

Defeat Yeltsin/Gorbachev Counterrevolution!

Nationalist Bloodbath Threatens in Soviet Breakup

SEPTEMBER 10—Boris Yeltsin threatens to annex the Russian-populated regions of the Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Newly independent Lithuania declares a blanket amnesty for wartime Nazi collaborators and mass murderers. Georgia's dictatorial nationalist president orders that oppositional demonstrators be met with a hail of gunfire. This is the true face of the counterrevolutionary tide dissolving the Soviet Union, a counter-revolution hailed by Wall Street and Washington as a triumph of "democracy" and the "death of Communism."

In the wake of the pathetically botched August 19 coup by Kremlin Stalinists, Yeltsin, with an enfeebled Gorbachev in tow, seized the reins of power in Moscow in the name of "free market" capitalism and Russian nationalism. The Communist Party was suppressed, and a purge of 80 percent of the senior commanders of the Soviet military announced. The imperialists declared victory in their 74-year war—sometimes hot, sometimes "cold"—against the Bolshevik Revolution.

As we wrote two weeks ago: "The working people of the Soviet Union, and indeed the workers of the world, have suffered an unparalleled disaster whose devastating consequences are now being played out.... But while Yeltsin & Co. now see a clear field to push through a forced-draft reintroduction of capitalism, the outcome is not yet definitively decided" ("Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" WV No. 533, 30 August).

The Soviet Union is descending into



Der Spiegel



Juraitis/Sipa

All the old crap returns: Russian Orthodox priest on barricades at Yeltsin's "White House" (left); rabid Lithuanian nationalists celebra counterravolution (right).

near-total political, national and economic chaos. One republic after another has declared "independence" from the impotent Moscow center, raising the prospect of border wars, mass forced population transfers and communalist blood feuds. Industrial output is in a free fall, while prices are expected to increase tenfold or more over the next year. The winter threatens to bring mass unemployment and famine.

Trying to balance atop the collaps-

ing power structure, Gorbachev, backed by Yeltsin, rammed through the self-liquidation of the Congress of People's Deputies. For the moment, the repository of "authority" will be a Council of Republics consisting of Gorbachev and representatives of ten republics which have not completely severed their ties to Moscow. But Yeltsin's Russian republic holds the whip hand. On the streets of Moscow, this Council is already being called the "GKChP II," after the coup plotters' "emergency committee."

At the end of their last session, Gorbachev gave the People's Deputies the kiss-off: "OK, that's it, *tovarishchi, do svidaniya*"—"goodbye, comrades." It might have been easy to dismiss these parliamentary cretins, who were pieced off by getting to keep their salaries, and perks like free air travel. But it will not be so easy to deal with an angry and hungry working class. Gorbachev's former foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, a leading light in the "democratic" counterrevolution, warns: "Last time round it was a palace coup. I don't think that will happen again. But that doesn't mean people won't take to the streets to rebel against chaos in the economy."

The last couple of weeks have seen little more than parliamentary play-acting. The real question is what will happen when the new regimes in Russia, the Ukraine and other republics begin to introduce the various "shock therapies"

aimed at moving toward capitalism. Should workers take to the streets to defend themselves against the ravages of capitalist restoration, against the shut-down of "unprofitable" enterprises, mass unemployment and impending starvation, all the plans of the imperialists and their Soviet running dogs could go up in smoke.

Through the dissemination of our propaganda and a Trotskyist program of struggle against the counterrevolution, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) seeks to cohere an authentically communist nucleus to intervene in this desperate situation to lead the coming struggles of the working class to victory against the now ascendant counterrevolution.

Rapacious Nationalists Come to the Fore

From Tatar villages on the Volga to Moscow's intellectual circles, there is a growing fear of Yeltsin as a new Russian tsar. Former dissident Roy Medvedev, who admirably still calls himself a Communist, voiced these sentiments:

"The failed coup is turning into a countercoup. Everything that is happening suggests a state of total emergency. Many of the decrees that Yeltsin has issued and that Gorbachev has swallowed are constitutionally illegal. The laws on freedom of the press and political parties have already been trampled on by the closure of newspapers and the closure of all the

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"New World Order"



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End of the Road for the CPUSA

With the dramatic collapse of Stalinism in the Soviet Union, the American media has focused unusual attention on longtime Communist Party USA leader Gus Hall as the last living Stalinist on the face of the planet. *Time* magazine (9 September) did a two-page spread on Hall as the "Last of the Red-Hot Believers." It's obvious even to the dim bulbs in the bourgeois press that the CPUSA has just lost its reason for existence. In fact, the party has been deeply split at the top for some time, with a whole section looking to jump ship, and the Moscow coup and counter-coup have brought this to a head.

The CP's first public reaction was a pathetically cynical attempt to deny that very much had happened in the Soviet Union. The headline of the 24 August *People's Weekly World* announced: "Gorbachev Returns; Socialism Faces New Challenges." An editorial dutifully repeated the Gorbachev line: "We, along with democratic-minded people everywhere, are pleased that the Soviet people have successfully defended their democratic achievements."

However, rumors circulated around the party that Gus Hall had, predict-



ably enough, supported the coup. Now a document by party oppositionists indicates that the official leadership line during those three days in August was to "neither condemn nor condone" the coup leaders' Emergency Committee, and "we were warned that we should not join 'the bring back Gorbachev bandwagon'." But since Gorbachev was brought back in tandem with the arch anti-Communist Yeltsin, Hall is a



man in big trouble.

At an August 30 press conference at party headquarters, Hall squirmed, saying that political life is like a garden and "socialism is not an annual, it is a perennial." Asked why the Soviet CP was banned, he replied, "I can't explain what happened yesterday.... I would suggest that they check the air-conditioner vents" in the Soviet legislature to see "whether something didn't come through the system that caused that kind of insanity" (*Washington Post*, 31 August).

Now that Gorbachev has dissolved the Soviet Communist Party and agreed to its illegalization, Hall wonders "whether Gorbachev was ever for socialism." On the political hot seat, the CPUSA chairman was forced to admit in an internal party speech on August 27 that "the takeover by the eight was an ill-conceived, anti-constitutional act." But, still, "it had a much broader base than we thought" and "it dealt with real problems."

Hall is trying to save himself from the debacle in Moscow by proclaiming his party stands for America-first socialism: "we are not directly a part of Soviet developments," he said in the August 27 talk. "Our main focus must be on the problems of our country and our people,

our working class...the main ball we have to keep our eyes on is here in the USA."

He even criticized some comrades for wanting to discuss Soviet developments: "Right in the middle of the racist struggle in Brooklyn, comrades who lived there, some did some good work. But some did nothing but insisted on meetings about the Moscow crisis, not the Brooklyn crisis." A counterrevolutionary regime has just taken over Moscow. The Communist Party has just been outlawed. All Soviet republics have declared their independence. And Gus Hall insists that Communists focus only on what's happening in...Brooklyn!

Hall's "our country first" line might perhaps work for the French Stalinists. Always virulently chauvinist, the French CP retains a significant, though rapidly shrinking, working-class base. Marchais & Co. could for a while compete with the social democrats as a third-rate reformist and social-patriotic party. But without its ties to and identification with the Kremlin leadership, the CPUSA is nothing. There is nothing it does that is not done bigger and better by the DSA social democrats, AFL-CIO bureaucrats, black Democrats and pacifists.

In an odd sort of way, Hall's current stance is analogous to those Stalinist apparatchiks running non-Russian Soviet republics, like the Ukraine and Byelorussia, who declared their independence from Moscow after the coup flopped. But, alas, poor Gus does not hold governmental power. Indeed, his position in his own party is shaky and no doubt getting shakier.

While Hall was clearly and increasingly hostile to perestroika and glasnost, a large section of the party has used the disintegration of the CPSU under Gorbachev to push for total liquidation of the CPUSA into the Democratic Party. This faction embraced many of the CP's leading black cadre, who apparently think they can have a bright future in black Democratic Party politics, perhaps as staffers for the likes of Douglas Wilder. Well over a year ago CP leader James Jackson hailed Wilder, who stands for the racist death penalty, as "a new face of a new democracy in Virginia."

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TROTSKY

The Bolsheviks and the Soviet National Question

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and formation of the Soviet Union were based on proletarian internationalism and a fundamental commitment to national equality for all its peoples. The Stalinist bureaucracy, in the name of "socialism in one country," perverted these Leninist principles, fostered a revival of Great Russian chauvinism and fueled reactionary nationalist tendencies in the non-Russian republics. The 1919 program of the Russian

Communist Party (Bolshevik) linked the fraternal unity of nationalities within a federated Soviet workers state to the perspective of world socialist revolution.

The October Revolution of 25 October (7 November) 1917, in Russia, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, which, assisted by poor peasantry and semi-proletariat, began to lay the foundations of a communist society. The course of development of revolutions in Germany and Austria-Hungary, the growth of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all advanced countries, the spreading of the Soviet form of this movement, that is, a form that is directed to the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat—all this proved that there had begun the era of a world-wide proletarian communist revolution....

With reference to the nationality question the RKP [Russian Communist Party] is guided by the following tenets:

1. The principal aim is the policy of bringing about closer relations between the proletarians and semi-proletarians of different nationalities, in order to carry on a general revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

2. In order to remove mistrust on the part of the working masses of the oppressed countries toward the proletariat of those states which oppressed them, it is necessary to abolish all privileges of any national group, to proclaim the full equality of nations and to recognize the rights of colonies and dependent nations to state separation....

Particular care and attention must be exercised by the proletariat of those nations which were oppressing nations, toward the remnants of national feelings of the working masses of the oppressed or dependant nations. Only by such a policy is it possible to create favourable conditions for a voluntary and real unity of different national elements of the international proletariat, as has been proved by the experiment of the union of several national Soviet republics around Soviet Russia.

