Israel had been gearing up its population for a war even before the latest crisis.

Spartacus Youth Club Forums

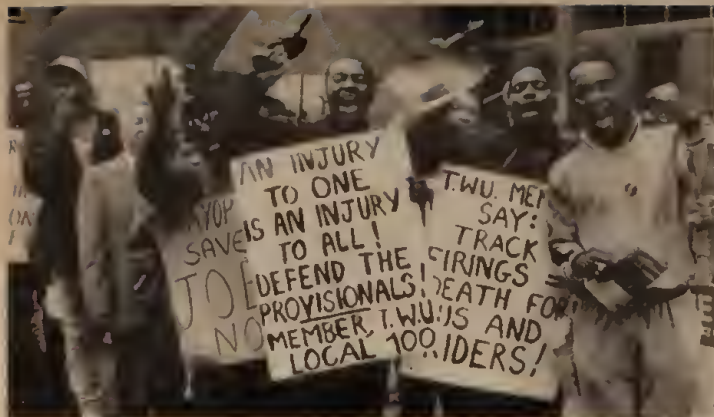
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Fired track workers protest at Brooklyn Supreme Court, August 24. WV Photo

NY Transit...

(continued from page 2)

have shut down the entire transit system. That's the kind of action needed to fight these firings—instead they tell us to put our faith in the capitalist politicians and their courts.

This union has the power to stop these cuts but Sonny Hall and his gang refuse to use it. At the track division meeting August 22 a supporter of the Committee for a Fighting TWU fought for a motion with a strategy to win but Hall refused to even allow a vote on this motion:

1. Make all provisionals permanent—save all jobs.
2. All future hiring on a permanent basis—no 2nd class provisionals.
3. For a union hiring hall for all jobs with union recruiting and training (especially among minorities and women).
4. For elected union safety reps at gang level with the power to shut down unsafe working conditions on the spot.

5. No forced overtime.

6. That under no circumstances will we permit a pick that excludes so-called provisional workers. Recognizing that this cut of jobs in track is part and parcel of cutbacks in service and jobs system-wide, we demand that the entire Local 100 defend provisional trackworkers with strike action. No confidence in Democratic or Republican politicians! Replace the Sonny Hall sell-outs with an elected strike committee.

The Taylor Law is only a piece of paper until the union bows down before it. Union busting, givebacks, two-tier wage systems and the racist attacks on blacks and minorities must stop. We have to take back our unions and to do that we need our own workers party to fight for a workers government. We can run a planned, socialized economy where there is equality and a decent life for all. *No Safety—No Work! Stop the Harassment and Vicimization of Workers—No Drug Testing! Rip Out the Turnstiles—For Free, Safe Mass Transit! Jobs and Decent Living Conditions for All!* ■

Archives...

(continued from page 5)

political adversaries abroad. Not only Trotsky.

La Stampa: You mention a "general order" to kill exiles who had become opponents. But in the archives did you find the precise order for the operation that was carried out in Mexico?

Volkogonov: Yes, the document exists. It is among those that I photocopied and is mentioned in my book.

La Stampa: And was it signed by Stalin?

Volkogonov: Yes, it was signed by Stalin himself. But in order not to assume sole responsibility for such an order, Stalin had it signed also by other members of the Politburo.

La Stampa: When was the document signed and by whom?

Volkogonov: It was signed in September '31. But in '34 a new order made the operation concrete. Then another good six years were necessary in order to follow it through. Trotsky hid himself, changed referees, was surrounded by faithful custodians. It was an epochal period. Do you want to know the names of the four signatories? Here they are. Klement Voroshilov, Vyacheslav Molotov, Grigori Ordzhonikidze.

La Stampa: And the fourth?

Volkogonov: The fourth was Joseph Stalin.

La Stampa: Your research could be considered the most thorough study of Trotsky ever carried out in the USSR. What is the political profile that emerges?

