

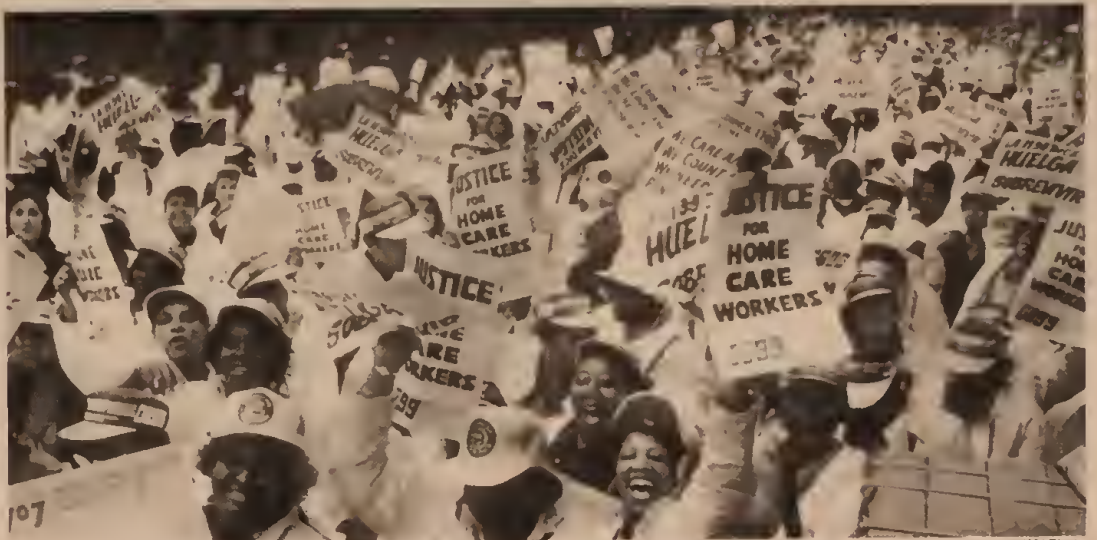
## Labor: Strike Against Cuomo, Dinkins, Wall Street!

# Budget Ax Murderers Go After NYC

### Pro-Dinkins Union Tops Sidetrack Fight

Squeezed from all sides, New York City has been spiraling downward into crisis. And now it's crunch time. The Wall Street banks want to unload their serious cash flow problems onto the state and city by jacking up their interest rates. Governor Cuomo, who's over \$6 billion in the red on the state budget, lambasted fellow Democrat Mayor Dinkins and won't pay \$600 million to NYC, exacerbating the city's "budget gap." Liberal Mario wants to keep his presidential contender status by acting as a fiscal conservative and demanding "sacrifices" from the unions as if he were Bush talking to Saddam Hussein. And to the more than 200,000 overwhelmingly black, Hispanic and Asian students at City University of New York, his message is: Drop Dead.

Instead they fought back. On April 8, students took over the main classroom building at City College in Harlem, starting a wave of occupations which spread



WV Photo

New York City, April 17—8,000 home care workers in one-day strike marched on World Trade Center. They were joined by CUNY students protesting cutbacks, tuition increases.

quickly across the five boroughs. At press time, in addition to CCNY, four other campuses were completely closed down: BMCC (lower Manhattan), Hostos (South Bronx), New York Tech (Brook-

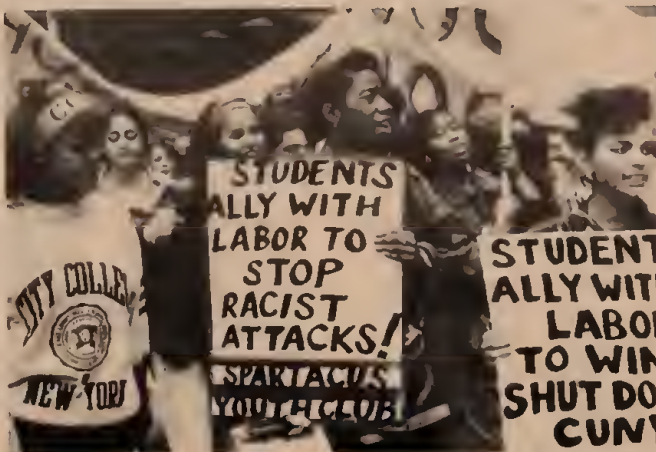
lyn), and York (Queens). Students were also barricaded in at eleven other schools including Hunter, La Guardia, Lehman and Queens colleges. They are protesting Cuomo's \$500 increase in tuition (on top

of a \$200 hike this year), which combined with a \$400 cutback in student loans almost doubles the cost of a school year. Effectively this spells the end of

*continued on page 4*

**Young  
Spartacus**

## CUNY Students Seize the Campuses



CUNY students on the march, April 17, against budget cutbacks that would purge campuses of minority and working-class students.

### Spartacists Demand: Cops Out! Open Admissions! No Tuition!

While Wall Street millionaires celebrate the stock market topping 3,000, working-class New York is fighting for survival. It's a tale of two cities—and at the forefront of the fight against the bankers' budget, Governor Cuomo's cuts and Mayor Dinkins' cops, are the working-class youth who've rocked the city with marches and building takeovers throughout the City University of New York (CUNY) system. We reprint here a leaflet issued on April 11 by the Spartacus Youth Club appealing for a common fight of city labor and CUNY students against the bosses.

Welcome to the "New World Order." Abroad, the U.S. massacres tens of thou-

sands of Iraqis. The LAPD brings the war machine home, showing on videotape the kind of brutal racist terror that is "business as usual" for the police in every barrio and ghetto across the USA. In New York City, Cuomo and Dinkins raise the budget ax like a guillotine over the heads of thousands of working-class youth. Let's be clear about this. Sticking up CUNY students for 1,000 bucks more per year is not a "tuition hike"—it's a deliberate racist purge!

The majority of working-class youth throughout the CUNY system are black and Hispanic. The government's message

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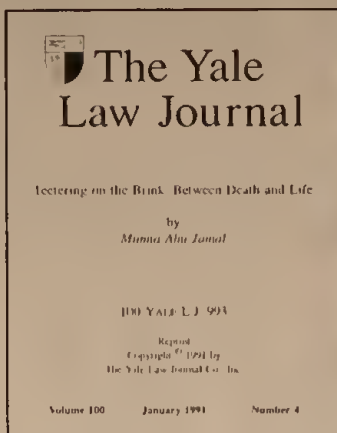


# Law Journal Publishes Mumia Abu-Jamal

In the infamous 1987 case of *McCleskey v. Kemp*, the U.S. Supreme Court explicitly endorsed the racist application of American capital punishment. Last week, when McCleskey brought a new petition before the court, over the violation of his Sixth Amendment right to counsel, Rehnquist & Co. used the opportunity to strike a deadly blow against appeals from death row. The court severely curtailed the right of defendants condemned to die to chal-

lenge the legality of their state convictions and sentences through *habeas corpus* appeals in the federal courts.

Incensed that *habeas* petitions result in some 40 percent of death sentences being overturned for constitutional errors, the court hopes to greatly speed up the execution process by limiting a death row inmate to only one shot in the federal courts. James Lee Richardson, Clarence Brandley and Ronald Monroe are just a few of those recently proven innocent



The case of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is becoming the rallying cry for all opponents of the death penalty.



Philadelphia Magazine

shortly before their scheduled executions. But to the Rehnquist court this is an "abuse of the writ."

To the rulers of this country the largely black and Hispanic prison population are non-persons—legally they are "civilly dead." For those on America's death rows awaiting the uncivil death of lethal injection, electrocution, gas or hanging, it's far worse than that. But from his cell in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal struck an important blow for them—and himself. The prestigious *Yale Law Journal* took the unprecedented step of publishing two essays authored by prisoners in its January 1991 issue.

Jamal's article, "Teetering on the Brink: Between Death and Life," describes the "netherworld of despair." Jamal writes of and for the "men and women who walk the razor's edge between half-life and certain death in thirty-four states or under the jurisdiction of the United States." It is a world where life "oscillates between the banal and the bizarre," so degrading in its conditions that even family visits "are an exercise in humiliation." For Jamal's fellow death row inmates, "the actual execution is a *fait accompli*, a formality already accomplished in spirit, where the state concludes its premeditated drama by putting the 'dead' to death a second time."

Jamal's appearance in this forum is a recognition that this accomplished journalist and death row commentator has become a symbol of the racist character of capital punishment U.S.A.

That same issue carried an article by Joseph Giarratano, the Virginia death row prisoner who has won national acclaim for his self-taught legal scholarship. Giarratano's death sentence was commuted just days before his scheduled execution, the result of a several-year publicity campaign.

Mumia Abu-Jamal's fight against racist "legal" lynching continues to win widespread recognition as the rallying cry against the racist death penalty. On April 19 James Herman, International president of the powerful ILWU West Coast longshore and warehouse union, wrote Governor Casey, "on behalf of the 50,000 members" of the union, "to express our strong opposition to the execution" of Jamal.

On March 6 Patrick Hooty Croy was sent back to a California prison to serve out a life sentence—for failing two urine tests! Croy, a Shasta Karuk Indian, already spent twelve years in prison, six on death row, before his acquittal last June in the shooting death of a drunken cop in Yreka, California.

Croy and his sister Norma Jean were framed up for surviving a vicious cop assault in July 1978. Twenty-seven cops wielding semi-automatic assault rifles, shotguns and .357 magnum pistols fired over 200 rounds at Patrick Croy and two

young relatives. Croy survived. But one drunken cop fell dead after putting two slugs in Croy's back at pointblank range. In 1985 the California Supreme Court reversed the murder conviction, but a conviction for conspiracy to commit murder was untouched.

Conceding that anti-Indian racism in and around Yreka was pervasive, the trial judge transferred the retrial to San Francisco. Last June a San Francisco jury, made up of several blacks and Hispanics, an Asian and a Guamanian, acquitted Patrick Croy of the murder charge, recognizing the truth of his "cultural defense" that centuries of racist terror against the Indian population of Northern California gave Croy a reasonable belief that the cop mob was out to kill him.

After Norma Jean Croy was denied parole, Patrick was sentenced to ten years' probation on the conspiracy charge. The terms of his probation required regular drug testing. After two urine samples turned up positive for marijuana, Placer County judge Gilbert ordered Patrick Croy sent back to prison for life. A hearing to reconsider the sentence is scheduled for April 30.

On April 19, the PDC sent a protest demanding Croy's immediate release, stating: "It is apparent to many observers that you wrongfully condemned Patrick Hooty Croy to life in prison because he had the audacity to defend against and to survive a massive police assault and then persuade a jury that he was innocent of any wrongdoing. Patrick Hooty Croy has committed no crime and his continued imprisonment stands as a graphic symbol of the racism, class bias and cruelty of 'law and order' in the U.S."

\* \* \*

For more information on the campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal contact the PDC. We encourage WV readers to continue to support and build the PDC. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■

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TROTSKY

## The Working Class, Achilles' Heel of U.S. Imperialism

In an orgy of imperialist triumphalism, George Bush called for resurrecting the "American Century" which was proclaimed when the U.S. emerged as the chief victor of World War II. The Soviet Union had borne the brunt of the fighting against the Nazis, and America's imperialist rivals were devastated. Today the American ruling class, intent on building a "New World Order" over the

corpses of more than 100,000 Iraqi men, women and children, has lost its economic hegemony. Speaking at a 1945 May Day rally, just as the United Nations was being founded in San Francisco, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon debunked the illusions of the imperialist rulers.

