

Yankee Imperialism Gears Up for Global Trade War

Stop U.S. "Free Trade" Rape of Mexico

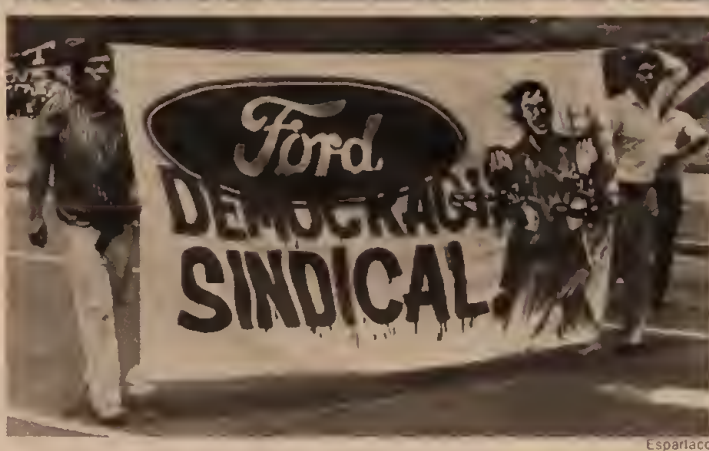


Above: Impoverished shantytown surrounds "free trade zone" factory in Nogales, Mexico.

We print below a joint declaration by the Grupo Espartaquista de México, the Spartacist League/U.S. and the Trotskyist League of Canada, sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Fresh from his Persian Gulf oil grab and bloody slaughter of Iraq, George Bush is moving to impose a "New World Order" of renewed U.S. imperialist domination. The American president's two immediate declared objectives are to pass an "omnibus crime bill" greatly expanding police powers and use of the death penalty in federal cases, and to get a "Free Trade Agreement" (FTA) with Mexico. On May 24, the U.S. Congress approved the so-called "fast track" procedure allowing the White House to negotiate tariff deals without legislative amendment, and on June 12 talks with Mexico got under way in Toronto. While strengthening the U.S. bourgeoisie against imperialist trade rivals, an FTA will also subject the working masses of the Americas to greater exploitation. We call on Mexican, U.S. and Canadian workers to join in opposing this anti-labor pact.

The Bush administration is forging ahead with negotiations for a treaty to eliminate, over the next decade, most tariffs and many investment curbs standing between Mexico and the United States. U.S. and Canadian trade unions fear a flood of Mexican goods produced



Left: Combative Ford workers march in Mexico City on May Day, 1991.

Unite U.S., Canadian and Mexican Workers in Class Struggle!

by cheap labor and a wave of "runaway plants" heading south, particularly in low-skill industries like textiles. Mexican unionists fear imports of cheaper and more technically advanced U.S. goods will bankrupt whole industries, especially in consumer durables and steel. Overall the stronger U.S. economy would have the upper hand. In addition, American capitalists want to use the FTA to gut

labor and environmental regulations on both sides of the border. Yankee imperialism wants to turn Mexico into a giant maquiladora, or free trade zone—"free" of unions, and "free" for capital.

Far from "freeing" trade internationally, the pact is aimed at setting up a private hunting preserve for the American imperialist bourgeoisie, their Canadian junior partners and their lackeys in the

Mexican ruling class. Already at the time of the First World War, Lenin noted that the narrow limits of the capitalist nation-state had become a fetter on the development of the productive forces, producing a struggle over redivision of the world. The various "common markets" in no way overcome this, but instead intensify interimperialist rivalries. We Trotskyists, communists, struggle for the economic integration of the world on a socialist basis. But the FTA is a reactionary move toward global trade war (and from there to a shooting war). The trade pact with Mexico is U.S. imperialism's answer to the Fourth Reich and Japan Inc.

U.S. imperialism sees the incorporation of Mexico in a free trade zone as a club against Japanese-led competition from the sweatshops of Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea. The FTA is also a response to the European economic and political union scheduled for completion in 1992. But its purposes are not just economic. It is an expression of the U.S. ruling class' belief in its "Manifest Destiny" to dominate the Western Hemisphere. Last June Bush proclaimed his "Initiative for the Americas," a call for a hemispheric free trade area. And at the height of the Persian Gulf War preparations, he traveled twice to Latin America to promote this new edition of the Monroe Doctrine. Characteristically, Latin American bourgeois

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Stop Deportations of the L.A. Eight!

For four years the U.S. government has been trying to deport seven Palestinians and a Kenyan, political activists known as the Los Angeles Eight. The eight were arrested in January 1987 and charged under the McCarran-Walter Act with "advocating world communism," and more specifically the views of the radical-nationalist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Despite many legal setbacks and substantial public support for the eight, the government is insistent on throwing them out.

It's none of the government's business what political views people have or

what political organizations they support. In fact, the L.A. Eight, well-established businessmen, students and working people, all deny membership in the PFLP or participation in any of its activities here or abroad. Khader Musa Hamide, the alleged Southern California "PFLP leader," is a businessman who has lived in the U.S. for 20 years, active in Democratic Party politics and a Jesse Jackson supporter. In fact, weeks after their arrest "Justice" Department spokesmen admitted they were compelled to use the witchhunting McCarran-Walter Act because "a lengthy FBI investigation failed to turn up evidence of plans to



L.A. Eight fight deportations: (top left) Khader Hamide, Michael Shehadeh, Amjad Obeld, (bottom left) Ayman Obeld, Alad Barakat, Naim Sharif, Julie Mongal. Not in picture, Bashir Amer.

commit criminal or terrorist acts" (*Washington Post*, 29 January 1987).

After a federal court ruled the ideological provision of McCarran-Walter violated the First Amendment, the feds grappled for new deportation grounds. Six of the L.A. Eight, in the U.S. on student visas, face deportation on technicalities—overstaying their visas, working part-time while on a student visa, etc. Two of them, Naim Sharif and Alad Barakat, filed for amnesty under the new immigration law over a year ago and have just received notice of the INS' intent to deny their applications on grounds of alleged PFLP affiliation. Amnesty applications for the other four are pending.

Michael Shehadeh and Khader Hamide, both permanent U.S. residents, have presented a thornier problem for the government. After a federal court ruled unconstitutional the anti-communist and "advocacy of the destruction of property" provisions of McCarran-Walter, the feds charged them with "membership or affiliation with an organization which advocates or teaches the duty, necessity or propriety of the unlawful assaulting or killing of government officials." Though the McCarran-Walter Act was replaced in March, the "Justice" Department insists that deportation proceedings pending at that time are not affected.

The federal government has also charged the L.A. Eight under the new "cleaner" immigration act which specifically cites support for the PLO as grounds for deportation. Claiming "national security" grounds, the feds refuse to disclose any evidence to support their "terrorism" charge, forcing Hamide and Shehadeh to fight blindfolded. Phone calls of the L.A. Eight and their lawyers have been wiretapped, also on "national security" grounds under the Foreign Surveillance Act. To expand their arsenal of legal weapons (and get around problems they have faced in railroading the L.A. Eight), the Bush administration has been trying to insert provisions for star-chamber "trials" of non-citizens (visitors and residents alike) on "terrorism" charges into the omnibus crime bill now before Congress. The accused would not be informed of their accusers, or the charges against them, or be present at the hearings, if the government claimed "national security" was affected.

The vendetta against the L.A. Eight represents the intersection of "terrorism" hysteria and anti-immigrant chauvinism. Their struggle against deportation is vital to the fight against anti-immigrant racism and state terror, especially for tens of thousands of Arab residents victimized in the preparations for and celebrations of the U.S.' Near East slaughter. It was in the L.A. Eight's fight against deportation in 1987 that government plans to herd Arab residents into concentration camps during wartime came to light, a plan which loomed as a frightening possibility with the U.S. assault on Iraq. The "New World Order" at home is the same old order of racist and anti-

immigrant terror and witchhunts of those opposed to the government's bloodthirsty designs.

Stop the deportations! Hands off the L.A. Eight! Full citizenship rights for all immigrant workers and their families! For more information and to send contributions write: Committee for Justice to Stop the McCarran-Walter Act Deportations, P.O. Box 4631, Los Angeles, CA 90051.

* * *

Former Black Panther Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) won a small gain in his ongoing struggle against the vindictive prison authorities. Immediately after a June 27 hearing, the attorney general's office complied with the judge's "suggestion" that Geronimo be transferred to a single cell. As a consequence of his post-traumatic stress disorder and medical complications due to shrapnel wounds received in Vietnam, sharing a cell with another prisoner is unbearably painful. This is a problem well known to prison officials, who for most of his 20 years in prison have kept Geronimo in single cells. But on April 1, Geronimo was thrown into punitive segregation on bogus "drug trafficking" charges, and for the first time in years forced to share a cell, although the prison unit contained empty cells. After one cellmate left a few weeks later, Geronimo was allowed to remain alone in the cell. But just days after Geronimo's June 3 filing of a petition for a new trial and an amended complaint in his lawsuit against prison harassment, the authorities retaliated by shipping in a new cellmate.

For 20 years the California prison authorities have acted on the belief that because Geronimo was a Black Panther Party leader they can peddle any lie about him and do anything they want to him (see "Geronimo Pratt—Freedom Now!" *WV* No. 529, 21 June). Geronimo returns to court on August 1 on his motion for a preliminary injunction to put an end to his confinement in the hole, remove the life-threatening lying designations of "escapee" and "cop-killer" which litter his prison record, and stop the persecution and harassment he regularly suffers in his prison hell. Pack the courtroom!

This legal battle costs lots of money. We are up against the vast financial resources of the state. Send contributions earmarked "Geronimo Pratt Defense" to the PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. Join the fight to free Geronimo!

