

The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It



AP
Soviet economy in shambles:
Troops harvest vegetables
to avert famine.



Reuters
USSR torn by separatists:
Soviet troops confront
Moldavian nationalists.

Soviet Union Winter of Decision

MOSCOW/LENINGRAD—The rifle shots in front of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during the November 7 celebration in Moscow's Red Square symbolized the explosive situation confronting the Soviet Union today. Around the country, Revolution Day became a barometer of the deep political polarization throughout Soviet society. Tens of thousands of Soviet citizens turned out to defy openly counterrevolutionary mobilizations and honor the 73rd anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Were it not for the insistence of the Red Army leadership, it is very likely that there would have been no commemoration of the Revolution this year at all. Decades of Stalinist bureaucratic misrule have brought the Soviet Union to a flash point. The very existence of the homeland of the October Revolution is at stake.

The dramatic crumbling of the Stalinist bureaucracy under Gorbachev has brought with it a rapidly escalating danger of capitalist counterrevolution and national disintegration. The economy is in a shambles, as the bureaucratic planning mechanism is ripped away with nothing to replace it. Store shelves in the industrial centers and major cities are absolutely empty. The chaos of the market has led to widespread speculation, hoarding, breakdown of the transport system and a virtual grain strike. Despite the biggest harvest in years, talk of impending winter famine abounds and soldiers have been sent into the fields to dig potatoes. One old-age pensioner mocked the leadership by parading through Red

For a Trotskyist Party!



Leningrad, 7 November 1990, anniversary of the Russian Revolution. The red banner of Trotskyism is raised in Palace Square.

Square with a scrawny, dead chicken held aloft. Stringent rationing has been introduced, the likes of which have not been seen since World War II.

The city councils of Moscow and Leningrad are dominated by forces which openly proclaim their aim of restoring capitalism, while the demagogic head of

the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, provocatively challenges the authority of the Kremlin. Yeltsin insists on carrying out a 500-day "shock treatment" aimed at the full restoration of a capitalist market economy, an aim shared by Gorbachev, who differs only on the timetable. Gorbachev has now acquiesced to demands to set up a new Federal Council and dumped Prime Minister Ryzhkov for dragging his feet in the forced march toward the market. In turn, Gorbachev has effectively been granted the right (if not the power) to rule by emergency decree.

Five years of Gorbachev's market-oriented perestroika (restructuring) have produced bureaucratized anarchy and fueled nationalist and communalist fratricide. Practically every constituent republic, autonomous region and national group has declared itself "sovereign and independent." Communalist bloodletting

has spread from the Caucasus to the Turkic-speaking region of Central Asia and now to Moldavia.

But for the first time in six decades, the revolutionary internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks has again been publicly raised in the Soviet Union. On November 7, the red banner with the hammer and sickle and "4" of Trotsky's Fourth International was unfurled in Leningrad's Palace Square, scene of the storming of the Winter Palace which signified the final conquest of workers power in 1917. In Moscow and Leningrad, demonstrators snapped up nearly 1,400 copies of the Russian-language *Spartacist Bulletin* No. 1 (the introduction to which is reprinted in the new English-language *Spartacist* No. 45-46, Winter 1990-91). Thousands more copies of the *Spartacist Bulletin*, as well as other Russian-language literature of the International Communist League, are now circulating in the Soviet Union.

In Leningrad, comrades of the ICL—working with a group of young militants who consider themselves Trotskyists, are studying Trotsky's works and considering the programs of ostensible Trotskyist currents internationally—constituted a contingent in the Leningrad Revolution Day march. They distributed a leaflet (reprinted on page 11), which concluded with the call "For an all-Union Trotskyist party!" to the "Red columns" that included Communist Party members and Red Army soldiers. They marched and rallied with placards signed "Spartacist/International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)." Their slogans pointed the way for a return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky: "Hail the Celebration of the October Revolution! Defend the Gains of the October Revolution! Down With the Restoration of Capitalism! For Power to Soviets of the Working People!"

"Democratic" Forces of Bloody Counterrevolution

Initially, the pro-Yeltsin city councils of Moscow and Leningrad sought to cancel and sabotage any demonstrations on Revolution Day. During the weeks

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"Iron Lady" Thatcher Abdicates

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Holiday Appeal for the Class-War Prisoners

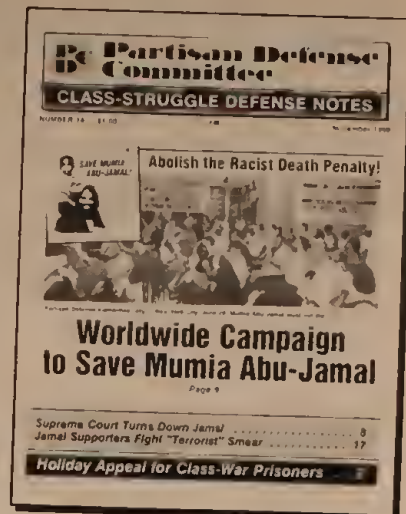
This holiday season Bush & Co., along with their Democratic Party elves, have many gifts to offer: from billions in handouts to the S&L bandits, to the federal budget designed to line the pockets of the rich while soaking the poor. For the rest—more immiseration for workers, blacks, Hispanics, the old and the sick. For the class-war prisoners—those men and women locked in this system's jails for opposition to class, racial and social oppression—the holiday season marks the end of another 365 days away from their families and their comrades, away from the living social struggles which first brought down the state's repressive fist upon them.

The imperialist oil grab in the Persian Gulf threatens the world with a war that promises the death of countless thousands of poor and working people. Fearing long overdue social explosions, the government seeks to strengthen its appa-

ratus of repression. More cops, more jails and more executions is the time-tested answer of the bosses' government to those who fight against war, racism, union-busting and poverty. For those imprisoned for standing up to the racist status quo, the temperature in their prison hells constantly grows hotter—Mumia Abu-Jamal's appeals have been thrown out; Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), Hugo Pinell and the MOVE men are vindictively transferred to desolate prison outposts far from family, friends and supporters; and MOVE women at Muncy prison are denied access to publications including *Workers Vanguard* and *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*.

This past year has seen an increased interest in the question of political prisoners. Nelson Mandela's release after 27 years focused worldwide attention on imprisoned militants. Traveling with Mandela across the U.S. last summer

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TROTSKY

For a Trotskyist Party in the Soviet Union

Today, as Stalin's heirs in the Kremlin sell out to imperialism down the line, defense of the gains of the October Revolution has become more urgent than ever. The key is forging a Trotskyist party to lead the workers political revolution which alone can save the Soviet state and restore the Bolshevik internationalist program of world socialist revolution. During World War II American Trotskyist merchant seamen sailing on the

Murmansk run braved Stalinist repression and German U-boats to distribute Trotsky's "Letter to the Workers of the USSR," from which the following excerpt is taken

Greetings to the Soviet workers, collective farmers, soldiers of the Red Army and sailors of the Red Navy!...

The October Revolution was accomplished for the sake of the toilers and not for the sake of new parasites. But due to the lag of the world revolution, due to the fatigue and, to a large measure, the backwardness of the Russian workers and especially the Russian peasants, there raised itself over the Soviet Republic and against its peoples a new oppressive and parasitic caste, whose leader is Stalin....

If Soviet economic life had been conducted in the interests of the people: if the bureaucracy had not devoured and vainly wasted the major portion of the national income; if the hureaucracy had not trampled underfoot the vital interests of the population, then the USSR would have been a great magnetic pole of attraction for the toilers of the world and the inviolability of the Soviet Union would have been assured. But the infamous oppressive regime of Stalin has deprived the USSR of its attractive power....

The goal of the Fourth International is to extend the October Revolution to the whole world and at the same time to regenerate the USSR by purging it of the parasitic bureaucracy. This can be achieved only in one way: by the workers, peasants, Red Army soldiers, and Red Navy sailors rising against the new caste of oppressors and parasites. To prepare this uprising, a new party is needed—a bold and honest revolutionary organization of the advanced workers. The Fourth International sets as its task the building of such a party in the USSR.

—Leon Trotsky, "Letter to the Workers of the USSR" (April 1940)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS Liz Gordon

EDITOR Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER Jorge Ramirez

CIRCULATION MANAGER Karen Valdez

EDITORIAL BOARD George Foster, Frank Hunter, Jene Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Reuben Samuels, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer, Marjorie Siamberg

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Turkey in the Desert—Bush Beats Drumsticks for War

U.S. Soldiers: "This Isn't Our War!"

This year Thanksgiving was turned into a sound bite for war as the U.S. commander in chief landed in Saudi Arabia to talk turkey with the troops in the desert. The *New York Times* (23 November) noted with relief that "there were none of the embarrassing offers of hot drinking water that marred an earlier visit by Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d." They omitted the fact that Bush mingled with only a preselected handful of soldiers who were specially briefed to mouth enthusiasm for the "mission" which still lacks a popular rationale.

Before he arrived Bush bragged, "I have never felt more secure in going any place than I do in going to see our troops over there." Perhaps this was because the troops who chowed down with him "had to take out their bullets and remove the bolts from their M-16 rifles before he arrived" (*Newsday*, 23 November). No kidding. And just to be on the safe side, live-fire artillery exercises were canceled so that Bush's helicopter would "be able to fly all over the desert without danger of being shot down by one of his own troops," explained one artillery officer to the *Washington Post* (23 November).

Even the *New York Times* (23 November), which usually finds such news unfit to print, wrote that a passing truck of soldiers shouted to reporters, "I want to go home! This isn't our war! What are

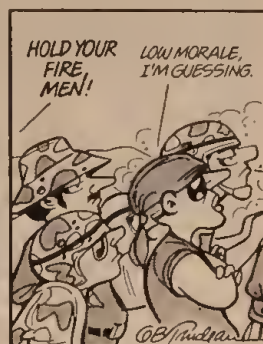
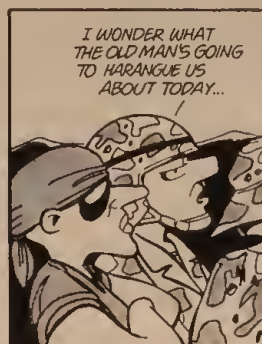
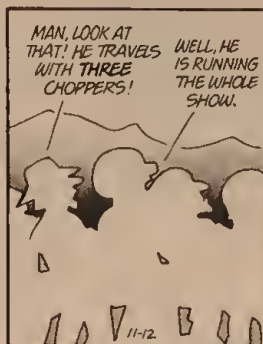
we doing here! Why are we over here? We aren't supposed to be here—this isn't our war!"

For the most part, the media dutifully focused on Bush's prepackaged war propaganda messages as he walked among the troops and, as the *Times*

There have been lots of complaints that the administration had failed to "sell" war on Iraq to the American public. So in Madison Avenue style, they're rewriting their pitch like they do ads for Tide. The previous appeals—defending oil, jobs or "our way of life"—all

has now committed over half of total U.S. combat strength worldwide, including three-quarters of its Marine combat forces, "two-thirds of the Army's most potent heavy tank units" and "more than half of the Navy's aircraft carrier battle groups" (*Washington Post*, 11 Novem-

DOONESBURY



aply put it, "the four leaders of Congress trailed along." But the polls have definitely tilted against Bush's war. The latest *New York Times*/CBS News poll shows 51 percent of Americans against his sending an additional 200,000 troops to the Gulf; among blacks it was 70 percent opposed. So Bush conjured up yet another rationale—stopping Iraq's dictator from getting nuclear weapons.

bombed, and the product-test polls indicated that only the "nuclear threat" was a winner. So U.S. "intelligence" sources promptly readjusted their estimate of the time remaining before Hussein gets some nukes from ten years to...two months, conveniently within the time frame of Bush's war.

It's clear Bush & Co. are intent on a very bloody war no matter what. Bush

ber). The force is so large that, to the dismay of the desert-weary troops already deployed, the Pentagon canceled plans for rotation because "there are not enough active-duty forces to replace them."

But even with the latest reinforcements, Iraq's battle-hardened army will still have more men on the ground and

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"Iron Lady" Thatcher Abdicates

LONDON, November 27—After more than eleven bitter years, during which she viciously ground the faces of workers and minorities into the ground, the "Iron Lady" of British politics is finally gone. On November 22, Margaret Thatcher resigned as leader of the ruling Conservative Party and therefore as prime minister. The new Tory leader, Chancellor of the Exchequer John Major, a previous nobody, was elected today, in anticipation of a general election some time next year. So now the prospect is one of a "reformed" Tory government or a Labour government under right-wing scabherder Neil Kinnock.

Discontent with the Thatcher government was massive. Trade unionists, minorities and the poor have always despised her. The middle classes are reeling under skyrocketing inflation and mortgage rates, top ruling echelons are worried by her attempts to sabotage "European integration," and everyone hates the soak-the-poor poll tax. In Scotland, used as a guinea pig for the tax and sharply hit by the Thatcherite devastation of industry, the Tory party is almost irrelevant, running a poor third behind Labour and the bourgeois-nationalist Scottish National Party.

Thatcher's longevity in office was in large measure due to the grovelling loyalty of Neil Kinnock's Labour Party and the Labourite Trades Union Congress (TUC) leaders. Twice since she took office in 1979, Thatcher and her government were in some danger of being toppled through sharp class struggle: first, during the bitter three-month-long steel strike of 1980, then four years later as the militant miners union waged a heroic year-long battle against mass layoffs and union-busting which galvanised workers and minorities throughout the country.

So isolated and widely hated was Thatcher in the course of the miners

strike that the IRA achieved a peak in popularity among the British population when it planted a bomb at the 1984 Tory party conference that nearly blew away the Iron Lady and her entire government. Yet the Labour/TUC leaders sabotaged every class-struggle challenge to Thatcher's rule, coldbloodedly knifing the miners.

In the end, Thatcher's downfall was engineered by those who seek to restore an effective bourgeois authority. She was ousted by the "men in the gray suits" (big business and the City of London financial moguls). The executive committee of the British bourgeoisie decided that her services were no longer required as they seek to politically rearm in the face of depression and impending war. A bitter Conservative power struggle has been out in the open since Sir Geoffrey Howe, until recently the sole Cabinet member left from her original 1979 Cabinet, resigned as foreign secretary over Thatcher's opposition to "European economic integration" and then launched a sharp attack in a parliamentary speech.