U.S. imperialism emerges from this war as the master of the world, and it seems to those who cannot see clearly that it is all-powerful. Some of the statesmen at Washington and their representatives in Frisco, and their generals and admirals on the battlefields and the high seas, deceive themselves in the effulgence of these great victories that have been produced as a result of the terrific preponderance of the American economy. They deceive themselves.

I do not think that America is all-powerful. Let us not make that mistake. The modern Rome, the master of the world, whose light-minded statesmen dream and even talk of dominating and exploiting and policing the world for one hundred years, has a cancer at its heart. But today they are the victors...

This is the revolutionary epoch and we, as the heralds of the revolution, have every right to confidence in the future. Power will decide it. The two greatest powers in the world today face each other on the continent of North America, in the United States of America which, as Trotsky once expressed it, is the foundry where the fate of mankind will be forged. Two powers face each other: one, the power of American imperialism, the present master of the world, and the other is a still greater, although not yet conscious power, the American proletariat, whose power is greater than that of American imperialism and greater than that of any force in the world, once it becomes conscious of its own social position and potentiality....

All the defeats of socialism, all of them, have been due solely to the lack of leadership. The task upon which the future of humanity depends is to create the leadership for the revolutionary struggle. That means, in one word, to create the revolutionary party....

To the robber League of Nations which they set up after the last world war, Lenin and Trotsky counterposed the Third International, the Comintern. To this new robber League of Nations which they are contriving at San Francisco now, we, the modern communists, the heirs of Lenin and Trotsky, counterpose the Fourth International.

—James P. Cannon, "The End of the War in Europe" (May 1945)



LENIN

# WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Poland:

## Spread Workers' Resistance Against Capitalist Attacks!

The following article was written by our comrades of the Spartakusowska Grupa Polski, sympathizing group of the International Communist League.

### Workers in Poland:

- Smash the fascists!
- Defend women's abortion rights!
- Oppose anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsy racism!
- Fight for revolutionary unity of Polish, German and Russian workers!

The Spartacists opposed capitalist restoration in Poland from the very beginning. Today workers in Poland are experiencing for themselves what introduction of capitalism means: misery and unemployment, attacks on women's abortion rights, growth of anti-Semitism and racism, growth of anti-Sovietism and fascism.

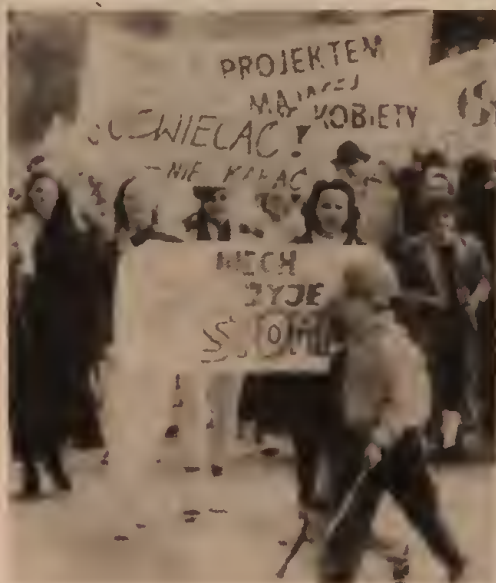
But the Polish workers have started to fight back against the "shock treatment" of the IMF and the German banks, imposed by the pro-capitalist Solidarność government. In the last weeks tens of thousands have come out to national demonstrations called by the former official Stalinist trade-union federation OPZZ, which is now the biggest union in Poland. The OPZZ leadership called these demos under the demands: stop unemployment; stop starvation wages and European prices; stop the closure of kindergartens, pharmacies, hospitals. The OPZZ is also agitating against a new tax on companies, which would lead to more unemployment. But they don't even have a single slogan against capitalist restoration.

It is not surprising that the leadership of OPZZ doesn't call upon workers to fight against pro-capitalist forces. During the presidential election in December last year they called to vote both for the Stalinist and for one of Solidarność candidates! They have organized the present demonstrations during the middle of the workday without calling the workers out on strike, in order to be able to

women, partly because the main industry in the area is textiles. Many groups of women workers, young and older, were the most spirited elements of the demo.

The Spartakusowska Grupa Polski marched with two placards: "SGP Founded—Build a Trotskyist Party—Against Capitalist Counterrevolution" and "Workers Must Mobilize to Defend Women's Abortion Rights." The com-

rades of the SGP attracted a lot of favorable notice and sold many copies of *Platforma Spartakusowców*. One woman came up to us because she particularly liked our slogan on abortion rights, saying that naturally she is against capitalism. A group of women shouted that the rents were now so high that they no longer even buy bread.



A Sokolowski

A high proportion of women work full-time, including in skilled trades and professions, very heavily in transport. The average wage is 700,000 zlotys per month (currently about US \$70). Equal pay for equal work is formally instituted, but women are overwhelmingly represented in less well-paid industries and jobs. Even before 1980 and increasingly now the life of peasant women is as deeply oppressed as in any undeveloped capitalist country. Only the formal gains (free legal abortion, etc.) helped to relieve the hardships of life for peasant women, and now even these are threatened.

In the countryside and small towns state-organized or even private childcare is almost nonexistent. In the large cities state-run childcare facilities are now charging prohibitive prices—in Warsaw, for example, as much as 500,000 zlotys per child per month, that is, about two-thirds of the average wage. Abortion is still one of the main methods of family planning in the country, where the level of sexual education is very low due to the activity of the powerful Catholic church. Only 11 percent of Polish women use modern contraceptives.

Attacks on the workers' demonstrations have begun. During the OPZZ demo in Lodz there was a road blockade against workers' buses, organized around the country by Rural Solidarność and announced on national radio. Toward the end of the demonstration in Lodz, as the demonstrators were herded together

times. The fascists pushed forward toward the president's office; nobody was doing anything against them. Spartacist comrades tried to organize other protesters and leftists to throw them out in a united action and make sure they would not try to threaten workers' demonstrations again. But there was criminal passivity on the part of the official organizers of the demo. One member of the Stalinist group Proletariat even responded to us that the police would take care of it!

Fascists are a deadly danger to the

workers movement. They must not be allowed to grow and recruit out of the desperate youth on the basis of poisonous Polish nationalism. We need united-front actions, based heavily on the working class, to smash the fascists! *Trybuna*, organ of the former Stalinist leadership in Poland which now calls itself Social Democrats (SDRP), reported on the fascist attacks by calling this scum a "little anti-protest group" who were not as loud as the demonstrators.

The Stalinist misleadership has no conception of fighting against the fascists, as they have no alternative to the pro-capitalist course of Solidarność. The workers need a real revolutionary party, a continuation of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. We say to the most conscious workers: We must forge a Trotskyist-Leninist revolutionary party!

This is what we are intervening for at the OPZZ demos, while most of the "left" in Poland hycott them in principle because they consider them Stalinist. We are fighting for workers' resistance against the ravages of capitalist



WV Photo

Women in Poland march against Solidarność government's attacks on abortion rights in 1990 (left); sign in background reads: "No to a law that makes an object of women!" In New York, Spartacists join protest against Lech Walesa outside Town Hall, March 25.



First Issue of the newspaper of the Spartakusowska Grupa Polski.

limit the number of workers based in from outside the cities and keep the demonstrations tightly controlled.

But the workers go into the streets and stay off work because they want to fight against poverty, the terrible conditions of their lives, and threats to their very livelihoods. In contrast to the OPZZ demo in Warsaw a few weeks ago, during the demo in Lodz on March 22 no Polish national flags were to be seen. The banners were "Support OPZZ" and signs from the individual factories. More than half of the 10,000 demonstrators were

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# NYC...

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open admissions, which is exactly what's intended.

There's a growing sense that the students' struggle and that of the workers are directly linked. The parents of these working-class kids, and they themselves, staff the city's hospitals, subways and welfare centers. When Local 1199 home care workers called a one-day strike April 17 on behalf of this terribly underpaid workforce of minority women, hundreds of CUNY students came out to a joint march and rally outside Cuomo's office in the World Trade Center. The Spartacus Youth Club carried a banner calling "For Open Admissions and Free Tuition! Students and Workers Unite! Strike Against Cutbacks and Layoffs!" It could happen here. A sign of community and labor support for the students was a leaflet by gypsy cab drivers saying:

"We hereby urge the CUNY authorities to stop the dangerous practice of calling the police to intimidate the students and we wish to remind them that just as students take buildings we the taxi drivers can jam traffic, bridges and tunnels."

At CCNY local gypsy cabbies, with whom students are in radio contact, have been keeping a lookout for cops around the campus.

## Unchain Labor's Muscle—Break with the Democrats!

An integrated labor-centered struggle against the cutback attacks is an urgent felt need in this city. The most powerful New York labor unions—transit, 1199 hospital workers, District 37 city workers—should use their muscle to shut down the city. The Spartacus Youth Club leaflet (see page 1) noted, "What we need is a demonstration of labor's power, like a one-day general strike involving private and public employees, CUNY and high school students." In the wake of the CUNY protests and the threat of massive layoffs, a mass labor demonstration has been called for April 30, the same day the Transport Workers Union (TWU) contract runs out. This should be the opportunity for a citywide strike.

But this will require a struggle against the union bureaucrats who tie labor to the Democrats in Gracie Mansion and Albany, who are sticking it to the unions. When a militant TWU member and supporter of the Spartacist League spoke from the floor at a community-labor forum sponsored by WBAI radio last week (see box above), calling for "some real strike action by the unions to defend ourselves...and to back up the CUNY students," AFSCME District Council 37 president Stanley Hill hid behind the anti-strike Taylor Law and sputtered about how Mayor Koch stood on the Brooklyn Bridge and told the unions to go to hell.

TWU chief Sonny Hall gets just as apoplectic as Hill whenever he hears the "s" word. But transit workers had better prepare to use their strike weapon at midnight April 30, or have management's truly "obscene" concession demands

# Transit Militant Calls for Strike Action

The following remarks were delivered at a forum against NYC budget cuts held on Tuesday, April 16 by the Community-Labor Coalition for Social & Economic Justice and WBAI Pacifica Radio, and broadcast two days later.

My name is Mary Jo Marino. I'm a longtime member of the Transport Workers Union Local 100, and I'm also a student at City College in the Bachelor of Technology program. One thing I want to say is that I think that the City College students are taking care of business right now, they're doing their bit. They took the campus, they're leading the protests, they're igniting CUNY. But the problem is that the unions, as far as I'm concerned, are not taking care of business.

The students by themselves have only so much power. The real power in this city—although many of us at City College, like myself, are the transit workers, are the hospital workers, are the teachers—is with the very people that make this city move. We can also make it come to a halt. And as far as I can see, all we're being offered by our labor leaders, including some of the brothers here, is the same old tired strategies: Go lobby Governor Cuomo! [laughter from audience] Go beg Washington to "change their priorities!"

Well, they had their priorities—they bombed Iraq back to a pre-industrial country, and murdered thousands of Iraqis, and set thousands of Kurds up

for slaughter—that's their priorities, they made that decision. We've got such problems here, like homelessness, like run-down neighborhoods, like our bridges falling down, like the schools being holding pens, like our hospitals, like our transit system. [Interjection: "We all know that."] Well, if we all know that, let's talk about how we're going to fight it.