* * *

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. ■

Soviet Union Crushed Nazi Invasion

Fifty years ago, on 22 June 1941, Nazi Germany launched Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union. Politically disarmed by Stalin's confidence in his 1939 pact with Hitler, militarily weakened by the 1937-38 blood purge of the Red Army officer corps, the USSR was expected to fall in a matter of weeks, as capitalist France had a year earlier. But the Soviet proletariat rallied to the defense of their workers state and ultimately



TROTSKY



LENIN

the Red Army crushed Hitlerism. Speaking in August 1941, on the first anniversary of Leon Trotsky's assassination by a Stalinist agent, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon expressed the Fourth International's unconditional defense of the Soviet Union in the struggle for world socialist revolution.

Those fainthearts, those traitors who said the Russian Revolution has been killed, that the Soviet Union is not worth defending, are being answered on the battlefields of Russia today by millions of men in arms. Millions of Soviet soldiers, pouring out their blood, say the revolution still lives and not even Hitler's army can kill it!...

Nobody believed in the fighting capacities of the Soviet army except the Soviet workers themselves—and the Fourth Internationalists. Stalin didn't believe in the fighting ability of the Red Army which he had beheaded. The only reason he didn't capitulate to Hitler and give him all the concessions he wanted, is that he didn't get a chance. Hitler thought it would be so easy to smash the Red Army, he didn't bother to parley about it. All the statesmen and military experts expected and freely predicted a Russian collapse on the French pattern in a few weeks. What they all overlooked was the one most important and most fundamental element in war, the one that was elucidated by Comrade Trotsky in our last talk with him in Mexico, fourteen months ago, the element of morale....

Those who made an equation between fascist Germany and the Soviet Union could not understand the psychology of the Russian workers and peasants. You can write all the books, wiseacre theses, explaining there is no difference between the degenerated workers' state in Russia and the fascist regime in Germany. But the Russian workers and peasants think there is a difference, and they think the difference is worth dying for. They know better than all the renegades, better than all those who have turned their backs on the Soviet Union in the hour of danger, the hour when people are really tested as to the value of their ideas, opinions, theories, and promises.

Trotsky said more than once that the beginning of a war of imperialism against the Soviet Union would undoubtedly arouse a veritable outburst of genuine revolutionary patriotism and fighting spirit in the Russian masses. That is precisely what we have seen there.

—James P. Cannon, "Trotskyism Lives" (August 1941)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Teamsters Boo Bush—G-Men Run Convention, Elections Feds Hands Off Teamsters!

It was quite a spectacle: 2,000 unionists hooting down a videotaped message from President Bush. Moreover, it was at the convention of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, just about the only major American union that has supported Republicans Bush, Reagan and Nixon over the past 30 years. Even more remarkable, the catcalls drowned out a flag-waving spiel from the U.S. commander in chief thanking the Teamsters for their support in that murderous slaughter Made in U.S.A. known as the Persian Gulf War. The delegates were incensed over White House opposition to a bill outlawing the hiring of scabs. They also booed down IBT president William McCarthy for agreeing to the massive government intervention that led to this stage-managed convention. The Teamsters have been hogtied by federal authorities in the most blatant U.S. seizure of a labor union ever.

"Teamsters Grapple with Democracy at Their Government-Run Convention," headlined the *Wall Street Journal*. What "democracy"? The IBT meeting at a (non-union) hotel in Orlando, Florida was a government-rigged charade from start to finish. Out in the hall delegates got to wave signs for their favorite bureaucrat-candidate. In the back rooms 65 federal agents ran the floor show, while a federally appointed "elections officer" and a brace of federal judges pulled the strings. The feds decided on who got to vote, voting rules, counting and announcing results, and virtually everything else. This was the upshot of the "consent decree" which IBT president



Teamster convoy blocks downtown Philadelphia bus terminal during bitter 1983 Greyhound strike. Teamsters don't like scabs, flinks or feds! UPI

McCarthy signed with the Bush administration in March 1989 to settle the RICO racketeering lawsuit against the Teamsters in exchange for government control of the union.

The outburst of anger at the convention tells a lot about the mood among American workers today. With 1.6 million members, the Teamsters is the largest union in the U.S., and contrary to its image the IBT includes hundreds of

thousands of women and blacks. Jay Foreman, a vice president of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, noted that "The Teamsters tend to be more conservative, they rally around the flag and patriotism. Despite all that, they still booed him. The old wrapping-yourself-in-the-flag just didn't cut it." The next day, delegates at the convention of the Communications Workers of America cheered a call for a mass

walkout during the scheduled keynote address by Bush's Labor Secretary Lynn Martin. To save face, the CWA tops disinvited Martin while she was in midair on the way to San Francisco.

Since the destruction of the air traffic controllers union in 1981, it has been all-out war on labor, which has suffered defeats from Hormel to Greyhound to the Eastern strike. And the government's

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Letter

On Class Struggle in the U.S.

New York
June 25, 1991

Editors
Workers Vanguard
Dear WV—

It would have been nice, in your reply to my letter published in WV #529 (June 21), if you had represented my *Village Voice* piece fairly. I explicitly criticized the "fair tax" waffle favored by conservative AFL-CIO types. While I do say nice things about Dennis Rivera's rhetorical frankness, I criticized his curious unwillingness to say anything nasty about Mayor David Dinkins. I denounced Dinkins and Mario Cuomo for being the slaves of Wall Street that they are. I denounced the municipal unions as "transmission belts" for policies determined by the financial and political elite.

I have no illusions about the Democratic party or the union establishment either in New York or the U.S. I don't believe that it's possible to "work within" or reform either; they're rotten institutions deserving of nothing but contempt. I think that Rivera's current work to create a PAC to fund pro-Dinkins City Council candidates, means the death of any serious electoral opposition to austerity and reaction.

Of course I believe in struggle at the point of production—though in this globalized factory, in which even leisure time is organized by capital, that point is a very evasive thing. You say that shutting the airports would have won the PATCO and Eastern strikes. Maybe so, but how much would the fundamental

balance of forces been changed by a better contract for the unions involved? Isn't this just a more militant variant of business unionism? The state is now deeply involved in the process of redistributing value across both within sectors of capital and across classes. The struggle for the control of that process is hardly a secondary concern.

Finally, I must take issue with a severe misquote in your piece on the "New World Order." I didn't say, as you claim, "that 'you don't have to believe in Marxian theories of a declining rate of profit' to understand the economic morass the U.S. is in." You then contrast this with a graph I ran in the same issue of *Left Business Observer* showing a fall in U.S. profit rates. There's no contradiction here at all. What I said was: "you don't have

to believe in Marxian theories of a declining rate of profit to see that Europe's adolescent consumer society looked suspiciously unexploited next to the relatively mature U.S." [LBO #45, April 17, 1991, p. 2]. I was trying to refute Seymour Melman's ludicrous explanation of U.S. firms' investment in Europe in the early 1960s. Melman argues that military spending had so wrecked the U.S. civilian economy that U.S. multinationals had no choice but to move overseas. My point is that "defending" the free movement of capital and profits has been the major reason behind our permanent war economy, and that Melman's analysis is exactly ass-backwards. In fact, I not only subscribe to Marxian theories of declining rates of profit—with Marx's own caveats about "countervailing ten-

dencies," of course—I also think that bourgeois statistics such as those I used confirm the point empirically.

Though I don't agree with every position you take, I think WV is a serious, important publication, and I read every issue cover-to-cover. Misrepresentations like these make me think twice about trusting your paper.

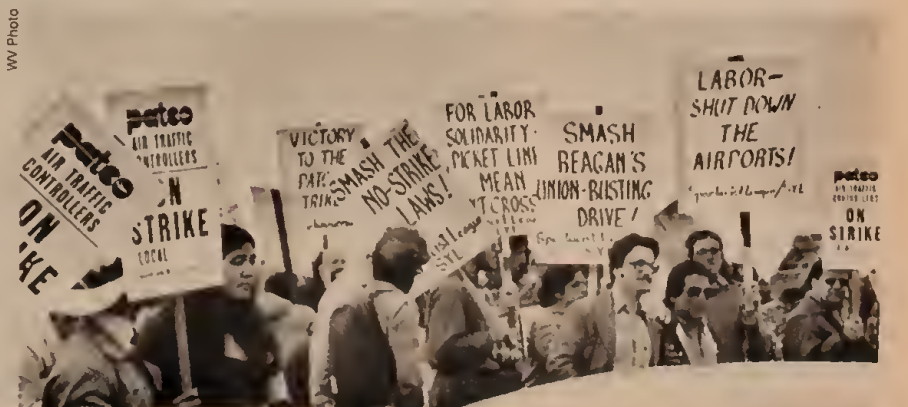
Yours truly,
Doug Henwood, Editor,
Left Business Observer

WV replies: If we misinterpreted Doug Henwood's views on the rate of profit, we are grateful to him for clarifying his position.

We do, however, have substantial differences on the "tax the rich" question. Marx emphasized, in polemicizing against liberals like John Stuart Mill, that the division of social product between profit and wages was fundamentally

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Oakland airport,
August 1981:
Spartacists
join PATCO
demonstration,
demand "Labor:
Shut Down the
Airports!"



For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!

Workers Struggle Can Topple South Korean Police State



Cole/Picture Group

DPA

South Korea ripe for social explosion. Left: Hyundai shipyard workers occupy plant in 1989. Right: Militant students defy Seoul riot police in May.

TOKYO—The militant student protests which swept South Korea in May posed the gravest political crisis President Roh Tae Woo has faced since taking office in 1987. Roh's predecessor, Chun Doo Hwan, was himself driven from office when a similar student upsurge triggered a wave of mass strikes and occupations. This time the working class did not play a decisive role and, for the moment, Roh has managed to limp through.

The general-turned-president was aided in his efforts by the liberal bourgeois opposition led by Kim Dae Jung, which sought to divert the massive social discontent into electoral support in municipal elections on June 20, the first in 30 years. In the upshot, Roh's ruling Democratic Liberal Party walked off with two-thirds of the seats (with 40 percent of the vote) while Kim's New Democratic Party garnered under one-fifth of the seats.