After former Cabinet minister Michael Heseltine's challenge for party leader received 152 votes to Thatcher's 204, forcing a second ballot, her Cabinet let her know that her time was up. Shortly before her resignation, the *Tory Sunday Times* (18 November) bade "A reluctant goodbye," as its editorial was titled, to the Thatcher regime: "It now presides over an economy mired in stagflation. The poll tax—the conception of which was a mistake, its birth a mess and its infancy an expensive embarrassment—has proved to be the most unpopular tax in modern British history. All the perfumes in the government's houndoir cannot make it smell sweet."

For many dissident Tory MPs, naked self-interest was motive enough to back the internal revolt. Crushing by-election



Gratuitously vicious PM Margaret Thatcher became liability, so Tory moneymen dumped her.

defeats in Eastbourne, Bradford and Bootle, as well as umpteen public opinion polls, made it abundantly clear that Thatcher was an electoral liability. Not surprisingly, Thatcher & Co. sought to whip up a "Falklands factor." "Thatcher Plays the Gulf Card: 'War Leader' Warns Off Heseltine," headlined the [London] *Guardian* (8 November).

But it largely came to nought. Kinnock has screamed louder than the Tories for war in the Gulf. Former defence minister Heseltine, no slouch himself when it comes to heating the imperialist war drums, has close ties with the officer corps and presided over the proliferation of NATO nuclear weapons as defence minister in the early 1980s. Richard Cheney, U.S. defense secretary, vouched for him: "I happen to be a fan of Maggie Thatcher's.... But Mr. Heseltine's policies towards the Gulf have basic-

ally been the same" ([London] *Times*, 19 November).

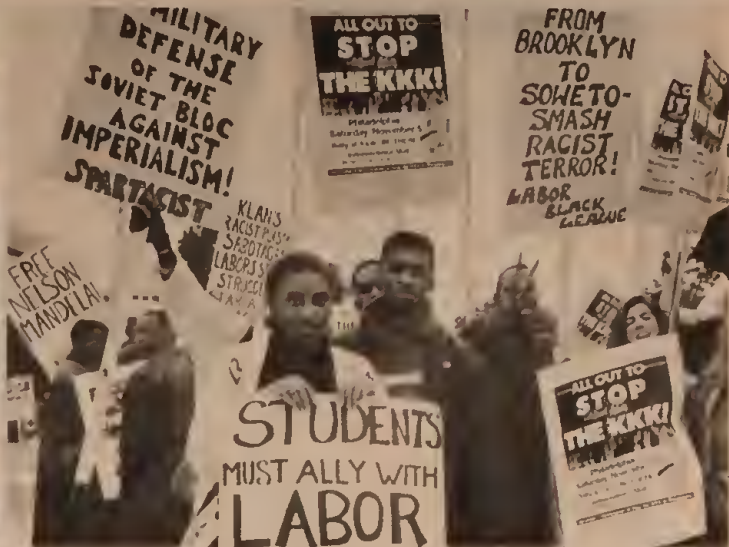
Above all, what triggered massive revolt against the government, from the Tory shires of southern England to the working class and plebeian poor of the large cities, was the gratuitously cruel poll tax. In March, 200,000 protested against the poll tax in London, repelling a police rampage. Ever attuned to the wishes of the Labour Party leadership, which denounced and sought to stifle any struggle against the poll tax, the legalistic Militant Tendency leadership of the anti-poll-tax federation initially offered to finger protesters to the cops. Again last month hundreds of protesters were beaten up and dozens arrested by rioting cops who attacked a picket of Brixton Prison, where four anti-poll-tax activists are serving sentences.

Fake-left groups such as Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party or Workers Power fill their press with militant sounding anti-Thatcher rhetoric. With Heseltine on the scene, the SWP said, "Take Advantage of Tory Splits—Get Them All Out!" (*Socialist Worker*, 17 November). Workers Power crowed that "Tory woes are good news for the workers" and worried that "a swing to the Liberals...would damage Labour's victory chances." The Labour entrists of *Militant* and *Socialist Organiser* drone away with identical pro-Kinnock "Kick them all out!" appeals. But anti-Thatcherism does not equate to anti-capitalism. As we wrote last March, at the height of the anti-poll-tax protests:

"The poll tax is likely to be ephemeral, with the strong probability that its chief architect and advocate will shortly go down the tubes. While there are large numbers of people who despise both Kinnock and his henchmen for enforcing this onerous tax, on a national level public opinion polls show the Labour Party has a huge lead over the Tories. But that

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Young Spartacus



Spartacist contingent (left) marching in October 20 NYC antiwar protest. Sign in Spanish demands: "Break the Blockade of Iraq!" Spartacus Youth Clubs mobilized students to join labor/black mobilization that stopped KKK from rallying in Philly, November 1988.

Spartacus Youth Clubs: What We Stand For

Bush and the Democrats are plunging headlong into war in the Persian Gulf. America's rulers have seized the supposed end of the Cold War as their opportunity for *hot* war. They've grabbed the oil and want to regain supremacy as top cops of the world. And they want *you* as the cannon fodder for their profits and their global imperialist ambitions which threaten humanity with a nuclear third world war. Working-class youth, particularly blacks and Latinos, are being sent to die in the Saudi sands. To stop imperialist war we have to fight the capitalist system that breeds it.

War is not an accident of foreign policy, it is the direct consequence of the capitalist economic system. World Wars I and II grew out of the competition for control of markets for exploitation and resulted in the deaths of millions of working people for the profits of their masters. Today, our greedy rulers have destroyed the industrial base of this country while lining their own pockets with the paper wealth of junk bonds. The U.S. wants to make up for its failing economy with brute military force, squeezing its imperialist rivals Germany and Japan by controlling the oil spigot, and sticking it to the Soviet Union. Electing a new leadership of the same ruling class is no answer—the Democrats are the party of Hiroshima, the Korean War, the carpet bombing of Vietnam, and the original sponsors of the bloody Salvadoran death squad regime.

Working people and minorities who've been ground down by a decade of union-busting, givebacks, and racist attacks, and youth who face a "future" of death in a chemwar suit have no interest in fighting a war for U.S. imperialism. What can you do about it? Student protest can register discontent, but isolated from economic production, students lack the social weight necessary to change the world. And youth are not a class—some will enter the ranks of the proletariat while others will become bourgeois rulers, technicians and ideologues. It's the

racially integrated working class, which produces the wealth of society, that has the power to replace this whole system of exploitation and war. The road to realizing that power is revolutionary *class* struggle led by a Leninist vanguard party—a tribune of the people—to fight on behalf of all of the oppressed for a socialist future of equality, material plenty and peace.

A key aspect, without which success is impossible, is to link labor and youth to a socialist perspective: the struggle for a society in which capital has been expropriated from private ownership and those who produce society's wealth rule. The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the student and youth affiliates of the Spartacist League/U.S., a section of the International Communist League. We base our program on the politics of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky and take as our example the Bolshevik Party's successful leadership of the working class to power in the Russian Revolution of 1917. We stand for:

Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for *class* struggle here and in the Near East to drive the U.S. out of the Persian Gulf and bring the working masses to power. Unlike reformists and fake socialists whose opposition to U.S. war moves consists of pressuring the Democrats (who support the war buildup) or even endorsing the United Nations sanctions and blockade, *we take a side* for the defeat of U.S. imperialism and the military defense of Iraq. Saddam Hussein is indeed a butcher of his own people and should be brought down by the Iraqi workers and national minorities. Such a perspective would be brought immeasurably closer by a military *defeat* of the American imperialists who now seek to depose their former ally through bloody subjugation of the Arab peoples.

The organized working class must be mobilized against the war machine: For labor political strikes against the impending war! One solid strike by

longshoremen against transport of munitions to the Gulf would pack more punch than a hundred peace crawls in Washington. What stands in the way of this kind of proletarian opposition is a union "leadership" that would rather roll over than oppose the government. We say: **Break the blockade of Iraq! Defeat U.S. imperialism!**

A workers party to fight for a socialist revolution. Today America has a one-party system—the property party of "Republicrats," which is also the war party. The working class is saddled with pro-capitalist union tops (what Daniel De Leon called the "labor lieutenants of capital") who preach the "unity" of interests of the exploited with their exploiters and have accepted the desperate conditions and defeats suffered by blacks and all workers in the past decade without a fight. They keep labor chained to the Democrats. We need a revolutionary workers party to organize and lead the struggles of working people in defense of their own interests and for their own class rule.

The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight to ally students with the power of the working class. We are the youth auxiliary to class struggle and revolutionary opposition in the labor movement. From campus workers' strikes to the battle at the New York *Daily News* we've brought students out to help build picket lines that mean *don't cross*. We say: **Break with the Democrats and Republicans—Build a Workers Party!**

For labor/black defense against racist attacks. The Spartacus Youth Clubs have consistently fought against the upsurge of racist atrocities on campus. Racial oppression permeates capitalist society and its every institution: the job market, schools, housing, the military, the "justice" system. Black people are subjugated as a race-color caste: last hired, first fired and segregated at the bottom of the economy. Today, an enormous number of black youth can't even get jobs or education—they've been thrown on the

scrap heap as an expendable "surplus" population this government has no use for. Despite the promises of equality held out since the Civil War against chattel slavery and the civil rights movement against Jim Crow, there can be no emancipation within a system that's based on class exploitation and racial oppression!

A class-struggle perspective in America requires the fusion of the fight for black liberation with proletarian revolution. There is no separate road to black equality—where working people have been divided, the result has always been defeat for minorities *and* for labor. The black power that can turn this country around is the power of black workers—as leaders of a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party to defend the integrated unions and mobilize labor in defense of the ghetto masses. From Atlanta to Philly, Chicago and elsewhere, the Spartacus Youth Clubs have helped build massive labor/black mobilizations that *stopped* Klan and Nazi race-hate terrorists in their tracks. **Finish the Civil War! Black liberation through socialist revolution!**

Free, quality education for all. Education should be a *right*, not a privilege. The American ruling class doesn't need or want educated working-class or minority youth. They want scared, obedient, and ignorant youth who won't grind the gears of their war machine or their profit system. To redress the race and class bias of education in this society, the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for open admissions, no tuition and a living stipend for all students. The elite private universities should be nationalized. Against illusions in the university administrations, we fight for student/teacher/worker control of the universities.

Women's liberation through socialist revolution. Abortion rights are under attack by politicians and the Supreme Court while "right to life" terrorists bomb abortion clinics. Young women are literally being forced to bear children or seek back-alley abortions because of

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Student Protests Rock France

In the beginning of October, youth in Vaulx-en-Velin (a working-class suburb/ghetto of Lyon, populated by mainly North African immigrants) exploded in rage after one of them was killed by the police.

Soon after, high school students across France poured into the streets in massive demonstrations protesting their lousy education and bleak future, echoing the cry of anger of the Vaulx-en-Velin youth—symbol of immigrants, *beurs* (French-born children of North African immigrants) and other youth confined in ghetto-like suburbs.

It was a mobilization of multi-ethnic youth who, in French society, are the layer least corrupted by poisonous racism. Their demands boiled down to "We want it all—we want it now!"

French president Mitterrand and his bourgeois masters were afraid of a repeat of May '68—afraid that the working class might rush into the breach opened by rebellious youth and, this time, settle accounts with this vicious regime of terror and austerity. They were scared of the student revolt because of its anti-racist character.

The protests involved thousands of *beurs*. They can't even hope to achieve

the economic status of their parents—the superexploited workers strategically placed at the core of the industrial proletariat of France—because there are no jobs to be had. A recent study showed that only one out of five students could find work after leaving school, and 60 to 70 percent of those landed only low-paid, intermittent employment.

The student protests have exposed the liberal bourgeois lie that academic success is the shoo-in to a secure future. But the fake-left is peddling an even more dangerous lie, that the capitalist ruling class can be pressured into re-adjusting its priorities for human needs instead of profits. A so-called "far-left" group, *Lutte Ouvrière* (affiliated with the subreformist *Spark* group in the U.S.) even has a demand which can be summarized as "More money for more cops," who should be "closer to the population." Tell it to the *beurs* or their parents who are terrorized every day by these enforcers of racist, capitalist "law and order."

Illusions in "socialist" Mitterrand—fostered by the fake-lefts—led to a dangerous police trap in the streets of Paris on November 12. Some 200,000 students marched from the Bastille—with



Turpin/Sygma
French students say, "We want it all and we want it now!" For a May '68 that goes all the way!

the pro-social-democratic police "union" serving as self-imposed marshals for the demonstration. Scores of plainclothes cops and dozens of fascist provocateurs in the midst of the students' ranks opened the way for provocations resulting in the smashing of shop windows. When students tried to flee this set-up and continue their march, they were hocked from crossing the Seine and tear gassed. A few dozen youth were picked up at random, tried in *Star Chamber*-like conditions and railroaded into prison—the severity of their sentences being in direct relation to their skin color.

Our comrades of the *Ligue Trotskyste de France* (LTF) have fought for an alliance of students with the social power of the multi-ethnic working class and against illusions in the police. On November 15, the LTF issued a leaflet denouncing the bourgeoisie's sinister equation that "youth + *beurs* + blacks = 'violence'" and demanded "the immediate release of all the victims of the police provocation and repression!"

Young Spartacus is pleased to reprint here a translation of a leaflet distributed by our French comrades on November 12 to the huge student demonstrations in Paris, Lyon and Rouen.

"We Want It All— We Want It Now!" Yes, and This Is How

A tempestuous wind of student revolt from the working-class and immigrant suburbs is blowing across Mitterrand's France—a rotting society of racist terror, unemployment, propaganda on the supposed "death of Communism," and the ominous rise of the fascists.

High school students: you want a quality education. You must fight to abolish all forms of the selection system—the high school diploma [*baccalauréat*], the obstacle course of grades

and exams, the flunk-outs from the academic system of those with poor grades—which perpetuates the special oppression of working-class, minority youth and women. All youth must have the right to attend the classes they want. For open admissions to universities and a living stipend for all!