What I feel is that we've got to have—not just resolutions—some real

strike action by the unions, to defend ourselves and our own livelihoods against the cuts we face, and to hack up the CUNY students. The brother talks about the Taylor Law—the Taylor Law was not handed down from the mount! [applause] That Taylor Law's a piece of paper, until the union leaders of this city bow down before it. The only strike that gets the Taylor Law invoked against it is a losing strike, and we could fight to win! [applause]



1980 NYC transit strike: Integrated labor movement has the social power to bring the city to a halt. What it needs is a fighting leadership.

shoved down their throats. The TA is demanding a three-year wage freeze, a six-tier wage scale starting at minimum wage for new hires, job cuts and more firings of provisionals. Meanwhile, safety conditions have gone to hell (seven transit workers killed on the tracks in just the last two years, not to mention hundreds of injuries). Militants in the TWU are calling for a mass meeting at the Felt Forum of Local 100 members to organize strike action, for elected strike committees that will fight to win, and for ripping up the Taylor Law.

After eleven years of big-mouthed racist pig Koch stoking the fires of race war in an increasingly polarized city, the ruling class felt they had to bring in a "healer" like Dinkins to cool things out. While Dinkins is a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, he was also a longstanding "responsible" member of the Board of Estimate, which was set up to handle "sensitive matters," like money, best not left to the scrutiny of elected bodies such as the city council, however impotent. A black mayor, they figured, would be better able to sell the "sacrifices" in store. "They'll take it from me," Dinkins told Wall Street contributors. Dinkins' campaign was the quintessential popular front: the union ranks worked the phone banks, and the banks reaped the benefit.

But now Dinkins' ruling-class backers are complaining that he's not tough enough, that the recent settlements with the teachers, the Teamsters and the city workers shows "weakness of will and a lack of decision" (*New York Times*, 12 March). Responding to these pressures, the city told bond agencies that labor was willing to defer contract gains. The union tops cried "liar." "This administration is going into the toilet," said Teamsters chief Barry Feinstein. "The head stinks," said Hill. Except it wasn't a lie—they had begun talks, they just wanted it kept secret from the members. A few days later Feinstein and Hill were at a party that raised \$800,000 for the mayor's reelection campaign.

Just another story about how the union tops party with the Democratic Party, just like Vic Gotbaum used to play ball (tennis) with top banker Felix Rohatyn, while Rohatyn was axing 60,000 city jobs and eating UFT pension funds for his power lunch. Nothing can be done in this city without breaking these ties that bind. And it's not just the "old guard." Up-and-coming labor leaders like 1199's Dennis Rivera may be more energetic (not hard to do—there has been no reported sign of life at Van Arsdale Jr.'s Central Labor Council for some years) and may even pull a strike now and then. But they are no less tied to the powers that be in NYC. Rivera was Dinkins' No. 1 union backer, and tries to get the reactionary Cardinal O'Connor to intervene in every strike that comes along.

What we urgently need is a leadership that will fight City Hall, and the State House, and the banks and the Democrats who swung the budget ax for Reagan and now Bush—a leadership that fights for a class-struggle workers party.

The crisis New York City faces is just a symptom of the far larger crisis of American capitalism. In the aftermath of the Gulf War, the U.S. economy continues to shrink as the number of jobless and homeless climbs. Not just Donald Trump, but the entire NYC real estate market has gone through the floor, leaving the banks with bad loans and the city with falling property revenues. After the S&L hasco, with insurance companies shaky and even the biggest banks tottering, Wall Street is putting the

screws to its biggest debtor. New York City, which "piles on more long-term debt in most years than any borrower other than the U.S. Government" (*New York Times*, 5 March), already owes \$22.4 billion to the banks. This means that 75 cents of every new dollar in city revenue is used to meet interest and principal payments to the banks!

When the banks suddenly declared that New York City was on the verge of "fiscal crisis," the powerful Moody's bond-ratings agency lowered the city's credit rating to the second-lowest investment grade—on a par with Cleveland! What this means is that the extra interest payments just shot up by another \$142 million. So now the city is throwing around numbers like 20,000 layoffs, and/or "furloughs" for the 243,000 municipal workers. To hell with their furloughs and layoffs and cutbacks. The working people should demand: not another red cent should be paid to the bloodsucking banks who bled the city dry 15 years ago.

The only answer the bureaucrats can give to the widespread attacks on the working class and poor minorities is "tax the rich!" Limiting their demands to what is "possible" under capitalism, the heads of these powerful unions impotently beg Cuomo for "a more progressive tax system" (*Village Voice*, 23 April). This is also the refrain of the so-called "socialists" who tail after the labor bureaucracy. At the rally for home health care workers, the Young Communist League carried a banner with the slogan "Tax the Rich!" while the Marxist-Leninist Party handed out a flier demanding "make the capitalists pay for the budget crisis!" How? "Tax the rich!" But everybody knows the rich don't pay taxes. It's the "little people" and working stiffs who are forced to pay taxes—they are deducted from their paychecks!

Besides, New York City already has one of the highest tax rates in the U.S. Although New York isn't simply expendable like East St. Louis or Philadelphia—cities that now resemble giant potholes—the rulers see a huge "underclass" which presents a storage problem. They can't simply send all immigrants back, or draft everyone into the army, and there aren't any jobs. The mess the economy is in has got a lot to do with



Cutbacks and cop terror: Ed Koch unleashed his cossacks against protesters in Harlem fighting closing of Sydenham Hospital in 1980.



# CUNY Students...

(continued from page 1)

to them is: "Hit the road, Jack. You're history." City College had a long history of free tuition, a school that was supposed to provide quality education for the working-class youth of this city. But the U.S. ruling class doesn't need or want educated youth anymore, especially not minorities. The greedy hoes have bankrupted the U.S. economy—who needs skilled labor if there's no jobs? Their policy is to let a whole generation of minority youth die on the ghetto streets or be used as cannon fodder for their wars.

How are we going to fight back? For starters, we need to consolidate and extend our protests to a system-wide strike that shuts down all of CUNY. Some students have expressed illusions that the administration is on our side—but the threats of suspensions, expulsions and a cop assault on our protests explode that myth. The Spartacus Youth Club says: *Abolish the administration and the board of trustees. For student/teacher/worker control of the university!* Education should be a right, not a privilege for the wealthy. To break down the race and class barriers to higher education we fight for open admissions and no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for students. Elite private universities should be nationalized to open the door to working-class youth.

But it's not true that "the students united will never be defeated." We surely appreciate Mike Tyson's support for us at Hunter College. But the real heavyweights that have to be brought into the ring are the powerful, integrated unions in this town. Our strength lies in our links to real working-class power. Many of us study at CCNY and keep the trains moving in this city—literally—as transit workers. Our parents (and many of us) are 1199 hospital workers and nurses, AFT schoolteachers, Teamsters, state and municipal employees organized by AFSCME, sanitation workers, firefighters. This is what moves New York City—the financial and cultural center of the country. And this is the power that could bring it to a halt in militant strike action.

To fight back we need to organize militant class struggle—demonstrations and marches of students and labor against our common enemy. Members of 1199 and public employees unions have spoken at CCNY rallies and pledged support. We need to appeal to these militants for a united struggle. There's



Spartacus Youth Club fights for free quality higher education for all, calling for a system-wide strike to shut down all of CUNY.

talk now of a big labor demonstration. City workers are ready and willing to fight: thousands came out to back the *Daily News* strike. What we need is a demonstration of labor's power, like a one-day general strike involving private and public employees, CUNY and high school students. The biggest obstacle to this is the AFL-CIO bureaucrats who only care about their dues base and work hand in glove with the Democrats they got elected to rule this town on behalf of the bankers. But the unions themselves represent the unity of the multi-ethnic working class and many militants see the writing on the wall: fight or starve.

We students need a common front with labor—now. The same bastards that are ripping up our right to an education are destroying our families' livelihoods and slashing social services. City unionists face imminent massive layoffs, firings, wage freezes, and takebacks like the outrageous theft of the teachers' paltry raises, while the Wall Street bankers rake in the interest payments. Who's dishing out the punishment? It's not just Bush and the Reaganites—here it's the "liberal" Democrats, Cuomo and Dinkins. There's a lesson in this—it's a whole rotten system of capitalist exploitation and racism. What we need is a class-struggle workers party, one that doesn't "respect" the property values of the bourgeoisie, a party that says to the exploited and oppressed: we want all of it, it ought to be ours, so don't beg, take it.

The only thing the bosses are pouring money into in this town is more cops—like the bunch who killed Freddy Pereira, Michael Stewart, Eleanor Bumpurs, and too many others. The capitalists want a solid blue line of racist police terror to

enforce their class interests and killer cuts on working people. They build prisons, gut Harlem Hospital and throw thousands of us out of school. The battle cry of the Spanish fascists was, "Down with Intelligence. Long Live Death!" This government wants to accomplish the same thing with an adding machine, but frankly, their computer chips have gone haywire. They're spending over \$43,000 a year per prisoner just to keep people locked up—a stark example of the waste and irrationality of capitalism. We fight for a society with jobs and education for all!

It's not a question of lobbying Albany or Washington to reshuffle their investments and priorities—as implied in the dumb chant, "Money for (fill in the blank), not for war." The bosses' government is not "our" state but an instrument for the class rule of the capitalist exploiters. One of the first American casualties of the U.S. war against Iraq was Ismael Cotto, a Puerto Rican youth and former CCNY student. His sister Maria asked the bitter, hard questions: "Why are they spending all this money on this stupid war?... Why aren't they spending it on the children, on the schools, on housing, on factories?... I saw them on Wall Street and they were cheering! It was sick.... Don't they know that it means people will die? Not them. Not their families. Not their kids. People like my brother" (*New York Post*, 2 February).

Death is the only "growth industry" of this sick capitalist economy. The U.S. has spent billions on defense to "roll back Communism" and arm the contra scum from Nicaragua to Afghanistan. America's rulers are emboldened by

the terminal crisis of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Gorbachev rolls over and Bush murders 100,000 Iraqis. "Democracy." "Self-determination"? Tell it to the Kurds and the Palestinian workers now being expelled from Kuwait! While trumpeting "the end of the Cold War," Bush and the Democrats launched a hot war to seize the oil wealth and stick it to their economically more dynamic rivals, Germany and Japan.

Many CUNY students recognized that their war was here at home. On February 21, as part of a national day of protest, CUNY students marched on Wall Street and asked that the Spartacus Youth Club banner declaring "Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!" lead the march. We fought for labor political strikes against the war. Other ostensible "socialists" wrapped themselves in yellow ribbons and the American flag under which the imperialists rained death on Iraq.

The government, the preachers and do-nothing demagogues like Farrakhan like to blame black youth in particular for their own oppression and everything else that's rotten in this society. The way we see it, if the government and this system can't even provide an adequate and complete public education to its youth, then we better get a new system, not a new youth. The crucial task is to forge a revolutionary leadership.

We need a socialist revolution to rip the wealth of this country out of the hands of the exploiters so we can begin to build a planned, socialist, egalitarian society on an international scale. Winning students and youth to this struggle is what the Trotskyist Spartacus Youth Club is all about. Join us! ■

the huge military machine which murdered tens of thousands of Iraqis while sucking up hundreds of billions of dollars annually. The racist imperialist ruling class of this country is not about to "restructure its priorities" and cease to be the enemy of the working class and the oppressed peoples of the world. Talk of a "peace dividend" or "money for schools, not for war" is just as utopian as "tax the rich!" Under capitalism, there is no solution to the crisis of capitalism. You've got to expropriate industry and the banks, seize the wealth, take the power!