But while the protests have subsided, the country is anything but stable. The military regime is widely despised. The student movement (as the accompanying eyewitness report vividly reveals) is courageous and militantly anti-government. The economy is going downhill fast. The South Korean proletariat is steeling in combat and unbroken. Meanwhile, the country is occupied by over 40,000 U.S. troops. Some Pentagon pundits, intoxicated by their easy win in the Gulf War, are already targeting the deformed workers state in the North as "the next renegade state." But in the face of decades of official anti-Communism, there is much sympathy in the South for North Korea.

South Korea has all the ingredients for a massive social explosion, which would engulf the entire peninsula in revolutionary struggle. The missing element is a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party.

Student Protests Shake Seoul

The recent upsurge of student protest was sparked by the April 26 killing of Yonsei University student Kang Kyung Dae during an anti-government dem-

For Workers Political Revolution in North Korea!

onstration in Seoul. Kang was killed by the elite *Paegoldan* riot police, notorious for their skull-like white helmets. As protests escalated, on May 9 over a quarter million demonstrators marched nationwide, while some 200,000 workers staged two-hour sympathy strikes in solidarity with the protesting students. Nine days later, on the anniversary of the 1980 Kwangju massacre, the proletariat again raised its head: up to 300,000 workers from 138 unions in 14 cities took part in strikes and protests. But with no effective leadership, the workers returned to their factories while the powerless students returned to desperate measures like self-immolation.

As the demonstrations continued despite massive repression and arrests, Roh was forced to make a few face-saving concessions, announcing a general am-

nesty for 258 political prisoners and appointing a new prime minister, Chung Won Shik. This only further outraged the students—as education minister in 1989, Chung had outlawed the teachers union and ordered the arrest of 1,500 members. While massive demonstrations again rocked Seoul and Kwangju, a young woman student named Kim Kwi Jong became another victim of the murderous police. When the new prime minister tried to give a speech at Hankook University, he was pelted with raw eggs, surrounded and literally chased off campus.

This action produced a hysterical Confucian frenzy on the part of the ruling class, who howled that the unruly students had no respect for their elders. Police invaded Hankook and a second university, arresting hundreds. A pre-

dawn raid to break a sit-down strike at a Seoul chemical factory dragged off 475 union members. The government also locked up well-known dissident Moon Ik Hwan, who only months ago had completed a prison term for the "crime" of visiting North Korea. And on June 14, Hyon Chu OK, head of the militant National Council of Labor Unions and a supporter of the student protests, was forced out of his sanctuary in Seoul's Myongdong cathedral and ambushed by police.

International working-class solidarity, especially in Japan and the U.S., must be mobilized to come to the aid of students and workers facing the Roh regime's brutal repression. Hands off militant students and striking workers! Release all victims of police-state terror!

Liberal Opposition Cheers On U.S. Occupation

Roh had been riding the crest of his 1987 "democratic reforms." Seoul's hosting of the 1988 Olympics and recent diplomatic breakthroughs with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who evidently wants to exchange North Korea for economic aid and investment from Seoul. But the past two years have seen double-digit inflation in the South, skyrocketing housing and land prices accompanied by real estate speculation scandals and a widening gap between rich and poor. Beginning with an impressive union organizing victory at Hyundai in 1987 (see "South Korea: Strikes Shake Dictatorship," WV No. 435, 4 September 1987), workers had won badly needed wage increases of about 15 percent a year. But the regime countered with a systematic drive to force wage gains below the inflation rate. Tens of thousands of riot police were sent in to violently suppress last year's Hyundai shipyard sit-down strike.

While ruthlessly suppressing proletarian organizations that have sprung up outside the government's own CIA-built

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U.S. troops along 38th parallel DMZ target North Korean deformed workers state.

John Nordelt



Eyewitness Report From Seoul



ON THE STUDENT BARRICADES

Spartacist Canada Photos

The following report was written by Mark Louis, a North American sympathizer of the International Communist League, who spent five days in Seoul last month.

I arrived in Seoul on Wednesday, May 29. The previous Saturday a student, Kim Kwi Jong, had been killed by the riot police at a demonstration. The police maintained that she was trampled by other demonstrators and wanted to perform an autopsy. Her family and the "Committee to Deal With Kim's Case" were blocking their attempts; they wanted an admission of excessive use of force and an apology from the cops. A ghoulish stand-off at downtown Paik Hospital ensued. Students erected and manned 24-hour barricades on each end of the hospital block in addition to the hospital morgue entrance. They were armed with metal fence posts, torn up sidewalk pieces and Molotov cocktails. There were several workers at Paik Hospital supporting the students. The cops across the street were armed with truncheons, shields, tear gas rifles, water cannons and gas masks.

One of the first sights on my arrival downtown during the Wednesday evening rush hour was a group of about 100 students on a busy street chanting, clenched fists in the air—it wasn't a demo, they were doing fund-raising. The collection box bore a picture of Kim. The death of Kim appeared to be an important focal point of student agitation. On a medium-traffic road near Paik Hospital, students distributed newspapers and leaflets to passing motorists, most of whom slowed down and rolled down their windows to receive them. In crowded subway cars people were reading similar flyers.

Thursday morning 1,500 riot police charged and removed the barricades in an hour-long clash where ten students and ten cops were injured. They didn't get the body and the barricades went hack up. The barricade-enclosed block along with the adjacent street near Myongdong cathedral (where dissidents on the cops' wanted list are given sanctuary) were "liberated zones."

I was able to speak to a group of students there. I was challenged: why does "my" government support Roh, why does it want to keep Korea divided? I explained my opposition to U.S. imperialism, both in Korea, the Persian Gulf and in the U.S. I told them about cop attacks on blacks and picket lines. While we were talking an audience began to build, and when some of my points got through, there was applause.

Around 1 p.m. on Sunday, June 2, I was in my hotel room when I thought I made out the rhythmic sound of chanting.

Camera in hand, I went out to investigate. Four blocks away was the largest, most militant demonstration I had ever seen. The newspapers said it was 35,000-strong, I estimated double that.

A sound truck stood in the middle of the intersection of Chongo (a ten-lane street) and Samillo (eight lanes). Circled around it, and extending deep into each of the four streets were students seated on the pavement. How they got there is still a puzzle to me, since the cops had vowed to limit the demo to sidewalks plus one traffic lane and to prohibit anti-

government slogans. In this they failed: the chant "Down with Roh Tae Woo" was easily discernible. Various speakers, young and old, made emotion-filled speeches, often punctuated with chants and raised fists. The demonstrators, serious, determined, many with gauze tear gas "masks" in place, responded in kind.

West of the intersection and directly in front of a McDonald's restaurant was a frightening spectacle. Separated by about two meters, thousands of riot police confronted several rows of militants. Pacing along this gap, a student leader addressed the courageous students on the front lines. Chanting defiantly, these were the guys who would take the brunt of the cop attack. Behind them small groups, mostly women, wearing Red Cross armbands also chanted and sang songs. In the same area, with their backs to the main rally, several thousand stood ready to do battle. Although students appeared to be the vast majority, they were not alone. Ordinary-looking people of all ages, some in ties, lined the sidewalks watching sympathetically and some of these non-student types participated in the rally. I did not see anything resembling contingents of organized labor.

I happened to be standing on a sidewalk newspaper box taking pictures of the "Showdown at McDonald's" when the cops charged. Store shutters came crashing down, tens of thousands of demonstrators stood up. With their black gas masks in place, the cops looked like an army of Darth Vaders. Truncheons swinging, they began beating their way into the crowd. I was snapping away when a tear gas canister exploded in my immediate vicinity.

Skin stinging, eyes tearing and finding it hard to breathe, I joined the crowd around me which began running in the opposite direction. Nobody panicked. I continued running. I figured the demo was over, but I was wrong. Although they were dispersed and in some disarray, the students who had been driven down side streets by the gas were just taking a badly needed breather.

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Spartacist Canada

Seoul, June 2: Thousands of students face off against Darth Vader-style riot police.

Trade Pact...

(continued from page 1)

rulers (particularly Argentina's Menem) are falling all over each other trying to get in on the feast as U.S. capital prepares to carve up the economies of its southern "neighbors."

From the rape of Grenada and the contra war against Nicaragua to the invasion of Panama and the "drug wars" aimed at terrorizing the Andean countries of South America, the U.S. is wielding the "Big Stick." Emboldened by a "big win" in the Persian Gulf, these cops of the world now have their sights set on Castro's Cuba. For 30 years U.S. rulers have smarted at their humiliating defeat by the Cuban workers and peasants at the Bay of Pigs, and sought to destroy Cuba through economic blockade and CIA intrigue. The very existence of this (bureaucratically deformed) workers state, where festering poverty has been abolished and health and literacy levels have reached "First World" levels, is an incitement to rebellion throughout the hemisphere. Now abandoned by Gorbachev, Havana is facing Washington's fury full-blast. We call on all class-conscious workers to unconditionally defend Cuba against Yankee imperialism.

While Yale grad Bush links arms with Harvard man and Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari in selling "free trade," the Canadian social democrats of the NDP wave the Maple Leaf flag and the bourgeois populist Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas wraps himself in the Mexican tricolor. Yet they only beg for better terms from Washington. The main opposition to the trade pact has come from the openly racist and protectionist AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which treacherously sets U.S. workers against their Mexican and Canadian brothers and sisters. There is a burning need for an internationalist proletarian opposition which stands with the working class and impoverished peasantry of Mexico against the imperialist assault. The Canadian, U.S. and Mexican sections of the International Communist League are dedicated to building a revolutionary vanguard that can unite the working masses of the continent in common class struggle.

U.S., Canada: No to Racist Protectionism!

Coupled with the 1989 trade pact with Canada, the FTA is designed to establish a "Fortress North America" as a weapon against a German-led Europe and a Japanese-dominated Far East. The American bourgeoisie dreams of salvaging the rusting U.S. economy through establishing a protected \$6-trillion common market encompassing 360 million people—substantially bigger than the European Economic Community—stretching "from the Yukon to the Yucatan." "To hear George Bush tell it, a free-trade pact



U.S. immigration cop seizes Mexican workers near the border. Over 1,000 "illegal" immigrants are arrested and deported daily.

between the U.S. and Mexico would be the next best thing to a free lunch," reports *Time* (3 June). The Texas mafia in the White House salivates at the prospect of raking in superprofits from a wholesale U.S. takeover of the Mexican economy. They doubtless fantasize about buying up the land south of the border like the land grab that stole half of Mexico's territory outright a century and a half ago.