—Programme of the RKP(b) (March 1919)



LENIN

CORRECTIONS

A note from former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, imprisoned on Pennsylvania's death row, brought an error to our attention: the article "Cuba in the Cross Hairs of Yankee Imperialism" (WV No. 531, 19 July) identified Assata Shakur (JoAnne Chesimard), now in exile in Cuba, as one of the New York Panther 21. As her 1987 autobiography, *Assata*, attests, she came to political consciousness as a black radical who later joined the Black Panther Party in New York. But Shakur was not a defendant in the case of the "Panther 21," who were jailed in 1969 on blatant frame-up charges of plotting to blow up, among other things, the Bronx Botanical Garden and Macy's. The charges were ludicrous and the 21 were eventually acquitted, but the arrests kept the New York Panther leadership behind bars in a critical period.

The Assata Shakur case also stemmed from a nationwide roundup of Black Panther Party leaders under the FBI's COINTELPRO operation. She was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment after state troopers opened fire on a car of ex-Panthers on the New Jersey Turnpike in 1973. A cop and former Panther Zayd Shakur were both killed during the assault. Sundjata Acoli (Clark Squires), one of the Panther 21, was also convicted in this case. Two years after being convicted, Assata escaped from prison. She was given political asylum by

Cuba, where she now resides.

The article "Death in Crown Heights" (WV No. 533, 30 August) noted that along with hundreds of black youth arrested, the police had reportedly arrested 40 Hasidic men during the week of unrest. However, the *New York Times*, from which we took this figure, subsequently published a correction saying the number of Hasidic men arrested was "4" not "40."

Our article also stated that both Gavin Cato, a seven-year-old black child from Guyana, and Yankel Rosenbaum, a 29-year-old Hasidic scholar from Australia, "died on the streets of Crown Heights." Rosenbaum was stabbed on the street, but as later revealed by *Newsday* (30 August), he was brought to Kings County Hospital in stable condition and only died two hours later. A chest x-ray which showed blood accumulating in his lung wasn't even examined by a radiologist until after he was dead!

Newsday quoted one doctor as saying, "The injuries he had sustained were peripheral lung injuries. They were the type of injuries that should not kill anyone in 1991." The paper further noted, "Some medical experts, including the associate director of Kings County's emergency room, Dr. Kildare Clarke, said Rosenbaum was the victim of poor medical care patients receive in New York's municipal hospital system."

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Helmut Kohl on "Human Values"?

What's Next—Goebbels on "Honesty in the Media"?

So Helmut Kohl, the chancellor of the reunified Fourth Reich of German imperialism, will be received by the chancellor of UC Berkeley and deliver the "Tanner Lecture on Human Values" on September 13. To mention Kohl and "human values" in the same breath is a real oxymoron, a gross contradiction in terms. The *Reichskanzler's* idea of humanism was shown when he and Ronald Reagan laid wreaths at the graves of Nazi SS men in the Bitburg military cemetery, saying these mass murderers were "victims" of World War II. Just like in the Orwellian lingo of the 1980s Cold War II, Nicaraguan contra terrorists and barbaric Afghan *mujahedin* were "freedom fighters." Or in the Vietnam War, when the U.S. military bombed peasant villages in order to "save" them. When the imperialists talk about "human values," read anti-Communism.

During the East German (DDR) election campaign of March 1990, a sign held by a Kohl supporter proclaimed, "Helmut take us by the hand, into the *Wirtschaftswunderland*," the land of the "economic miracle." By promising a pot of D-marks at the end of the rainbow, voters were stampeded into voting for *Anschluss* (annexation) by capitalist West Germany. But instead, in East Germany, where collectivized property and a planned economy had provided full employment, subsidized housing, day care and education, there are now more than four million jobless—half the entire workforce—and children's nurseries and hospital clinics are being closed down while neo-Nazi gangs terrorize foreign workers and gays. Mass unemployment, poverty, housing shortages, fascist violence—that's Kohl & Co.'s idea of "human values."

And victimization of women: more than half of those laid off are women, who are being sent back to "home and hearth" for their lives to be dominated by "Kinder, Küche, Kirche" (children, kitchen, church), the holy trinity of the bourgeois family. Like Hitler, who wanted to breed "healthy Aryans" for the Reich, Kohl & Co. are trying to impose West German laws outlawing abortion on women in the conquered DDR. These anti-abortion laws have not only forced thousands of West German women to go to the Netherlands for an abortion, but subjected many to forced gynecological examinations and prosecution if border guards suspect they left the country to have an abortion! For under this Bismarckian law, the wombs of German women belong to the German state.

Crowning the Fourth Reich

During the 1990 East German elections, the walls of Kohl's campaign headquarters featured a map of Germany

with its 1937 borders. With the capitalist reunification of Germany, its rulers think they have reversed the verdict of Hitler's defeat in World War II. They want to bring the Baltic lands "home to the Reich." In appointing new German ambassadors, Bonn foreign minister Genscher spoke of Germany's "historic responsibility toward the Baltic states." Right, like Nazi occupation in WW II, the German barons who lorded it over Baltic peasants for centuries, the Hanseatic League, the Teutonic Knights? German imperialism is also bidding for mastery of the Balkans by championing the secession of Slovenia and Croatia in Yugoslavia. And behind Kohl's pleas for more aid to the Soviet Union lies the Fourth Reich's hope to achieve through D-mark imperialism what Wehrmacht Panzers failed to do in Operation Barbarossa.

The aspirations of German imperialism to regain what they see as "their" hinterland in the East were symbolized in the reburial last month amid great pomp of the long-dead Hohenzollern

Reich, a celebration of counterrevolution. Reburying Prussian monarchs has a history. On 21 March 1933 Adolf Hitler officially founded the Third Reich on the grave of Frederick the Great (and a portrait of Frederick was the only picture on the wall of Hitler's last bunker). Today, the Bonn government—the self-proclaimed legal successor state to Hitler's Reich—makes a new grave for the Hohenzollern prince as their formal political declaration of imperial continuity going back to the Holy Roman Empire (which, as the French *philosophe* Voltaire quipped, was neither holy nor Roman nor an empire). The site of Potsdam, where for the past 45 years a garrison of Soviet troops had stood on guard against NATO imperialism, added to the intended message of the German rulers: counterrevolution in the DDR is completed and the new Reich is now the pre-eminent power in Europe.

The reburial of the Fredericks was held under the aegis of the SPD president of the state of Brandenburg, Bishop Stolpe. In World War I, the Social Dem-

now Kohl have laid claim to the legacy of Frederick the Great, this feudal despot wouldn't have let either of them shine his boots. The paradigm of "enlightened absolutism," Frederick looked to France for culture (he corresponded extensively with Voltaire) and would have despised their nationalist glorification of Germany. On the other hand, for modern German capitalist rulers to resurrect this 18th century absolutist monarch, who looked to the Junker's whip and corporal's baton to rule what German Enlightenment writer Lessing described as "the most slavish country of Europe," testifies to the degeneration of capitalist rule. And it may be unnerving to Germany's neighbors. Frederick expanded his Prussian kingdom by conquering Silesia and participating in the first partition of Poland. "The first hallmark of a prince should be to survive," he wrote in his 1768 testament, "the second, to expand."

Socialism or Barbarism

Among Kohl's imperialist allies, the "replanting" of the Fredericks raised more than a few eyebrows. *Newsweek* (12 August) said that it "seems almost deliberately provocative" to "evoke the ghosts of German militarism." But Kohl is deliberately seeking to rehabilitate the Prussian military heritage as part of re-establishing Germany as a "normal" imperialist power: "old Prussian values in the best sense should live on," he stated. In this he has the support of much of Germany's bourgeois literati. Countess Marion Dönhoff (whose family held East Prussian estates), in an essay on "Old Fritz and the New Times" (*Die Zeit*, 16 August), rejected complaints about "too much hoopla": "The spirit of the times is at fault—nothing goes without hoopla: even a dubious victory is celebrated with the biggest confetti parade of all times." Such genteel imperialist pique.

Attempting to reassert the U.S.A. as top gun of the world, and to put the screws to their imperialist rivals in Germany and Japan, Bush and the Pentagon slaughtered more than 100,000 Iraqi soldiers and civilians this year. Using the pretext of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. rulers reckoned that with their hands on the oil spigot in the Persian Gulf they could cut off their economic competitors when they felt like it (while asking them to foot the bill for the war!). When Reagan joined Kohl in saluting Nazi SS graves at Bitburg in 1985, U.S. rulers were embracing the "enemy" of World War II as their "ally" in the drive to destroy the "Communist menace" of the Soviet Union. But having proclaimed victory in the Cold War, Washington looks around and sees a different world.

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Fourth Reich necrophilia: Reburial of Emperor Frederick the Great at his Sanssouci Palace in August.

ers of Prussia—Frederick the Great and his father, Frederick I. Hitler had ordered the remains of the two Fredericks removed to the West in 1945 to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Red Army. Now their cadavers were returned on an imperial train of the last Kaiser and in a ghoulish "affair of state," 50,000 filed past the coffins, which were reburied at the stroke of midnight at Frederick the Great's former Sanssouci Palace in Potsdam. Earlier, the "Quadriga of Victory," a statue of a chariot drawn by four horses, was hoisted back atop the Brandenburg Gate complete with the Prussian iron cross and eagle which had been removed during the four decades of the DDR deformed workers state.

This was the crowning of the Fourth

ocrats became last-ditch defenders of the Hohenzollern monarchy. In August 1914, they dutifully voted war credits for the Reich. And in November 1918, when German defeat made Kaiser Wilhelm's departure inevitable, SPD leader Ebert still desperately sought to save the monarchy. The bourgeois republic was proclaimed only to head off socialist revolution. The SPD "bloodhounds" joined with the imperial German military to crush the Spartakist-led revolutionary workers and to murder their leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. Eighty years later, the SPD were advance men for German imperialism's drive to restore the "freedom and democracy" of capitalist exploitation in the DDR.

While German nationalists Hitler and

Soviet Union...

(continued from page 1)

Communist Party offices. These are bad signs."