## For Open Admissions—No Tuition!

The hard-won gain of open admissions at CUNY, achieved after the radical struggles of the 1960s, is under attack. The *New York Times* (15 April) asked: "will the financially beleaguered university be able to sustain its historical mission of offering a way out of poverty for the children of immigrants and minorities, low-wage workers and the poor?" Not if Chancellor Ann Reynolds has her way. She was brought to CUNY from California State University to spearhead an assault on open admissions.

The *Times* article, headlined, "At Heart of Protest at CUNY, Its Role in Educating the Poor," for once accurately spelled out the many-pronged attack: tuition hikes, slashing student loans, "tougher admissions requirements," administrative harassment, and \$92 million of budget cuts targeting such programs as tutoring and counseling. The article admits the city and state are "afraid of the political consequences of explicitly curtailing open admissions."

CUNY's traditional no-tuition policy lasted from the time the system was founded in 1848 until 1976, when a fee of \$925 was imposed. The first year that tuition was imposed, enrollment fell by 75,000 students, and that's exactly what they expect and intend to happen this time. One student from Harlem exclaimed, "If this goes through, I'll be in a supermarket for the rest of my life" (*Village Voice*, 23 April). Actually, he'll be lucky to get even a McJob. And college graduates are finding it the worst job market in a decade, or more.

On the CUNY student demonstrations, there's been talk of joining the '60s with the '90s. But the present protests are not a product of a general radicalization, but a desperate response of minority and

poor students with their backs to the wall. Many have been pretty career oriented and at most campuses, the sit-ins are being monopolized by junior bureaucrats of the student government.

On more than one occasion, these unelected "delegates" and self-appointed censors have tried to exclude "unauthorized" speakers, "non-CUNY" banners, and so forth. These exclusionist practices and political narrowness have limited the protests, rather than drawing in the masses of students and others who support the struggle. At Columbia University in 1968, the whole community showed up in Morningside Heights, and there was an open mike. Thousands stood outside the occupied buildings as a buffer between the NYPD and the students inside.

The New York Spartacus Youth Club has actively participated in the CUNY protests: doing guard duty in building occupations, speaking at rallies, marching forthrightly under our own banners that call for joining the struggles with the power of the labor movement. Unlike the wishy-washy left that's gone along with the exclusionist garbage by hiding their ostensible politics and party affiliations, and even joining in the red-baiting, we're

not ashamed of our politics. And we're getting a good response.

As we go to press, CUNY students have occupied the campuses for over two weeks. Injunctions against students at BMCC and Bronx Community College to vacate the buildings or face arrest have already run out. Even if the protesters do give up, they still face suspension and possible expulsion from school. Many students are immigrants from countries like Haiti and El Salvador—for them expulsion could mean deportation. We demand: Cops off campus, no reprisals!

Right now many of the CUNY protesters' political vision may be pretty narrow. But don't forget the old adage that there's more education at the end of a cop's nightstick than in years of sitting in musty lecture halls. CUNY students are learning enormous amounts about struggle through struggle, and they're right on the cutting edge of the fight for black, Hispanic and working-class New York. And don't forget—in Paris in 1968, it was the students' struggles which spread to the working class and touched off a general strike and brought France to the edge of revolution. We need some of that here. ■



# Divorce Italian Style

In early February, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) said its final goodbye to even the name of communism, having in practice already abandoned the revolutionary program in favor of reformism more than half a century ago. In November 1989, following the opening of the Berlin Wall, party leader Achille Occhetto called for replacing the PCI with a "broader" left party. The project, for lack of name, was known as "la Cosa" (the thing). Any identification not only with Leninism but also with Marxism was to be discarded, as well as (following the Gorbachev line to its conclusion) the class struggle per se. Now the Congress in Rimini decided that henceforth it would be known as the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), its symbol an oak tree growing out of a hammer and sickle.

But many in and around the ex-PCI are determined to hold on to the name "Communist." At Rimini, the group of those dead set against the change to PDS walked out and announced the birth of a new movement for "Rifondazione Comunista." The "refounders" of the PCI are already claiming a membership of 125,000, and held a mass meeting in Rome on February 10 with buses coming from all over Italy. As over 5,000 people jammed into a theater and hundreds more stood outside in the street in intermittent rain, the atmosphere was one of anger, pride and defiance. Every 15 minutes or so the crowd would burst into the traditional workers songs of the Resistance, singing loudly with fists in the air. At one point a hundred people arrived carrying a huge (1,500 square meter) red communist flag.

They were happy to be rid of the rightist elements in the PDS, and many have illusions that they can finally do something now. But Rifondazione Comunista is led by Stalinist bureaucrats who have in no way broken with the reformism of the old PCI. Its parliamentary leaders are Armando Cossutta, who now heads a fraction of eleven senators, and deputy Sergio Garavini, Garavini, who gave the keynote address at the Rome meeting, is a former leader of the PCI-dominated CGIL union federation and a real "labor lieutenant of capital." Cossutta was the veteran "pro-Soviet" leader of the party, who for more than a decade was in impotent opposition to the "Eurocommunist" line of Enrico Berlinguer and his successor Occhetto. Neither Cossutta nor Garavini ever opposed the PCI's domestic policies of class collaboration.

Meanwhile, far from attracting an influx of unaffiliated leftists, the PDS has been rent by internal squabbling and hemorrhaging. The ultra-reformist section around Giorgio Napolitano would like to unify with the Socialist Party (PSI) of Bettino Craxi, a cynical power politician unaffectionately nicknamed "Benito" (after Mussolini) who wants to dominate a left coalition with the remnants of the PCI firmly under his heel. With Napolitano and a tame "left" around Pietro Ingrao joining forces, Occhetto was not even able to get renominated as general secretary until a hastily called second

The war on Iraq provided an x-ray of the differences within the now-ex-PCI, and their limited scope. Last August, the party supported "sanctions" (the U.S. hlockade of Iraq covered with the fig leaf of the UN) and abstained on the Italian government's sending of warships to the Persian Gulf. This tacitly pro-American policy was not popular with the PCI's working-class base, and as bombs started falling on Baghdad in January there were widespread strikes and walkouts. So on the eve of the Rimini Congress, in order to steal a march on the left, Occhetto appealed for a cease-fire, called on the

state to arbitrate over who has the "copy-right" to the hammer and sickle! RC's reference point is the traditional PCI: thus Cossutta constantly refers to the policies of Togliatti, and at a March 16 RC meeting in Bologna Garavini continuously praised Berlinguer. Their commitment to popular-frontism was underscored by the adhesion of Christian Democratic (DC) senator Maria Fida Moro, daughter of former premier Aldo Moro, who is bitter that the DC didn't make a deal with the Red Brigades to free her father because it feared he would bring the PCI into the government.

Yet Rifondazione is a heterogeneous formation, with old Stalinist warhorses as well as former "kabalists" who supported Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, metal workers chafing at the sellout policies of the CGIL bureaucrats, and younger would-be communists whose hands are not dirty with past betrayals. At the Bologna meeting there were hundreds of young people who are rebelling against the status quo that includes a city government which the ex-PCI ran for decades. And at a national RC youth meeting in Rome on April 14 there was considerable interest in our pamphlet, just out in Italian, "Trotskyism: What It Isn't and What It Is." Many were surprised to learn that the LTD'I, unlike the gaggle of pseudo-Trotskyist anti-Soviet groups in Italy, defended the Soviet Union over Afghanistan and opposed Polish Solidarność, the "union" for the Frankfurt bankers and CIA blessed by the Pope and paid for with money from the Vatican bank.

The various fake Trotskyists are busily deciding which force to tail after. Falce Martello ("Hammer and Sickle") of the British-based Militant tendency has evidently decided to go after the left wing of the PDS. The supporters of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat around Livio Maitan had already liquidated themselves into Democrazia Proletaria, where they have been caught up in the usual internal maneuvering. DP, in turn, has offered to give up its organizational identity and "flow into the new PCI," that is, "so long as it isn't a little PCI." Garavini wasn't interested—but who knows, maybe if the Manifesto group comes in on the deal things will change. As the opportunist carousel turns: they're all assessing their options, talking of their respective "policies of alliances." In contrast, the LTD'I is aggressively approaching with the program of authentic Trotskyism and Leninism those attracted by Rifondazione Comunista.

Of all the West European CPs the PCI was at the forefront in a nationalist break with Moscow, from Togliatti's Testament to Berlinguer coining "Eurocommunism" in 1975. Today Occhetto & Co. are desperate to break out of the political ghetto in which they have been confined for over 40 years. But no amount of selling out will make them *ministrabile* (eligible to be ministers). While the spectacle of 50 cabinets since WWII gives the impression of bourgeois instability, this game of musical chairs masks the underlying stability: three decades of Christian Democratic rule, followed by the "center-left" *pentapartito* (five-sided party) centered on the DC and PSI in power since 1981. And one thing they all agree upon is: anything that smacks of "communism" must be kept out at all costs.

The death-rebirth of the PCI takes place against the backdrop of the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe and

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PDS leader Achille Occhetto with eco-friendly party symbol.

session of the congress a week later. Since then the former followers of the II Manifesto/PDUP (Party of Proletarian Unity) have walked out of the PDS.

The search for a "popular front" alliance with sections of the bourgeoisie didn't begin with Berlinguer's forlorn attempt at a "historic compromise" with Christian Democracy, the perennial ruling party of postwar Italian capitalism. All wings of the ex-PCI bureaucracy look back to the end of World War II when the Stalinists headed off proletarian revolution in order to establish the capitalist republic on the ruins of the fascist regime of Mussolini and the monarchy. In the late 1970s, the PCI's popular-front program of class betrayal was expressed in the "anti-terrorist" witchhunt against leftist militants. And for years, whether as Moscow-loyal Stalinists or "Euros," the PCI has headed off powerful strikes by Italy's militant working class.

government to withdraw the ships and praised the Pope's "peace" oratory (which became the theme of *l'Unità*). The PDS right wing, meanwhile, openly supported Italian participation in the war.

And Rifondazione Comunista? Speaking at Rimini before the split, Cossutta denounced the "infernal war machine" unleashed by the U.S., and noted that Bush's objectives were "to consolidate American hegemony throughout the region, including by war, and worldwide as well in the conflict-competition with European and Japanese interests, and to give a further blow to the remaining international prestige of the USSR." He even made a nod toward a "great national strike" against the war. Yet leader Garavini declared that the war undercut Occhetto's "post-Cold War" justifications for abandoning the name of the PCI, but called for "political and economic measures to force Saddam to respect the sovereignty of Kuwait."

Cossutta bellows at a meeting of his comrades that "communism is in our view the loftiest horizon of human freedom." The crowd responds: well roared, lion. But none of the would-be "refounders of communism" dared to call for defense of Iraq against imperialist attack, as our comrades of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia (LTD'I) did. This is an elementary duty for Leninists. Writing on "The Tasks of the Third International" (July 1919), Lenin insisted: "There must be no toleration of the verbal condemnation of imperialism while no real revolutionary struggle is waged for the liberation of the colonies (and dependent nations) from one's own imperialist bourgeoisie." This was made explicit in the "21 Conditions" for admission to the Comintern.