But the purpose of an education system under decaying capitalism is not to provide quality education for all, but to meet the needs of a system based on production for profit, and to train useful servants capable of creating wealth without disrupting the peace and idleness of the bourgeoisie. There's just one

solution: revolution!

You are penned in the ghetto suburbs under the watchful eye of the cops, the armed fist of the state. High school students marching in Paris chanted: "We are all from Vaulx-en-Velin." Others chanted, "No to segregation." These youth show the way forward. Cops out of the immigrant neighborhoods! Cops, guards, priests out of the high schools and universities! Oust your leaders who invited the cops to your demonstration; the "democratic cops" of the FASP [a social-democratic police "union"] are no less your enemies! Full citizenship rights for immigrant workers and their families!

For labor/immigrant/Jewish mobilizations to smash the fascists!

During the student movement of 1986 against the Devaquet "reforms," it was the enormous social power of the trade unions which brought down the Chirac government when, after the assassination of Malik Oussekiene, the unions announced their intention to support the students' struggle with strike action. At a minimum, what is necessary today is a general strike throughout the national education system. High school students want a decent future and a decent life. For that you need a secure and well-paid

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Racist Curfew Against Atlanta Youth

ATLANTA—With a show of "get tough on crime" bullying, on November 19 black Democratic mayor Maynard H. Jackson slapped a curfew on this city's youth. The law is a battering ram in the "war on drugs," which is mainly a war on black people. "We will make it more difficult for children to use drugs by limiting unsupervised time," the mayor says (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 9 November).

Curfews and police crackdowns are nothing new in "the city too busy to hate." When the KKK rallied at the grave of Martin Luther King Jr., residents of nearby housing projects were made prisoners in their own homes and forbidden to go in or out. This law is part of a drive to "clean up" the city for the Super Bowl in 1994 and the summer Olympic Games in 1996. When big bucks come to town, "dangerous" black youth are to be made invisible.

The next step in the mayor's anti-crime blitz is an ordinance aimed at the homeless that will make it illegal to panhandle or congregate in public parking lots or vacant buildings. So, a government that can't feed the hungry or house the homeless has finally found a "solution"—criminalize poverty and mug the youth! Meanwhile the legions of Atlan-

ta's homeless will grow as Techwood Homes, the oldest public housing in the U.S., will be razed to make way for an Olympic Village—no provisions have been made yet to house those the city will dump into the streets.

This curfew law allows police-state powers to racist cops who are empowered to stop anyone under 17 years of age unaccompanied by an adult after 11:00 p.m. on weeknights or midnights on weekends. Youth have to prove that they're coming from school or work to avoid detention by the police. It's a grotesque example of the state acting *in loco parentis*; deputy police chief W.J. Taylor warns, "Most officers are perceptive enough to determine if a kid is lying." Sure, and most city kids are wise enough to know the cops can be just plain "loco" enough to blow you away.

On top of targeting the kid, parents of "repeat offenders" can be fined up to \$1,000 or jailed for up to 60 days at a judge's whim. It doesn't take a civil libertarian to see that the First Amendment might as well be written on toilet paper since the rights of youth are being flushed away. Rohm McVoy, 16, captured the essence of the law: "It sucks. If you're not causing trouble, what's the problem with being outside? It's

the same thing as censorship." Even the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* asked, "What's next in Atlanta? Borrow South Africa's pass laws?... Take the big step and declare martial law?"

For all practical purposes the city is already a South African-style bantustan, where a layer of black bootlickers keep the majority of black people locked in grinding poverty and the social pathology of drugs and crime, and locked out of the economic wealth controlled by the big bosses at Coca-Cola. Inside Atlanta's I-285 perimeter, blacks are terrified by the violent drug trade, left out of the city's mythical "New South" bustle and greatly demoralized by entrenched poverty, joblessness and hopelessness. Outside the perimeter in mainly white Gwinnett, residents rail about the "threat" of becoming "a Belgian Congo" if mass transit is extended to their suburbs. This climate is ripe for the very real threat from growing fascist Klan and Nazi scum.

From black overseer Mayor Jackson to community-control pusher Jabari Simama and city councilwoman Davetta Johnson who introduced the curfew, this repressive law is backed by black Democrats who claim to be responding to the shootings of youth in drug-related violence. These misleaders help foster the illusions

in the drug witchhunt and "making the cops work for you" that run deep in the black community. At the Atlanta University Center, black students wrongly called for more cops on campus for "protection" from the surrounding black ghetto, after a student was slain by mugging teens. Their demand shows the class-biased notion that collegiate blacks are somehow "better" than their economically deprived brothers and sisters. But cops on the prowl for youth after hours won't ask for a college ID before locking them up—or worse. In racist, capitalist America, skin color is the defining "pass."

The answer of this rotting system to the social pathology of ghetto oppression is to criminalize youth, make wholesale roundups, build more prisons and keep black people locked out for good. For Marxists, stop-and-detain curfews and laws that criminalize drugs are reactionary extensions of police power aimed at regimenting the population and victimizing the victims. When they turn 18, these same youths who are herded off to jail after 11:00 p.m. could be "allowed" to die for the racist, white ruling class in the sands of Saudi Arabia—at any hour! The Spartacus Youth Club demands: Down with the racist curfew! ■

Black Soldier Singled Out for Prosecution

Black troops herded off to the Saudi sands to defend "our way of life" are discovering that the military is no haven from the "American way" of racist discrimination. The troops in the Gulf, disproportionately black and Latino (some 44 percent of all women deployed are black!), know they have no interest in getting their butts blown off for a government that's never given them any opportunities at home. Reservists who entered the military because there are no jobs, or in hope of learning a skill, or to get financial assistance for college, are now trying to get out. Several dozen reservists have refused to ship out, but the government has singled out one black soldier among them for prosecution and a possible court-martial.

Ronald Jean-Baptiste, a Haitian reservist in the Air Force's 34th Medical Service Squadron who was called up for active duty in October, recruited his buddies to donate to a Red Cross blood drive, only to have his own blood rejected because he's Haitian. (The entire Haitian population has been outrageously stigmatized as a "diseased" people whose blood is banned from the nation's blood supply by order of the

Defend Ronald Jean-Baptiste!

Food and Drug Administration.) That this government deemed his blood good enough to spill in the Persian Gulf for the profits of Big Oil, but not good enough for the blood supply where it might enter the veins of a white person, made Jean-Baptiste question the whole purpose of the military mobilization:

"I'm taking a position. Haitian people can't continue to take this crap... Who gives us the right to say, 'I'm the police of the world.' Israel, they're committing all kinds of massacres. Why doesn't Bush do something about that? How about South Africa?"

If court-martialed by the military, this courageous man could be locked up in the brig and carry a "dishonorable discharge" around for life. We say: Hands off Ronald Jean-Baptiste! It's the government that ought to be on trial for killing the youth of this country and the systematic discrimination and oppression of black people. Down with the Haitian blood ban!

Record numbers of reservists are applying for "conscientious objector" (C.O.) status to get out of the war. At the New School in New York City, a "Hands Off Sam" movement has grown around Sam Lwin, a Marine reservist of Burmese descent who explains, "They say they can teach you a skill, and give you adventure, but it's really all about killing.... They tried to completely dehumanize us in order to start all over and turn us into 'real men'" (Newsday, 22 November). The level of discontent and political opposition within the military is a big problem for the Pentagon. As Sam Lwin's lawyer said, if the military denies C.O. status to Lwin and others, "they will spread disaffection wherever they go."

But ultimately the war machine can't be stopped through individual acts of resistance. Hate leftists like We're Here World Party promote this myth, chanting, "Hell no, we won't go—we won't fight for Texaco," recalling the idiotic

New Leftist query, "Suppose they gave a war and nobody came?" What bunk. Until the ruling class is expropriated it will get its army by hook or by crook. In the event of a draft army, black and working-class youth simply don't have the option of taking off to Canada. As opposed to individual acts of draft resistance, which during the Vietnam War simply cut off middle-class radicals from the working-class and minority draftees, we Marxists went in with our class to organize the seething discontent within the armed forces into class opposition to the government.

Unlike during the Vietnam War, today's military has no draft—but the burden of service continues to be borne by people with far less money and darker skins than the rulers whose interests they're sent to die for. A perceptive article on class and war (New York Times, 13 November) asks, "Would President Bush be slower to send the troops if among them were the sons and daughters of members of Congress, top newspaper editors and the foreign-policy establishment?" Hands off Jean-Baptiste! For class struggle against the criminal war aims of this government.

Spartacus Youth Clubs...

(continued from page 4)

"squeal rules" on the books in 33 states which require parental or state consent for minors to obtain abortions or birth control. The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight against all "age of consent" laws and for **free abortion on demand**.

The nuclear family is the main source of women's special oppression under capitalism. As a social institution, the family separates women from the workforce, keeping them cloistered at home, and serves as a key means for the inheritance of property and instilling authority. To reinforce "family values" and mold a generation of docile, obedient youth, the government is even censoring "dangerous" rock 'n' roll lyrics! At the same time, the government is ripping apart the families of poor women with the "workfare" law which requires welfare recipients to take any subhuman job allotted to them or risk having their children taken away.

These attacks on women go hand in hand with the state-sponsored gay-bashing—the refusal of the government to adequately fund research or care for people with AIDS. Unlike feminists who draw a sex line instead of a class line and unite with bourgeois politicians at the expense of poor and minority women, we Marxists fight for the working class to champion the rights of women and homosexuals.

Defend the Soviet Union! For the revolutionary internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky! The capitalists are gloating over the "death of Communism," but what is dying before our eyes is Stalinism—the antithesis of everything genuine communists stand for. More than 50 years ago, Leon Trotsky described the Soviet Union as a "degenerated workers state"—a contradictory society based on the fundamental gains of the 1917 proletarian revolution yet governed by a bureaucracy that threatened the very existence of those conquests by the working class. Under the lying watchword of "socialism in one country," Stalin betrayed the revolutionary internationalist goals of the Russian Revolution in vain pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism.

The Gorbachev regime deserted Afghanistan, pushed the Cuhans out of



New York City, 5 July 1989: Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for free abortion on demand and an end to "squeal rules" that target youth.

Angola, gave in to a capitalist takeover of East Germany and now threatens the Soviet Union itself with a plan to restore the capitalist market. This would be a huge setback for the world working class. Today workers in Eastern Europe are discovering that the "miracle of the marketplace" means unemployment and destitution for them. Basic social and economic rights (such as employment, housing, education and health care) were the benefits of the overturn of capitalism and a society based on a planned, collectivized economy. We Trotskyists defend the Soviet Union from domestic counter-revolution and imperialist attack. Oust the bureaucrats—workers councils to power!

Our comrades in the Spartacist Workers Party of Germany have fought down the line against a capitalist Fourth Reich and for the revolutionary unity of the German, Polish and Soviet working class. Our comrades in the newly founded Spartacist Group of Poland were won to the program of Trotskyism in battle against Solidarność' drive for capitalist counter-revolution. On November 7 of this year, Spartacist slogans and our red flag emblazoned with the communist hammer and sickle and "4" of Trotsky's Fourth International were carried in Leningrad's Palace Square, birthplace of the October Revolution.

With the prolonged breakdown of the socialist and labor movement, many purported socialist organizations turned inward, becoming peculiar and sectarian. The Spartacus Youth Clubs resolutely fight this perversion of Marxism. We

believe the clash of opinion and test in action of the various forces claiming to be socialists is a crucial element in raising the consciousness of working people and less experienced youth. Thus when we initiate a united-front activity, rally speakers reflect the differing views represented among the participants. Where we differ with views expressed by others, we openly state our criticisms—we reject the prevailing practice of political censorship!

Contrast this with the actions of groups like the Workers World Party. Our forthright presentation of our political views places such cowards in a bad light. So

France...

(continued from page 5)

job. Now, especially as thousands of layoffs are announced in auto, a traditional workers' stronghold, high school students must take up the demands: Not one layoff and not one factory closing! Down with temporary work without benefits! Equal pay for equal work!

War minister Chevènement, who makes no distinction between school and the army, says these youths in revolt lack a sense of patriotism. He will be ready to send these youths to die in the Persian Gulf for the interests of an imperialism that has hled white the same peoples that many of these youths come from. The fight for a better future also requires defending Iraq against imperialist aggression. Break the blockade of Iraq!

Mitterrand's lackeys, who are leading

they suppress, slander and attempt to seal off (even through the use of police force) genuine leftists from activities they initiate, and even hide their own wretched politics, all in pursuit of maintaining a "safe" political homogeneity for the Democratic Party leaders they pander to. Other groups like the Workers League and the Socialist Workers Party ban other groups' members from their "public" meetings and bookstores. Political lies are but surrogates for political violence.

In our local offices we carry the press of the most interesting sections of the entire radical movement and reprint their best critiques of our organization in our own "Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacist League" pamphlet series. Unlike those who have chased after whatever movement, however reactionary, seemed popular at the moment (from Khomeini's "Islamic revolution" to Polish Solidarność), we've told the truth and are proud of our record. The work, history and views of our political tendency are available for public view in carefully indexed and bound volumes of our press.

If you want to do something about the racism and oppression endemic to this system, if you want to eliminate the threat of nuclear annihilation, then it's high time to join the struggle for a socialist America. The way to start is by joining a Spartacus Youth Club. The Spartacus Youth Clubs are schools of revolutionary action and education. Join us! ■

the two national student coalitions, will betray you to preserve their rather privileged relationship with the Mitterrand government—a government of warmongers and unemployment. They're either preaching "reconciliation" with the cops (e.g., SOS-Racisme, Lutte Ouvrière) or trying to sell you the lie that this government can be persuaded to defend your interests.

The ruling class can barely disguise its worry over a protest movement that is growing and has aroused expectations which only a victorious proletarian revolution—like the 1917 Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky—can fulfill. Yes, what's needed today is a May 1968 that goes all the way! Join the Ligue Trotskyiste, French section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). We have a world to win.