Volkogonov: Trotsky is a figure who attracts a lot of interest today in our country. When writing about him one cannot use only the color red or only the color black. He is a complicated personality. On the one hand, he was the

second figure of the Revolution and the Civil War, he was very close to Lenin, he was a highly cultured person, of a strong intellect, a brilliant publicist and orator. On the other hand, he partook in the system that we are now destroying: Stalin took a lot from him. I arrived at a paradoxical conclusion: the greatest Trotskyist was Stalin.

La Stampa: Do you mean to say that the regime of terror installed by Stalin found its roots in Trotsky?

Volkogonov: I say, for example, that the extermination of the kulaks (the peasants of the agrarian bourgeoisie) was decided in '27-'28 by Trotsky. And the idea of the "blockade detachments" to which Stalin resorted in '41-'42 had already been used by Trotsky in '18; if the troops left their positions without orders, these "blockade detachments," that were in the rear guard, shot at their comrades who were retreating. Not only this. The first instructions for concentration camps were given by Trotsky. Trotsky is implicated in many crimes that we denounce today.

La Stampa: Trotsky appears as a completely negative figure, then. Historical judgment will not change?

Volkogonov: I didn't say that. Trotsky's greatest merit is that, from the beginning to the end, he was the only one to stand up against Stalin. In the most difficult and dramatic moments of the '20s he had the courage, the historical courage, to oppose Stalin. This is reason alone to enter Trotsky forever in history.

La Stampa: And Trotsky's gravest error?

Volkogonov: Trotsky was hostage, was prisoner of a grand, false idea: the idea of the world revolution. Even one week before his death, he wrote that he believed in the victory of the world revolution. A false idea but a grand one. That's why he, too, is great and why he attracts so much sympathy. ■

Rikers Island...

(continued from page 3)

guards with violations of prisoners' civil rights, the directive is supposed to "regulate" the guards' brutality. The screws see this as cramping their style.

The following week, Rikers inmates suffered through three days without running water or hot food, 50 more prisoners were injured by guards, and the state Corrections Commission announced an investigation into the August 14 beatings. (It decided there was "excessive force" since the wall was covered with blood and there were so many wounds to the backs of inmates' heads.) Emergency Medical Service workers announced a new policy of refusing to enter Rikers Island without a police escort, and the seven EMS techs injured by guards filed a suit. Prison guard "union" president Phil Seelig threatened another walkout and, when Dinkins objected, denounced him as a "minority mayor" who would naturally side with the inmates. Now the racist Seelig is trying to whip up public fear by claiming that "inmates have threatened to riot, take women officers hostage and rape them."

Clearly the prison guards feel they have the city by the short hairs, given the skyrocketing arrest rates and massively overcrowded jails. As the caste-like segregation of blacks and Hispanics deepens due to the increasing decay and stagnation of industry, whole sections of these populations have become lumpenized, with larger and larger numbers being forced to turn to crime to survive. Moreover, the "war on drugs" has legalized huge random sweeps of minority communities, and draconian sentencing of first-time offenders. Increasingly the capitalist class is raising the call for the death penalty, to be applied even to juveniles and the mentally retarded. And the despicable racist guards want to be allowed

to kill at will. These sworn servants of the capitalist class are not and can never be part of the labor movement!

The Rikers guard rampage is a part of the ominous rise of police bonapartism in the New York area and across the country. In Teaneck, New Jersey on August 22, over 2,500 police from four states rallied for the racist cop who shot down unarmed black youth Phillip Pannell last spring. In NYC, Transit Authority cops sweep the homeless off the cars and tracks, and the TA is now arming its police with 9mm hair-trigger Glock pistols. The TAPD chief is "leaning to" using hollow-point "dumdum" bullets which rip out the victim's insides—i.e., shoot to kill. The terrible cop murder of black artist Michael Stewart, hogtied and bludgeoned to death by an eleven-man TA cop mob, was painfully recalled this week when the Stewart family won a \$1.7 million settlement in civil court.