Rifondazione Comunista (RC) did not seek to break with the Occhettos and Napolitanos. Up to the last minute they begged for a "federative pact" with the PDS rather than a split. Moreover, these self-proclaimed "communists" are taking the PDS to court, asking the capitalist

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# When the PCI Sold Out Revolution



Storia Illustrata

## Resistance and Betrayal

The leadership of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) decided last February, in what was no doubt its first honest statement in decades, that it no longer pretended to be "Communist." Two-thirds of the delegates to the party's 21st Congress voted in favor of changing the party's name to Democratic Party of the Left. However, a minority walked out to form a movement for "refounding communism." Rifondazione Comunista looks to the traditions of the PCI for its inspiration, particularly the halcyon days of the *Resistenza*. A national congress of the new grouping was initially scheduled for April 25, Liberation Day, commemorating the 1945 insurrection which finished off fascist rule. And speaking at the PCI congress, Senator Armando Cossutta, the senior leader of Rifondazione, declared: "I have been in the Party since 1943, I have dedicated my life to this Party, from jail to the *Resistenza* to the infinite battles of almost half a century...."

The mystique of the Resistance has long inspired the ranks of the PCI. However squalid the party's subsequent sell-outs, militants could look back to the days when they or their parents fought fascism, arms in hand. But the bitter reality is that the heroic fighters of the *Resistenza* were sold out by the PCI leadership, on orders from Stalin who confirmed at Yalta in 1945 that Italy would belong to the Western sphere of influence. When Cossutta went into opposition to the PCI leadership's "ripping away" from the Soviet Union, over Poland and Afghanistan, he yearned for "the possibility, which was contemplated by Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta, of continuing the wartime alliance between the two countries in an alliance of peace" through "the efforts and the cooperation of the two leading powers" (*Lo strappo* [1982]). Yet the goal of that "alliance" and "cooperation" was the prevention of proletarian revolution in the West.

The heritage of the PCI is that of class collaboration. And the treacherous consequences are nowhere clearer than in the defeat of the revolutionary wave which swept Italy at the close of World War II. The upsurge in Italy which opened in 1943 and culminated two years later in the spring of 1945 was one of the most powerful demonstrations of working-class power since the revolution in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Against hideous repression the workers of Italy's northern industrial cities repeatedly launched gigantic strike movements. Yet the enormous possibilities opened up by these struggles were derailed by the leaders of the PCI in the name of popular-front "unity" with the class enemy. Would-be communist militants who seriously wish to probe the roots of the crisis of Stalinism must address this history which



Alfred Bowman

## Italy 1943-45

**Top: Fall 1943, partisan fighters take up arms against fascist regime. Above: The revolution strangled, spring 1945. Following orders from U.S. Army, Stalinist leaders organized "victory celebration" which ended with disarming of partisans.**

the Stalinists have sought to bury under mountains of lies and self-serving myths.

In March, August and November-December 1943 powerful strikes, centered on the industrial triangle of Milano-Torino-Genova, shook the country. Then in March 1944 northern Italy exploded in the largest strike to take place in German-occupied Europe. Millions of workers stopped work and brought the country to a standstill. Thousands were deported to German death camps. Hundreds of workers were shot in the streets and by fascist firing squads. Yet the strikes continued in the face of Nazi repression. The culmination of the revolutionary upsurge occurred in April-May 1945 when, as the imminent German defeat became apparent, the population of northern Italy rose in a mass insurrection. Partisan guerrilla detachments wiped out the remnants of the Italian fascist regime and drove the German army from the industrial cities.

As the Allied armies rushed north to restore bourgeois "order," the armed working population turned its wrath upon the despised fascist regime at its roots. As James P. Cannon, leader of the American Trotskyists, said in a speech on May Day 1945 (shortly after being released from prison where he and 17 comrades were jailed for opposing the imperialist war): "The European revolutions—we have seen the beginning of them in Italy.... We saw what the workers of Milan have done in the past week. After more than twenty years of fascist degradation, imprisonment, concentration camps, violence, and death, they rose up as the only power in the country and hung Mussolini by his heels from the side of a gas station."

The explosion of working-class power which shook Italy in the spring of 1945 could have been the opening salvo in sparking a European socialist revolution.

Instead, the popular-front coalition of Stalinists, social democrats and bourgeois liberals, which found itself holding the power which the insurgent masses had wrenched from the fascists and Nazis, promptly handed it over like a hot potato to the Allied military commanders and their quisling government in Rome. The Stalinists and other reformist working-class leaders worked overtime to dam the flood of revolution, disarm the workers and partisan fighters, and liquidate the factory committees. Only with their indispensable assistance was the bourgeoisie able to reconsolidate the capitalist order by integrating the very fascist scum who had faithfully served under Mussolini.

The disarming of the partisans and their bitter disillusion, evoked in Bertolucci's film *1900*, are familiar images. Less well known is how the Stalinist leaders prostrated themselves before the Allied military commanders in carrying out this cynical maneuver. The U.S. Army had this to say about the organization of the victory "celebrations":

"It is preferable that these should not appear as held by Allied order but rather as the expression of the Partisans' own wishes...."

"The parade should be conducted with as much ceremony as possible—advance publicity, flags, band and speakers will all add to its effect...."

"The Partisans should participate in making the arrangements and at the conclusion of the parade should march, preferably by sub-units, to an appointed dumping place where their arms will be handed over."

—Harry Coles and Albert Weinberg, *The United States Army in World War II* (1964)

As we shall see, the partisan leaders right up to the top carried out the orders of the U.S. Army. PCI general secretary Palmiro Togliatti, who has lately been demonized by the Italian right wing (with help from Occhetto & Co.) and lauded by PCI lefts, noted in his report to the party congress in December 1945 that it "united" with the other parties in an agreement that "calls for the disarming of all, and we were the first to carry it out...."

### The Italian Revolution and the Popular Front

The Stalinists sacrificed the Italian revolution on the altar of the popular front. This policy of forming class-collaborationist alliances with sections of the bourgeoisie was embraced by Stalin in the mid-1930s. It was endorsed at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in 1935, at which Ercoli (Togliatti) gave one of the main reports. It was carried out in France, where the popular-front government smashed the 1936 general strike, fired on anti-fascist workers in Clichy in 1937, and crushed

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# Italy 1943-45...

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organizations struggling for the liberation of the colonies. The most dramatic demonstration of the counterrevolutionary nature of the popular front was in Spain where, in the interests of "unity" with the bourgeoisie, the Stalinists crushed the social revolution and murdered leftists—whom they indiscriminately labeled "Trotskyist."

Thousands of CP supporters and other militants from around the world, among them numerous Italians, fought valiantly in Spain against the Francoists. The slogan of the Garibaldi Brigades was "Today in Spain, tomorrow in Italy." But for the Stalinist leaders this had a grotesque meaning. Togliatti was a high Comintern agent in Spain, and participated in the April 1937 Paris meeting where it was decided to intensify the "struggle against Trotskyism" with GPU methods. This was followed shortly by the crushing of the Barcelona May Days workers revolt and the assassination of scores of leftists, including Andrés Nin, leader of the centrist POUM. Also active in Spain were Luigi Longo (Gallo), inspector general of the International Brigades, who was later a top leader of the Italian *Resistenza*; and Vittorio Vidali (Carlos Contreras), head of the Fifth Brigade and one of the bloodiest butchers of leftists, who after WWII became PCI leader in Trieste.

In Spain the popular front called for "unity" with the "democratic" bourgeoisie; in Italy they joined together with top fascists in the name of anti-German unity. A revolutionary crisis broke out in the spring of 1943, when Italian defeats in North Africa and Red Army advances in Stalingrad gave workers and peasants a sense of imminent collapse of the fascist regime and an end to the war. In March workers in the industrial centers went on strike and staged huge demonstrations. Southern Italy was swept by

the workers' determination to sweep away the monarchy and put an end to the capitalist system which had spawned the fascist regime and brought the horrors of war. The revolutionary conflagration was checked only by the swift occupation of northern Italy in August by the Germans. And the Allies...extended class solidarity to the Nazis! The American Trotskyists reported an interview with the liberal Gaetano Salvemini:

"America sent bombers to bomb the people of Milan, Genoa, Turin in August to smash the revolution. There were demonstrations in the streets, but instead of bombing the Brenner Pass, through which the German army was pouring in, America bombed the Italians."

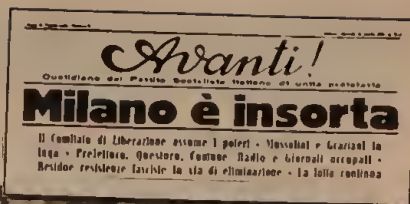
—quoted in *Fourth International*, April 1944

However, there was no decisive test of strength between the workers and their oppressors; the revolutionary wave was checked but not crushed.

On September 8 the armistice was announced between Italy and the Allies, as Badoglio, the king and their rudimentary government fled to the Allied camp. For the American and British military commanders, the problem as their armies marched up the peninsula was to reconstruct and stabilize the tottering capitalist order while bridling the growing mass movement. After two decades of supporting and participating in the corrupt fascist regime, the Italian capitalists and landlords, the monarchy and the brass hats, the church hierarchy and the Vatican, all had thoroughly discredited themselves in the eyes of the masses. Many were fooled at first, however, by the "democratic" imperialists who professed aims of "liberation." The Allies took advantage of these illusions to impose upon the Italian people the self-same criminals who had been the bedrock of the fascist regime.

In order to foist this hoax on the Italian working people, the Allied authorities were seconded by a six-party popular front, an alliance between the PCI, the Socialists and the liberal bourgeoisie. The Stalinists were a key bulwark in this counterrevolutionary alliance because they retained a mass following and could

April 1945: "Milano Has Arisen!" Tram workers (below) in Milano general strike. Mass insurrection in northern Italy brought down fascist order, but Stalinists headed off proletarian revolution.



A. Mondadori

him. Historian Paolo Spriano in his five-volume *Storia del Partito comunista italiano* (1967-1973) writes: "The 'National Committee of Anti-Fascist Currents,' later 'Central Committee of the Opposition,' or again 'of the Anti-Fascist Forces,' thus renounced, for the moment, calling for the constitution of a democratic government or an early armistice." PCI leader Giorgio Amendola justified this, saying "the situation wasn't easy" because "the king and Badoglio still enjoyed wide popularity." And when the August strikes flared up, demanding immediate peace, release of political prisoners and removal of fascists from industry, facing German machine guns and Allied bombs, the PCI sent a delegate (Giovanni Roveda) on a mission of the fascist Badoglio government to Torino to get the strikes called off (Charles Delzell, *Mussolini's Enemies* [1961]).

## The State and Counterrevolution

Despite Badoglio's promise to include Bonomi and other "opposition" politicians in his government, the formation of a coalition regime floundered on the refusal of the king, hated symbol of the fascist regime, to abdicate. The deadlock was broken when Togliatti returned from exile in Moscow in March 1944 and declared the PCI's willingness to enter the Badoglio government regardless of whether King Vittorio Emanuele III stayed on the throne. The Stalinists thus sought to provide the reactionary regime of the marshal and the king with a basis of popular support which the Allies were unable to provide. As the other parties of the popular front, rebaptized the Committee of National Liberation (CLN), followed suit and entered Badoglio's cabinet, Italian working people found themselves ruled by a truly unholy "popular front" of Stalinists, social democrats, liberals, monarchists and luminaries of the fascist regime, supported by American bayonets.