—Guardian [London], 30 August

Yeltsin and his Russian nationalist cohorts wasted no time in unsheathing the claws of the Great Russian bear. In response to Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk's declaration of "independence," Yeltsin ominously threatened to "review" Russia's borders, while vowing to "defend the interests of Russians outside the Russian republic." Leningrad mayor Anatoly Sobchak has demanded that the Crimean peninsula, placed under Ukrainian control by Khrushchev, be returned to Russia.

Yeltsin is flagrantly courting the present-day descendants of the Black Hundreds, the Pamyat fascists whom he legitimized in one of his first acts as Moscow party chief in the mid-1980s. Asked his opinion of the "very strongly anti-Semitic" Pamyat in a September 5 ABC-TV "town meeting" interview, Yeltsin blithely replied that this fascist outfit is not "so extreme as it was when it was started." He added: "I've had dealings with Pamyat for quite a long time."

Gorbachev's market "reforms" fueled the resurgence of long suppressed nationalist antagonisms—first expressed in the fratricidal fighting between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the Caucasus—and encouraged Great Russian fascists like Pamyat and the Hitlerite NTS to emerge from their rat holes. From the time Pamyat first appeared on the streets of Moscow and Leningrad, we Trotskyists called for independent mobilizations of workers, Red Army men and women, Jews and other minorities to sweep these fascist blackshirts away. The bureaucracy, for its part, protected Pamyat, and now these pogromists are flourishing under the flag of the new counterrevolutionary regime.

Yeltsinites and Stalinist "patriots" alike have acted to drive Soviet Jews, whose forebears fought in disproportionate numbers to defend the Soviet state in the Civil War and World War II, into the arms of the Zionist deathtrap of Israel. An authentic Leninist vanguard, as "tribune of the people," must combat all manifestations of anti-Semitism.

The new Council of Republics is aimed at presiding over the "orderly collapse" of the Soviet state. But the collapse of the Soviet Union will be neither orderly nor democratic. The multinational population of the USSR is deeply interpenetrated—indeed, often intermarried—far more so than under the tsars. In Estonia only three people out of five are ethnic Estonians, in Latvia one out of two are Latvians, and in Kazakhstan, scarcely more than one in three are Kazakhs. And Russia is home to more than 100 national and ethnic groupings, including 16 autonomous republics. At the Congress of People's Deputies representatives of these nationalities asked for guarantees against



Soviet Union united over a hundred peoples. Drive for capitalist restoration has sparked orgy of nationalist strife. Return to the internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks!

Yeltsin's Russian nationalist regime. The virulent petty-bourgeois nationalists who now reign supreme in the various former union republics—mostly drawn from the old Stalinist bureaucracy—are out to resurrect the "right" of their nationality to lord it over others. In Moldavia, nationalist leader Mircea Snegur calls for unification with Romania in order to "fulfill the dream of our King Stephen the Great"—from the 15th century! Needless to say, this does not sit well with the more than one-third of the Moldavian population which is

Times, 2 September). The Latvian government is debating whether to even grant citizenship rights, much less language equality, to the 48 percent of its population who are Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians or other non-Balts. What is involved here is not only national but also class oppression, for Russian-speaking workers make up the overwhelming majority of the industrial proletariat in Latvia and also Estonia. These Russian-speaking workers are far from powerless against the new regimes' attempt to make them



Pamyat fascists, Great Russian anti-Semitic terrorists, legitimized by Yeltsin, march in Moscow earlier this year with portrait of Tsar Nicholas II.

Russian, Ukrainian or Turkic-speaking Gaugaz, nor even with many ethnic Romanians. In response, non-Romanian minorities have declared an independent Socialist Republic of Dniester, where statues of Lenin still stand, and staged militant protests—including stopping trains—to demand the release of their president arrested by the Moldavian authorities. "We want to remain in the Soviet Union," said one elderly Ukrainian woman protester (New York

non-citizens or drive them from their homes. The formation of real workers soviets in Riga and Tallinn could teach the petty-bourgeois Baltic nationalists a well-needed lesson in democracy.

Nazi Collaborators and Imperialist Puppets


The heritage of bourgeois "independence" and "democracy" that the various nationalists in the Soviet Union harken back to today is one of imperialist subjugation, fascism and bonapartist dic-

tatorship. An international uproar was triggered over news that "democratic" Lithuania has been "rehabilitating" thousands of Nazi collaborators sentenced for war crimes by Soviet courts.

Zionist anti-Communist Elie Wiesel exclaims, "That this would be among the first steps of an independent Lithuania is something no decent person can understand or accept." What did he expect? Interwar Lithuania was under the grip of a regime of White Terror which persecuted Communists and oppressed Jews, Poles, Russians and other minorities. The pro-capitalist Lithuanian Sajudis nationalists glory in this past and, not surprisingly, are shot through with outright fascists.

In the western Ukrainian city of Lvov recently, there was a march of World War II "anti-Soviet partisans" in full battle regalia and uniforms. To be an "anti-Soviet partisan" in World War II was, simply put, to be a Nazi or Nazi collaborator. The most prominent of these outfits, the Union of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) of Stepan Bandera, was notorious for its massacres of Jews, Poles and Communists in the western Ukraine. Well before Hitler launched his Operation Barbarossa, the OUN "had been busy preparing for the Nazis lists of Jewish and Polish intellectuals to be murdered as soon as Lvov fell into their hands" (Reuben Ainsztein, Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe [1974]). Alongside and subordinate to the war between the Red Army and Nazi Germany, the Ukraine was the scene of a civil war between anti-Communist Ukrainian nationalists on the one hand and Jewish and Red partisans on the other.

The Ukrainian and Baltic collaborators of the Third Reich were but the continuation of the imperialist-backed nationalist forces who fought the Bolsheviks in the Civil War of 1918-21. German imperialism presided over the

Spartacus Youth Club  Forums

Bankrupt Stalinism Opens Floodgates to Capitalist Restoration

Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution in USSR!

Speaker: Joseph Seymour, SL Central Committee

Thursday, Sept. 19, 5:30 p.m.
San Francisco State University
Student Union B112
For more information (415) 777-9367

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Saturday, Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m.
University of California at Berkeley
126 Barrows
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Oakland

Thursday, Sept. 19
7:30 p.m.

University of Wisconsin-Madison
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For more information, (312) 663-0715

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Speaker
Paul Collins, SL Central Committee

Saturday, Sept. 28, 2:00 p.m.

Howard University
Undergraduate Library Lecture Room
For more information, (202) 872-8240

Washington, D.C.

Speaker
Len Meyers, WV Editorial Board

Thursday, Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m.

Place to be announced
For more information, (617) 492-3928

Boston



Planeta



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Novosti



Novosti

Leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution.
From left:
Yakov Sverdlov,
first president of
Soviet Republic;
Feliks Dzerzhinsky,
founder of Cheka;
Stepan Shaumyan,
head of 1918
Baku soviet;
Christian Rakovsky,
first president of
Soviet Ukraine.

birth of an "independent" Ukraine, and joined with British imperialism to "self-determine" the Baltic states and Georgia. While the peasant masses of Estonia and Latvia flocked to the red banner of Bolshevism in 1917—with the Latvian Riflemen serving as crack troops in the young Soviet regime—the bourgeois and landlord classes which had formerly been a bulwark of the Romanovs took the road of separatism as a means of combatting the revolution.

The situation in Transcaucasia was even more striking. In Baku in 1918, the Armenian Bolshevik Stepan Shaumyan formed a soviet government based on largely Azerbaijani and Russian oil workers. Shaumyan and his comrades were subsequently murdered by nationalist forces acting on British orders. In contrast, the bourgeois Transcaucasian Republic formed at the same time rapidly fell apart as Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian nationalists went at each other: Azerbaijan became a puppet of Turkey, Menshevik Georgia a vassal of first German and then British imperialism. Only after the Bolsheviks defeated the nationalists and their imperialist patrons was a basis laid for these interpenetrated national communities to coexist.

Leninist Internationalism vs. Stalinist Nationalism

The Bolshevik Revolution transformed what Lenin called the tsarist "prison house of peoples" into a multinational federation. It was only the Bolsheviks' internationalist program, which asserted full and equal national rights for all peoples in order to secure the fullest unity of the workers of all nationalities, which made this possible. The Bolshevik leadership was an embodiment of this perspective. Alongside the Russians Lenin and Bukharin there were the Pole Dzerzhinsky, the Romanian Rakovsky, the Georgian Stalin, the Armenian Shaumyan, the Jews Sverdlov and Trotsky, and others.

As the administrative apparatus of the Soviet state and Bolshevik Party cohered into a bureaucratic caste, and as this caste usurped political power in 1923-24, these internationalist policies were subverted and finally reversed. Confined to bed by illness in 1923, Lenin urged a full-scale assault on the ascendant bureaucracy headed by Stalin, particularly over the latter's arrogant treatment of the Georgian Communists in 1922. The struggle against the emerging Stalinist bureaucracy was taken up by the Trotskyist Left Opposition.

Despite the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet regime, the foundations of the planned economy instituted by the October Revolution laid the basis for a massive advancement by the minority nationalities formerly oppressed under the tsarist empire. Speaking of continuing advances in national policy, Trotsky noted in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937): "This is especially true of the backward nationalities of the Union, which must of necessity pass through a more or less prolonged period of borrowing, imitation and assimilation of what exists." The nomadic peoples of Siberia, the Muslim clans of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were brought forward centuries in a matter of decades.

If the Central Asian republics continue to remain under the control of old-line Stalinists—who, to be sure, now espouse Turkic nationalism—and statues of Lenin continue to stand in Tashkent, it is because these peoples more than any other Soviet nationality benefited from the strides forward Soviet power brought them. Even now, up to half of the budgets of the Central Asian republics rely on subsidies from the center. And it is they who will suffer most from a capitalist free-for-all.