—Ligue Trotskyiste de France
11 November 1990

At 1:00 a.m., Thanksgiving night, there were 50 or so striking drivers milling around outside Freddy's Bar in Fort Greene, Brooklyn around the corner from the *Daily News* printing plant. Thinly manned police lines, smaller than usual on the holiday, separated pickets from the Pacific Street plant housing the scab-run presses (and the Atlantic Avenue parking lot housing scab trucks and cars). Then over 500 strikers came marching in from Dean Street in military formation.

Chants of "Union, Union!" and "Scabs go home in body bags!" were undoubtedly heard by the strikebreakers inside the *Daily News* plant, printing what is traditionally the largest paper of the year, filled with ads for the holiday weekend sales. The union battalion was told it was being assembled to see to it that the *News* didn't go out. Strikers came for scab-busting, but instead they were paraded around nearly deserted Brooklyn streets. As they circled, some of the strikers called out the obvious, "Why not storm the plant?"

A striking driver told *Workers Vanguard* the next day that the officials were blowing off steam: "The picket last night was really kind of unproductive. It was just a show of manpower." The strikers "still in a way respect the boss man's property," he said. But he pointed to the power of a plant occupation:

"Just go for it. Go for broke. You've got nothing to lose. If we did storm the plant, close it up, stop his production, you'd be on the inside. You'd be an effective force, and the scabs on the outside."

Exactly.

The *Daily News* strike is a month old. The unions are in a strong position. Roving pickets of drivers and pressmen have effectively kept the scabload off the newsstands. Big-time advertisers like Macy's and A&S department stores have given up on the *News*' lying circulation figures and canceled their ads. The Tribune Company even had to yank their spokescab Lisa Robinson off the air. When she declared "New Yorkers are creatures of habit," it was the last straw. How would she know?

The newspaper unions have got *News* publisher Hoge and Tribune Co. union-buster in chief Brumback by the balls. Now is the time to squeeze. No strike wins by fighting the bosses to a draw. Allied Printing Trades Council adviser

Daily News Strike: Storm the Plant!



Hundreds of striking *Daily News* drivers, pressmen and Guild members hold Thanksgiving midnight march in the streets around Brooklyn printing plant.

Ted Kheel is trying to broker a deal with an outside buyer. But this would mean forking over hundreds of jobs and tens of millions in givebacks. Screw givebacks! The *Daily News* was for years a cash cow for the Tribune Company.

What is urgently needed is a decisive blow by the unions: occupy the printing plants, backed up by mass pickets of thousands of working people from all over New York, so the scab rag never gets printed. City workers, millions of black and Hispanic poor facing cutbacks will rally to the unions' side. Turn around the scabherders' cynical use of the black homeless to hawk the *News* by giving them a real *Workers News* to sell!

Against the cynical use of black and Hispanic workers as scabs to break the strike, a black striker told WV: "the *Daily News* never cared about minorities, period. Until all of a sudden minorities had

become a commodity, a tool to break the unions." From the outset, we have called for union-run minority recruitment and training programs to provide jobs and integrate all the press unions.

After sending out his "ninja" thugs to patrol the streets and try to terrorize newsstands into carrying the scab *News*, Hoge and his security chief Richard Koehler (Koch's former city corrections boss) have taken a new tack: eleven striking drivers and pressmen have been hit with civil suits in an effort to intimidate them. Scores of ninjas equipped with video cameras have been sent out in chase cars behind scab trucks in an attempt to provoke strikers into defending themselves.

But even the haughty *New York Times* published an exposé of the recruitment of scab thugs from around Southern army bases to set up strikers. A strikebreaker from Kentucky, one of many holed up in

Jersey motels, who was trying to escape from New York but didn't have the cash for a (scab) bus ticket home, complained: "we were bait...cheese for the rats."

Meanwhile, black Democratic mayor David Dinkins' cops have roughed up strikers and their supporters in front of the *Daily News* building on 42nd Street. A reporter for the strikers' newspaper, *Real News*, was arrested for trying to take down badge numbers. Even the ACLU, no friend of organized labor, said, "The NYPD has turned into a private security force for the *Daily News*." New York unions must demand: Drop the charges against all strikers!

The strike is stagnating. Tommy Van Arsdale and the do-nothing CLC hold 42nd Street rallies so Lane Kirkland and the rest of the AFL-CIO brass can grandstand in baseball caps and windbreakers. The strike is being run by pro-Dinkins labor bureaucrats like 1199's Dennis Rivera, who would rather have his members manning a phone bank for the Democrats than a picket line in Brooklyn. And meanwhile the presses are rolling in Brooklyn, Garden City and Kearny.

What's needed is a class-struggle leadership that will bring the strikers' allies into the streets against the popular front of Democratic Party politicians, Wall Street hankers and labor bureaucrats who are running NYC into the ground. It took reds to build the racially integrated industrial unions in the 1930s, using the militant tactics like hot-cargoing and sit-down strikes that are badly needed today. And it will take a class-struggle workers party fighting for all the oppressed to hush the union-busters for good.

The striking driver interviewed by WV pointed to what this battle means for NYC labor:

"The strike really brought our situation at the *Daily News* to the attention of a lot of New Yorkers. Because the majority of the workforce in New York is unionized, all the city workers are unionized. So now there's this threat. If they get away with it at the *Daily News*, Lord knows what's going to happen. It's going to be blitzkrieg for the unions. That's why so much attention is being paid at the strike: if they can do it in New York they can do it anywhere."

"We want to bring the *Daily News* management to its knees, in tears. That's the kind of hardball game they wanted to play with us, you got to keep it up and bring it to them."

PDC Notes...

(continued from page 2)

(#6434), Debbie Sims Africa (#6307), Janet Holloway Africa (#6308), Janine Phillips Africa (#6309), Merle Austin Africa (#6306) and Susan Leon Africa (#6325). Carlos Africa (AM7400) is at the State Correctional Facility, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612, and Charles Sims Africa (#41793-066), U.S.P., 3901 Klein Blvd., Lompoc, CA 93436. Edward Goodman Africa (AM 4974) is at P.O. Box 200, Camp Hill, PA 17001. Michael Davis Africa (AM 4973) is at Drawer R, Huntingdon, PA 16652. William Phillips Africa (41685-066) is at P.O. Box 1000,

Leavenworth, KS 66048, and Delbert Orr Africa (AM 4985, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612).

Hugo Pinell (SHU C 12 211, P.O. Box 7500, Crescent City, CA 95531-7500) is one of the San Quentin Six, courageous anti-racist prison rights activists. He is serving a life term. W.M.E. we Langa (David Rice) (27718 P.O. Box 2500, Nebraska State Penitentiary, Lincoln, NE 68502) and Ed Poindexter (Lino Lake Facility, 7525 4th Avenue, Lino Lake, MN 55017) are former leaders of the Omaha Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism and Black Panther Party supporters, and are in the 20th year of life sentences. Targets of COINTELPRO, Mondo and Poindexter were framed for the 1970 killing of a cop in a bomb explosion.

The PDC's stipend program now extends to Eddie McClelland (A 154, B Wing, H Block 4, Maze Prison Long Kesh, Lisburn Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland), an imprisoned supporter of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. McClelland was sentenced to three life terms in Britain's star chamber Diplock courts on frame-up charges of killing three members of the British occupation Royal Ulster Constabulary, though British authorities conceded McClelland wasn't even present when the shootings occurred.

This year we are once again holding fund-raisers in New York, Chicago, Atlanta and the Bay Area. Last year we raised over \$9,000 for the class-war

prisoners and their families. These funds give the PDC a solid financial basis for sending monthly stipends, and meeting requests for books, magazines, special items of clothing, as well as holiday gifts for the prisoners and their families. You can read more about these class-war prisoners, updates on their cases, and a biographical letter from Eddie McClelland in *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* No. 14. Join our fight to free the class-war prisoners. Send your contributions to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■

Bush...

(continued from page 3)

more tanks than the entire U.S.-led coalition. Even U.S. experts are predicting 10,000-30,000 American dead and, given the Pentagon's propensity for profligate bombing, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. The Spartacist League stands for defense of Iraq and defeat of Washington's criminal war, whose real aim is to restore U.S. imperialist domination of the world. For labor/political strikes against the war! Break the blockade of Iraq! U.S. out of the Near East!

Bush has been able to amass this imperialist force only because the Gorbachevite "reformers" in the Soviet Union have surrendered the field. The Kremlin abandoned beleaguered Afghanistan and let East Germany be returned to the

rapacious German bourgeoisie, which led to the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. So now Bush feels free to strip U.S. forces from West Europe and concentrate them in Saudi Arabia some 700 miles from the Soviet Union.

This week Bush is busy rounding up the Security Council votes for a UN stamp of approval for war. He even met with the Syrian president (previously considered a terrorist), declaring: "Mr. Assad is lined up with us with a commitment to force." The *Times* expressed some worry over Soviet "hesitancy" on "commitment to force," but a "nyet" from Moscow is hardly taken very seriously anymore. Recent experience has shown that Gorbachev's "no" is followed the next day by a "maybe" and the day after by a capitulatory "yes," especially if he gets a whiff of IMF credits.

It's been a while since Khrushchev banged his shoe at the UN—not that he was any less fundamentally committed to "peaceful coexistence." We haven't forgotten how Khrushchev blinked in the face of Kennedy's threats in the Cuban missile crisis. Lenin's famous dictum that capitalism breeds war may be considered dead dogma by some burned-out Stalinists in the Soviet bloc, but now it stares them in the face. U.S. imperialism on the loose is a threat to humanity, and the Soviet Union first of all. Bush may think he can order up a war like Kaiser Wilhelm, but remember that World War I lost him his throne. ■

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For Workers Resistance Against the Fourth Reich!

WORKERS VANGUARD

purge reds. DGB unions make a deal with the bosses limiting wage raises in the ex-DDR to productivity increases. Not class collaboration but a light for workers control, to rip the factories from the hands of the bureaucrats become bosses, can smash the plans of the capitalists and their Treuhänder lackeys.

- For mass strikes and factory occupations against mass layoffs and plant shutdowns! For elected strike committees! Oust the bureaucrats and make the trade unions into fighting organizations of class struggle.

- Equal pay for equal work, East and West, women and men, youth and foreign workers! For a sliding scale of wages! (automatic raises according to increases in the price of consumer goods). For a sliding scale of hours! (divide the available work among all available hands). For a massive program of public works, at full union wages!

- For the expropriation of the capitalist banks and industry by a workers government! For a genuine socialist planned economy under the control of workers councils, recallable at any time!

Already on October 3, the Bonn authorities began their anti-communist witchhunt. "Examinations" of judges and teachers, "blacklisting" of former SED and present PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) members, arrests of "spymasters" are the order of the day. Meanwhile, the BKA (West German FBI) has taken over the Stasi headquarters. And former members of the RAF (Red Army Faction) have already been handed over to the West German political police for jailing.

- Stop the repression against the PDS, FDJ (Free German Youth) and FDGB! For united action against the party expropriation law! Down with blacklisting! Hands off Markus Wolf!
- Release the members of the RAF! Abolish the "anti-terrorist" Paragraph 129a!

It is an atrocity that Soviet soldiers and officers and their families are insulted and discriminated against and have now become the targets of deadly armed attacks by German nationalists. The Red Army and the Soviet peoples liberated Germany and East Europe from the scourge of fascism at the cost of 28 million Soviet dead. For decades, the Soviet Army men stood at their posts on the front line against NATO imperialism.

- For united-front actions, centered on the working class, to defend and honor our Soviet Army comrades and their families!

Greater Germany means "drive to the East," to Kaliningrad and beyond. They are gearing up the Bundeswehr for worldwide deployment. And a mere constitutional clause or "2+4 treaty" will not stop the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz, which has aided apartheid South Africa in developing the A-bomb, from itself deploying nuclear weapons. Even a "reduced" Bundeswehr will soon be larger than the total of Soviet and U.S. forces in West and Central Europe. The imperialists crow that they "won the Cold War," yet we are a great deal closer to World War III, with its threat of a nuclear holocaust—the flash point today is the Persian Gulf. The only disarmament that can avert or end war is the disarming of the bourgeoisie through workers revolution.

- Down with NATO! Not one man, not one woman, not one pfennig for the Bundeswehr!

- Imperialist military forces out of the Persian Gulf! Bundesmarine out of the Mediterranean! No Bundeswehr Tornado fighter jets to Turkey!

- Break the blockade! The USSR must end its weapons embargo against Iraq!

When Kohl & Co. talk of a united Germany in a united Europe, they're talking about restoring capitalist exploitation to the Urals and beyond. From Afghanistan to East Germany, Gorbachev has been giving the imperialists whatever



Der Spiegel Photos



Capitalist fatherland victimizes women. Above: striking East German textile workers in May. Free childcare made it possible for 94 percent of East German women to hold jobs; capitalist reunification has meant closing of day-care centers, mass firing of women.

they ask for. Now Yeltsin and Gorbachev threaten to force the Soviet peoples to undergo the misery of the market.

- Unconditional military defense of the degenerated/deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution!

- For proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies before they sell out everything to the imperialists!

- For the revolutionary unity of German, Polish and Soviet workers!

- For a Red Germany of workers councils in a socialist Europe!

The Road of Lenin and Trotsky

Today the historic proletarian gains of the October Revolution, the very existence of the Soviet Union, are in danger. From Central Asia to East Europe, the prospect of civil war is posed. Gorbachev's caving in to a reunited imperialist Germany puts NATO troops on the Oder-Neisse border. And as the failure of his perestroika market reforms produces economic chaos, there is a stampede to restore capitalism. The market is presented as a magic remedy, but look at the first results: in Poland, full shop windows and empty stomachs; in the Soviet Union, a record harvest rotting in the fields and food shortages in the cities. The answer to six and a half decades of Stalinist bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy is not the brutal destruction wreaked by the capitalist market but a planned economy under workers council democracy.