On 29 March 1944, Togliatti met with party leaders in the south, calling for "postponement of the problem of institutions until it was possible to call the constituent assembly"—i.e., not challenging the monarchy until after the war—and in the meantime setting up a "government of national unity." In his April 11 speech to the cadres of Naples, he declared that the party's objective, "after the war," was that of "creating in Italy a democratic and progressive regime"—i.e., no revolution. The PCI's abject pledge of fealty to the hated monarch provoked a deep malaise in the

party, especially in Milano and other cities of the industrial north. Longo dissented, saying that "we recognized that one could collaborate militarily with Badoglio, but denied that one could also collaborate politically." In the ranks the reaction was far sharper:

"An informational report from Milano, dated 15 December 1944, referring to meetings with factory cells, underlined that 'there is little enthusiasm for progressive democracy,' and also: 'this formula has been met with diffidence among some comrades who see in it a subterfuge for the bourgeoisie to repulse the fighting proletariat.... Our clarifications...do not convince them.... They think that civil war is necessary to achieve our aims'."

—*Rivista di storia contemporanea*, October 1974

A whole mythology has arisen which presents the PCI's entry into the Badoglio cabinet as a *svolta* (turn) which supposedly represented a break with the PCI's past positions. In reality, Togliatti's position (which followed the Kremlin's recognition of the Badoglio government) was firmly in the tradition of the popular front. The PCI's capitulation before Badoglio had been prepared by months of bartering on the question of the monarchy. After first demanding the abdication of the king and Crown Prince Umberto, the CLN leadership then accepted the prince, pleading with Allied military commanders that if it accepted anything less it would "see itself disavowed...by its supporters" (*Foreign Relations of the U.S.*, 1944, Vol. 3). It was finally agreed that the king would "retire" in favor of the prince. All the new cabinet ministers, including Togliatti, pledged to uphold this arrangement until the end of the war.

Following the logic of the popular front, in World War II the Stalinists in the "democratic" imperialist countries lined up in support of their "own" imperialism against Nazi Germany. The Trotskyists, in contrast, waged revolutionary opposition against the imperialist war, while steadfastly defending the Soviet Union against imperialist attack (including sending many of their American seaman comrades on the dangerous Murmansk run). As Leon Trotsky had pointed out, "social patriotism" meant subordinating the class struggle and tying the workers to their "own" bourgeoisie. Certainly, it was pretty hard for the PCI to tell Italian workers that this was a "war against fascism" when they were now in a coalition government with a gang of fascist holdovers.

The Allied armies' march into the Rome region in the summer of 1944 posed the first decisive test of the abil-



Allied armies roll into Rome, June 1944. U.S. bourgeoisie promised "liberation," restored fascist officials to power.

revolts and land occupations, and the army began to disintegrate. In order to head off the threatening upheaval (and to permit an approach to the Allies for an armistice), Mussolini was dumped in July 1943 by an alliance of reactionary officers, the big bourgeoisie, the king's coterie and the fascist Grand Council. Il Duce was replaced by Marshal Badoglio, despicable butcher of the Ethiopian people.

However, the bourgeoisie's strategy backfired. Mussolini's ouster, instead of dampening the growing revolt, spurred the masses to more daring actions. The streets of Torino and other cities were patrolled by "anti-scab squads" [*squadre anticurraggio*]. Every sign pointed to

still clothe themselves with the authority of the Bolshevik Revolution which had freed Russia from capitalist rule. A first incarnation of this coalition was set up in April 1943 at the very moment that the revolutionary wave began to break. A United Freedom Front was formed, presided over by the liberal former premier Ivanoe Bonomi and including the PCI. As intrigues swirled around the royal house of Savoy, Bonomi met with the king, the crown prince and Badoglio himself, pushing the idea of an anti-Mussolini coup which would supposedly allow Italy to extricate itself from the war.

When Badoglio took power in July, the anti-fascist "opposition" tacitly supported



ity of the PCI and the rest of the popular front to hold back the winds of revolution:

"Armed Italians, often in red shirts, waving revolutionary banners, greeted them, frequently after they had set up their own local administrations. The Allied armies pushed some Partisans aside, and even threatened them with the firing squad; they arrested many and threw them into prisons.... Indeed, the Occupation followed the carrot and stick policy, those Partisans refusing to hand in arms facing prison, those cooperating being given special food rations and, if available, jobs, though not usually in the army and rarely in the police."

—Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* (1968)

The masses were clamoring to wipe out the fascist pestilence. When Rome's mass-murdering ex-police chief came to trial, thousands of furious citizens stormed the Palace of Justice, seized an ex-prison director who was there to testify, and drowned him in the Tiber. The political climate in the Eternal City was too hot for Badoglio and his clique, so he was dropped and a new coalition government, resting like its predecessor on Allied bayonets, was set up under CLN leader Bonomi.

As Lenin stressed in his classic 1917 work *The State and Revolution*, the central task of the socialist revolution is the destruction of the bourgeois state, centrally the police and the army—those "bodies of armed men" which Engels pointed to as the central institutions defending the ruling class—and its replacement by a workers state, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Contrariwise, the central task of the Italian bourgeoisie in its drive to reconsolidate the bourgeois state was to reconstruct a repressive apparatus which it could count on to defend its class rule and property. This was one of the key tasks of the perfidious Bonomi government. And for their bodies of armed men they picked those trusted elements who had been responsible for directing the security forces of the fascist regime—the officer corps, police chiefs and local prefects—who were integrated lock, stock and barrel into the new "democratic" regime.

In the summer of 1944 the Allied armies prepared to advance into northern Italy where the great bulk of Italian workers were engaged in an ongoing civil war with the Germans and the puppet Salò republic headed by Mussolini. At the same time, as news of the counterrevolutionary role of the Allies spread into the north, the masses' illusions in the "democratic" role of the Allies were rapidly crumbling. The occupation authorities were also making coldblooded use of the weapon of economic terror to starve the working people into submission. The average daily ration in Allied-occupied Italy was a mere 664 calories, slightly more than half the nutrition required to maintain normal health. The slow military advance up the peninsula was giving the industrial proletariat of northern Italy time to understand what Allied occupation meant—and to prepare for it.

The Allied commanders were likewise preparing to confront the working class—and their counterrevolutionary political instrument was the CLN popular front. Military authorities proceeded to work out with their Stalinist henchmen the details of a scenario for the liquidation of the proletarian revolution they knew awaited them upon their occupation of the north. The principal tasks of the counterrevolution—disarming the partisans and handing over power to the imperialist armies—were the subject of formal agreements. Meanwhile, the Allied commander, British general Alexander, cynically addressed a radio message in November 1944 to the partisans calling on them to "halt large-scale military operations"—thus giving the Germans a green light to devote their forces to crushing the partisans. At this same time Alexander was preparing to provoke a bloody civil war in Greece aiming to smash CP-led partisans.

In return for an engagement to provide vital supplies and financial aid, CLN leaders signed a secret agreement promising to act "under the authority of the Supreme Allied Commander" and "carry out all instructions of the Commander-in-Chief." In this document (the so-called "Protocols of Rome") the CLN promised, upon taking power, to "hand over" to Allied military authorities "all authority and powers of local government." It further promised to "disband and surrender their arms, when required to do so" (Coles and Weinberg, *The United States Army in World War II*). Several days later, the CLN signed a further agreement with the Italian government in which it recognized the government in Rome as "the sole legitimate authority in that part of Italy which has already been or will later on be restored to the Italian Government by the Allied Military Government."

As an Allied intelligence memorandum put it, one question remained: "the ability

production in the plants (which they had already seized) and reorganize the shattered economy on the basis of socialist planning.

Far from providing the leadership required for these tasks, with the Stalinists in the forefront the CLN went into high gear to sabotage the struggle which threatened the very foundations of the capitalist system. The first task was laid out by the British government representative: "Nothing matters except disarmament" (Harold MacMillan, *The Blast of War* [1967]). In order to find the most effective way to disarm the partisans, the Allies had taken different tacks. Initially, in Rome and southern Italy, they tried to use force, arresting partisan groups and turning them over to (fascist-dominated) tribunals. Ultimately it was decided to rely on the partisan leaders themselves. To oversee this rotten maneuver a new government Ministry of Occupied Italy was set up, and a leader of the PCI, Mauro Scoccimarro (a leftist who had

The indignities meted out to the partisans were calculated to demoralize them and break their combativity. In many cities, they were obliged, before disarming, to pass in review before the despised Crown Prince Umberto, symbol of the fascist regime. After turning in their arms, all the partisans were sent to concentration camps ("patriot centers") where for up to three months they were turned over to Allied military intelligence for interrogation. Those who needed clothing were provided with outfits with a large yellow "V" (for veteran) sewn on them. Most were then used for special work details, including demining operations. However, the army refused at first to supply them with mine detectors, so they had to use what the official British military history contentedly calls "the highly dangerous method of prodding" (C.R.S. Harris, *Allied Military Administration of Italy 1943-1945* [1957]).

The Allied authorities garnered from the partisans dozens of truckloads of small arms, some light artillery and two tanks. However, they estimated that over a third of the arms had not been turned in. So the army and police went on a rampage, searching out arms and arresting hundreds in what "quickly took on the appearance of an anti-Communist crusade" (Tony Judt, ed., *Resistance and Revolution in Mediterranean Europe 1939-1948* [1989]). It was not just Togliatti who pushed through this betrayal. In an article on the 80th birthday of Luigi Longo, Arrigo Boldrin writes: "Thus it would be wrong not to recall what a role was played by Luigi Longo, along with other leaders, during the demobilization of the partisan formations imposed by the Allies, to prevent a general disbanding or worse, a counterrevolt, as some attempted to organize in the heated postwar months" (*Calendario del popolo*, August-September 1980).

The next task on the popular front's counterrevolutionary agenda was to bring to heel the workers committees which in factories throughout northern Italy had been thrown up spontaneously in the course of the insurrection. Recalling the movement of revolutionary factory councils which swept the north in 1920-22, these factory committees were provoking yelps from the bourgeoisie, including forces participating in the CLN. As Stalinist historian Gastone Manacorda frankly admitted, the PCI's policy was "to prevent the factory liberation committees from going so far in the course of the insurrection as to expropriate the capitalists." It was, he writes, "a concrete case—perhaps the most conspicuous—of the conscious self-limitation of the revolution, a political intervention aimed at preventing the spontaneous movement of the working class from reaching towards socialist objectives" (quoted in Guido Quazza, *Resistenza e storia d'Italia* [1976]).

The Stalinists sought to keep the factory committees centered on economic issues to prevent them from becoming

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Stalinist gravediggers of the Italian revolution. Palmiro Togliatti (second from right) was joined by PCI lefts Luigi Longo and Pietro Secchia (right) in disarming partisans in Milano.



of the resistance leaders to maintain discipline among their followers."

## The Popular Front Strangles the Revolution

As the Allied armies marched into the Po valley in April 1945 they were anticipated by days, sometimes by hours, by mass popular insurrections in every town, large or small, from Venice to Torino. The scenario was everywhere the same: mass strikes, popular insurrections, storming of barracks, seizure of strategic buildings, freeing of political prisoners, sharp clashes with German and fascist troops who were forced to surrender or flee. Partisan bands, reinvigorated since their nadir the previous winter by tens of thousands of recruits escaping the Nazis' labor and military conscription, were the military vanguard. Everywhere the fascist scum were routed and expedited popular justice was administered to thousands of fascists. Factory committees, local committees, cooperatives, district, neighborhood and even street CLNs sprung up in the hotbed of revolution. The situation in the factories can be gauged from a U.S. State Department report on Fiat in Torino:

"Here workers have to all extents and purposes taken over the factory.... Factory is patrolled by armed liberationists. Management is virtually ignored."