At the same time, Yeltsin & Co. have incited resentment among Russians that the great wealth of Siberia's natu-

over, the centrifugal tendencies being promoted by the various separatist forces collide head-on with the fact that the economies of the republics are strongly intertwined and based from top to bottom on a centralized economy.

Talk of reorganizing the economy along the lines of the European Common Market is ludicrous. The Soviet republics are far more dependent on each other than even Wales and England, or any two states in the U.S. Nine of the 15 republics export more than 60 percent of their output to the rest of the Soviet Union, and virtually every industrial enterprise relies on other republics for

worry that they will not survive even the coming winter if they cannot put food on the tables of the workers.

The working class has yet to make its voice heard. But there are unmistakable rumblings of discontent with the "new order." Tens of thousands have come to Lenin's mausoleum, standing in lines that have reached a mile long. And unlike the smug yuppies and pampered children of the bureaucracy who flocked to Yeltsin, those who gather to pay their respects to the founder of the Soviet state are predominantly working people.

Soviet workers do not relish the prospect of seeing their cities, and even their immediate families, torn apart by nationalist fratricide. They are already fed up with the rampant black marketeering and grotesque avarice fostered by five years of partial capitalist measures. And those still seduced by the siren song that full-fledged capitalism will bring VCRs and stereos to all will soon be rudely awakened.

As a worried Eduard Shevardnadze noted: "If people take to the streets, it is impossible to predict what slogans they will be guided by, and who will lead that movement." In his own counterrevolutionary way, Shevardnadze understands that the fate of the Soviet Union will be decided by who will lead the working masses and under what program.

Soviet Stalinism is dead, and despite the imperialist and Stalinist lies that Stalinism was identical to communism, there is a sense among Soviet working people that this is not the case. One woman waiting outside Lenin's mausoleum said, "He tried to do good things for our country, but over the years his ideas have been distorted."

What is key to reversing the counterrevolutionary tide sweeping the homeland of October is for the vanguard elements of the Soviet working class to rediscover the undistorted program of Leninism, regrouping in a Trotskyist party all the forces who would return to the internationalist road of the October Revolution. That is the task of the hour. ■



Amid Yeltsin's counterrevolution, thousands wait in mile-long line at Lenin mausoleum to honor leader of the Bolshevik Revolution.

ral resources goes in part to develop the more backward Turkic-speaking regions. The Yeltsinite "free marketeers"—largely the children of Stalin's apparatchiks—want to sell Siberia's oil and natural gas fields, and gold and diamond mines, to Wall Street and Frankfurt so they can live like Western yuppies.

Indeed, the immediate background to the recent flood of nationalist antagonisms was not the Great Russian chauvinism of the center. Perestroika fueled the aspirations of the more advanced republics like the Baltics and Armenia for an even greater slice of the pie. Baltic nationalists dream that by ridding themselves of Russia and the more backward republics and prostituting themselves to the Deutschmark, they will live like Scandinavians. They might ponder what the D-mark has brought to the former East Germany—four million unemployed, economic devastation, social collapse.

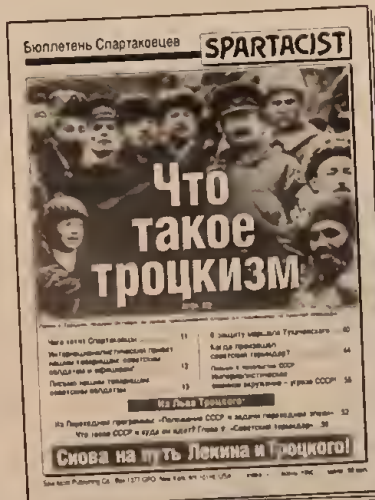
Genuine Leninists stand for full equality of all nations and nationalities in a genuinely socialist federation.

Soviet Workers: Fight Capitalist Enslavement!

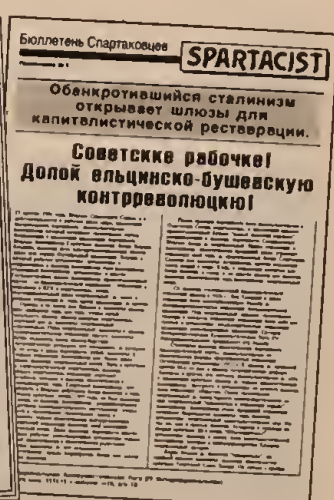
It will take more than parliamentary decrees to dismantle the Soviet state and consolidate a capitalist regime. While the pinnacles of the military, police and administrative apparatus are now occupied by counterrevolutionaries, the multimillioned base of the state apparatus will not be so easily purged. More-

raw materials and parts. One Western economist warns: "The process of establishing an efficient, prosperous market economy in the U.S.S.R. will take not years but decades."

Even given this illusory perspective, it would mean years of grinding poverty for the working people, throwing their living standards back to the days of tsarism. Yet the aspiring Soviet capitalists



Russian-language Spartacist Bulletin No. 1, "What Is Trotskyism" (left); translation of Workers Vanguard article "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (right).



From Gulf War to Global Trade War

"New World Order"

Step Toward New World War

Part One of this article was published in Workers Vanguard No. 529, 21 June.

When the tanks rolled into Moscow's Red Square on August 19, the London *Financial Times* (20 August) headlined, "Coup Against Gorbachev: Back Towards the Old World Order." Many imperialist pundits declared that it was all over for the "New World Order" that the United States had proclaimed by gruesome slaughter in the Persian Gulf and by the grace of the United Nations,

PART TWO OF TWO

thanks to Gorbachev's support in the Security Council. When the tanks rolled out two days later, U.S. rulers saw it as global victory—"Communism" was dead, the "American century" was back, and the rest of the world had better shape up and fly right. British correspondent Martin Walker wrote from Washington:

"The collapse of the Communist Party in its heartland has reinforced the verdict of the Gulf war. The global dominance of US military power and its subtle ideology of free markets, democratic institutions and American culture, appear to be beyond challenge. The ability of other nations to conduct an independent foreign policy, or of Third World countries to adopt a different development model, has never been more constrained."

—*Guardian* (London), 28 August

Washington's official ideologues have proclaimed a "unipolar world," with the United States as "the only remaining superpower." To vividly demonstrate this was the whole point of bombing Iraq back to "a pre-industrial age" (as a UN report summarized the devastation). But Walker noted "the irony that America's international triumph rests upon an enfeebled domestic base." And its economically more dynamic imperialist allies aren't about to roll over and play dead. Salivating at the prospect of opening up a huge Soviet market of 280 million consumers, a Colgate-Palmolive executive remarked, "That's a lot of teeth." The USSR also has huge supplies of fuel and other raw materials. In fact, a disintegration of the Soviet Union could sharply escalate interimperialist rivalry, with Germany exploiting the resources of European Russia and the Ukraine as Japan pounces on Siberia. This predators' feast would feed into an imperialist race to redivide the world.

With Washington proclaiming victory



Bush brings the war home: Army helicopters overfly the Capitol in preparation for June 8 march of Desert Stormtroopers through streets of Washington, D.C.

in the Cold War and the Gulf War, many European imperialist leaders and their mouthpieces have been uneasy over Washington's "hubris" (*Economist*) and "America's assertive world role" (*Financial Times*). "Ever since the end of the Gulf war five months ago George Bush has behaved as if he was president of the world rather than just the United States," lamented the *FT* (29 July). Already at the outset of the fighting, the *Guardian's* Walker wrote of the "Flawed Vision of the New Imperial Rome." He voiced fears that instead of the original conception of the "NWO" (New World Order) based on cooperation of the Americans with the Japanese and West European trading blocs, now "the cold war is in dire danger of being replaced by trade wars." And from trade wars plus a capitalist feeding frenzy over the Soviet Union, the imperialist rivalries point once again to world war.

From Cold War to Chip War

Three times in recent months there have been hard clashes between the U.S. on the one hand, and Japan and West Europe on the other. At the July 1990 Houston summit of the group of seven leading imperialist powers (G-7), the Europeans caucused beforehand to force the Americans' hand on loans to Gorbachev's Rus-

sia, much to Bush's annoyance. Last December there was a breakdown of the "Uruguay Round" trade negotiations over the European agricultural subsidies, or alternatively the American demand that hundreds of thousands of West European peasants (and right-wing voters) go under so that Washington can balance its trade balance through wheat and butter exports. Then this spring when the U.S. wanted to force West Germany to lower its interest rates (in order to increase growth, and thus demand for American exports), the Bundesbank told their "colleagues" at the Federal Reserve flatly "no."

The Europeans and Japanese are by no means happy with a global Pax Americana, and rankle at recognizing U.S. imperialist ascendancy as *primus inter pares* (first among equals). With the "Soviet threat" no longer of use for Washington to whip its allies into line—or put another way, without the Cold War justification for subordinating conflicts of interest of the rival capitalist powers to a common front—interimperialist economic rivalries are rapidly escalating. The first stage is the demise of the Cold War "free trade" regime under GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) in favor of competing imperialist trade blocs: a German-led European Common Market, with East Europe as its hinterland; a Japanese-led "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere," with Southeast Asia as its low-wage workshops; and a U.S.-run North American free trade area, with the rest of the hemisphere supplying raw materials and sweatshops.

But it's not just about "beggars thy neighbor" tariff discrimination. As the experience of the 1930s demonstrates, trade wars point straight to shooting wars. Pentagon insiders repeat the old quip that the purpose of NATO was to keep the Russians out and the Germans down, adding that the U.S.-commanded military alliance should be maintained because only half of its reason for existence is gone. For now, as *Le Monde* (9 July) writes:

"The Americans are using velvet gloves, since their prestige has come out of

the Gulf War strengthened. The world, which had forgotten it, is reminded that guns remain among the attributes of power. This eclipses, at least for now, the idea of a debt-burdened nation suffering from a slow industrial decline. The fact that, for lack of financial resources, the war was financed by German, Japanese or Saudi taxpayers, was little stressed, except as the product of a kind of authoritarian taxation, and thus another demonstration of untrammelled domination."