The American ruling class wants to pick up the Mexican economy in one huge buyout—at bargain basement prices. Certainly decaying American capitalism can't produce anything decent any more, after a decade of looting the economy for trillion-dollar Pentagon budgets and now to bail out the S&L crooks. In a graphic example of the deindustrialization of America, the Dow Jones stock index just replaced USX (U.S. Steel) with Walt Disney! However, the reactionary AFL-CIO bureaucracy aims its guns not at their capitalist masters, but at the workers of Mexico and Japan. For years there has been a barrage of racist, protectionist poison from the auto, garment and textile union tops blaming foreign workers for "stealing American jobs." Yet these same labor lieutenants of capital fork over billions in giveaways to U.S. bosses and go along with millions of layoffs while knifing U.S. workers' struggles in the back.

As the U.S. and Mexican economies are increasingly interpenetrated, there is a tremendous opportunity for internationalist labor struggle. The current plant occupation (sit-down strike) by garment workers in El Paso, Texas should be used to spark an organizing drive for unionization of workers on both sides of the Rio

Grande/Rio Bravo (see box opposite).

The jingoism of the labor traitors is echoed by reformists like the Communist Party USA, whose headlines scream "Maquiladora: A Monster Devouring U.S. Jobs." Their counterparts in the Canadian CP oppose the FTA as a "sellout of Canadian sovereignty" and

Chinese American Vincent Chin was hanged to death on the streets of Detroit a decade ago because a Chrysler foreman thought he was Japanese and blamed him for "stealing jobs." The AFL-CIO's anti-foreign-worker policies are so grotesque, denouncing a free trade agreement for serving to "increase illegal immigration," that even George Bush denounces it for racism against Hispanics. We say that anyone who has made it to the U.S. or Canada has the right to work and live without the fear of being kidnapped by *la migra*! For full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers! Stop the deportations! Smash the racist Simpson-Rodino immigration law! Mexican workers as well must come to the aid of Central American refugees who, fleeing bloody repression by the U.S. client regimes, are brutally exploited and victimized in southern Mexico.

In a *Wall Street Journal* (18 April) column denouncing the trade pact, AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland hypocritically condemned the *maquiladora* plants, where "more than a half-million Mexicans...were joining the ranks of the most crudely exploited humans on the planet." But Kirkland and the rest of the American labor bureaucracy haven't lifted a finger to aid the organization of Mexican workers, not even in industries like auto, where 75,000 work in the Big 3 plants south of the border. GM alone has 25 plants in Mexico—it is the largest private employer in the entire country. Instead, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, infamous among class-conscious workers through-



Mexican president Salinas de Gortari and his imperialist godfather Bush.

because "it's a bad deal for Canada" (*Pacific Tribune*, 29 April). These "Communists" can't seem to distinguish between Canadian bosses and Canadian workers. In the U.S., a soft-core version of this social-chauvinism emanates from social-democratic groupings like *Labor Notes* (March 1991), which highlights opposition to the FTA "either out of self-interest or a sense of international solidarity," while not even mentioning protectionism, the main theme of their pals in the labor bureaucracy.

This is deadly poison—the young

out the hemisphere for decades of dirty work for the CIA from Chile to Central America to the Dominican Republic, has backed to the hilt the bloody U.S.-backed dictatorships which have enslaved the workers and peasants of the region.

The 1989 "free trade" agreement between Canada and the U.S. has been in place for two years, and has accelerated the war on unions and social benefits on both sides of the border. Coupled with the recession, it has meant the loss of at least a quarter million manufacturing jobs. Unemployment has soared to an official rate of 10.5 percent as Canada has lost 15 percent of its manufacturing jobs. When Caterpillar announced in April that it was moving operations from its plant north of Toronto to North Carolina (where wages are \$7.50 an hour less), workers occupied the factory. But the Canadian Auto Workers bureaucracy, which left the UAW in a nationalist split four years ago, coaxed the workers out of the plant with empty promises of severance pay! The pro-capitalist CAW tops only bind Canadian workers closer to their "own" English Canadian bourgeoisie—while supporting the U.S./Canadian anti-Soviet military alliances.

Mexico: For Class-Struggle Unionism!

In April, Mexican president Salinas toured Canadian and U.S. cities beating the drums for the trade pact, while at home he pushes an avalanche of "privatizations." Salinas has staked his regime on the FTA, declaring "Mexico has decided to join the New World Order." What the New World Order means for Mexican workers and peasants is literal starvation, as this Harvard-educated

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El Paso Garment Workers Hold Plant

The strike covering 120 workers at four El Paso, Texas garment plants—DCB, H&R, ACC and the occupation and hunger strike at Sonia Fashions—all owned by Andres Diaz, the "Sweatshop King," is now in its third month. Bonjour, a major national wholesaler, has canceled contracts with the "King" for the duration of the strike. The labor movement must come to the aid of the courageous Latina women strikers by mobilizing its power for an organizing strike of all the sweatshops.

The strike was called to demand recognition of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) and that tens of thousands of dollars in back wages be paid (see "Hispanic Women Strikers Occupy El Paso Plant," WV No. 528, 7 June). To make sure there was no scab production, the biggest factory, Sonia's, was occupied. To dramatize their struggle, beginning in mid-May small groups of strikers have gone on hunger strike, being replaced by others as dehydration and sickness set in. In a phone interview with *Workers Vanguard*, 52-year-old Julieta Riola warmly recalled reading the Spanish translation of our first article while she was on hunger strike. Eustolia Oliva, a leader of *Mujer Obrera* (Working Woman) which first took up the garment workers' cause, told WV, "We're stronger than we were on the first day."

The strikers are solid, but they can't be left to stand alone. We pointed earlier to the power of unionized transportation workers to "hot-cargo" scab goods from Diaz' shops. In fact, ILGWU organizer Isidoro Basurto told WV, Teamster truck drivers of Roadway, Yellow Freight and

UPS have refused to cross the picket lines at struck plants. However, the rest of the El Paso labor movement has failed to mobilize actively in support of the strike. With solid backing from the International and other unions, strike activists could lead a mass march of

thousands down Texas Avenue to pull out garment workers in other sweatshops to join the strike! And extend the strike across the river to the *maquiladora* "free trade zone" garment shops in Ciudad Juárez!

In a desperate attempt to undercut the

strike, Andres Diaz has been sneaking pieces from his one partially operating cutting room out to other area sweatshops. On June 20, while following Diaz' car in order to set up a picket line at the scab shop, ILGWU organizers Basurto and Adriana Meneses were arrested on the phony charge of disturbing the peace. Six days later, union organizer Pablo Montiel and striker Leonardo Garcia were similarly arrested on trumped-up charges. Not only have El Paso police engaged in an arrest and harassment campaign on behalf of the struck company, now cops are directly running Diaz' cut goods to the scab shops in unmarked police cars! We demand the dropping of all charges against the strikers and their supporters!

From the Farah strike in the early '70s and the strike at the Vestamex *maquiladora* in 1987, women garment workers in the El Paso/Ciudad Juárez area have fought valiantly in the face of tremendous odds. What's urgently needed is to flex the muscle of organized labor in a class-struggle campaign to organize workers on both sides of the border. If truckers refuse to handle struck goods and rail workers refuse to bring in supplies, utilities workers could cut off power and water to the sweatshops, teachers (who sent a delegation to Sonia's) could help man picket lines during summer vacation, and a concerted campaign could shut down El Paso's 120 *talleres de hambre* with their starvation wages. Despite the bosses' threats and cop intimidation, if the class brothers and sisters stand together, these greedy capitalists can be defeated. ¡Viva la huelga de la cosnura de El Paso! ■



Jose Luis Cerrato/El Paso Times

Striking garment workers picket DCB Apparel on May 1.

technocrat has instituted his economic program called *la apertura*, the "opening" to the Yankee colossus to the north. Years of unrelenting attacks on the Mexican working class on behalf of the imperialist banks saw real wages slashed by 60 percent between 1982 and the end of the decade (*El Cotidiano*, April-May 1991), so that they are now lower than in the late 1930s! While foreign investment is skyrocketing (to an expected \$4-5 billion in 1991), 77,000 Mexican companies have closed in the last five years (*La Jornada*, 28 April).

In 1982 when the "debt crisis" exploded, Mexico owed roughly \$80 billion to foreign creditors. Over the last eight years, the governments of the perennially ruling PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) have squeezed over \$80 billion out of Mexican workers, and today—after a \$10 billion reduction last year through renegotiation—Mexico owes...\$80 billion. A government official bragged that "Now there is life after debt." Not for the poor and working people, who face a daily struggle for survival. Most workers make the minimum wage or less—under four dollars a day. Yet prices for meat, fish, fruit and many vegetables are as high as in the U.S. Consumption of meat has fallen drastically and malnutrition is rampant. While Cárdenas and his PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) plead for a "moratorium" on the debt, we call for renouncing it outright—not one cent to the bloodsucking banks!

Meanwhile, Salinas is "privatizing" the economy at a breakneck pace—three-quarters of the 1,200 state-owned industries have been merged, closed or sold off, including steel mills, mines, the telephone system and both national airlines. Eighteen major banks will be sold off this year and next. Often, as at Aeroméxico, this selloff has included smashing the union and firing the entire workforce. Strikes have been broken with army scabherding at the Sicartsa steel



Vallarta/Picture Group

U.S. union tops push protectionist poison, blame Mexican workers for "stealing American jobs."

mill and the Cananea copper mine. In the case of oil workers and most recently the port of Veracruz, it has meant a frontal attack on the old-guard labor bureaucracy, with its corporatist powers and privileges. Yet on May Day, these *charros*, the corrupt union bureaucrats of the Confederation of Mexican Labor (CTM), long a pillar of the PRI, once again dragged a million workers to Mexico City's Zócalo to pay obeisance to the president and demonstrate for the "free trade" rape of Mexico.