—David Ellwood, *Italy 1943-1945* (1985)

The insurrectionary masses were in no mood to place their confidence in the quiescent government in Rome. The workers had not taken up arms to drive out the fascists and their Nazi backers only in order to be subjected to fascist-become-democrat prefects and bureaucrats acting as stooges of Wall Street. The climate was clearly in favor of a break with the capitalists and for a government of only the Communist and Socialist parties. Soviets—workers councils—were on the order of the day, backed up by workers militias, to uproot the fascist scum, set up popular tribunals to try them, prepare fraternization with the troops of the occupying Allied armies (to win their support or at least neutrality in the upcoming class battles), resume

opposed Togliatti's *svolta*), was brought in to run it.

The Allied officer in charge of disarming the partisans has left a graphic description of how he used the PCI leadership to carry off this cynical machination:

"At the end of the parade route were placed several empty army trucks and some local spieles who continuously plugged the example of Garibaldi in discarding his weapon and returning to the plow when his work as a soldier was done."

"Carefully coached bellwethers in the vanguard tossed their weapons into the trucks, and the rest followed suit.... In retrospect, it seems unbelievable that the scheme could have worked, yet it did."

—Alfred Bowman, *Zones of Strain* (1982)

It almost didn't work, at least in some places. In Venice the first attempts to get the partisans to hand in their arms were met with a blank refusal. In Parma the partisan fighters vented their bitterness and frustration by standing shoulder to shoulder 6,000 strong in the town square firing their machine guns, rifles and tommy guns into the air—while the Allied officer at the podium leared for his life.

Greek monarchist butchers display severed heads of leftist partisans, 1945. In Greece as well, Stalinists' popular-front policies ensured defeat of workers revolution.





# Italy 1943-45...

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soviets, organs of working-class power. However, in the mass upsurge against the hated fascists, the factory committees burst the bounds set for them by the reformist working-class leaders. In plant after plant the workers threw out the bosses and management, who had all worked hand in glove with Mussolini's thugs, and took over the operation of the factories. With the factories in the workers' hands, the question was posed point-blank: Which class would rule?

Yet for the CLN popular front the task that was now on the agenda was to increase production in order to aid in the reconstruction of the "new" (capitalist) Italy. The CLN issued frantic calls for "discipline," "responsibility," and above all a "rapid return to work," admonishing the factory committees "in the name of the higher objective of reconstruction" (Fabio Levi, Paride Rugafiori and Salvatore Vento, *Il triangolo industriale* [1974]). In order to break the back of the revolutionary factory committees, the Stalinists and their popular-front partners undertook to dissolve them into class-collaborationist organs which would participate with management in determining production schedules, etc. This provoked heated opposition among the workers at the base who accused their leaders of "double-cross," "bootlicking."

Over the next year, as the factory committees' class-struggle axis was gutted, the capitalists were able simply to sweep them aside. Fascist bosses and managers who had been thrown out of the plants were brought back by "appealing" their cases to special worker-management "tribunals" in which the bosses had the deciding vote. As the official British army historian puts it, the "damage" was thus "to a large extent repaired." At the end of June the CLN, as previously agreed, passed to the Allied military commanders the administration of northern Italy. This is the "New Italy" the Stalinists had helped to create:

"The larger figures in Mussolini's party—all except the greatest hierarchs—returned in full force and began to occupy leading positions in the administration and in private economic activity."

—H. Stuart Hughes, *The United States and Italy* (1965)

Back in the summer of 1944, the new Rome government had sought to defuse popular fury over the fascist criminals by announcing that the phony "purge" of Mussolini fascists would be partly administered by a PCI leader, the ubiqui-



Rome, June 1944—Partisans rooted out fascist criminals and dispensed summary justice. Mussolini's body (along with henchmen) was strung up by anti-fascist fighters in April 1945.



International News Photos

tous Scoccimorro. By June 1946 the last nail was driven into the coffin of the anti-fascist "purge" by the notorious amnesty law—drafted by Minister of Justice Palmiro Togliatti. And by the early '50s it was the partisans themselves who were being arrested for so-called "terrorist" actions committed against the fascists!

## The Italian Working Class in the Shadow of Yalta

The international context in which the revolutionary situation developed in Italy was dominated by the agreements between Stalin and the Allied imperialists centered on the February 1945 conference at Yalta. There Stalin agreed to a deal with the capitalist powers, Britain and the U.S., on a division of postwar Europe into spheres of influence. In return for a predominant influence of the Soviet Union in the East European "buffer" states (which were expected to remain capitalist), Stalin agreed to the capitalist restabilization of Western Europe. Boasting of his "iron link" to the Soviet Union, Togliatti ruthlessly carried out this program. Yet Stalin's Italian henchman, who was idolized in the PCI as "il migliore" (the best), was in fact handcuffed both to domestic bourgeois masters and to the Kremlin. The Yalta deal sabotaged proletarian revolution in Italy and West Europe, and thereby also criminally undermined defense of the Soviet Union and of Soviet workers.

Even this sellout deal did not stand up to the imperialists' rage to "contain" the USSR and ultimately restore capitalism in the Soviet bureaucratically degenerated workers state. Under the pressure of the imperialists' Cold War, Stalin was eventually pushed to carry out a bureaucratic overthrow of capitalism in East Europe. But the Kremlin did keep its part

of this treacherous bargain, by strangling the revolutionary possibilities which surged forth in Europe at the close of the war. On the eve of WW II, Trotsky had predicted that, if the Soviet Union survived the coming Nazi-German onslaught, workers revolutions would arise in the aftermath, as happened following the first imperialist world war. But thanks to Stalinist treachery, these revolutions were strangled (Italy), stillborn (France) or crushed (Greece).

Neither the origins nor the impact of the Italian revolution were nationally limited. The fall of Mussolini and the August strike wave unleashed antiwar fever among Italian occupation troops in Greece, who began to fraternize with the Greek workers. This led to a general strike in Athens and a mutiny in the Greek army and navy in Egypt, soon followed by the uprising of the Stalinist-led EAM partisans. But with Stalin's permission the British brutally occupied the Greek mainland, and rejecting EAM offers to sell out they proceeded to devastate every center of revolt. This was then used by the PCI to intimidate those who desired revolution. Thus a party leader in Milano argued in early 1946: "If we want to go into action with machine guns, we will be opposing armored cars, planes, and the Allied gentlemen will do to us what they did in Greece."

The main "argument" of the Stalinists was and is the assertion that revolution was impossible. A prime example of this was from Pietro Secchia, a leftist PCI leader of the *Resistenza* in the north who claims: "Today young people who read certain romanticized histories of our war of liberation have the impression that we had the power and that we were not able, or worse, we didn't want to hold it...to carry out, I won't say proletarian revolution, which was absolutely beyond all possibilities, but even a regime of progressive democracy" (*Annali dell'Istituto Giangiacomo Feltrinelli* [1971]). Similarly, a CP leader at the Fiat Mirafiori plant explained: "We knew that [the workers] were pushing for a movement with revolutionary characteristics, but this would also have been in the interests of Amer-

ica, a pretext for intervention" (Liliana Lanzardo, *Classe operaia e partito comunista alla Fiat* [1971]).

Far from being impossible, or "romanticized" stories, or simply a pretext for intervention, the revolutionary possibilities were palpable for all. The discredited, divided Italian bourgeoisie and the Allied imperialists were scared to death, and as their memoirs quoted above recount, they were utterly amazed at the lengths to which the Stalinists went to give up power which was in their hands or there for the taking. The key element missing was a genuinely revolutionary party for which "communism" was not an empty name but a living program. The Trotskyists had such a program, which was why they were seen as a mortal threat by the Stalinists and ruthlessly "liquidated." This was the fate of Pietro Tresso (Blasco), former PCI leader and leading Italian Trotskyist, who in 1943 was murdered in France by the Stalinists with whom he escaped from the fascist prison of Puy.

The depths to which these unspeakable wretches would sink is shown by Togliatti's grotesque comment on Leon Trotsky after this comrade-in-arms of Lenin and co-leader of the Russian Revolution was murdered by Stalin's agent: "the little Judas Trotsky belongs to the race of apologists and servants of capital" (quoted in Paolo Spriano, *Stalin and the European Communists* [1985]).

The loss of precious Trotskyist cadres at the hands of Stalinist and Nazi repression was a cruel blow to the working class. It meant that in Italy the Stalinist traitors, after having stabbed the revolutionary proletariat in the back, could emerge virtually unchallenged as the postwar leaders of the working class. In learning the lessons of its own history, the Italian working class will learn to vilify the Stalinist gravediggers of the socialist revolution and appropriate the revolutionary heritage which is its birthright. It is to this task, the forging of a truly Leninist party, that the International Communist League and its Italian section, the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, are dedicated. ■

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## Divorce Italian Style...

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the mounting crisis in the Soviet Union. Among the supporters of Rifondazione Comunista, the big majority undoubtedly are passionately opposed to capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR. Not so for Garavini/Cossutta, who look to the Gorbachev and hardline "patriot" wings of the Kremlin bureaucracy that have also committed themselves to restoring capitalism, although at a slower pace than Yeltsin's "democrats." Likewise over the Persian Gulf War, the PCI ranks wanted to strike against the bloody imperialist intervention while Garavini wrote that perhaps force was necessary against Saddam Hussein.

This breach between the ranks who see themselves as "reds" and the tops nostalgic for the Brezhnev-Stalin "good old days" must be widened by the intervention of authentic Trotskyism. Recently there have been articles on the centenary of the birth of Antonio Gramsci, the PCI founder who died after ten years in Mussolini's prisons, as a "national" alternative to Stalinism. But to "refund communism" it is necessary to learn the lessons of the history of the degeneration of the Soviet Union and the Comintern, and the bloody anti-revolutionary consequences in Italy and worldwide. The answer, for those who would be communists, is not an "Italian road to socialism" or turning poor Gramsci into an icon because his imprisonment removed him from the decisive Stalin-Trotsky battle, but rather in returning to the internationalist road of Lenin and Trotsky. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD



# Rail Strike...

(continued from page 12)

amount of material to the Persian Gulf."

The whole process of contract negotiations has been one big charade among the union chiefs, the railroad bosses and the government boards. As one angry striker at the Burlington Northern yards in Chicago told WV, "The government is always going to say the workers are in the wrong. They just tell us to cool off, negotiate, cool off, and by the time it's settled it's just the same old thing."

The companies and the government did their best to heighten the sense of crisis. The *Wall Street Journal* (19 April) noted that the railroads "decided to stop all service, including some commuter-rail and Amtrak operations, which the unions didn't strike.... That helped create a national emergency that prompted Congress to end the walkout quickly."

The *Journal* quoted a gloating "industry official" who said after Bush and Congress intervened against the strike that "it's not far from a mandate" for the emergency board's report, adding, "I can't see why we would feel too bad." The *Journal of Commerce* headlined: "'Thank You Very Much,' Surprised Shippers Express Relief Over Brevity of Strike."

This has become an all too familiar pattern for the unions. Just ask the Greyhound, Eastern and *Daily News* strikers who showed plenty of combativity and got plenty of support from the rank and file of labor, but couldn't win a decent contract with their pro-Democratic Party sellout leadership.