The explosion of New York's prison population occurred under the reign of frenzied racist Ed Koch. Between 1977, when Koch took office, and 1987, the number of jail beds more than doubled, and still the cells were filled beyond capacity. When Koch's plans to build huge jails in downtown Manhattan and on Staten Island were defeated, he opened floating prison barges on the Hudson and East Rivers, and built the huge warehouse dormitories on Rikers Island. Dinkins, who got elected as a nice guy who would promote racial harmony in contrast to the inflammatory Koch, has no answers for the black and poor of New York City, other than to hire 1,000 more killer cops. The "Citizens Crime Commission," composed of executives of American Express, Mobil, IBM, Metropolitan Life and New York Telephone, is asking for another 5,000. In New York and around the country, it will take a socialist revolution to smash the capitalist state and the whole system of racist terror. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

From Vietnam to Iraq: U.S. Racist War Machine

Blacks Don't Buy Bush's War

Blacks aren't buying Bush's war to make the world safe for Exxon, and no surprise. Being black in capitalist America puts you at the bottom of an ever emptier barrel. Bush says the troops are in the Gulf to defend the "American way of life"—so he can tool around in his cigarette boat off Kennebunkport and his son Neil can skim millions off the S&L scam. But for the black youth being sent to die in the Arabian sands the "American way of life" means being out of a job, out of a home and a walking target for every trigger-happy racist cop on the streets.

Young Spartacus

Having gotten everything they demanded and then some from the craven capitalists in the Kremlin, having managed to walk over tiny black Grenada and brutally install a new puppet regime in Panama, the American rulers think they can once again be unchallenged cops of the world like the "good old days" before their humiliating defeat in Vietnam. "The end of the Vietnam syndrome," crows a commentary in *U.S. News & World Report* (20 August). Don't bet on it. The "Vietnam syndrome"—the result of America's dirty, losing colonial war in Indochina—is alive and well, and that's before a single GI has returned home in a body bag.

A recent poll by the *Wall Street Journal* and NBC News found that only 41

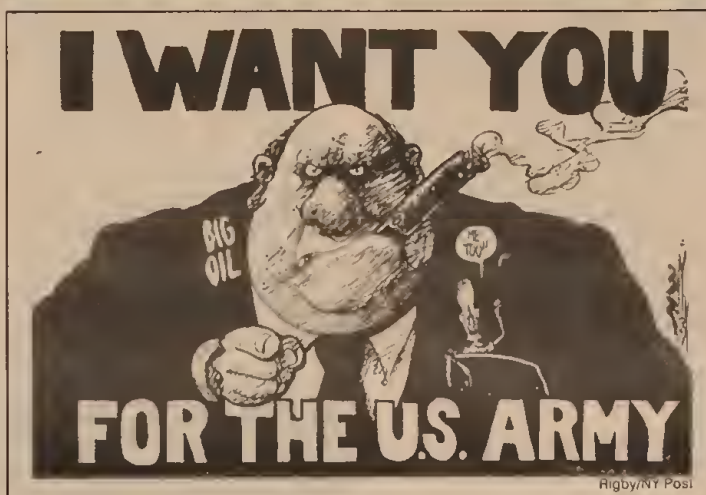
percent of black voters (as compared to 74 percent of whites) approve of Bush's war moves, while 49 percent are outright opposed. While the big business press pimps for Bush, black newspapers are

Troops in the Persian Gulf: Why Are They There?" and "Is Iraq the Real Enemy?"

On predominantly black campuses, at New York transit depots, in Harlem

Dan Quayle didn't get sent off to die in the jungles of Indochina—their daddies made sure of that. It was the sons of working people who were shipped out to fight a counterrevolutionary war against the workers and peasants of Vietnam.