The battle for union democracy at the Ford plant in Cuautitlán near Mexico City highlights the stranglehold of imperialist companies, the Mexican government and corporatist "unions," which will be a model for "labor relations" under a "free trade" pact. Ford ripped up the contract in 1987, and in January 1990 a group of gun thugs brought in by the company and the CTM stormed the plant, killing one worker, Cleto Nigno. After Ford attempted to fire 2,400, a court required a recount vote for union affiliation. While most workers supported the

COR (a dissident labor federation), the CTM "won" in a June vote carried out under the guns of police grenadiers, with workers required to verbally declare which union they supported in front of government officials, supervisors and video cameras! Afterwards, 90-year-old CTM leader Fidel Velázquez vowed that over 1,100 workers who voted for the rival union would be thrown out.

The Cuautitlán Ford struggle is one of the sharpest labor battles on the continent, and should have received the support of solidarity strikes by U.S. and Canadian auto workers.

Two areas of Mexico's economy long considered untouchable have been the nationalized oil industry, Pemex, and the *ejidos*, communally owned lands encompassing 60 percent of farmland, whose peasants were long a base of support for the ruling party. From the 1940s to the early '60s, Mexico managed to achieve self-sufficiency in food production. But with the economic crisis, credits to rural small producers were slashed and now Salinas is moving to allow the sale of

communal land. As *ejidatarios* face ruin from a flood of U.S. grain, the subsidized tortillas that keep millions of poor just above starvation will be a thing of the past. And though the PRI denies any plans to allow U.S. and European oil giants to invade Mexico's rich offshore fields, it is already privatizing processing and transport, while Bush (the former head of "Zapata Oil") and his fellow oil men want to undo Mexico's 1938 nationalization of petroleum.

In Mexican industry, the average worker is paid 57 cents an hour, one-twentieth of the average industrial wage of \$10.84 in the U.S. In the highest-paid industry, transportation equipment, this rises to one-seventh of U.S. wages. But in the 2,000 *maquiladora* (free trade zone) plants, almost half a million workers, four-fifths of them women, slave 48 hours for an average wage of \$28 a week. This is one of the lowest industrial wages in the world, far below Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea. Working conditions in many *maquilas* are unspeakable—child labor, brown lung, toxic wastes—and workers are crowded by the tens of thousands into shantytowns ringing the plants. The women workers of the *maquiladoras* and throughout Mexico have fought in militant strikes to organize against this brutal super-exploitation. A class-struggle labor leadership would champion the rights of these doubly oppressed workers—fighting for free day care and for free, safe abortion on demand. This is literally a life-and-death question, as many thousands of Mexican women die yearly from illegal abortions.

The fight against the FTA is a battle against American imperialist domination of Mexico. The U.S. ambassador, John Negroponte, was known in his previous posting in Honduras as "The Proconsul" for his role in running the Nicaraguan contras. In a confidential

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Trade Pact...

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memo, Negroponte declared that a "Free Trade Agreement will institutionalize acceptance of a North American orientation to Mexico's foreign relations" (*Proceso*, 13 May). Salinas had already lined up with the American-engineered blockade of Sandinista Nicaragua and, in addition to the notorious activities of the American DEA inside Mexico, today U.S. military planes routinely enter the country "in hot pursuit" of alleged drug smugglers. Using the same "drug wars" pretext, Washington is increasingly militarizing the border with Mexico, as U.S. officials and racist vigilantes escalate violence against Mexican immigrants in the border region.

Negroponte's memo also saw the FTA as "an instrument to...guarantee continued policies of economic reform in Mexico beyond the Salinas administration." The U.S. capitalists want to continue to buy up Mexican properties at will. The Salinas administration, in turn, is looking more and more like the government of Porfirio Díaz at the turn of the century, during whose reign American investments in Mexico exceeded all other U.S. foreign investment and all investments by the Mexican bourgeoisie. By 1911, some 80 percent of all fixed investment in mining was American, up to 20 percent of Mexico's land was owned by foreigners, and of the country's 80 largest companies only six were Mexican (compared to 21 U.S. and 23 British establishments). Today all eight of Mexico's largest companies are either state-owned or foreign-owned "transnationals." But while the Yankee capitalists' appetites are voracious, it should be recalled that the predatory feast under Díaz provoked the Mexican Revolution.

American bosses are not the only owners of *maquilas*. Dozens of Japanese companies—Nissan, Hitachi, Sanyo, Casio, Matsushita—have set up factories. The hollowness of the "free trade" rhetoric is exposed by the U.S. bourgeoisie's concern that the Japanese be excluded from the "free lunch." *Time* quotes one Washington expert: "What we emphatically don't want to do is to make Mexico safe for Japanese investment." The protectionists in Congress are demanding a provision that would require 75 percent "North American content" to exclude Japanese products. The anti-Japanese chauvinism of the U.S. trade-union tops is shared by nationalists in Mexico, who are now railing against Japanese capital investment in the "privatized" state industries. (Salinas, however, is adept at playing the Japanese card—talking of dynamic "Pacific Rim" countries and

even enrolling his children in a Japanese school in Mexico City.)

For internationalist Opposition to the FTAI

Nationalism is the touchstone of opponents of the FTA in Mexico. Cárdenas and his fake-socialist supporters spout rhetoric about *la patria* (fatherland) and national sovereignty in order to mobilize workers for a return to the "good old days" when the PRI's authoritarian capitalist rule had a fig leaf of "independence" from the U.S. Cárdenas bombastically declares, "we are categorically and irrevocably opposed to this kind of free trade agreement," and then talks of an "alternative agreement" that would include a "social charter" and "common standards for labour, social and

and prevent dreaded "social unrest." Meanwhile, some ex-Stalinists around Jorge Alcocer have recently split from the *cardenista* PRD to support Salinas, arguing that the free trade agreement will bring foreign investment and some concessions to the workers while criticizing Cárdenas' "vengeance-seeking" and "anti-governmentism"!

The reformists of the PRT (Mexican followers of Ernest Mandel), on the other hand, declare themselves internationalists hostile to any illusions in the possibility of defending "a 'national' capitalist system, outdated, exploded, outstripped, ruined"...and then call for "coming together" with nationalists (including "those coming from the bourgeois camp") in a "broad front against the FTA with forces like the PRD" (*Bandera*

ism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line that is built, with every international trust, and every workers' association that is formed."

—"Critical Remarks on the National Question" (October-December 1913)

The "free trade" assault on Mexico poses pointblank the need for building Trotskyist parties as part of a revolutionary Fourth International which can lead the proletariat of the region to power. A document of the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938, "Thesis on the World Role of American Imperialism," noted that economic rivalries were the opening shots of the second imperialist world war:

"The 'good neighbor' policy is nothing but the attempt to unify the Western Hemisphere under the hegemony of Washington, as a solid bloc wielded by the latter in its drive to close the door of the two American continents to all the foreign imperialist powers except itself. This policy is materially supplemented by the favorable trade agreements which the United States seeks to conclude with the Latin American countries in the hope of systematically edging its rivals out of the market...."

"The struggle against American imperialism is therefore at the same time a struggle against the coming imperialist war and for the liberation of oppressed colonial and semicolonial peoples. Hence, it is inseparable from the class struggle of the American proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie, and cannot be conducted apart from it...."

"Only a union of the Latin American peoples, striving towards the goal of a united socialist America and allied in the struggle with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States, would present a force strong enough to contend successfully with North American imperialism."

The International Communist League has always recognized that the fate of the Mexican and U.S. proletariats are closely intertwined. As we stressed in "Mexico Atop the Volcano" (*WV* No. 429, 29 May 1987): "The light for workers revolution in Mexico and the U.S. is directly linked, including by the human bridge of millions of Mexican and Central American workers who have 'gone north.' Mexico's proximity to the U.S., which has cost it half its territory and subjected it to repeated Yankee aggression, can be a powerful lever for international socialist revolution. The Spartacist tendency seeks to construct an authentically communist vanguard to lead it, forged in the fight for the rebirth of Trotsky's Fourth International."

Grupo Espartaquista de México,
Spartacist League/U.S.,
Trotskyist League of Canada,
sections of the
International Communist League
(Fourth Internationalist)



Banner at Mexico City May Day march denounces Free Trade Agreement for "prostituting" Mexico to the U.S.

environmental rights" (*Canadian Tribune*, 21 January). This Cuauhtémoc-in-Wonderland scenario ignores the fundamental fact that it is precisely Mexico's cheap wages and lax regulatory standards that attract the profit-gouging North American capitalists.

In fact, Cárdenas offers up his bourgeois populist policies as better able to bring about a "convergence of national interests" with the Yankee imperialists, as "only a Mexican government with...impeccable nationalist credentials" can get the working class to shoulder its "share" of the burden as Mexico emerges from a "welfare state" (*Foreign Policy*, Spring 1990). Stripped of the language of bourgeois diplomacy, Cárdenas is lecturing Washington, Ottawa and Wall Street that only a popular front in power can stick it to the Mexican proletariat

Socialista, 10 June). The fact that Cárdenas is not opposed to a free trade pact, but is only trying to *modify* its terms, exposes the PRT's call, not for uniting in militant actions against imperialism but for a *political bloc* with "progressive" sectors of the Mexican bourgeoisie. Likewise, the pseudo-Trotskyist PTZ (followers of the late Nahuel Moreno) publishes a front-page editorial talking of "our country," "our territory," "our sovereignty"—even "our foreign policy"!—and calling for "a national front that opposes the sellout of the country" (*El Socialista*, 1st fortnight of June 1991).

Lenin denounced such capitulation with contempt:

"Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just,' 'purest,' most refined and civilized brand. In place of all forms of national-

Letter...