As the rail strike began, the union bureaucrats were begging Democrats in Congress for yet another review board. So Ted Kennedy and his bipartisan cronies in the House and the Bush administration cooked up with the acquiescence of the rail union chiefs the same rotten deal that over 200,000 rail workers thought they were striking against.

They had the power. The national trucking contract ran out on April 1. If the rail unions and the Teamsters had

# 82-Year-Old Peace Activist Dies After Police Beating L.A. Cops Strike Again

With all the triumphalism over the U.S. devastation of a Near Eastern semicolonial country, bourgeois politicians are seeking to impose their "New World Order" on minorities and the working class at home. In Los Angeles,

outrage over the videotaped cop beating of a black man, Rodney King, has sharply polarized the city. Hoping to chill out the situation, the mayor-appointed police commission suspended notorious racist LAPD chief Gates, with



DZ/LA Times

Persian Gulf protest was his final battle. After clubbing by federal marshals, veteran CIO organizer and peace activist William Gandall later died in the hospital.

pay. But Gates went to court and got a temporary reinstatement, and the conservative city council is backing him in his bid to block the suspension. Meanwhile, governor Pete Wilson described calls for Gates' resignation as an "attempted lynching!"

A little-known example of L.A. cop brutality was recently revealed, in the death of 82-year-old William Gandall on March 23. Gandall, a former CIO organizer and Spanish Civil War veteran, continued to be active in antiwar protests and anti-Klan demonstrations, despite his advanced years and the pacemaker he wore after triple bypass heart surgery. On January 16, as Bush rained bombs on Baghdad, Gandall joined protesters at the L.A. Federal Building. Federal cops moved in, clubs swinging, when the demonstrators rushed to block the doors with a sit-in. Gandall was beaten to the ground and, when the cops belatedly brought him to the hospital, required emergency surgery for a ruptured duodenal ulcer.

William Gandall died in the hospital two months later. As the *Los Angeles Times* (13 April) reported, "The crowning moment of 'Wild' Bill Gandall's final campaign found him on his hands and knees, crawling up the steps of the Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles in protest against the Persian Gulf War." Gandall's daughter Kate is pursuing legal action against the feds, saying he told her that his treatment was "the worst he had seen since his early organizing days with the CIO."

joined in a national transport strike it could have reversed a decade of cutbacks and union-busting under Carter, Reagan and Bush. But far from appealing for joint strike action and militant labor solidarity, the rail union honchos tried to curry favor with bourgeois "public opinion" by limiting the strike.

In Chicago, they were so concerned the strike would "inconvenience" yuppie suburbanites that these sellouts offered

to keep the Metra commuter trains running. When the picket lines went up, the rail union tops outrageously herded the Metra workers into work!

As we wrote in our article, "From the Railway Labor Act to Taft-Hartley: Anti-Red Hysteria and Anti-Labor Laws" (WV No. 473, 17 March 1989):

"The only times workers have successfully defied anti-labor laws are when they have overridden their pro-capitalist mis-

leaders. In 1977-78 striking coal miners tore up the Taft-Hartley injunction issued by Democrat Jimmy Carter while driving the despised union president Arnold Miller—originally touted as a liberal reformer—from the coal fields. But spontaneous acts of rank-and-file militancy are not enough. The workers need to place at the head of the unions a leadership that will fight the bosses' government and the Democratic and Republican parties, leading the way toward a workers government." ■

# Kurds...

(continued from page 12)

diseases take hold. TV news broadcasts are filled with images of mothers burying their infant dead in shallow graves.

What the American media still refuse to show is the horror and devastation visited on the rest of Iraq's 17 million people—by the U.S. terror bombing. Throughout the country, people face mass starvation and the threat of widespread epidemics. Meanwhile the arrogant American conquerors are even refusing Baghdad's requests that the country be allowed to export a billion dollars worth of oil in order to be able to import food for its starving population. And the draconian cease-fire terms imposed by the U.S. on Iraq mean that after laying waste to the country they're now plundering it: billions in "reparations" to the filthy rich Kuwaiti ruling family, guarantees that Baghdad will pay its more than \$40 billion foreign debt, etc.

There is a lot more to Bush's sinister operation than bombarding the Kurds with inedible U.S. Army surplus MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). Having appointed itself imperialist sheriff of the Near East through the slaughter of more than 100,000 men, women and children, the U.S. is out to bully all the peoples of the region into its "New World Order," including the Kurds. This isn't about refugees, who are to be found just about everywhere. The aim, as one observer put it, "is to make sure this population of Kurds will be a controlled population." And to keep Iraq under Washington's thumb.

The whole business ripped the "UN" veil off U.S. aggression. While UN relief agencies worked through the Iraqi regime to provide aid to the Kurdish refugees, and even the Kurdish nationalist groups

which led the U.S.-instigated uprising are negotiating with Baghdad, the U.S. is intent on imposing its *diktat*. Even house-trained UN secretary general Pérez de Cuéllar said the U.S. move violated Iraqi sovereignty. But Bush was interested in imperial suzerainty, and blithely seized 1,500 square miles of Iraqi territory.

The first of some 10,000 U.S. troops, with thousands more British and French soldiers to come, have already begun to move into northern Iraq. The entire region above the 36th parallel has been declared off-limits to the Iraqi army, while UN ambassador Thomas Pickering arrogantly dictates that "Baghdad will facilitate the implementation of international relief services." The imperialist troops are supposedly going to "protect" Kurds from the Iraqi army. But right now it is Turkish soldiers who are firing on and killing Kurdish refugees. And the camps will be located well away from any present concentrations of refugees, up to 60 miles inside Iraqi territory.

This military occupation has nothing to do with defending the Kurdish people. As one international relief worker put it, "Nobody wants a Kurdish state, let's not kid ourselves." Certainly none of the imperialist powers nor their regional lackeys do. The International Communist League, which has consistently upheld the Kurds' right to self-determination and calls for a socialist republic of united Kurdistan, warns that getting rid of the imperialist occupiers is a *precondition* for any serious struggle for Kurdish liberation. U.S. out of Iraq and the Persian Gulf!

At best the Kurds face the prospect of a tightly policed bantustan. More likely, as one international relief official said, is that they will be subjected to "the worst of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Beirut," forced to be permanent inmates of concentration camps surround-

ed by barbed wire and U.S. or other imperialist "peacekeeping" forces. The White House has already made clear its intentions of suppressing Kurdish militants, as it "warned Kurdish opposition groups not to use the proposed refugee camps as a staging area" to continue their struggle. Yet the same Kurdish nationalist groups who led their people to the slaughter in the hope of imperialist support suicidally continue to pander to Washington.

We wrote last issue that the U.S. had set up the Kurds for suppression at the hands of Saddam Hussein, calling for an uprising (including on the CIA's Voice of Free Iraq) only to have it drowned in blood. After being on the receiving end of Saddam Hussein's terror, the Kurds are being set up once again by Bush's "purely humanitarian" ploy. Anyone who looks for protection to the deadliest enemy of the world's peoples should look at the history of how U.S. imperialism has

cynically played the Kurdish card in the past, or how it has used other mountain peoples as mercenaries, like the Hmong in Laos.

If Ba'athist Iraq has been a hellhole for the Kurds, Kurds in Turkey, Syria and Iran have even fewer rights. NATO Turkey, with some 12 to 15 million Kurds inside its borders, put particular pressure on Washington to move into Iraq out of fears that a massive influx of refugees or ongoing concentration of Iraqi Kurds on its border could lead to an explosion of struggle by Kurds throughout the region.

"Operation Provide Comfort" will provide about as much comfort to the long-suffering Kurdish people as "Operation Just Cause" meted out justice for the Panamanians it slaughtered over a year ago. The only road to national salvation for the Kurdish people lies in united revolutionary struggle with all the toilers of the region. ■

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## Bush's "Humanitarian Aid"—Another Set-Up

# Pax Americana Means Hunger and Death for Kurds

Having bombed Iraq back to a "pre-industrial age," mass murderer George Bush is trying to pass himself off as a "humanitarian" to the downtrodden and desperate Iraqi Kurds. Following a clamor from Washington's European allies and its Near East clients, Bush announced "Operation Provide Comfort," supposedly to provide food and shelter for an estimated 700,000 Kurds stranded in the mountainous areas along the Turkish border. "At Last, the Kurds Find Friends," cheered a *New York Times* (18 April) editorial. With friends like these...

For weeks now, hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees have been stranded along the freezing mountainsides of northern Iraq. United Nations refugee officials say it is the largest movement of refugees ever in such a short space of time. Almost half are estimated to be young children, many of them dying as they grow weak from hunger, diarrhea and dysentery. Relief workers claim that several hundred, perhaps a thousand, Kurdish refugees are dying every day, and that will increase sharply if epidemics of measles, cholera and other

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Kurdish refugees, pawns and victims of Bush's "New World Order," trapped and dying in mountain passes.

# Bush, Democrats Ban Rail Strike

"A rail strike that took any period of time to resolve would be devastating," declared House Speaker Thomas Foley, as Congress met late into the night to rush through a bill to stop the rail strike after only one day. The strikers had the power to throw a huge monkey wrench into the transportation system, especially now that many industries like auto are increasingly dependent on "just in time" rail deliveries. Yet the union tops had no intention of using that power.

After working over three years without a contract or pay raise, finally on April 17 eleven unions representing over 230,000 workers struck the railroads which handle over a third of the country's freight. As pickets went up at yards from coast to coast, rail shipments of coal, grain and automobiles ground to a halt. But after Bush was awakened in the wee hours of April 18 to sign the anti-strike bill passed almost unanimously by the Democratic-controlled Congress, the heads of the striking unions immediately ordered the pickets down.

The *Boston Globe* (18 April) reported that the bill demanded by Bush to halt the strike was "secretly devised over the last two weeks by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy."

During three years of negotiations, the union bureaucrats first turned to a federal mediation panel, then last May submitted to an "emergency board" hand-



Los Angeles Taylor Yard, April 17—Eleven striking rail unions put up picket line for 24 hours before union heads caved in to Congress.

picked by Bush. The board's "compromise" announced in January calls for workers to start paying a big chunk of their health insurance, and offers a measly 3 percent wage "increase" for skilled workers who make under \$30,000

even with plenty of overtime.

While the railroads have been raking in billions in profits, the government hoard calls for a net 16 percent cut in real wages! This union-busting plan would also let the bosses tear up crew

size limits and change work rules to increase the mileage traveled by conductors and brakemen. And it's a frontal assault on safety. To cut train crews to just two men, getting rid of all 22,000 brakemen, as the board's plan provides, will mean many more workers and passengers injured and killed.

When Bush signed the bill, David Gray, president of Chicago's United Transportation Local 528, meekly promised "we always comply with the law." That goes without saying for the craven misleaders of the rail unions. But you can fight the federal government. When the rail workers struck in 1946, Truman "outlawed" the strike, threatening to send the army in to run the trains and to draft strikers into the military! The unions told Truman to drop dead, and 48 hours later they had their pay increase.

In February, heads of the rail unions proved their loyalty to their imperialist rulers by agreeing to a 90-day "cooling off" period (instead of the usual 30 days) explicitly so that Bush could carry out undisturbed the massacre of Iraq. Even now a rail strike would affect the Pentagon, as UPI reported: "for the military, a looming nationwide rail strike comes at the second worst possible time. Last year the stakes were clearly higher, as the Pentagon avoided the worst case and successfully deployed an enormous

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