This was the program of Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition, which fought Stalin and the parasitic Soviet bureaucracy as it usurped power and proclaimed a conservative, nationalist policy at home of "building socialism in one country." The Stalinists' counterpart to this abroad was the "popular front," tying the working class to the bourgeoisie in order to

head off proletarian revolution. To carry out this policy of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, Stalin and his henchmen (like the thug Ulbricht) had to murder the Trotskyists, who warned that the bureaucracy was preparing the way for counterrevolution. Today, as Gorbachev and Gysi openly embrace the restoration of capitalism, they still slander Trotskyism, for it embodies the genuine Bolshevik program of socialist revolution worldwide which they and their granddaddy Stalin betrayed.

The decrepit DDR economy was not the result of too much planned economy, as everyone from Kohl to Gysi claims, but too little—above all internationally. Leuna workers produced hundreds of products from Soviet-supplied oil, but deliveries were slashed as the Kremlin bureaucrats sought to take advantage of high oil prices on the world market. So [former East German Stalinist leaders] Honecker and Mittag ordered DDR power plants to burn lignite, polluting the atmosphere and lungs. Facing an imperialist boycott on advanced technology, Rohotron workers produced perfectly capable computers—but now the Soviet Union buys IBM and so the East German computer industry lies in shambles. In opposing capitalist reunification, we Trotskyists did not appeal to narrow DDR nationalism but raised a program for socialist reunification and socialist international economic planning.

In response, the bankrupt leftovers of SED-Stalinism accused us of blowing "red soap bubbles." But who was "unrealistic," we who called for uniting German, Polish and Soviet workers against counterrevolution, or those like Gysi-Modrow who capitulated before the Bonn onslaught while blowing "black-red-gold soap bubbles"? What of the "citizens' movements" who dreamed of a "third way," were wiped out in the March 18 DDR vote and are now spearheading

the anti-Stasi, anti-PDS witchhunt? Or those who believed the lies of Kohl and the Social Democrats, who said that the D-mark would bring salvation? The Spartakists say straight-out that the formation of a united imperialist Germany is a great defeat. But we say too that working people can and must resist its consequences. While reformists wrangle over seats in the modern Reichstag, the SpAD uses this election campaign as a platform to call for Bolshevik politics and hard class struggle.

After 45 years of Stalinist mismanagement, the SED/PDS just handed over everything to the capitalists. Gysi crawls behind Lafontaine and the witchhunters of the SPD, and much of the "far left" crawl behind Gysi. The Greens are split over the witchhunt of the PDS, with the majority spouting eco-anti-Communism while many ex-Fundis (and not a few Realos) [the "fundamentalist" and "realist" wings of the Greens] go over to Gysi's brand of "left" social democracy. So fixated is the PDS/Linke Liste on ingratiating itself to this German nationalist petty-bourgeois milieu that the working class has utterly ceased to exist for it. They yearn to be junior partners in a coalition with the capitalist rulers—the loyal "opposition" to the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz and Babi Yar! This is the popular front they learned in the Stalinist school. No vote to the Green and PDS handmaidens of capital!

For Fighting Working-Class Unity in Action

The Spartakist Workers Party of Germany is a small party, but faces big tasks. As part of our communist program, we have sought out opportunities to use the Leninist tactic of the united front, to bring together forces in common struggle without confusing political banners. Thus we initiated the united-front anti-fascist mobilization after the desecration of the Treptow monument to the Red Army fighters who fell in the battle to smash Nazism. Our call was taken up as well by the SED/PDS, and some 250,000 people rallied on January 3 in the largest anti-fascist demonstration ever in Germany. But the SPD tops and Cold Warriors in the West were enraged by this powerful pro-Soviet countermobilization against Bonn's reunification drive, and the SED/PDS caved in to them.

The drive toward counterrevolution in the DDR unleashed a rising wave of fascist/skinhead racist terror attacks on immigrant workers and escalating anti-Semitism. Now Hans Modrow has his "Deutschland, einig Vaterland" (Germany, united fatherland) and Nazis are literally gunning for Gysi. In times of "prosperity," the fascist shock troops of capital are kept in reserve, staging periodic provocations and readying to unleash bloody terror in times of crisis. But in the former DDR, economic crisis is looming now. And in the absence of a widely recognized purposive communist opposition, the fascists could capitalize on frustrations by attacking foreign workers and leftists. "Dialogue" with these killers as the PDS wants is suicidal idiocy. What's needed are mass worker/immigrant mobilizations which can stop the fascists now, while they are still

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Der Spiegel



Spartakist

Left: Mozambican worker in Eisenach auto plant. Right: Mozambican workers join Spartakists in demanding full citizenship rights for foreign/immigrant workers at 1990 May march in Berlin.

Police Wage War on Berlin Squatters, Rail Workers Strike

Germany: Hot Autumn of Class Struggle

NOVEMBER 27—For months the German bourgeoisie feared a "hot autumn" of social unrest as the social consequences of the annexation of the former East Germany (DDR) by capitalist West Germany became clear. The illusions of the East German population of instant prosperity through a "strong mark" would disappear and the bitter reality of mass unemployment and poverty could provoke outbursts of fury. And the apparatus of state repression was not yet in place. Our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) have mounted a *Klassenkampf-Wahlkampf* (class-struggle election campaign) for the December 2 Bundestag (parliament) elections under the watchword, "For Workers Resistance Against the Fourth Reich!"

Now the "hot autumn" has arrived, with a vengeance. Trying to head off protest with a blatant show of force, the Social Democratic (SPD) government of Berlin mayor Walter Momper launched a massive police assault against apartment houses in the former East Berlin occupied by squatters. An initial attack by riot police on November 12 was resisted by building occupiers heaving Molotov cocktails and paving stones, resulting in a stand-off. The squatters got hold of an excavator and dug up the street to erect barricades. SPD police chief Erich Pätzold, in turn, brought in over 3,000 cops in phalanxes, together with armored cars, tanks and helicopters. This occupation army then beat up and cleared out the squatters.

Describing the street battles, *Neues Deutschland* (15 November) headlined, "West Police Test Civil War in East Berlin." The cops' blitzkrieg tactics sparked anger among the populace of the former DDR, who had never seen anything like it. They may have thought they had lived in a police state, but the *Volks-polizei* was seldom even armed! The squatters also enjoyed popular support in East Berlin, where there are 27,000 empty apartments (most now owned by West landlords) while 45,000 people are looking for housing; and in West Berlin, where rents are skyrocketing. At a November 17 protest the SpAD marched with a banner declaring: "Stop Police Terror With Workers Mobilization!"

The massive deployment of police has not had the effect of intimidating workers protests. Barely a week and a half later, 250,000 workers of the Deutsche Reichsbahn, the former East German state railways, went out on strike. Their minimal demands were simply for raising wages to 60 percent of the levels in the West German Bundesbahn and job security against threatened mass layoffs. This is the first labor struggle since capitalist reunification was formally sealed on October 3, and it put the entire German bourgeoisie on pins and needles.

On Sunday, November 25 more than

97 percent of the railroad workers voted to strike, and instead of waiting until the Monday deadline, they immediately began to shut down many lines. The next day, long-distance passenger and freight trains were stopped, more than 300 in all. In the Baltic port of Rostock, harbor workers reportedly stopped work in soli-



Berlin SPD government sent 3,000 cops with tanks to evict squatters in East Berlin, provoking pitched battles. Violent assault confirmed Spartakist warning that Social Democrats were "bloodhounds for the Deutsche Bank."

arity, but continued loading potatoes in ships bound for Leningrad. On the Polish border at Frankfurt/Oder, as well, strikers agreed to load trains hauling emergency food supplies to the Soviet Union.

The SpAD quickly put out a leaflet headlined, "No Layoffs! Equal Pay for Equal Work, East and West, Now! Reichsbahn and Bundesbahn Workers: All-Out Strike Now!" It called for elected strike committees to lead the struggle to victory, and for shutting down urban transport in Berlin. And the SpAD noted that a solid show of strength by the half million railroad workers would have an enormous effect on workers throughout the country.

This is the most important strike in Germany since 1984, and it gave workers in the East a taste of their social power for the first time since the 1953 workers uprising against the Stalinist regime. In response, the Bonn government of Christian Democratic (CDU) chancellor Helmut Kohl said it would bring in the army as strikebreakers, using Bundeswehr trucks to move "Christmas" packages. This is a threat to the entire labor movement. But instead of mobilizing the power of the largest railway union in the world, the union tops have now lifted the strike on passenger trains.

In the DDR elections last March, the Trotskyist SpAD, which called for proletarian political revolution to oust the

Stalinist bureaucracies of the deformed workers states, was the only party which categorically opposed capitalist reunification. In contrast, the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism, successor to the Stalinist SED which ruled East Germany for four decades) and various left groups bowed before the imperialist onslaught,

only seeking to slow it down and improve the terms for selling out the social achievements of the DDR which were built with the toil of the working people.

Today, these fake-lefts continue their policy of capitulation. PDS leader Gregor Gysi went along with a night-and-fog raid by Pätzold's cops against the PDS, then fingered his own treasurers to the capitalist police for their attempts to

protect party money from expropriation! As for the Reichsbahn workers, the PDS calls for the same kind of "rationalization" measures that slashed 100,000 jobs on the Bundesbahn. In West Berlin, the "Alternative List" (Greens) broke their coalition with Walter Momper after the police assault on the squatters. But this was after the city government's breaking of the day-care (KiTa) strike last winter, and their votes are still keeping Momper & Co. in office.

Opposed to these parliamentary cretins, the SpAD put forward a "Fighting Program" for its "Class-Struggle Election Campaign" (see page 8). Having fought counterrevolution down the line when the rest of the left crawled before Kohl & Co., the SpAD now seeks to provide direction for the defensive battles in the aftermath of the takeover of the DDR by imperialist West Germany.

The Spartakists have systematically fought the rightist witchhunting attacks, principally against the PDS and also the Greens. This has gained the SpAD some notoriety. The social-democratic/liberal news magazine *Der Spiegel* (19 November) noted that at a Gysi appearance in Hamburg, the Spartakists demanded "immediate release" of the PDS treasurers and termed Gysi a "belly-crawling capitulator." In addition "Spiegel-TV" covered a plant-gate distribution at the East Berlin KWO factory, where our comrades emphasized the importance of defending immigrant workers. (The SpAD election program was translated into Turkish, Polish and Portuguese.)

As the class struggle heats up in the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, the Trotskyists of the Spartakist Workers Party seek to use the "Reichstag" election campaign as the Bolsheviks did with the tsar's Duma, as a platform for revolutionary politics. ■

Censors Try to Disappear Auschwitz

In a radio election spot, the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany declared that "Gorbachev and the PDS [successor to the former East German Stalinist ruling party] gave away the DDR to the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz." This statement was not to the liking of the bosses at Berliner Rundfunk, in former East Berlin, who claimed it was "libelous." These ex-Stalinists were so solicitous of the German ruling class against insult that they appointed themselves political censors and refused to air our election spot. Instead they broadcast a version in which the word "Auschwitz" was replaced by a beep tone!

Renate Dahlhaus, an SpAD candidate in Berlin for Bundestag deputy, issued a November 20 statement de-

claring: "The Berliner Rundfunk is attempting to cover up the heinous legacy of the Third Reich and the Holocaust with the primitive methods of Richard Nixon's Watergate. This is not only an attack on freedom of speech and press, on the democratic rights of our party. It is an attack on all those who seek to fight the catastrophic effects of a Fourth Reich." The statement listed a number of prominent West German politicians who began their careers in the Third Reich, including Fritz Karl Ries, the political mentor of Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

On November 26, an administrative court in Berlin ruled that the radio station was required to broadcast the SpAD election statement in full.

Thatcher...

(continued from page 3)

could rapidly change if the Conservatives dump Thatcher before the general election.... In fact, there wouldn't be much difference between a Tory government headed by Heseltine, and a Kinnock Labour government."

—Workers Hammer, March/April 1990

This was clearly something the British electorate recognised as well. Immediately after Thatcher's resignation, Labour's 16-point lead in the opinion polls vanished, with Heseltine and the other two Tory contenders, Cabinet ministers Douglas Hurd and John Major, vaulting ahead of Kinnock. As the *New York*

Times (25 November) observed, "Labor's policies showed not much different from those of the Conservatives." The weak British economy, ravaged by decades of capitalist neglect and devastation, offers no easy options to the bosses. Industry has been cut to the bone, rail and transport starved of investment, and industrial murder has become commonplace, from the North Sea to the London Underground. For the working masses the choice between the boot of the Tories or the knife of Labour is no choice at all.

Kinnock showed his colours during the miners strike, when he supported Thatcher's demand for a scab ballot while denouncing the miners for defending their picket lines against strikebreakers. Had class struggle toppled the

Thatcher government during the strike it would have created a pre-revolutionary situation, posing point blank the question of *which class shall rule*. So, Kinnock, Willis and the Labour "lefts" worked overtime to knife the miners.

Since then, Kinnock has amply demonstrated that he is an enemy of working people and the oppressed. It is starkly clear that to wage a class fight against unemployment, union-busting, wage-slashing and warmongering a political break must be made from the Labour traitors, right and "left." Our task is to forge a revolutionary party through splitting Labour's working-class base from its pro-capitalist leadership and regrouping those forces outside and to the left of the Labour Party under the banner of authen-

tic communism.

It is too bad that Margaret Thatcher was only kicked out of No. 10 by her Tory cronies. The sacked miners, homeless youth, impoverished pensioners, families of the Argentine sailors of the *Belgrano* which she maliciously ordered blown away during the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas War, the oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland and victims of racist cop rampage—to name but a few—are certainly celebrating her departure, but they are no closer to redressing the devastating injury she and her ruling-class cohorts have inflicted on them. Real justice will come with proletarian revolution, which will sweep into the dustbin of history the bourgeoisie along with the parasitic Labour fakers. ■

Soviet Union...