If German and Japanese politicians needed reminding of the importance of military power, Mercedes-Benz and Mitsubishi are prepared to redress the balance. And despite the paper constraints of post-World War II "peace constitutions" imposed by the U.S., following the recent war both Bonn and Tokyo demonstratively sent military forces to the region (Japanese minesweepers in the Persian Gulf, German troops dispensing "humanitarian" aid to Kurdish refugees in Iran).

Instead of a stable balance of imperialist power, the "post-Cold War" period could produce "new world disorder." East Europe is rent by national strife, Yugoslavia is shattering in a nationalist civil war, now the Soviet Union faces dissolution. The American shark is sharpening its teeth to swallow the Cuban sardine. The world is looking a lot like the period leading up to the First World War. And while champagne is flowing in the imperial chancelleries, millions are still starving in Third World slums. As the Spanish weekly *Cambio 16* (29 July) wrote: "But the party isn't for everyone. A huge bleacher section consisting of the majority of human beings, submerged in underdevelopment, looks on at the capitalist jubilation grinding their teeth and clenching their fists. For them, the world continues to be a slaughterhouse and its brutal rules are the only order they know."

In the imperialist centers themselves, the bourgeoisie's class war on workers and the minority poor continues with a vengeance. In the United States, the "American Dream" long ago faded into thin air as the real income and standard of living of the working class have steadily declined for more than a decade and a half. During the '80s, the myth of a homogeneous middle-class society disappeared as the gulf between the opulent rich and the miserable poor widened enormously. Brutal police terror stalks the ghettos and barrios. Homelessness and unemployment are mass phenomena throughout the advanced capitalist countries. Yet the working class is paralyzed, lacking the key element, a revolutionary leadership, needed to mobilize its tremendous power at the head of the oppressed to bring the whole rotting edifice crashing down.

As World War I turned Europe into a charnel house, a giant morgue, Rosa Luxemburg declared the alternative facing humanity was "socialism or barbarism." Behind the censored TV images, the Persian Gulf War showed the grisly face of high-tech barbarism. The fight for socialist revolution is urgent, the key is revolutionary leadership.

Fourth Reich Drive to the East

It was in Germany that there was the biggest opposition to the U.S. war plans,



The face of high-tech barbarism. What military censorship wouldn't show: Iraqi corpse incinerated by U.S. bombing on the "Highway of Death" north of Kuwait.

and where there were the largest antiwar demonstrations. While the U.S. "peace" movement was shot through with patriotism, in Germany there was a direct connection from the government to the streets, via the Social Democrats (SPD) and the ex-Stalinist PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism). Thus after Bonn received an angry phone call from Washington complaining about the wide support for the January 26 peace demo, Chancellor Kohl decreed that there must be no anti-Americanism. Two days later at the Bonn demo there were signs everywhere saying, "I'm not anti-American."

There was evident lack of enthusiasm among the German bourgeoisie. The months-long wrangling over how many D-marks Bonn would cough up for the "war effort" (the final total was eleven billion) ended up with German finance minister Waigel going to Washington in April demanding to see the Pentagon's books to make sure they weren't being overcharged. Rudolf Augstein complained in a *Der Spiegel* editorial (11 February) about imperial allies always calling for sending "The Germans to the front!" Right now, he opined, Germany is busy with reunification and preoccupied with the Soviet Union. "This is not our war," Augstein wrote, "the next one may be." He added: "One shouldn't, after all, think that the Germans in particular will permanently stay out of it when one day it comes to finally destroying the world."

The view of large sections of the German bourgeoisie was captured in an article by Theo Sommer in *Die Zeit* (22 March), which recalled how in the 1880s Bismarck was pressed from many sides to win more and more colonies for the Reich. As a prominent friend showed him a map of Africa, the imperial chancellor replied: "Your map of Africa is very beautiful. But my map of Africa is in Europe. Here is Russia, and here is



Spartacist League called for internationalist class struggle to "Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!"

France. And we are in the middle. That is my map of Africa." Sommer adds: "But his remark, this is my map of Africa, can quite well be reformulated for the present situation of the federal republic. Our Near East lies between the Elbe and Eisenhüttenstadt [on Germany's border with Poland], our Middle East begins beyond the Bug [Poland's border with the Soviet Union]."

When Bonn politicians tacitly agreed with the slogan of leftist demonstrators, "No Blood for Oil," it wasn't because the rulers of German imperialism's Fourth Reich are pacifists. They want to avoid the mistakes which have led to past defeats. On the 50th anniversary of "Operation Barbarossa," the 1941 German invasion of the Soviet Union, *Spiegel* editor Augstein wrote of Hitler: "His internal and foreign policy until 1938 is a model of tactical soundness, indeed, if you don't require of statecraft a great political design, a model of statecraft." Hitler's downfall was to repeat the mistake of World War I: "no two-front war" (*Der Spiegel*, 10 June). So German impe-



rialism wants to keep its sights trained on the main target: the Soviet Union. And this time instead of sending tanks to conquer Russia, they're relying on the deutschmark, currently the strongest weapon in German imperialism's arsenal, first to subvert the Soviet economy and now to try to buy it up.

Coming War With Japan?

For Tokyo, the Persian Gulf War marks a sea change in its post-World War II history. As British historian Anthony Sampson wrote after a recent visit, "Most Japanese seem to accept that the Gulf war presents a critical turning point in their relations with the West, particularly with the United States." They asked, said Sampson: "Should the Japanese accept US diplomatic and military leadership when, increasingly, they are becoming the masters of high technology and global finance?" (*Independent*, 20 February). An obvious question.

On the American side, capitalist Japan is fast replacing "Soviet Communism" as the "evil empire" threatening

made a profit on the deal—for a war it didn't start and didn't want. U.S. Congressmen complained that Tokyo wasn't really "on board." Japanese prime minister Kaifu replied that he had tried last fall to get approval from the Diet (parliament) to send an unarmed force to the Gulf, but this was rejected amid a public uproar. However, the U.S. "victory" evidently turned public opinion around, so that after the fighting Kaifu was able to dispatch Japanese minesweepers to the Gulf with hardly a peep of protest.

Japanese rulers are worried that the U.S. victory in the Gulf will be used against them to unilaterally dictate new trade terms. The *Wall Street Journal* (14 March) quoted a Japanese opposition legislator, Masao Kunihiro, on the growing perception of the U.S. as a "fearsome country": "Once a tiger has tasted human blood, he is going to be a repeater, and the U.S. has tasted the sweet success of its concentrated bombing of Iraq." But the Japanese were not overly impressed with American military-technological prowess. The *Journal* quotes an official of a big securities company saying: "If we had been fighting the U.S.—not that we ever would—we would have inflicted major casualties." And Japan's leading America-basher, Shintaro Ishihara, has just published a book, *The Japan That Can Really Say No*, pointing out that the U.S. "smart" bombs used in the Gulf War are dependent upon the high-quality Japanese semiconductor PTV. Nor is Japan flinching at U.S. threats of trade war.

Virulent Japan-bashing isn't limited to the Americans. Upon taking office in May, French prime minister Cresson unleashed a chauvinist and outright racist verbal assault on the Japanese, whom she has described as "yellow midgets" and "ants." "They sit up all night thinking of ways to screw the Americans and the Europeans," she said. "They are our common enemy." Cresson's immediate purpose was to get the Common Market to impose quotas on autos exported from Japan and those produced by Japanese subsidiaries in Europe. The French also want protection for Europe's outclassed computer and microchip industries. As "Nippophobia" escalates, the purpose is to raise a protectionist wall around a "Fortress Europe." Japan Inc., meanwhile, is increasing investments to get in before the scheduled completion of European economic union in 1992. And as the brickbats fly, Japanese rightists "guillotined" an effigy of Cresson with a *boken* (wooden sword) in Tokyo on Bastille Day.

Under mounting pressure, Japanese imperialism is indeed preparing itself for economic war...and worse. Far more than its European and American rivals, this island power without natural resources is utterly dependent on imports for its raw materials, importing 100 percent of the oil, natural gas, iron ore, copper, nickel, bauxite, manganese, molybdenum and titanium used in production, along with 91 percent of the lead, 88 percent of coal consumed, etc. For every ton of finished products it exports, Japan must import eight tons of supplies. This materials deficit makes it extraordinarily vulnerable to economic boycott, even

informal. That is why Tokyo has resisted American pressure to open the market to rice imports: it seeks to be self-sufficient in food at all costs. Two-thirds of Japan's oil imports came from the Persian Gulf, but it wasn't happy with the U.S. war because it *sees control of oil supplies by Iraq, which would have to sell it, as less dangerous than control by the Americans, who could cut it off, as they did on the eve of WW II.*

Today Japan has the third-largest war budget in the world and is the only world power that is sharply increasing its military power. *Air Force Magazine* (June 1991) reports, "In the 1980s, Japan conducted the most consistent defense buildup of any nation, focusing on acquisition of modern weaponry." When its acquisition programs are completed Japan will have more high-performance jet fighters than any air force in the Pacific theater. Tokyo is also carrying out a major expansion of its war fleet, and by this year will have 60 destroyers—twice the number in the U.S. Seventh Fleet. It is particularly focusing on anti-submarine warfare, critical to keeping sea lanes open for merchant ships. And its Type 90 tank is more sophisticated than the Americans' M-1 and narrow enough to operate on Japanese roads. The clear purpose of this buildup is to reassert its imperialist appetites in Asia and neutralize pressure from the U.S.

Meanwhile, Japanese international economic strategy is shifting rapidly. In the last couple years Tokyo banks have pulled back heavily from their multi-billion-dollar purchasing of U.S. Treasury bonds and American real estate. While the Japanese government has insisted on the Soviet Union handing over the Kuril Islands as a precondition for loans, Japanese companies have launched a number of big joint-venture projects in Siberia, several using North Korean labor. It maintained and increased trade with China after the Tiananmen Square massacre. And mainly Japan has redirected investment to Southeast Asia, opening a factory a day in Thailand last year, aiding Indonesia in constructing naval bases, increasing ties with Vietnam despite the U.S. embargo. Malaysia has invited Japan to act as "leader" of a proposed "East Asian Economic Grouping," and ASEAN diplomats have suggested (over U.S. objections) that such an EAEG might also embrace security matters.