(continued from page 3)

determined in the process of production itself, not subsequent distribution. Henwood, however, focuses on redistributing income through taxation.

In this context, Henwood's attitude toward the unions appears contradictory. His 7 May *Village Voice* piece urged the New York City labor movement to aggressively campaign for taxing the rich. The article's subhead was "Unions' Tax-the-Rich Rally Gets Timid." Thus Henwood evidently believes that the labor movement has the economic and political power to affect how, in his words, the state redistributes value "both within sectors of capital and across classes." At the same time, he isn't sure whether the unions can defend their members' living standards through militant strike action such as shutting down the airports, and whether it makes a difference if they do. It does.

Would winning the PATCO strike have made a difference? Just see Barbara Koppel's film *American Dream* about the Hormel strike and ask yourself if the outcome would have been different for

the 1,400 meatpackers in the middle of Minnesota if Reagan hadn't been able to bust the air traffic controllers. Or for the Morenci copper miners, or the Greyhound bus drivers, or the Pittston coal miners, etc.

Henwood does not address the main point in our reply to his original letter: how to *begin* to reverse the increase in the rate of exploitation of the American working class brought about by the *defeatism* of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, both the outright reactionaries like Lane Kirkland and the social democrats like Dennis Rivera. Right after the 1983-84 Greyhound strike, we wrote in our action program "Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win," of which we have distributed over 200,000 copies to striking workers and labor demonstrations:

"No decisive gain of labor was ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress. Everything the workers movement has won of value has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks of labor in hard-fought struggle, on the picket lines, in plant occupations. What counts is power. The strength of the unions lies in their numbers, their militancy, their organization and discipline and their relation to the decisive means of production in modern capitalist society."

—*WV* No. 349, 2 March 1984

If the unions had shut down the airports in the PATCO or Eastern strikes, if mass picketing had been used to stop police scabberding in the Greyhound and Hormel strikes, this would not be "just a more militant variant of business unionism." The entire political climate in this country would have changed. American society would have *polarized* along different lines: for the workers or for capitalist law and order. The impact of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strike and San Francisco general strike, of the 1937 Flint GM sitdown, went far, far beyond winning union contracts for the specific groups of workers involved. These actions spurred class struggle throughout American society and radicalized tens of thousands of workers and also young intellectuals.

To turn things around today will require comparable struggle. A major reason for the catastrophic decline in unionization over the past few decades has been the shift of manufacturing from the Midwest and Northeast to the South and Southwest, the so-called "Sun Belt." To organize the "open shop" South, union forces will have to take on cracker sheriffs and KKK terrorists. And it will take militant tactics, such as plant occu-

pations and "hot-cargoing" (refusing to handle scab products), for the existing unions to put an end to the wage gouging and giveback contracts of the past decade and give a combative labor movement the power to attract new members and broad support. This is the kind of class and anti-racist struggle needed to mobilize the black masses behind the labor movement, not lobbying Congress or state legislatures to "tax the rich." ■

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Korean Workers...

(continued from page 4)

corporatist trade-union federation, the South Korean police state has tolerated a loyal liberal opposition which acts as a safety valve to harness student and working-class discontent into "safe" channels. In the 1987 elections, the two principal liberal opposition forces, centered around Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung (the "two Kims"), could not agree on a common slate and ran against each other, utilizing the military's man Roh to win. Liberals and radicals alike have since flagellated themselves for squandering this "historic" opportunity to oust the military hardliners. In fact the two Kims are nothing but parliamentary hustlers, who stand with the military on the fundamentals.

Indeed, Kim Young Sam openly joined forces with Roh to form the Democratic Liberal Party last year. And while Kim Dae Jung continues to mouth democratic phrases, in an extensive interview in Japan's English-language *Daily Yomiuri* (3 June) during the student protests he made it absolutely clear that he stood for "political stability," insisting that Roh "should be removed by elections, not by street demonstrations or violent means." Kim wants the *chuebol* (monopoly)-

he declares: "The best way to avoid creating a vacuum that will be filled by a resurgent Japan is to keep American forces in Korea." South Korea has been a U.S. puppet since its creation as a forward military post for American imperialism's Cold War onslaught against Mao's China and the USSR, particularly during the Korean War of 1950-53.

But Kim's views are certainly not shared by the vast majority of workers and student militants. South Korea's vaunted "economic miracle" has been achieved through rigid repression and grinding exploitation. Meanwhile, there is a wide—and growing—"income gap" between rich and poor. And the student protesters who chanted "Down with the murderous Roh regime!" also shouted "Drive out the Yankees!" Neither the independent trade unions nor the all-Korea nationalist student protesters buy the government's virulently anti-Communist propaganda. Indeed one of the principal demands of student militants in recent years has been for unconditional reunification with the North, expressed most dramatically by mass student delegations attempting to cross the border at Panmunjon.

Far from seeing North Korea as the Communist enemy, many South Korean workers and students are either neutral or sympathetic toward the North. "In North Korea everybody is equal," said one student protester who, as the *Korea Herald*

iric American Stalinoid apologists like Sam Marcy's Workers World Party and Jack Barnes' SWP to the contrary, the dynastic regime of Kim Il Sung and his son and heir apparent Kim Jong Il is one of the most grotesque expressions of Stalinist rule anywhere.

Unlike Germany, where the promise of instant D-mark prosperity cast its spell over the workers of the East (who have since been cruelly disillusioned) and pushed through a ruinous capitalist reunification, in Korea the prospects point, if anything, in the opposite direction. The U.S.-hacked strongman regime in the South is so fearful of any popular contact with the North that it forbids all mail and phone communication, and makes it a crime to visit North Korea or listen to North Korean radio. A revolutionary upsurge in the South would almost immediately pose the reunification of Korea as a revolutionary workers state, and as the first contingents of workers and students crossed over the DMZ it would instantly shake the brittle bureaucratic regime of Kim Il Sung & Son.

While the North Korean proletariat has stubbornly defended its socialized property forms and stayed the bloody hand of U.S. imperialism along the 38th parallel for 40 years, the Kim Il Sung bureaucracy—with its autarkic program of "self-reliance" (*juche*) based on building "socialism in half a country"—has consistently refused to reach out to the South Korean proletariat. Now, smelling the winds of collapsing Stalinism from the West, Kim is already making amends with imperialist archenemy Japan and testing the waters for some form of accommodation with the capitalist South.

South Korea is a powder keg of class contradictions waiting to explode in social revolution. An article in the *New York Village Voice* (19 June 1990) captured this quality:

"In the universities, students sing of revolution. In the assembly plants and factories, workers organize radical unions. Strikers occupy shipyards and auto plants. Farmers organize to evict U.S. air bases from their communities."

The personally courageous leadership of the new union movement—forged in struggle against the *chaebols*, the KCIA and the "AFL-CIA"—supported corporatist "union" federation—is limited to a perspective of economic demands and liberal democracy. Yet virtually every strike by the independent trade unions immediately comes up against the naked power of the capitalist state. What is sorely needed is a proletarian party committed to a revolutionary perspective for all Korea.

For Leninist Internationalism!

The South Korean industrial proletariat is relatively young, but the traditions of Korean communism, inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, fill an important chapter in the history of the struggle for world socialist revolution. Dispersed by Japanese imperialism's 1910 occupation, pioneer Korean revolutionary militants played an important role not only in Korea but in building Communist parties of the Soviet Far East, China and Japan. Koreans in the Soviet



San Francisco, May 23: Spartacists protest Seoul's bloody repression of student demos.

maritime district eagerly joined the Red Army to fight against the White Guards and Japanese imperialism during the Russian Civil War. They were active in China and Manchuria as an important component of the Communist International's Shanghai Far Eastern Bureau. Indeed the first Comintern representative in Japan was a Korean and many Korean youth studying in Tokyo were recruited to the early Japanese CP.

Courageous Korean Communists, dispatched from the USSR, China and Japan, tried to organize an indigenous Korean party, but most were jailed by the efficient Japanese occupation police. The Korean contribution to early Asian communism was readily seen at the 1921 First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East, held in Moscow, where 52 of the 144 accredited delegates were Korean. Stalin later politically destroyed these invaluable cadres. But this internationalist founding tradition of Korean communism must be rekindled and expanded through forging a Leninist-Trotskyist party fighting for the revolutionary reunification of Korea. Fused with the combative spirit of the Korean workers and students, this would have an electrifying effect on China and Japan.

The Spartacist Group Japan and the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) demand: U.S. out of Korea! For military defense of North Korea, the USSR and the other deformed workers states! For revolutionary reunification of Korea through socialist revolution in the South and proletarian political revolution in the North! Reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution! ■



Kim Il Sung

North Korea's arch-Stalinist "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung.

dominated South Korean capitalist state to adopt a democratic façade as the surest road to gobbling up the "Communist" North: "My goal is to make South Korea another West Germany. I am convinced that only when we have a truly democratic society in the South will unification be possible."

Until then, Kim is unabashed in his support for the U.S. military presence, insisting that "American forces, at a reduced level, should remain in Korea indefinitely." Pledging loyalty to Washington's "New World Order" in its growing interimperialist rivalry with Japan,

(31 May) reported, was "echoing comments made by the vast majority of the radical students." The article continued:

"The student insisted he did not support the government of North Korean leader Kim Il-sung, saying, 'You know that to support North Korea can put you in jail.' "But he added, 'in North Korea everybody has food enough to eat and school and medical care are free.'"

It speaks volumes about the corrupt and brutal character of capitalist class rule in the South that these militant petty-bourgeois students are attracted to the truly bizarre bureaucratically deformed workers state to the north. Eccen-

marks were able to get better pictures of the action.) In thick clouds of tear gas, the battle on Chongo raged for some time. Amazingly, at one point the crowd surged westward, pushing the cops back. How they tolerated the gas is beyond me. Later on, I saw the remains of the combatants' weapons: Molotov cocktails and rocks. I don't know how many were injured.