(continued from page 1)

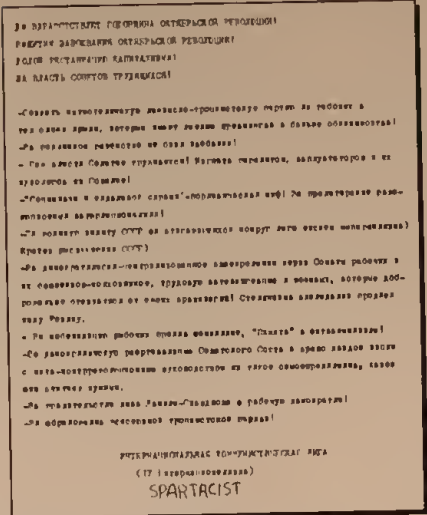
leading up to November 7, Moscow was rife with rumors, circulated by pro-capitalist forces, of a "conservative" military coup, supposedly to be carried out under cover of preparations for the November 7 parade. Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov vehemently denounced these rumors as a slander and lashed back at the "so-called democrats": "This is very useful to somebody. Not only to shake up the army, to slander it. But the most important, to prepare some kind of 'coup d'état'..." (New York Times, 1 October).

Gorbachev overruled the Yeltsinites, but tried to limit the occasion to military parades. The Moscow media broadcast appeals for people to stay home. But in the face of counterrevolutionary mobilizations, CPSU leaders at the last moment appealed on TV for the population to show their support for October. In Moscow, 100,000 marched in the official celebration, where one banner demanded, "Anti-Communist Gorbachev—Out of the CPSU." Others carried signs reading, "Hands off Lenin!" and "No to a Market of Labor!" At the same time, a demonstration by 10,000 right-wingers (heavily covered by the Western media) heard a Russian Orthodox priest lead a prayer vigil for the "victims of Communism." Yeltsin, after briefly sharing the reviewing stand with Gorbachev atop Lenin's mausoleum, went straight to the anti-Communist counterdemonstration on the other side of the Kremlin, where he was greeted with wild acclaim.

In Leningrad, after the Red columns marched down the Nevsky Prospect into Palace Square, there was a second march of the so-called "Democratic columns," whose main slogan was "November 7 is a day of national tragedy." The character of these "democratic forces" was fully revealed by the fact that at their head marched contingents of the fascist Pamyat and other ultrarightist outfits, followed by the Popular Front and Democratic Union. In Kiev, nationalistic Ukrainian students tried to obstruct the Red Army parade. In Vilnius, Lithuania paratroopers had to clear right-wing students out of the way. In Georgia, the commemoration of Revolution Day was restricted to a military base near Tbilisi. In many cities there was no commemoration of the Revolution at all.

Many military cadre are rightly outraged by the widespread denigration of Soviet patriotism; increasing draft dodging and desertions, especially in the non-Russian republics; the open surfacing of Nazi collaborators in the Baltic republics; the sabotage and vilification of the military intervention in Afghanistan against the CIA-armed Islamic *mujahedin*. But perhaps more than anything else, they are outraged by Gorbachev's unilateral retreat before NATO and the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, as demobilized officers and soldiers return to face the threat of unemployment and tent cities.

A Trotskyist party in the Soviet Union could recruit into its ranks Red Army



Translation of ICL leaflet in Russian (above) produced and circulated in Leningrad for November 7 anniversary demonstration.

men who do not want to see their country exploited and colonized by Western imperialism. Indeed, many soldiers and militiamen bought our Russian-language bulletin when they saw the article "In Defense of Marshal Tukhachevsky," the head of the Red Army who was slandered and murdered along with virtually



Hail the Celebration of the October Revolution!
Defend the Gains of the October Revolution!
Down With the Restoration of Capitalism!
For Power to Soviets of the Working People!

- Create an anti-Stalinist Leninist-Trotskyist party from workers and those sections of the army who have the lowest privileges and the most responsibilities!
- For genuine equality on the basis of abundance!
- All power to the Soviets of the working people! Oust the parasites, exploiters and their ideologues from the Soviets!
- "Socialism in one country" is a defeatist myth! For proletarian revolutionary internationalism!
- For military defense of the USSR against the imperialist vise tightening around it! Against the dismemberment of the USSR!
- For democratic-centralist planning through Soviets of the workers and their allies—peasants, the working intelligentsia and those of the military who voluntarily renounce their privileges! Stalin's heirs are selling out our Motherland.
- For workers mobilizations against chauvinism, Pamyat and anti-Semitism!
- For democratic reorganization of the Soviet Union and the right of every nation with an anti-counterrevolutionary leadership to whatever self-determination it considers necessary.
- For government of the Lenin-Sverdlov type on the basis of workers democracy!
- For the formation of an all-Union Trotskyist party!

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST LEAGUE (IV Internationalist)

unemployment, rampant inflation and descent into nationalistic carnage.

The bureaucracy's decades-long stranglehold over the Soviet working class is being broken. With the exception of a handful of hard-bitten Stalinists, demonstrators in the Red columns in both Moscow and Leningrad were quite open

out of literature, they held an impromptu rally in front of the Aleksandrovsky Column in the middle of Palace Square. Several hundred people listened to Trotskyist speeches calling for the workers to retake political power on the program of revolutionary internationalism. *Vechny Leningrad* quoted from an interview with an ICL spokesman, calling for a return to "the original Leninist and Trotskyist theory" and "above all, not conceding to the restoration of capitalism." One woman, seeing the Fourth Internationalist insignia on our banner, exclaimed with tears in her eyes, "It's so wonderful to see you again." Another came over to our literature stall and joined the rally, asking that the sign she was carrying be placed alongside the ICL slogans. It read: "Stop Capitalist Restoration! They're Trying to Make Our Homeland Into a Colony!"

Indeed they are. The rulers of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo aim not only to buy up the productive resources of the Soviet Union but also to dismember the USSR and turn the remnants into semi-colonies. Gorbachev has made clear his intent to sell off to Western and Japanese capitalists the collectivized factories, mines and other resources created by the blood and sweat of the Soviet workers over decades. One group of Western industrialists is reportedly planning an ambitious project to construct a new superhighway from Odessa to Leningrad via Kiev and Moscow, in which they intend to use returning troops from East Europe as cheap labor.

Meanwhile the forces of backwardness and obscurantism unleashed by perestroika grow ever more grotesque. Pro-tsarist reactionaries and the Russian Orthodox church are now planning to erect a memorial cathedral in Sverdlovsk on the site where Tsar Nicholas II and his family were executed by the Bolsheviks!

Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky!

Only united struggle by the multinational Soviet working class can defeat the forces of bloody capitalist counter-revolution. Sections of the Soviet working class, especially the miners, have been militant in defending their economic interests against the ravages of perestroika. Politically, however, Soviet workers remain under the sway of various contending factions within the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy and intelligentsia.

Late last month, 900 delegates from coal mines across the USSR met in the Donbass region of the eastern Ukraine to debate forming an independent, USSR-wide union. While the tone of the conference was one of defiance, there was

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Powerful 1989 Soviet miners strike shook USSR. Russian-language *Spartacist Bulletin* got enthusiastic reception with hundreds purchased by coal miners at October congress in Donetsk.



German Trotskyists...

(continued from page 9)

small and relatively isolated.

The party expropriation law, inspired by the SPD, was part of the sinister campaign to criminalize former and present members of the SED and PDS and squelch resistance to capitalist *Anschluss*. Now it is turned against the trade unions. The SpAD refused to hand over its party finances to the trustees of the Deutsche Bank. Furthermore, we called in an "Open Letter" on all left and working-class organizations to defend the right to organize and defy this attempt to throttle the proletariat. But Gysi et al. wouldn't fight it. While other "leftist" parties are financed by Bonn—sealing their role as pressure groups on and paid servants of the ruling class—we stand for the class independence of workers organizations, refusing to take one D-mark of state subsidies.

In the March 18 DDR elections, the SpAD offered to call for a vote, in those constituencies where we did not present candidates, to any parties which stated, in writing, their absolute opposition to capitalist reunification. There were no takers. Other so-called "leftists" from the PDS to the Nelken, Vereinigte Linke and KPD, crawled before the imperialist *Anschluss*, at best seeking to slow it down or improve the terms for the sellout. Now the Linke Liste/PDS slate declares that parts of it accept "the social-state compromise" in the Federal Republic and makes this the starting point of its politics for the new Greater German Reich. They openly support capitalism. We don't. We Trotskyists fight for socialist revolution. And you?

For Revolutionary Internationalism!

To exemplify our internationalist, working-class program, the Spartakist Workers Party featured a tour through the DDR and Hamburg in June by American black Trotskyist Don Andrews. Through the Komitee für Soziale Verteidigung we have mobilized support for

the worldwide campaign to save the life of black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, framed up and slated for execution by the racist American rulers for his unrelenting defense of the oppressed. The SpAD has massively distributed materials in Polish, Vietnamese, Turkish, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian for immigrant workers and Soviet soldiers. We have fought to mobilize the workers of the KWO plant to defend their Mozambican coworkers from fascist attacks. We have opposed anti-Polish chauvinism, holding a protest picket last May against the Aldi supermarket's outrageous discrimination against Polish workers.

Most recently, in the face of the vile ban on immigration by Soviet Jews ordered from Bonn, the Spartakists organized a protest before the (now former) monument to the victims of fascism on Unter den Linden, declaring: "Down with the Ban on Jewish Immigration of the Fourth Reich!" Some gave as a reason for not participating that the Nazis were not in power yet, so this can't be a "Fourth Reich." But Nazis were not in power in the Bismarckian/Wilhelminian Second Reich, which along with the other imperialist powers unleashed the slaughter of World War I. And in the

new Greater Germany, fascists are marauding and cocking their pistols, from Görlitz and Greifswald to Göttingen. If the Republikaner have not substantially grown, it is because Kohl & Lafontaine are carrying out much of their program.

Triumphantly portraying the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe as the "death of Communism," the imperialists take up Hitler's slogan of a "New World Order." Yet they seem intent on proving that war and economic crisis are inherent in capitalism. Washington is in a frenzy to resolve the contradiction between its crumbling economic basis and its military power by launching an invasion of the Persian Gulf against Iraq. This is to be financed by the Arab oil sheiks and its former enemies of World War II. Germany and Japan, however, maneuver to avoid antagonizing oil suppliers, while using the occasion to loosen the restraints of their U.S.-written constitutions on using military force abroad.

The Green neo-imperialists and black-red-gold "left" social democrats of the PDS join the chorus of warmongers, asking only for the fig leaf of the UN to cover their defense of the oil monopolies, Gulf monarchies and U.S.-led imperialists. The SpAD and the International

Communist League, in contrast, call for the military defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, while simultaneously calling on the working people of Iraq and the rest of the Near East to sweep away their bloody rulers. In the DDR, we Spartakists have solidarized with Soviet troops, while the "left" German nationalists of the PDS and VL raise the anti-Soviet slogan of "withdrawal of all foreign troops" so that the Bundeswehr can be undisputed master in Greater Germany.

In East Europe, which German imperialism treats as its *Hinterland*, the "free market economy" means the rebirth of nationalist and fascist movements, pogroms and a return to pre-World War II poverty. Poland is groaning under the capitalist austerity policies implemented by Solidarność to pay off the Frankfurt hankers. But Polish miners and railway workers have begun to light back. In the USSR, perestroika has unleashed nationalist conflict from the Caucasus to the Baltics. Counterrevolution is cloaked in demands for independence, while sinister Russian nationalist forces such as the anti-Semitic fascists of Pamyat are also at work. Yet since the 1989 miners strike, when strike committees took on the character of soviets, the spectre of a new working-class explosion, that could cut across nationalist lines, is a nightmare for the pro-capitalist forces.

Despite a yearning for soviet democracy and equality, there is great confusion among the Soviet working people. A Leninist-Trotskyist party must be built to defend the Stalinist-betrayed heritage of Red October. It was the lack of such a party in Germany that allowed capitalist reunification to rush through unimpeded. It is such a party that must be built today to lead the struggles of the working people against the new German imperialist Reich, and to join with the workers from South Korea to South Africa in sweeping away the imperialist system of exploitation, racism and war. This program of proletarian internationalism is the banner of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League, fighting to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution! ■



250,000 come out in show of strength against Nazi defacing of Red Army graves in Treptow Park, East Berlin, 3 January 1990. Spartakists initiated this anti-fascist mobilization, largest ever in German history.

Soviet Union...

(continued from page 11)

neither the leadership nor program there to mobilize this defiance against those who would become their new capitalist masters. Some delegates looked to syndicalism, many felt that a market economy was inevitable and the question was how to fight against its excesses. Meanwhile, a hard core of Cold War anti-communists—including representatives from Freedom House, the Russian fascist

NTS, and from Britain the scab Union of Democratic Miners and the virulently anti-communist Electricians union—worked the corridors hard with the aim of promoting a Solidarność-style counter-revolutionary "union." These CIA types particularly focused on enrolling the Soviet miners into the vicious witchhunt against militant British miners leader Arthur Scargill.

At the conference, our comrades intervened through sales and corridor discussion to oppose the anti-Scargill witchhunt, pointing out the reactionary

character of the bourgeois/scab attack on Scargill. After the UDM representative was allowed to appeal from the podium for the Soviet miners to demand that monies contributed by them to the heroic 1984-85 British miners strike be handed over to the UDM, an ICL representative addressed conference presidium members, presenting them with a copy of *Workers Vanguard* (No. 508, 10 August) with the article, "Sinister Frame-Up of British Miners Leader—Scargill Witch-hunted." In the upshot, the conference resolved not to pursue the UDM's appeal to join in denouncing Scargill.

The conference participants bought 600 bulletins, some taking stacks of ten back with them to their comrades in remote mining areas. In numerous lively discussions, the ICL comrades insisted that the establishment of a capitalist market economy is *not* inevitable. More than 65 years of bureaucratic rule have succeeded in sapping the communist consciousness of the Soviet proletariat, burying it under a mountain of lies, the most dangerous of which is that all-sided lie called "socialism in one country." What is posed in the USSR today is to direct the defensive struggles of the working people toward the formation of soviets and restoring the internationalist heritage of October.