Class Struggle vs. Drive to WW III

Over the last decade of Cold War II, the international Spartacist tendency (iSt)—now the International Communist League—argued against pseudo-Trotskyists such as Ernest Mandel (who blithely claimed that détente was alive and well, and nuclear war was impossible) that the imperialists were indeed driving toward a third world war. In the introduction by the International Executive Committee of the iSt to the *Prometheus Research Series* bulletin No. 2 (February 1989), "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy,'" we wrote:

"World imperialism has already brought human civilization to the brink of the
continued on page 10

Lane Kirkland's Parade of Anti-Communism



CIA-funded reactionaries march at head of "Solidarity Day II" parade (left); AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland (above) calls for counterrevolution in Cuba, China.

"AFL-CIA" Cheers Counterrevolution While Labor Gets the Shaft

If you wanted to know the reason for the sorry state of American labor, all you had to do was look at the front line of the "Solidarity Day II" march in Washington, August 31. There were the encrusted labor betrayers—far more likely to be found on a golf course at Bal Harbour, Florida than on a picket line—and a gaggle of marginal Democratic Party pols: never-has-beens like Mondale's ex-running mate Geraldine Ferraro and sorta-wannabes like Jerry Brown, emerged from meditation after his conversion to Zen Buddhism. Between loser Democrats and loser bureaucrats it was a most un-popular front indeed. And flapping overhead was the banner of Polish Solidarność, the only "union" Ronald Reagan ever loved, and now the government of Poland where it is shoving starvation austerity policies down the workers' throats.

Following this collection of Cold Warriors came the hoary "captive nations" crowd of East European fascists who fled before the Red Army in the baggage trains of the retreating German Wehrmacht, aging Cuban gusanos, and the scum of Saigon who managed to get the last flight out. Minding the "Lithuanian Workers Movement," Polish Solidarność, fledgling Hungarian "free trade unions" and the like were the various fronts of what has become known internationally as the "AFL-CIA": the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Asian-American Free Labor Institution, the African-American Labor Center and the granddaddy of them all, the AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development). And as the estimated 250,000 marchers wilted in the 100-degree heat, they were bombarded by several hours of hot air from speakers

hailing the "Death of Communism."

Conducting the chorus of anti-Communist triumphalism was AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland, who proclaimed:

"Everywhere you look—in Eastern and Central Europe, in Asia, in South Africa, and now even in the republics of the Soviet Union—working people like you are rising to their feet, taking to the streets and demanding their fundamental right to breathe free and to live in dignity. China next! Cuba next!"

This is not just empty bombast. Long before the spymasters at Langley, Virginia began laundering money through the BCCI, the American labor federation was notorious as a main conduit of CIA cash for counterrevolution. John Vanderveken of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions claimed "we are winning" all over the world, posturing as if they had opposed Pinochet in Chile and South African apartheid. Actually, "AFL-CIA" fronts aided in the bloody 1973 coup which installed Pinochet in power and have been funneling money to apartheid's killer dogs of war, Buthelezi's Inkatha.

Well, one place where working people sure as hell haven't been winning is right here in the U.S. The American labor movement has been devastated, losing members by the millions as the members lose billions in givebacks to the bosses negotiated by Kirkland's cronies. And this same crowd that let the PATCO air controllers hang out to dry wants to do to the workers of East Europe and the USSR what they've done to workers and minorities at home. Now Polish workers line up for soup kitchens, millions have lost their jobs in the former East Germany, and the "magic of the marketplace" threatens to bring a winter of famine to the Soviet Union. Kirkland & Co. have been up to their dirty work there as well. Sergei Kovalev, a Yeltsin supporter in the Russian parliament, thanked the AFL-CIO for its support.

In hours of deadly speeches about the "Death of Communism," no one addressed the fact that unions in this country are being marched to the grave. There was hardly any reference to a single strike or labor struggle under way in the U.S. This is no accident. While the AFL-CIO tops have become a foreign-policy adjunct of the White House and CIA, they have acceded to every union-busting demand of Wall Street and the banks to drive their profits up and American workers down the tubes. Throughout the '80s, while the bosses have been playing hardball, the union tops were

tossing frisbees. British correspondent Martin Walker noted the issue that went unmentioned on Solidarity Day, "the impoverishment of what used to be the world's best-paid working class":

"The average weekly earnings of America's production and non-supervisory employees are now lower in real terms than in 1959. The gains in living standards in the boom of the 1960s, and were said to have trickled down in the Reagan era, have been lost. Over the same period, the proportion of the workforce in unions has fallen from almost 35 to 16 percent."

—Guardian [London],
3 September

Mink coats don't trickle down, as they say. So why haven't the Democrats and labor bureaucrats taken up what would seem to be a natural issue against the plutocrat Bush? Because they don't have answers any different than the Republicans—and they all support capitalism. Their bankruptcy was summed up by Jesse Jackson, who said: "We have a plan to bail out Panama, to bail out Kuwait, to bail out Eastern Europe, to bail out savings and loan thieves; to bail out Russia. It's time to have a plan to rebuild America." And what might that plan be? "Come home, George Bush,"

he intoned, "we need a domestic summit conference."

But begging Bush to "come home" holds no promise for the hundreds of thousands of union members, many of them black and Hispanic, who rallied in Washington. They have shown the will to fight: there were delegations of Pittston miners, Maine paper workers, Detroit auto workers, Greyhound bus drivers, El Paso garment strikers. Most poignant were the PATCO air controllers, fired en masse in 1981 in the opening shot of Reagan's war on labor, who picketed briefly outside the headquarters of the Federal Aviation Administration. What we all need, as we wrote in our last issue, is to "forge a leadership that has the program and determination to wage a down-the-line fight for a workers government that will undertake the socialist reindustrialization of America."

Some 1,900 copies of *Workers Vanguard* were sold at "Solidarity Day II." We hope that many of these new readers will become subscribers to the paper that tells them the truth about the class struggle: "The truth is: *what this country needs is a revolution, and a revolutionary party to lead it.*" ■

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Anti-abortion terrorists of Operation Rescue attack Wichita clinic.

Assault on Abortion Rights

The Battle of Wichita



Clinic defenders protect patient from O.R. attackers. Schaben/Sygma Photos

The born-again anti-abortion hordes who invaded Wichita, Kansas for six weeks this summer held a 25,000-strong wrap-up rally August 25. Homemade signs included the chilling slogan "Support Our Unborn Troops." What brave new world is *this* supposed to be—tiny soldiers in the womb, gas masks in place, ready to march out from between their mothers' thighs to bomb and slaughter? Beyond the bizarre images it calls up, this slogan is an eerie summation of the terrifying world triumphant American capitalism envisages.

Of course, the far-right fundamentalists of Operation Rescue who blockade abortion clinics and terrorize women clients aren't really in the driver's seat—yet. Wrapping the yellow ribbon of Persian Gulf slaughter around their anti-woman action is no accident though. From fetus to cannon fodder, what O.R.'s ringleaders and their masters want to enforce is obedience to the authority of organized religion, the family and above all the armed fist of the state.

The used-car salesman and Bible Belt bigots who run Operation Rescue portray themselves as "freedom fighters." Yeah, like their good buddies, the Nicaraguan contras, who bayoneted fetuses in mothers' bellies because they wanted to kill all Sandinistas, including the unborn. Many of these fanatics' concern for supposed "preborn children" is irrational, even in religious terms—after all, if souls are immortal, why should they have to get born into this wretched vale of tears anyhow?

In a historical sense, Operation Rescue's hordes are latter-day "border ruffians"—those gangs of slaveowners and paid mercenaries who invaded "Bleeding Kansas" in the 1850s, seeking to force Congress to keep the territory a haven for slavery. Today it's women the reactionaries want to keep enslaved. They want women chained to a passive role as semen receptacles and fetus incubators, tied to endless domestic drudgery (with maybe a little minimum wage homework on the side, like gluing computer parts together).

After six weeks of terror against

women, finally the timid bourgeois groups that claim to support women's rights, like the National Organization for Women, decided to venture into Wichita. They held a small rally downtown, where about 5,000 people heard NOW executive vice president Patricia Ireland identify with counterrevolutionaries like Yeltsin in the USSR: "The people of the Soviet Union defended their freedom with their lives and their bodies against tanks, with Yeltsin."

Such "democratic" apologists for capitalist counterrevolution would like us to forget that it was *Lenin's Bolsheviks* in the early Soviet state who *legalized abortion on demand for all women*. Just as it took the Civil War to free the slaves, the 1917 October Revolution opened the road to the liberation of women. Now it won't be long before the Russian counterrevolutionaries go after the right to abortion, as they are already doing in Poland and the former East Germany. All those who hail Boris Yeltsin today are cheering deadly enemies of workers' and women's liberation.

Ms. Ireland blustered about Operation Rescue, "we're going to go toe-to-toe with these bullies." Where, how? "We're going to do it in the voting booths in 1992, and we're going to do it in the courts." While the battle for abortion rights is raging in the streets, NOW runs to the judges and calls for voting Democratic next year! But then such bourgeois feminists, who this summer actually invited the FBI—America's own Gestapo, the COINTELPRO murderers of the Black Panther Party—to recruit at NOW's conference, will never be able to fight for women's liberation. They can't even defend the very limited gains women still have.

Much is being made of the intervention of Wichita U.S. federal district judge Patrick Kelly, who actually seemed to have the basic decency to be outraged by Operation Rescue's bullying of women. He issued an injunction against the blockades, using a Reconstruction-era ruling, the Civil Rights Act of 1871, originally passed to prevent the Klan from blockading voter

registration sites so the freed slaves couldn't vote. Operation Rescue ignored the injunction, of course, and Bush's Justice Department promptly intervened on the side of the born-again bigots, seeking to have the judge's order rescinded.