After an hour or so of this the ranks began to thin. Littered with the remnants of the fight and with tear gas lingering in the air, Chongo was returning to semi-normality. Store windows were all intact. The road was thick with traffic, riot police were massed on corners and people clutching kerchiefs to their noses filled the sidewalks. Several hours later, the air still had a bite to it. ■

Eyewitness...

(continued from page 5)

A steady drumbeat resounded as people milled around discussing what to do next. They tore up the sidewalk tiles, then broke up the big pieces by smashing them onto the road. Advancing in a semi-organized way, they lobbed their rocks. The cops responded with rounds of tear gas which sounded like automatic gun fire. The crowd retreated, then began preparing for the next advance. Individuals occasionally shouted out directions.

Although I didn't get near the heavy fighting, it was obvious to me that the students were very brave. (Photographers with "PRESS" imprinted on their gas

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Teamsters...

(continued from page 3)

invasion of the IBT convention is the culmination of a half-century-long government vendetta against this giant of the labor movement. But the Teamsters still have the power to cripple the economy with a transport strike. As the bosses' press noted, "one corner of the marketplace where Teamsters have considerable clout is the package-delivery industry. At UPS, which delivers almost 12 million parcels a day...a Teamsters walk-out would effectively halt the nation's package-delivery system" (*Wall Street Journal*, 12 June).

Union "Reform" Through Government Control?

At the convention, Chuck Mack, a union official from California, denounced the consent decree, saying: "This agreement has allowed the government to occupy our international union and many locals and joint councils like a conquering army for the last two years." Running point for the government is "Teamsters for a Democratic Union," a social-democratic-inspired outfit whose idea of "union reform" consists of bringing in the courts. They worked hand in hand with the Senate "investigation" of the Teamsters as witnesses for the prosecution, and literally wrote the blueprint for the government plan to



Jimmy Hoffa (right) confronts witchhunter Bobby Kennedy during 1959 Congressional hearing. Kennedys waged a decade-long vendetta to jail Teamster leader.

heart deals and bribery, and gave Presser secret information to help get him elected Teamster chief. Yelling about corruption really takes chutzpah coming from the Reagan and Bush gang whose family and friends fed at the trough of the S&L piggy bank mega rip-off.

Since the 1989 consent decree, the feds have charged over 100 Teamsters with corruption and thrown 41 out of the union. Meanwhile the IBT treasury is being milked by the court-appointed overseers: while complaining about high

And most of the American left that claims to be socialist has predictably lined up behind Carey and the TDU.

Thus last April, at the *Labor Notes* conference in Dearborn that brought together ex-New Leftists and aspiring union bureaucrats like the New Directions crowd in the UAW, featured speaker Carey declared that, instead of rewarding labor's enemies, he would "reward our friends and punish our enemies." In other words, vote Democrat. Yet the ostensible Trotskyists of Socialist Action call Carey "a fighting alternative" (while conceding his program is "less than clear on political action"), and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency claims that the TDU is part of an "implied program of progressive unionism" and that the "task at hand is to win the election for Carey. What happens after that will depend on the strength and skill of the TDU caucus in the union." If the Communist Party didn't tilt to Carey, it's because they claimed that "progressive local and district union leaders can be found in each camp."

A slew of social democrats are pumping for Carey and the TDU. The International Socialist Organization, which backs a Carey victory, writes an article on the convention that doesn't even mention the feds' operation against the union. In *These Times* at least admits Carey's Democratic Party politics, but claims that by ousting the old guard such "clean" candidates would open the way to using the union's muscle to win decent contracts. Bullshit! TDU was built on the model of Arnold Miller's "Miners for Democracy," who took over the UMWA in a Labor Department-ordered election in 1972. After several wildcat strikes over the objections of the government-installed "reform" leadership, miners launched the great coal strike of 1977-78, in which they repeatedly burned contracts negotiated by the UMW tops, ripped up Taft-Hartley injunctions and burned Miller in effigy.

All the government claims about "democracy" are so much hooey. The U.S.-controlled "direct election" of International officers is far less democratic than open debate on the floor of a union con-

vention. Moreover, estimates are that it will take over a million dollars to run a campaign for Teamster International president—and that kind of money can only come from the feds, the mob or the bosses. In the hands of the capitalist state and bosses' media, such votes favor candidates who offer themselves as labor cops to "discipline" the unions for the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, to reverse the losses which have gutted the National Master Freight Agreement through two-tier wages and "double-breasting," where the IBT looks the other way when companies set up non-union subsidiaries, the Teamsters will have to take up the militant tactics which have been the target of the government union-busters from the beginning.

Needed: A Class-Struggle Leadership

The government attacks on the Teamsters have often been most intense under the liberal Democrats. The Kennedy brothers, Robert and John, directed enormous government resources in their obsession to destroy Jimmy Hoffa. The labor-hating McClellan Committee investigated 12 unions in 1957 including the Teamsters. Robert Kennedy became the chief staff counsel and point man attacking the unions for the Congressional Committee (on which his brother John also sat). He called over 1,300 witnesses against Hoffa and the Teamsters alone! McClellan tried to fix the 1957 IBT convention which elected Hoffa president by sending telegrams threatening to throw out half the delegates. Meanwhile, Cold Warrior George Meany expelled the Teamsters from the AFL-CIO at the height of the "get Hoffa" campaign.

In his book luridly titled *The Enemy Within* (1960), Robert Kennedy declared: "The Teamsters Union is the most powerful institution in the country—aside from the United States Government itself.... They control the pickup and delivery of milk, frozen meat, fresh fruit, department store merchandise, newspapers, railroad express, air freight, and of cargo to and from the sea docks. Quite literally your life—the life of every person in the United States—is in the hands of Hoffa and his Teamsters. But though the great majority of Teamster officers and Teamster members are honest, the Teamster union under Hoffa is not run as a bona fide union. As Mr. Hoffa operates it, this is a conspiracy of evil." Most working people, especially blacks and Hispanics, would consider "a conspiracy of evil" an apt description of the U.S. government.

Robert Kennedy began his career as a witchhunter for Joe McCarthy. As journalist John Bartlow Martin wrote in *Jimmy Hoffa's Hot* (1959), "Kennedy was maneuvering to establish his own fifth column inside the Teamsters Union." TDU is precisely the kind of "fifth column" that RFK wanted. As Kennedy's smear job indicated, the government's interest in the Teamsters is very clear. A top investigator of the New York State Organized Crime Task Force recently said, "they could still tie the nation up in

TEAMSTER CONVOY DISPATCH August 1990

TDU Wins New Rights

U.S. District Judge David Edelstein on July 10 ordered new election protections for all Teamsters, after TDU legal briefs requested them! U.S. District Judge Stanley Harris on July 12 ordered contract voting-rights protections, another TDU victory! (See articles page 1 and page 6.) TDU is there for you. We need you to be there for TDU. Be part of the solution—\$30 is a small price to pay to do your part for a strong, democratic union. Join TDU today!



TDU brings bosses' state into union affairs, halls worst-ever government control of Teamsters as "another TDU victory." For complete independence of the unions from the capitalist state!

"reorganize" the union. They even brag "TDU Wins New Rights" (*Convoy*, August 1990), after this unprecedented government straitjacket was slapped on the Teamsters. Warning: TDU is as anti-union as finks wearing a wire—they're G-men without a G-string.

Under the decree, federal judge Dave Edelstein and his deputies Michael Holland (former counsel of the Mine Workers) and retired judge Frederick Lacey have vetoed one candidate for union office after another. So following the nominations at Orlando for IBT International elections in December, Teamsters will now get to choose among government-certified slates headed by R.V. Durham, IBT vice president in charge of national freight; Walter Shea, a longtime assistant to Teamster presidents; and Ron Carey, head of the New York UPS local, who is supported by the TDU. All three mouth criticisms of the feds' takeover of the union, but all of them have dragged the union into the bosses' courts, all of them support the bosses' Democratic and Republican parties, and none of them has the slightest intention of leading militant labor struggle.

The government and the capitalists' hired pens in the labor-hating press harp about Teamster corruption, graft and nepotism. Former International president Jackie Presser, who was carried into the IBT's 1986 convention at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas on a sedan chair by wrestlers dressed as Roman centurions, was a government fink for ten years. He was the Manuel Noriega of American labor. The feds knew all about his sweet-

salaries for Teamster officials, administrator Lacey is raking in \$340 per hour and "investigations officer" Charles Carberry (\$250 an hour) is leasing plush Manhattan offices and charging the unions \$1.1 million a year for his staff of government agents. Federal supervision of local union delegate elections for the convention cost over \$4 million. Even the union's monthly magazine has been taken over by the feds; 26 out of the 32 pages in the June issue were written by the government. Perhaps most important of all, Lacey has the power to veto union expenditures. It's not too hard to figure out what that would mean in the middle of a national strike!

Labor Must Clean Its Own House!

Workers democracy is not going to come to the American labor movement as a gift from the bourgeoisie. It will be won by the working class through struggle—struggle which will inevitably, and in the case of the Teamsters immediately, come up against the capitalist state. Opposition to intervention by the bosses' state into the affairs of the workers movement should be elementary for any class-conscious worker. But outfits like the TDU and the "Association for Union Democracy" have made their living suing the unions in the bosses' courts. A recent hook by TDU founder Dan La Botz, *Rank and File Rebellion* (1990), boasts:

"Over the years, TDU has repeatedly gone to the National Labor Relations Board, to the courts and to the Department of Labor (and to many government agencies) to seek justice for union members."

Teamsters protest government intervention at 1987 conference in Cincinnati.



NYC...

(continued from page 12)

And now labor fakery Stanley Hill (AFSCME District Council 37) and Barry Feinstein (Teamsters) want a "divorce" from this administration that they put in office.