During the turbulent months between the February and October Revolutions in 1917, as the Bolshevik-led workers vied for power with the weak capitalist Kerensky government, the capitalists sought to force the workers into submission by sabotaging the economy. With the country on the verge of famine and anarchy, Lenin wrote "The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It," insisting that

"only the winning of power by the proletariat, headed by the Bolshevik Party, can put an end to the outrageous actions of Kerensky and Co. and restore the work of democratic food distribution, supply and other organisations, which Kerensky and his government are frustrating." A month later, the Bolshevik-led workers seized power and swept away the tottering old order.

Today once more the working people are faced with famine and anarchy. The Soviet proletariat must regain political power on the basis of democratically elected soviets if it is to save the Soviet Union and prevent capitalist counterrevolution. Genuine soviets have nothing in common with either the bureaucratic shells under Stalin or the pseudo-parliamentary sham erected under Gorbachev, but are instruments of proletarian democracy, with delegates directly elected and recallable by the working class and its social allies—rank-and-file collective farmers, oppressed minorities, working women, Red Army soldiers and those members of the intelligentsia who overcome their corrupt appetites and embrace the cause of the working class. Genuine soviets will not be created at will nor by bureaucratic fiat; rather they arise through the mass struggles of the working class.

The working class and its allies can defeat the forces of counterrevolution and take power into their own hands. For that, it is necessary above all to forge a new party modeled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. The ICL leaflet distributed in Leningrad outlines the program for the Trotskyist party needed to lead the Soviet workers political revolution. ■

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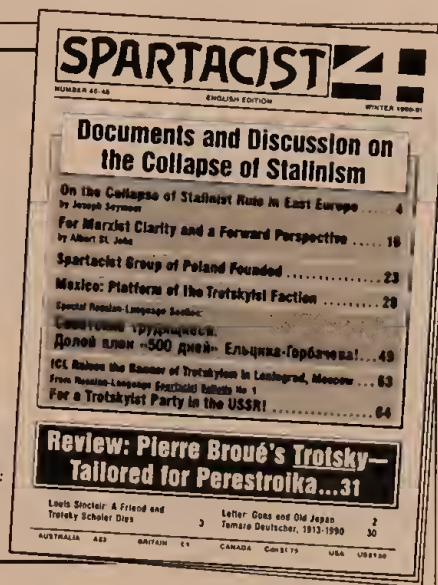
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Peter Magubane

Left: Inkatha thugs launched terror campaign. Right: Xhosas murder "suspected Zulu." For racially integrated workers defense guards to halt bloody communist warfare whipped up by apartheid rulers!



Guardian (London)

South Africa...

(continued from page 16)

"the struggle". They worry about the Communist Party (SACP). But to show their commitment to a "post-apartheid" capitalist state, the ANC, SACP and their allies in COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) have denounced militant sit-down strikes, sacrificing hundreds of unionists and pledging to protect company profits (see accompanying article on the Mercedes-Benz strike).

Last February, Mandela's first speech after his release from Pollsmoor prison reiterated ANC commitment to "armed struggle" and the alliance with the SACP. We noted, "The morning after, there was consternation in corporate boardrooms when Mandela reaffirmed the ANC's call for nationalization of the mines. The Johannesburg gold market sank to the floor" (WV No. 496, 23 February). The ANC has long advocated a "mixed economy" and some form of negotiated settlement with the white-supremacist regime. The famous phrase in the 1955 "Freedom Charter," that "mineral wealth beneath the soil... shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole," is purposely vague. The Jo'burg bankers and industrialists want the ANC to spell out its commitments.

In May, Mandela told a conference of *verligte* capitalists organized by Anglo American mining magnate Gavin Relly "a secret": "the view that the only words in the economic vocabulary that the ANC knows are nationalisation and redistribution is mistaken." In September Mandela told the *Financial Mail* that he has "never advocated socialism at all" and that he favors "the flourishing of capitalism among Africans." And at the beginning of October the ANC issued a revised economic policy statement saying that only state-owned industries, like utility companies, which the government is trying to privatize, "will be subject to immediate re-nationalization."

As the bosses decree "mayhem" and the country lurches chaotically, the black unions and anti-apartheid organizations are thrown into crisis, with raging internal debates over "which way forward." In the pages of the *Weekly Mail*, *Work in Progress*, *South African Labour Bulletin* and even the SACP's *African Communist*, articles and readers' letters abound on

the key question of Stalinism vs. Trotskyism. This is no abstract debate: the issue is reform or revolution and the stakes are enormous. As Stalinist regimes collapse all across East Europe under the weight of their own contradictions and in the face of the imperialist onslaught, we have noted that the South African masses don't believe in the "death of Communism." Yet Stalinism in its death agony has one last gasp—trying to hold on in South Africa long enough to betray one more revolution to the bourgeoisie.

South Africa today expresses the quintessence of Trotsky's program of *permanent revolution* in which the most basic democratic demands—"one person, one vote," land to the tiller, ending slave-like oppression in the mining compounds and

to reduce this to "ancient tribal rivalries" between Zulu and Xhosa, playing up images of savagery, while liberals talk politely of "inter-ethnic conflict" and wring their hands about "black-on-black violence." But this slaughter grows out of a terror campaign by Buthelezi's Inkatha, whose gangs of thugs have murdered more than 4,000 people in Natal province during the last five years and have now extended their operations to the Vaal Reef. Seeking to scuttle, or at least reshape ANC-government negotiations, various elements of the apartheid regime and its puppets have conspired to touch off a tribal war, and have to some extent succeeded.

The theory of age-old "inter-tribal violence" is belied by the fact that the



Kus/Sipa

Fascist shock troops of Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

bantustans—can only be solved when the working class comes to power. Never before has the combative black working class been better organized. Yet the Stalinists of the South African Communist Party, playing out their historic role, try to contain this fight within the bounds of a "national-democratic" capitalist state. The urgent task is forging a Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for workers revolution.

Behind the "Reef War"

While the ANC called off the "armed struggle," right-wing forces took this as a signal to launch a killing spree. The hideous murders have thus far taken more than 1,000 lives, and are sporadically continuing. The Western press tries

terror in Natal has pitted Inkatha Zulu *impis* (squads) against other Zulus who support the pro-ANC United Democratic Front. Furthermore, a recent book on the Xhosa, *The Dead Will Arise* by Professor Jeff Peires, chairman of the history department of Transkei University, notes that there was only one recorded clash between the Zulus and the Xhosas—in 1827, and even that was a minor skirmish which ended with the latter pledging fealty to Zulu King Shaka. The very real tribal tensions in South Africa today are more the product of apartheid's "divide-and-rule" schemes, carving the black African population up into myriad bantustans and deliberately using migrant

labor which is segregated off in men-only hostels to work the mines and other key industries.

There are curious patterns to the terror. For instance, its timing, breaking out precisely *one day* after the signing of the Pretoria Minute on August 6. Another is the seeming inability of the massive South African intelligence apparatus to find the perpetrators. Black miners leader Cyril Ramaphosa, speaking at Howard University on September 26, noted that in two months of right-wing terror throughout the Transvaal, the police made exactly one arrest. And that was when a township defense squad caught an Inkatha terrorist in the act of burning a house in Soweto and turned him over to the cops.

Allister Sparks in the *Washington Post* (22 September) described the military precision of the single most blood-curdling incident, the slaughter of commuters aboard a rush-hour train between Johannesburg and Soweto on September 13. Masked attackers boarded the train at a Jo'burg station but made no move until after its next stop, when it became a partial express passing through two other stations, giving them ten minutes to carry out their gory attack:

"They ran through coaches, shooting and hacking at passengers, hurling dozens through exit doors to fall in a tangle of broken limbs down steep embankments. "At Benrose station, another gang was waiting on the platform. When the doors opened and the panic-stricken passengers spilled out, this second gang attacked, shooting and slashing at more people with long machetes. In all, 26 people were killed and more than 100 injured. "None of the attackers said a word throughout the carnage, leading to speculation that they were not South Africans."

Sparks cited reports that some Inkatha squads were trained alongside Mozambican "Renamo" mercenaries at camps operated by the South African army. The TV show *South Africa Now* raised similar suggestions in a 3 October report on "The Hidden Hand" behind the violence: "A Renamo speciality has been attacking transportation lines in Mozambique, very much the modus operandi of similar massacres on commuter trains outside Johannesburg." Among the "fingers" of the "hidden hand" are the Koevet, a counterinsurgency unit used by the South Africans in Namibia; the Inkatha

continued on page 14



Peters/Sipa

Apartheid ruler De Klerk greets Nelson Mandela, August 7. ANC promises to end "armed struggle" and leave gold and diamond mines in hands of the Randlords.

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South Africa...

(continued from page 13)

vigilantes; and the army's infamous "Civil Cooperation Bureau." A recent government "inquiry" into this assassination bureau found no evidence of death squads, even though they had confessions from white and black members describing the murders they had carried out!

The fascist "white right" has also stepped up its activity lately, organizing for race war. The largest grouping, the AWB (Afrikaner Resistance Movement) of Eugene TerreBlanche, with its swastika-like emblem, has been recruiting for paramilitary "Boerekommandos." Last spring, AWB-affiliated vigilantes in Welkom, in the Orange Free State, launched a murderous offensive against blacks in the mines and a nearby township. In early July there was a series of bomb attacks in Johannesburg against a synagogue, an anti-apartheid Afrikaans paper and a crowded black bus station, which were claimed by a previously unheard-of white-supremacist terror outfit. And the *Weekly Mail* (19 October) reports that, "A spate of assassinations and attempted murders of African National Congress activists over the past week has raised fears that apartheid death squads are back in business."

In the background of the "Reef war" there are different forces at work. Hardliners in the police and army—which



WV Photo

Trotskyist Spartacist League marches in New York protest, June 1983, demands internationalist labor solidarity, not imperialist sanctions.

with the police-imposed curfew, undercuts the feverish organizing campaign of anti-apartheid forces.

But in response to the terror, the response of the ANC...was to appeal to the apartheid police! Andrew Mapheto, regional ANC organizer in the PWV (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal Reef) region, wrote in a revealing account:

"Unfortunately, the more reports of police misconduct reached us, the more we urged our people to work in consultation with them. The result was that

migrant workers' hostels into surrounding largely Xhosa townships, killing at random. Soon Xhosas were launching murderous attacks on the hostels. This is attested to as well by the account of ANCer Mapheto, who while criticizing attempts to portray the violence as "a Xhosa-Zulu war" notes that often "all people who were Zulu-speaking were seen as being responsible," and in one area "sectors of the youth felt every home with Zulu-speaking inhabitants had to be burned or demolished." Mapheto himself was surrounded by a lynch mob of Xhosa youth who thought the ANCers were Zulus because their car had Natal license plates. And at report-back meetings, he says, people asked, "Give us guns and we will kill the Zulus."

It's not surprising that there is concern that a government of the ANC (many of whose present leaders are Xhosa, including Mandela, Tambo, Sisulu, Mbeki, Hani) would favor their own tribal grouping. For all its appeals for "non-racialism," the ANC's only answer to attempts to provoke tribal warfare has been to appeal to the apartheid regime to impose its racist "law and order," or watch as the Xhosa youth get swept into the communalist bloodletting. The history of neo-colonial regimes in Africa, such as Zimbabwe where the government of Robert Mugabe based on the Shona has wielded supremacy over the Ndebele led by Joshua Nkomo, is replete with examples of domination by one tribe over another. That this has been the fate of much of post-colonial black Africa is tragic enough; in the industrial powerhouse of the continent this need not and must not happen.

What is needed is the formation of

union-based workers defense guards, linking the factory to the townships, and made up of class-conscious workers including Zulus, Xhosas and members of other tribal groupings, as well as coloured, Asian and anti-racist white workers, to suppress both the right-wing terrorists and the fomenters of bloody communalist war. In tsarist Russia, the Bolsheviks in the oil-producing center of Baku organized such workers military formations to suppress mutual communalist slaughter among the Armenians and Azerbaijanis, incited by the petty-bourgeois nationalists of both peoples. In South Africa today, workers defense guards could develop into powerful organs of proletarian dual power which can derail the ANC/De Klerk/Relly plans for a "post-apartheid" capitalist state.

Precisely because of the economic development fostered by South African capitalism, the various racial, ethnic and tribal groups are intermingled as nowhere else on the continent. Indians led by Mohandas Gandhi played a key role in the founding of the Congress movement. The Afrikaans-speaking coloured population in the Cape province has historically been in the vanguard of struggle against racial discrimination. And although the white population as a whole is a privileged caste enjoying relative prosperity paid for by the toil of black labor, many whites also have been active in anti-apartheid struggles, from the ANC to the black unions. But the ANC, with its popular-front program aiming at a "post-apartheid" capitalist state, cannot overcome the racial/ethnic/tribal communal animosities that are bred by the struggle for survival in conditions of extreme poverty.

These are the existing lines of division along which a desperate competition for the spoils of office is carried out. This can only be transcended through socialist revolution eliminating the fratricidal competition for a few meager crumbs from the capitalists' table and placing the enormous wealth (presently in the hands of rich corporations like Anglo American) at the service of all the toilers. Desperately needed is an authentically communist party built on the program of permanent revolution and mobilizing the power of the black proletariat, which can unite and champion the rights of all, the Xhosa and Zulu, Venda and Sotho, migrant workers from Mozambique and Botswana, the coloureds and Asians, and those growing numbers of whites who do not wish to spend their lives in a doomed racist garrison state awaiting a fiery *Götterdämmerung* in their bunkers.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Mbeki/Linda

ANC leaders: Umkonto we Sizwe commander Chris Hani (left), international director Thabo Mbeki.

have stood by and watched as Inkatha gangs attack—seek to shore up the crumbling ramparts of apartheid by scuttling negotiations. In addition to these diehards, the De Klerk "reformers" (including the Broederbond secret society of Afrikaner leaders which was the hard core of the apartheid regime) want to expand the "negotiations" to include their kept dogs like Buthelezi. To dilute the influence of the ANC/SACP they have even extended invitations to the black nationalists of the PAC (Pan-Africanist Congress) and AZAPO (Azanian People's Organization), which are reportedly in turmoil over the issue. The terror campaign also works to create a climate of fear in the townships which, together

we were often booed....