But, at the same time, Judge Kelly's ban could well be used in the future—especially by liberals—to legitimize the suppression of militant actions by labor, blacks and leftists. Judges and D.A.s could point to Wichita when they go after workers picketing a corporate headquarters, angry blacks surrounding a courthouse to protest a racist frame-up, or antiwar activists blockading a military induction center. New York's liberal Democratic attorney general, Robert Abrams, claims what is at stake in upholding Kelly's injunction is "the ability of state and local authorities to maintain order." That is, capitalist "law and order."

America's rulers have been chipping away at the right to abortion ever since the Supreme Court legalized it nationally two decades ago. In 1976 Congress, with bipartisan support, passed the Hyde Amendment, banning the use of Medi-

caid funds for poor women's abortions. Then Reagan and Bush packed the Court with right-wingers whose agenda includes dismantling all that remains of women's right to abortion. After Wichita, the reactionaries are raising the heat to ram confirmation of Clarence Thomas through a supine Senate—so that the Supreme Court will finally roll back *Roe v. Wade* in the name of the "right to life" while removing all restraints on the racist death penalty.

Operation Rescue is emboldened by the Bush administration's open support, and they intend to strike again. It's clearer than ever that the only strategy that can stop these zealots cold is to massively mobilize their intended victims—women, minorities, the oppressed, backed up by the muscle of organized labor—to keep the clinic doors open. Such a show of strength on the streets would bring out many more in support of women's rights. *Free abortion on demand and contraception rights for all* can only be won through a working-class fight for women's liberation through socialist revolution. ■

Workers Vanguard Subscription Drive



Totals: Week One of Six

Local	Quota (in polnia)	Week One	%
Atlanta	225	111	49
Boston	260	72	28
Chicago	500	162	32
Cleveland	100	61½	62
Los Angeles	300	62	21
New York	1,140	269½	24
Oakland	800	295½	37
San Francisco	300	136	45
Washington, D.C.	150	73	49
At Large	275	75	27
National Total	4,050	1,317½	33

CPUSA...

(continued from page 2)

The CP opposition naturally ran under the factional banner of "democratization." Reminds one of the pro-Yeltsin faction that left the CPSU to embrace out-and-out capitalism, calling itself "Communists for Democracy." The references to classless "democracy" fostered by the CP under the guise of the "popular front" are coming home to roost. The mask has become the face.

An oppositional document by James Jackson, Charlene Mitchell and Danny Rubin, entitled "The coup merited a clear-cut condemnation," was printed in the *People's Weekly World* (7 September). But this clear-cut condemnation will not give Jackson, Mitchell & Co.

their hoped-for entrée into big-time Democratic Party politics. They will have to do a lot more than mouth platitudes about "democracy and socialism" to live down their many years as CP spokesmen.

Of course, there are always those who want to strike a balance between two opposing factions. Thus a contribution from a professor of psychology in Oregon to the CP's preconvention discussion bulletin had the engaging title, "Toward a dialectical unity: synergistic integration of the democratization line and the 'Hold the line at all cost' line."

As for Gus Hall, there seems to be no place for an old-line Stalinist like him in this country and these days anywhere else. Well, not quite anywhere else. After returning from a recent trip abroad, Hall recommended: "If you want a nice vacation, take it in North Korea." ■

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Plant Inferno...

(continued from page 12)

plant in Cumming, Georgia (Forsyth County), which had two fires in the past year, never had been inspected by OSHA (the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration) either.

Meanwhile, INS immigration cops spend millions of dollars raiding poultry plants throughout the South, deporting foreign-born workers to starvation.

Now OSHA and state authorities are scrambling to cover their asses, preparing a massive cover-up of the protection racket they have been running for their capitalist masters. In fact, the drastic cut-back of OSHA safety inspectors has had bipartisan Congressional support.

Criminal Racism Cripples Rescue Effort

Even as the fire raged, official racism claimed its victims. The nearest town to Hamlet is the largely black municipality of Dobbin Heights, which has its own fire department. *They were only six minutes away.* Yet although the Hamlet fire brigade was overwhelmed and workers trapped in the plant were screaming for help, the Hamlet fire chief refused aid from the black firefighters.

The *Richmond County Daily Journal* (5 September) reported that Dobbin Heights fire chief Ernest Cannon "said his department called and offered its assistance three times and was put on standby each time." Instead, the Hamlet chief radioed for help from East Rockingham, whose men took 20 minutes to get to the scene.

Workers Vanguard spoke with Cannon, who bitterly said: "We could have saved at least one life. People were inside this plant, trapped, locked in. We heard across our communication system. Instead, they chose to call a station that was almost ten miles away. Some 20 minutes elapsed."

Cannon told *WV* there was a history of racist scorn of the Dobbin Heights firemen, when they came to the Hamlet fire house for training sessions. After they equipped their men with new radios,

he said they began to receive phone threats to blow up their station and were told, "Niggers, get off the airwaves." They recognized the voices as being from the Hamlet fire department.

Break with the Democrats, Organize the South!

As for how the fire at Imperial Food Products may have been prevented, Cannon was categorical: "If that place had a union, it wouldn't be in that condition." But he added, "People are scared. They blackball you, they get to the banks." Labor organizing in the South, where union-hating and racist terror hold sway, will take a class-struggle leadership.

Hamlet is on the South Carolina line. Only 80 miles to the north in Greensboro was where KKK and Nazi terrorists, accompanied by state and local officials and advised by federal agents, shot down five union organizers and leftists in 1979. Not one of the fascist killers was ever convicted.

The black workers at Imperial say management talked to them like "we were inmates in a prison" and locked them up like prisoners. But as the Triangle fire spurred the organizing of the needle trades, so the tragedy of Imperial can be the spark to organize the poultry industry in the South.

The AFL-CIO has made halfhearted occasional efforts to organize in the South, but their bureaucratic legalistic campaigns have foundered in the face of the owners' stonewalling and counterattacks. Union bureaucrats have no answer to the intimidation of workers, who in these little Southern towns fear for their jobs, their homes, and the safety of their families.

Any campaign to organize such plants must be part of a mass organizing drive that links workers in struggle across the South.

In the week after the fire there have been numerous calls for Congressional probes and investigations. But relying on the Democratic Congress to enforce safety or to pass a toothless bill supposedly outlawing "permanent replacement workers" is like asking Frank Perdue to guard the hen house.

Victims of 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire In New York: 146 mostly immigrant women perished because of locked fire exits.



From the 1930s to today, the chains which bind organized labor to the Democrats prevent the kind of knockdown-dragout battles that it will take to organize unions in the South. The CIO was tied to FDR, who wouldn't cross the Jim Crow Dixiecrats; their auxiliaries, the Ku Klux Klan, threatened to and did lynch labor organizers.

Today, the Congressional Democrats "repay" labor for doing the legwork and supplying campaign finances to get them elected...by outlawing the rail strike. Liberal Jesse Jackson is scheduled to grandstand in Hamlet this week, where he will be hustling votes as usual. When Jackson went to the Hormel strike in Minnesota in 1986, he touted his "mediating" skills with the liberal Democratic governor, who brought in the National Guard to break the strike.

When Jackson toured the South together with Amalgamated Clothing union president Jack Sheinkman last year, Black Workers for Justice noted that they spoke under banners reading "Register the Unregistered" and "Sign the Unsigned." They claimed this effort to herd workers into the Democratic Party showed "unity between the struggles to unionize workers and for

Black political power" (*Justice Speaks*, May 1990).

BJW also supported Democrat Harvey Gantt, who lost the Senate race against arch-racist Jesse Helms last November, claiming this was "a direct challenge to the old Southern power structure." But supporting the bosses' Democratic Party, including black liberals like Gantt or "mainstream" black Dems like Virginia governor Wilder, props up the racist power structure.

We need our own party—a workers party. Critically necessary is forging a revolutionary leadership of the union movement. To organize the unorganized requires championing the cause of the most oppressed, fighting against racist discrimination, segregation in housing and schools, police and KKK terror—the whole racist capitalist system which keeps black workers on the bottom and the whole working class exploited.

Today, from among the ranks of the South's black and white working women will come fighting leaders of class struggle. Their leadership in the struggle to build integrated unions in the South would be a fitting memorial for the victims of this latest outrage of racist American capitalism. ■

"New World Order"...

(continued from page 7)

abyss with two world wars. A rational human being would not consciously embark on a course leading to nuclear world war. But capitalism long ago created economic forces which strain against the boundaries of the nation-states in which they are fettered: world imperialism isn't rational, and neither are the men who rule over us in its interest....

"While the irreconcilable hostility of U.S. imperialism to the Soviet Union is the main factor now posing the threat of WWIII before humanity, one cannot ignore interimperialist contradictions. The strength of Japanese industry and world trade cannot be suppressed peacefully. And there is evidence that German imperialism is ready for renewed imperialist adventure."

In itself, the Persian Gulf War was a non-contest. The Pentagon used it to test out and showcase its latest high-tech weaponry with minimal danger. But Washington used the opportunity to reassert U.S. imperialist hegemony in a "post-Cold War" world. With the collapse of the East European Stalinist regimes and now the ascendancy of counterrevolutionary forces in the Soviet Union itself, the post-World War II "bipolar" confrontation between the U.S. and USSR has been superseded. But as the counterrevolutionary Polish Pope John Paul II noted, the postwar world has now been replaced by a pre-war world. Interimperialist conflicts are heading toward WWIII, and they got a big push down the road from the Gulf War.