What's Exxon Ever Done for You?



running headlines like "U.S. Has No Business in Middle East" (*City Sun*, 29 August) and "Death to the People...For Arab Oil" (*New American*, 30 August). The Howard University *Hilltop* (31 August) runs articles headlined, "U.S.

and other black communities, you can hardly find anybody who's gung ho over the U.S. invasion. Muslims and Arab Americans deeply resent Washington's claim to defend the "freedom" of the oil-rich Kuwaiti sheiks while it endorses Zionist butchery against Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. Prominent Los Angeles DJ Casey Kasem vows to speak out against the U.S. invasion in the Near East "to make up for what I didn't do" during the Vietnam War. Even among the whites who back Bush's moves, that support is very shallow, and will change as soon as American soldiers start coming home in aluminum caskets.

Wali Muhammad, aide to Nation of Islam demagogue Louis Farrakhan, voices the sentiments of millions of black people when he says: "We know all about getting our oil cut off—it gets cut off in the winter because we can't pay for it" (*Wall Street Journal*, 22 August). And Mississippi Democrat Mike Espy, who like the rest of his party has rallied 'round Bush's invasion, concedes: "Blacks look back at the history of the war in Vietnam, and many of them remember it as a poor soldiers' war, with the rich kids all winning deferments. Black people fear their sons may be the first to die." And no wonder.

Death is about the only thing blacks get first crack at in this deeply racist society, whether it be in their preponderance on death row or as cannon fodder for imperialist war. An estimated one-quarter of the troops sent to Saudi Arabia are black, and one out of every three GIs in Vietnam was black. Bush's sons and

Black America Hated the Vietnam War

Ever since Vietnam, U.S. rulers have tried to gear up the population for another imperialist adventure overseas. Meanwhile, they exact vengeance on the Vietnamese people by a boycott to starve them. Hollywood launched a Big Lie campaign to rewrite history with films like *The Deer Hunter* and the gung ho racist Rambo flicks. To explain the humiliating defeat in Indochina, the right wing borrows a page from Hitler's "stab in the back" myth, that Germany didn't lose World War I on the battlefield but rather it was Jews and Bolsheviks on the home front who were responsible. The American version has wounded and disabled Vietnam vets coming home to be spat on by New Left antiwar activists.

This is a damned lie! Can anyone who lived through the Vietnam War era recall a single instance of leftists spitting on returning GIs? On the contrary, there were plenty of cases where New Leftists set up coffeehouses near military bases in order to reach out to soldiers, overwhelmingly black or working-class, to convince them that this was a war they had no stake in. And they got a hearing. By the time most American ground troops were pulled out of Indochina in 1972, the army ranks were in turmoil.

"Fragging" (killing hated officers, usually with fragmentation grenades) had reached epidemic proportions. Many GIs shot themselves, hoping it would get them sent stateside. And there was growing political opposition to the war within the military, particularly among black GIs. In Vietnam itself, there were sit-down strikes and brig rebellions by soldiers who had been imprisoned for refusing to obey orders. Even the elite B-52 air crews, suffering ever-mounting losses in December 1972 as they flew daily into withering North Vietnamese anti-aircraft fire, began staging mass "sick-outs" at their bases in Guam and U-Tapao (Thailand). And the Navy brass were horrified by a wave of suspected sabotage, including a major fire aboard the *Forrestal*, and a mass antiwar petition signed by over a thousand sailors on another ship.

At Fort Hood, 150 black soldiers refused to go to Chicago to be used against antiwar demonstrators outside the 1968 Democratic convention. In late 1972, pent-up frustration over racist attacks exploded aboard the aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* as it headed for North Vietnam from the Philippines: 21 black sailors charged with "rioting" were flown to the brig at San Diego. A few days later over

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Bush's Sons and Dan Quayle Weren't Sent to Die in Vietnam



Vietnam. Black soldier reads sign: "U.S. Negro Armymen! You are committing the same ignominious crimes in South Vietnam that the KKK clique is perpetrating against your family at home."

We Won't Forget Rape of Grenada, Panama!