"During our visits to the townships, a desperate call for arms became deafening. And at meetings, unless a speaker said something very specific on the question of self defence and arms, his message fell on deaf ears.

"Some ANC workers even became reluctant to come face-to-face with comrades from conflict-ridden areas. They had no answer to the demand for arms.... Instead people felt the ANC was displaying a political paralysis and had fallen prey to De Klerk's sweet talk."

—Work in Progress, September 1990

The imperialist press reports that the young "comrades" in the Vaal townships are saying, "Give us MK"—short for Umkonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the ANC's armed wing—and "Give us Hani."

Unlike many ANCers who after returning home have become the darlings of the white liberal cocktail circuit, Chris Hani, the MK chief of staff, has reportedly set up operations along with 2,000 fighters in the Transkei, where he is staying in the home of former chief Kaiser Matanzima. Some of his supporters refer to this as "the first liberated zone." The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (14 November) writes: "In his speeches, often entirely in Xhosa, for which he likes to show up in a camouflage jacket, he calls on his soldiers to 'stay in the trenches.'" But behind the militant rhetoric, what Hani is actually doing is setting up an ethnic-regional local power in the Transkei (where pro-apartheid elements just attempted a coup against the pro-ANC bantustan military rulers). Does Hani, the hero of the "young lions" in the townships, want to succeed Mandela at the head of the ANC by building a Xhosa tribal base in a dressed-up bantustan?

The danger of tribal war is real. In order to undercut the ANC, which sells its liberal program with appeals to "non-racial unity" across ethnic lines, the Inkatha squads surged out of mainly Zulu



"Hidden hand" of apartheid state behind the grisly slaughter aboard Johannesburg-Soweto commuter train, September 13.

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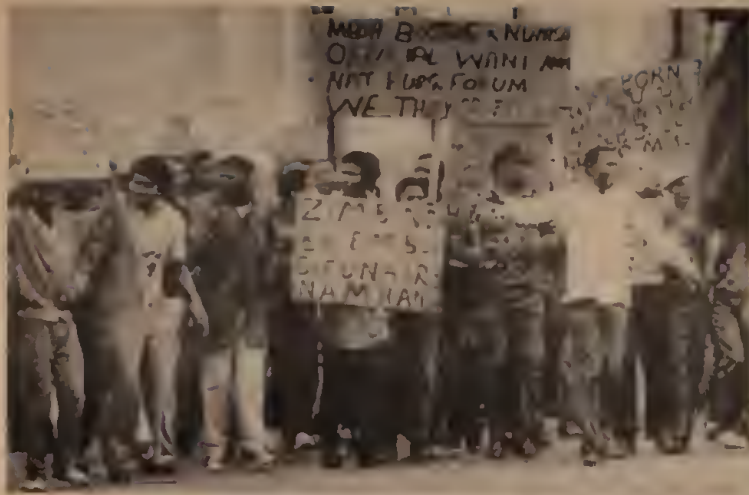
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Left: East London auto workers demonstrate in support of plant occupation. Right: CP leaders Joe Slovo (center) and NUMSA's Moses Mayekiso were brought in by Mercedes-Benz to squelch the strike.



Right: CP leaders Joe Slovo (center) and NUMSA's Moses Mayekiso were brought in by Mercedes-Benz to squelch the strike.

Mercedes-Benz South Africa

Sit-Down Strikers Raise Red Flag, CP Sells Them Out

When the South African Communist Party held its first public rally last July 29, African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela arrived at the stadium near Johannesburg in a bright red Mercedes 500 SE armored limousine. The car had been built for him specially by the workers at the Mercedes-Benz plant in East London. The red, they had said in presenting it to him, stood for the blood spilled in the freedom struggle and the "revolutionary alliance" of the ANC, the SACP and the COSATU trade-union federation.

Two weeks later, the workers at Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA) occupied the plant in a "sleep-in" strike and ran the ANC and SACP flags up the company flagpoles. Yet the ANC/SACP/COSATU alliance recoiled in horror, for the strike threw a giant wrench in their plans for industrial peace in a "post-apartheid" South Africa. At the company's request, SACP leader Joe Slovo and National Union of Metal Workers (NUMSA) general secretary Moses Mayekiso (also a top SACPer) flew to East London to tell the strikers to go back to work.

Strikebreaking on behalf of the "enlightened" apartheid bosses—the strike against Mercedes-Benz sums up in a nutshell what the negotiations are all about. It also threw South Africa's black union movement into turmoil, dramatically exposing the "revolutionary" pretensions of its leaders. And because of this, it was downplayed by pro-ANC media.

The Mercedes plant was one of the most militant factories in all of South Africa. In a marathon 1987 strike they won the highest wages in the auto industry. This gave the workers confidence and a sense of their strength. A spokesman for MBSA management said that "we have had a factory with worker control since 1987. Supervisors used to clock in and then lock themselves in their offices for the whole day. They didn't dare go out on the assembly lines."

Another MBSA executive complained that "a highly organized and politicized workforce with very skilled union leadership had in many respects taken control." Some workers even stood at assembly lines with mock AK-47s or bazookas strapped to their backs, as a "symbol of defiance and rejection of the company which many workers believed was merely an extension of the repressive apartheid structures." Mercedes-Benz was determined to smash this example of class-struggle militancy. And the ANC/

SACP/COSATU served as their instruments in disciplining the workers.

The strike was directed against the National Bargaining Forum, set up the year before by NUMSA and South Africa's auto manufacturers. In 1989, national bargaining had raised the minimum for auto workers to R5.50 an hour. However, for the traditionally militant Mercedes workers it brought nothing, as their wages were already above this minimum. For 1990 they demanded a R3-per-hour

23 stewards and was voted by a general union meeting on August 16. Two thousand of the factory's 3,500 workers began the sleep-in, replacing the Mercedes star with the red flag with the hammer and sickle.

Already on August 21, NUMSA leader Mayekiso spoke to the workers inside the plant, trying to get them to leave with promises that plant-level bargaining could take up some of their demands; on September 3, COSATU vice president



Black auto workers at Mercedes-Benz have been in the forefront of class struggle in South Africa.

raise above the national minimum. This was opposed by Mayekiso and the NUMSA tops.

The union leadership accused the Mercedes militants of "factory tribalism," abandoning "unity" with workers in other companies. This is a classic ploy of Stalinists and other reformists who call on the workers to "sacrifice" for the popular front. Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular in Chile accused copper miners of being "privileged" when they struck to defend their cost-of-living escalator. Now South African workers are being told to sacrifice even before the pop front is in office.

Extensive post-strike coverage of the struggle at Mercedes-Benz by the *South Africa Labour Bulletin* (November 1990) reports that the movement began among several shop stewards as they traveled to and from the SACP rally in Johannesburg. While apologists for the union tops try to blame it all on the "immature militancy" of a small minority, in fact the strike was supported by 18 out of the

John Gomomo and ANC leader Raymond Mhlaba (both SACP leaders) spoke with the shop stewards. But the strike continued, although the numbers inside the plant began to dwindle.

The company continued to hardline it, refusing to grant any increase and announcing that 538 hard-core strikers were fired. For support they went to ANC international director Thabo Mbeki, who went to the Communist Party. On September 20, Mayekiso and SACP general secretary Joe Slovo spoke to thousands of MBSA workers at a church meeting hall in the huge Mdantsane township.

Mayekiso warned of the danger of Mercedes pulling out of South Africa. Slovo backed the union tops, saying: "It is not a question of right and wrong, but of power, of being able to continue struggling and making advances." Yet it was the stab in the back by the ANC/SACP/COSATU leaders that sabotaged this struggle. But still the strikers held out until October 8.

In order to end the nine-week struggle

which caused them so much embarrassment, the NUMSA tops signed a groveling agreement pledging themselves to the "common objectives of industrial peace and stability," the "maintenance of acceptable work and behavior standards" and the "growth and viability of the company." The fired workers were out of the plant, and the union agreed to assign a top organizer to East London to keep the Mercedes workers in line. Instead of militant workers control, which represented dual power in the factory, the company and union intend to implement West German style "co-determination."

For years, the ANC/SACP was calling on the imperialists to impose economic "sanctions" on the apartheid regime, and on multinationals to shut down their South African operations. We warned against looking to international finance capital as saviors, and that "divestment" could sap the strength of the key force for freedom, the black proletariat, whose unions were strongest in foreign-owned plants like Mercedes. But now that the ANC and SACP see themselves "sharing power" they'll break strikes to keep the multinationals sweet.

The Mercedes strike showed in a microcosm what the ANC/SACP/COSATU negotiations with De Klerk for a "democratic" South Africa are all about. *South Africa Labour Bulletin* editor Karl von Holdt summed it up: the anti-apartheid forces are in effect "abandoning their call for disinvestment," and "these organizations are accepting that capitalists have an important and legitimate role to play in South Africa. They are also accepting that it is necessary to create conditions that capitalists will find acceptable."

In South Africa today the returning ANC leaders and nouveau riches in Soweto are notable for their predilection for Mercedes-Benz luxury automobiles. As a result, the nascent layer of well-off blacks who want to make it into the bourgeois class are popularly known as the tribe of the "WaBenzi." As class divisions sharpen, the WaBenzi join their capitalist masters in cracking down on the Mercedes-Benz workers.

Although the East London strikers were defeated, the black workers of South Africa are combative and restless. In the present situation, as reformists seek deals with the government and companies, strike struggles could spark a wave of worker insurgency throughout the country. The issue of proletarian revolution would be posed, what's needed is a revolutionary party to lead it to victory. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

ANC, Communist Party Seek to Repackage Apartheid

South Africa and Permanent Revolution

Nine months after the release of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela from apartheid prison, South Africa is at a decisive turning point. The imperialist media talk of "power sharing" between the white minority regime headed by Nationalist prime minister F.W. De Klerk and the ANC as leader of the oppressed black, coloured (mixed race) and Indian populations which constitute more than six-sevenths of the total. The *Economist* (3 November) publishes a special survey of South Africa titled, "After Apartheid." But while the name may change, what's being talked about is reforming and sprucing up the racist system. As constitutional commissions deliberate, there is bitter anger in black townships and factories against the mur-

PART ONE OF TWO

derous apartheid repression, and mounting disaffection with the ANC leaders accused of falling for De Klerk's honeyed words. Where is freedom, they demand, as the death tolls climb.

There can be no end to the system of apartheid slavery short of socialist revolution. Superexploitation of black labor is the bedrock on which South African capitalism has been built, and with it the whole edifice of white supremacy. Anything even approaching a minimum of bourgeois democracy (such as "one person, one vote") is incompatible with the continued existence of that social system. Fighting for the land which has been stolen from them, for the mines and factories which produce enormous wealth from their toil, South Africa's black masses sense this basic fact. But as the decisive hour approaches, the ANC leaders and the South African Communist Party are the greatest obstacles to black freedom, chaining the oppressed populations to the apartheid masters in a "popular front" alliance with De Klerk and the "verligte" (enlightened) capitalists. And now virtually every leftist and anti-apartheid organization seems to be falling into line behind this betrayal.

Desperately needed is a revolutionary leadership which can lead the oppressed

Smash Apartheid— Workers to Power!



Combative unionists demonstrate for Workers Charter, October 1990. Black proletariat must fight for its own class power!

masses in the factories, the townships and the hantustans in forging organs of dual power in the fight for a black-centered workers government in South Africa.

"People thought that Mandela's release was synonymous with freedom. But that has not occurred," said Lulamile Jojyasi,

an organizer of the militant South African Youth Congress in the Eastern Cape province. As tear gas lingered over Sebokeng township in the Vaal Reef in September, where soldiers opened fire on black youth, killing 36, one anti-apartheid fighter sighed, "I tell you, this is no life. It isn't what we expected a

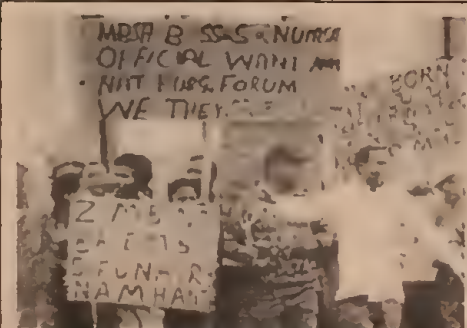
couple of months ago." In March, when cops massacred protesters in Schokeng, Mandela (temporarily) called off a meeting with De Klerk. This time the ANC leader met the minister of "law and order" and called their talk "extremely fruitful."

As a wave of shadowy terror swept through the Transvaal, leaving over 500 dead in a two-week period in August, Mandela "urged the government to use the full force of its security apparatus to end the violence" (*Johannesburg Star*, 12 September). "Mandela wants an iron fist. We're going to give an iron fist," said Major General Gerrit Erasmus, police commissioner in the Witwatersrand. "Operation Iron Fist" imposed virtual martial law on 27 black townships, surrounding them with razor wire and brutal police occupation. With the lid clamped on, De Klerk traveled to Washington where he stood at the Reflecting Pool with George Bush and obscenely declared solidarity with Martin Luther King's "dream."

In May the ANC and the Nationalist government held "talks about talks" at Groote Schuur. In August, Mandela signed the "Pretoria Minute" with De Klerk, agreeing to give up armed struggle in exchange for release of political prisoners. It was a one-sided "peace"; black townships were drenched in blood in the mysterious "Reef wars." As Inkatha terrorists of KwaZulu hantustan satrap Mangosuthu Buthelezi and their police protectors roamed with impunity. As for political prisoners, the government claimed there were a grand total of 40-50, while the families of over 3,000 jailed anti-apartheid fighters have yet to see their loved ones.

Meanwhile, to reassure the capitalist rulers, the ANC hacked off its long-held position for nationalization of the gold and diamond mines—the heart of South Africa's economy. But this is not enough for the capitalists. The *Economist* complains, "miners attend union meetings in military uniforms, armed with imitation AK-47s.... Production is disrupted by stayaways that have nothing to do with wage claims and everything to do with

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Mercedes-Benz South Africa

Sit-Down Strikers Raise Red Flag, CP Sells Them Out

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