Enough! New York labor must use its muscle to fight to save New York. You can't fight City Hall? Like hell! A labor leadership worthy of the name would shut NYC down tight for 48 hours—let the Yupper East Side see what it's like to pick up their own garbage, see how Wall Street likes walking to work! The working class of New York can seal up this city tight as a drum—raise the bridges, shut down the tunnels, nothing moves in or out, and the LIRR and the subways screech to a halt! The bosses need New York, so squeeze: not one lay-off, not one furlough—and not a penny to the bloodsucking banks! But such a fight requires a political battle against the labor traitors who put NYC workers' and minorities' backs to the wall.

Killer Cuts and Killer Cops

These are killer cuts: Harlem Hospital, the only health care for over 100,000 Harlem residents, is losing hundreds of



1980 NYC transit workers strike. Integrated labor movement has the power to save New York!

workers—almost all of them front line health care workers. When 300 angry, grim members of AFSCME Local 420 rallied outside the hospital on June 27, all that Local 420 president Jim Butler offered the laid-off workers was "an

honored place in the front of the march."

But not every city agency is being cut. Over the next three years, the cops will get 9,000 more thugs in blue on the streets, racist killers like the ones who used a "camel clutch" to choke Federico Pereira to death on the streets of Queens in February. Despite three eyewitnesses, four of those cops walked when the Queens D.A. dropped the charges, and a fifth faces reduced charges. Outside the courthouse protesters chanted "KKK, PBA" and Federico's mother Laura Nieves tearfully called the killer cops "death squads." As *Daily News* columnist Juan Gonzalez bitterly wrote, "When the history of this city's descent into a near police state is written...the case will certainly deserve special mention."

And in the next two years alone, a billion dollars will go to add new jail cells to what is already the largest municipal penal complex in the world (over 23,000 cells, doubled since 1986). The other "growth industry" in New York is the homeless. In the midst of the biggest real estate bust in decades, with thousands of apartments sitting empty, warehoused by bankrupt speculators, tens of thousands of homeless roam the streets.



The Hill, homeless community next to the Manhattan Bridge.

knots if they wanted to." Then as now, the Teamsters command respect and the feds' attention for the muscle they have. The government persecution of the IBT goes back to 1941, when Roosevelt used the anti-communist Smith Act to purge the Minneapolis Teamsters of the Trotskyist leaders who led the 1934 Minneapolis general strike and opposed the drive to the second imperialist world war.

The current crop of corrupt and pro-capitalist labor traitors in the Teamsters leadership are the result of that first government "red purge" of the unions (which was cheered on by the Communist Party, screaming about a "Trotskyite Fifth Column"). Jimmy Hoffa was sent by gangster-linked IBT chief Daniel Tobin to "clean out" the Minneapolis local. Earlier, as a Detroit local leader, Hoffa learned the organizing techniques that the Trotskyists used to organize over-the-road drivers. This was what enabled the Teamsters to grow from a disparate collection of local barons into a powerful national union. And this was what the government set out to destroy, from the 1948 Taft-Hartley "slave labor" act to the 1959 Landrum-Griffin "anti-corruption" act. Both targeted the "secondary boycott" ("hot-cargoing") pioneered by the Minneapolis Trotskyist Teamsters.

In 1940, as the witchhunt against left-wing unionists was building in the U.S., Leon Trotsky was working on an article against the growing capitalist state control of labor when he was struck down by a Stalinist assassin. In

that article, Trotsky wrote:

"Monopoly capitalism is less and less willing to reconcile itself to the independence of trade unions. It demands of the reformist bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy, who pick up the crumbs from its banquet table, that they become transformed into its political police before the eyes of the working class."

The consequence for the workers' struggle, declared the co-leader of the Russian Revolution and founder of the Fourth International, was:

"The primary slogan for this struggle is: complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labor aristocracy. "The second slogan is: trade union democracy. This second slogan flows directly from the first and presupposes for its realization the complete freedom of the trade unions from the imperialist or colonial state.

"The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

"But," he added, "without the political leadership of the Fourth International the independence of the trade unions is impossible."

This is no abstract or outdated question. A rehiring of class-struggle unionism would directly confront the state. The sellouts and finks and social democrats who just beg for crumbs from the capi-

talist table think they can use the government as it is using them. But anyone who seriously proposes to fight drug-testing witchhunts, government-supervised union elections, police scabherding and the like had better have a class-struggle pro-

In a series of sweeps to "disappear" the homeless before the 1992 Democratic Party convention, the Dinkins administration has brutally closed encampments at Tompkins Square and now the Coliseum. The city's next target is the "Hill," a longstanding community of homeless at the foot of Manhattan Bridge.

New York City is by no means alone. With the federal budget being poured into the Pentagon and the S&L boondoggle, the 1980s saw a deep drop in money to the cities. The federal share of the NYC budget fell from 18 percent in 1980 to less than 10 percent today. Philadelphia is on the ropes, Bridgeport has filed for bankruptcy (as a means to bust the municipal unions). And the states are in big trouble. California is facing a \$14 billion shortfall—which in a bipartisan move the state government thinks they can squeeze out of welfare payments. If New York City is the target of choice, it's because it is the largest issuer of bonds outside of the U.S. government itself.

Reformists and labor traitors try to divert workers away from the road of class struggle with impotent appeals to "Tax the Rich." But no matter how "militant" their appeals to "redistribute income" or to "make the rich pay," they all boil down to begging the racist, capitalist system to reform itself. That is truly pie-in-the-sky.

Dinkins keeps saying there's no money. There are billions upon billions sitting in the Federal Reserve bank. But just try and get it! As urban planner Elliott Sclar writes in *Newsday* (30 June), "Congress now seriously considers only the relative merits of bank bail-outs and Stealth bomber contracts." The decay of New York City is a direct reflection of decaying American capitalism, and the bind that the ruling class faces over state and municipal financing reflects a broader contradiction between its dwindling economic base and its appetite for world domination.

Canceling the debt, expropriating the banks, taking industry from the owners who have run it into the ground—that brings you right up against capitalist state power. The fight to save New York must be part and parcel of a program for socialist revolution, and the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead it. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Union Tops Sacrifice Workers and Minorities to Wall Street

NYC Soak-the-Poor Budget

JULY 1—"D-Day" in the New York City budget war came and city workers went, more than 10,000 laid off, and along with them \$1.4 billion in cuts of desperately needed services that affect the minority poor first and foremost. Wall Street demanded big bucks in givebacks, liberal Democratic governor Cuomo cracked the whip, black Democratic mayor Dinkins dished it out, social-democratic union leaders served it up, and we're supposed to eat it. With thousands more unemployed on the streets and thousands more cops out there to make the mean streets of New York meaner, the social mixture could be explosive.

David Dinkins announced his "Doomsday Budget" in early May, as a club to extract hundreds of millions of dollars in givebacks from the city unions, while guaranteeing billions in interest payments to the banks (\$2.77 billion in the coming year). Well, now the day of reckoning is here for the poor and working people of New York, and the cuts are already killing. On June 24, Ollie Hartley, a 29-year-old Sanitation Department worker with two children, leapt from the roof of his Inwood apartment building, after learning that he was being laid off after ten years as a stock clerk.

As the July 1 deadline for the budget approached, Dinkins and the city council engaged in a disgusting bidding war over which city workers to slash, while proposing to shut down shelters for the homeless and cut off medical care for the poor. Meanwhile, the Dinkins administration was squeezing city unions, saying they could "buy back" jobs (at \$23,000 a pop) with concessions. Dinkins, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), encouraged "the labor community" to "step up to the plate and contribute, to do it for New York."

Over it all hung the threat of another Big MAC (Municipal Assistance Corporation) takeover of NYC finances. "King Felix" Rohatyn, head of the MAC, was looking for "deep concessions from the unions" before he would unlock the cash

"Friend of Labor" Dinkins Lays Off Thousands



June 6: 1,500 parks workers protest mass layoffs.

box and provide \$350 million. In the mid-1970s, a big chunk of this country's ruling class agreed with Gerald Ford when he sent the message to New York: "Drop Dead." But having gone through that "fiscal crisis" and seen the gaping holes in the infrastructure that those cutbacks caused, the bourgeoisie today knows that they can't let the capital of world finance sink into the ocean. Yet the big New York commercial banks are on the brink, and they're holding billions in NYC municipal paper.

So the hammer has come down, and the budget battle has been class against class as seen through the green visors of city accountants: will "closing the gap" mean closing the Central Park Zoo on the posh Upper East Side, or Brooklyn libraries filled with poor black kids? While the horse trading proceeded, it was clear that tens of thousands of homeless, AIDS patients, city workers and those whose only medical care is the near-terminal city hospital system would feel the lash. And meanwhile, the city was

adding to the army of more than 35,000 NYC cops, and upping payments to the banks by \$800 million, almost 50 percent, in one year.

Last month, Local 1199 (hospital workers) leader Dennis Rivera remarked that "we did not elect David Dinkins to oversee the dismantling of health and hospitals" (*New York Newsday*, 17 June). Actually, that's exactly why the bourgeoisie went for the first black mayor of New York. When the editorial guardians of the ruling class at the *New York Times* endorsed Dinkins 20 months ago, they arrogantly proclaimed that "the next mayor will have to ask for, and sell, sacrifice to all New Yorkers," and concluded that "Mr. Dinkins seems better qualified" to do just that. Dinkins for his part promised that city unions, minorities and the poor will "take it from me."

Now the popular front is presenting the bill: the working people of New York are being bled dry by the Democratic Party politicians who rode the backs of the unions into City Hall and the governor's mansion. Transit workers have been without a contract since April 30 and face deadly cuts in the workforce, as TWU Local 100 chief Sonny Hall tells them to wait on Albany. Sanitation workers, angry at hundreds of layoffs, instituted a slowdown. Hospital workers, social service employees, neighborhood youth service workers and others marched daily on City Hall. But it was all a big game of pressure politics.

continued on page 11



NYC Teamsters head Barry Feinstein, DC 37 chief Stanley Hill cynically use protests to blow off steam (left). Together with 1199's Dennis Rivera (right, thumbs up with Dinkins) they put the mayor in office, now talk of "divorce" while knuckling under to budget cuts.