Yet the "antiwar" movement disap-



War on unions at home: Pittston miners faced army of scabberding cops. Labor's gotta play hardball to win!

peared. As if to underscore the similarity to the period leading up to 1914, a number of radlibs actually supported the U.S. military buildup in the Gulf, mouthing platitudes about nonexistent "international law" and using the United Nations as a fig leaf. In the run-up to the fighting, a number of supposed "socialists" sported yellow ribbons and many carried social-patriotic signs to "support our troops." And as soon as it was clear there would be no significant "Allied" casualties, the "antiwar" movement simply vanished. As always, the reformist left tailed after the liberal Democrats, and the pusillanimous nature of the "peace" movement reflected the

fact that, when U.S. "victory" was assured, for the first time in decades the American bourgeoisie spoke with one voice.

The Spartacist League, based on the program of Lenin and Trotsky, denounced the American invasion from the outset, calling to defeat U.S. imperialism and defend Iraq. We began our article "Break Blockade of Iraq!" (*WV* No. 509, 7 September 1990):

"What's going on in the Middle East right now is a bald attempt by the United States to seize control of the world's oil supplies. Having lost its economic pre-dominance, Washington is now trying to reassert its role as imperialist global policeman through brute military force.

That's what George Bush means when he talks about a 'new world order,' echoing Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. But in fact, the American invasion is setting the stage for a new world war."

"It is the lack of effective opposition that is the novel element in today's world," wrote Edward Mortimer in the *Financial Times* (15 May), adding: "The limits to American power are mainly internal." But those limits are very real. The budget deficit, instead of falling to under \$100 billion this year, has ballooned to over \$300 billion. So Secretary of State Baker repeatedly had to go around to U.S. allies with a tin cup asking for dollars to pay for the war. Bush keeps announcing the imminent end to the "recession" which officially began in August 1990. Instead, unemployment is at 7 percent officially (double that when you include those who can't find a full-time job or who have dropped out of the labor market altogether) and is still growing. To avoid the term depression, bourgeois economists are now talking of a "double-dip recession," in which a slight upturn is followed by another fall.

The biggest obstacle to a recovery is now the towering debt piled up during the 1980s. The federal debt skyrocketed from \$900 billion to over \$3.4 trillion during the decade. Two-thirds of the cities and virtually all the states are running deficits, which unlike the federal government they can't cover by printing money. Heavily indebted consumers likewise aren't buying autos or refrigerators. And 28 percent of U.S. corporations' cash flow, over half their pretax profits, goes for interest payments. The savings and loan associations are bankrupt, with the bailout projected to cost \$500 billion. Insurance companies are

Death on the IRT...

(continued from page 12)

97 people. The five dead victims were all working people from poorer neighborhoods of the city riding to and from night shift jobs: a hotel housekeeper, a nurse's aide, a medical technician, a security guard working three jobs and a maintenance man.

Robert Ray, the motorman who by other workers' accounts was driving the train erratically, overshooting station platforms and speeding, emerged from the accident dazed but not seriously hurt. He identified himself to policemen on the spot, then apparently watched the rescue efforts above ground for a few hours. Ray was arrested at his home about six hours after the crash, was grilled for hours while the union attorney was not allowed to see him, and was then charged with manslaughter. Later the charges were upped to murder by Manhattan D.A. Morgenthau.

The tabloid press immediately branded Ray a crackhead because a "crack vial" was recovered from the motorman's cab. Drug tests showed he had not used cocaine. An alcohol test 13 hours after the accident showed a .21 blood alcohol level. His attorney says this simply reflects Ray's drinking in despair after the accident. Of course, Transit Authority bosses and politicians screamed for random drug testing. Only 24 hours later Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 president Sonny Hall agreed to this scapegoating, union-busting demand which targets all transit workers.

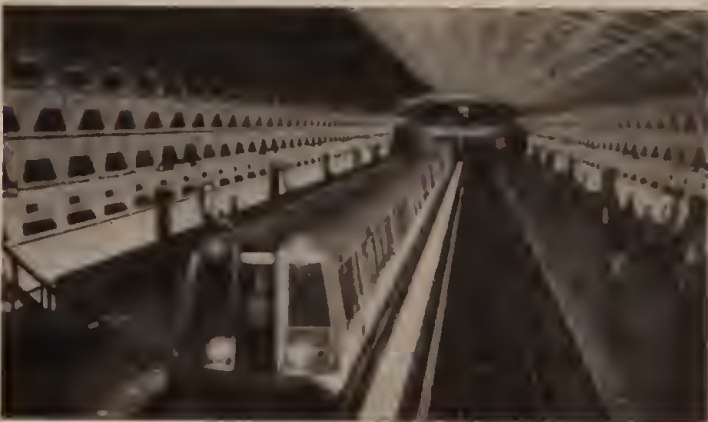
It is gross hypocrisy for the TA tops to string up Ray and go after the TWU with random drug tests. *Newsday* columnist Jim Dwyer, who refused to go along with the drug war against the workforce, notes that alcohol and other drugs have almost never been implicated in subway accidents, but "about 25 percent of the people who drive New York trains or operate track switches are dangerously fatigued. That's because they routinely work more hours than federal safety standards permit." And that's because the TA has been laying off and eliminating critical maintenance and operating jobs. Last fall 300 experienced, mostly minority track workers who do vital repair jobs were fired.

Random drug testing is meant to terrorize the unionized workers and alibi the bosses. Transit systems around the country and Congressmen are now using the NYC accident to ram through drug testing. But "testing" won't stop accidents. TWUers, whose lives are on the line every day working long hours underground, can. They are acutely aware of the dangers on the job. Motorman Phyllis Love told *Newsday* that "we know what's at stake, we're not kids here. You tell [a coworker] to book off, to say he's not feeling well and to go home." *The trains and buses in NYC won't be safe until the workers have the power, through elected union safety reps, to shut down unsafe working conditions on the spot.*

Those who labor in the transit system of New York City have paid dearly with their blood because of the unsafe, crum-

pled and callously left trapped, bleeding to death for four hours inside his cab, while the TA was holding a press conference denouncing Cole for "failing to follow the rules of the railroad." It was a big lie by the Transit Authority: the fact is, the signal system wasn't working, and there was no flagman to warn Cole of the train stopped ahead of him on his track!

The Union Square crash should never have happened. The real criminals are the bosses and bankers who have deliberately allowed the massive decay of the infrastructure of New York City from bridges to water mains to the century-old subway system—while they take limos to and from Wall Street. The Inspector General of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority admitted, "the technology exists to prevent accidents like this from happening, but the Transit Authority does not have it."



Menschel/Christian Science Monitor

Washington, D.C. Metro: automated controls ensure trains don't exceed safe speed.

bling infrastructure. In the last two years eight transit workers have been killed and scores seriously injured on the job. Those workers are dead because the TA did not provide flagmen or didn't inform other workers that men were working on the tracks! And in almost every case the TA falsely tried to blame the workers—raising drugs as a smokescreen. Yet last spring, Peter Stangl was confirmed as MTA chief despite letting friends play Casey-at-the-throttle of a Metro-North train barreling along at 80 mph.

Many TWU members still remember the infamous train crash ten years ago that killed motorman Jesse Cole. Cole

was callously left trapped, bleeding to death for four hours inside his cab, while the TA was holding a press conference denouncing Cole for "failing to follow the rules of the railroad." It was a big lie by the Transit Authority: the fact is, the signal system wasn't working, and there was no flagman to warn Cole of the train stopped ahead of him on his track!

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should be ripped out and rebuilt.

The IRT crash got even more attention because it highlighted the disastrous state of mass transportation and public services in the financial center of the U.S. How bad is it? A recent study by engineers at Cooper Union "paints a grim picture of New York circa 2030 in which pipes are bursting like cheap balloons and citizens are struggling without running water for days on end; in which roads and bridges are being closed for fear of collapse, and every corner of the city is immobilized in epic traffic jams" (*New York Times*, 2 August). The solution is billions to rebuild the city, billions that capitalism will never spend.

Covering up their criminal hostility to safety while scapegoating transit workers with help from the TWU bureaucracy is what the TA does best. Last December an electrical explosion at the Clark Street station injured more than 180 people—two died from smoke inhalation. The TA claimed it was a freak accident, but management knew that the exhaust fans which serviced the Clark Street Tunnel hadn't been operable since 1984! The deaths were expected and predicted by the TA's own internal study, but not one boss faced murder charges! The month before the Clark Street disaster, the TA postponed \$500 million of critical track and tunnel work. In the wake of the latest accident, the TA announced a \$700 million program to prevent future Union Square catastrophes. Tops on their list is computer harassment of workers for taking days off!

The Committee for a Fighting TWU, a class-struggle opposition group in TWU Local 100, has been fighting for the basic workers' right that "no safety means no work." After transit workers David Davis and Stewart Melsinker were killed on the job last year, the Committee put forward motions at union meetings demanding "elected union safety representatives, backed by the entire union, with the power to shut down any unsafe working conditions on the spot." The motion passed at one division meeting, but Hall and his fellow bureaucrats buried it. The transit system will never be safe for workers or riders until workers control safety. NYC must be rebuilt from the ground up—and underneath—with a massive program of public works providing jobs for all! And this will take a class-struggle leadership. No to drug testing! For free, safe mass transit! ■

precarious. And the banks are teetering on the edge: already this year there have been major mergers in New York and California to avert bankruptcy and a possible nationwide bank collapse. As a result there is almost no investment in the American economy today.

Meanwhile, the capitalist managers continue to loot the companies with abandon. At the end of World War II, the average U.S. corporate chief (CEO) earned 12 times the average factory worker's wage. At the beginning of the 1980s the average annual pay of CEOs was \$643,000, or 42 times the worker's wage. But in 1990, this had shot up by 212 percent to an average of \$1.9 million, 85 times the worker's wage (*AFL-CIO News*, 21 May)! Meanwhile, the real take-home pay of factory workers has fallen since 1973, to the point that today young working-class families have virtually no hope of buying a house. Things have gotten so bad that *Business Week* (19 August) ran a cover story asking "What Happened to the American Dream?" So much for the myth of a "classless society."

Over five million children go to bed hungry, and there are an estimated three million homeless. Worst off are black and Hispanic minorities, particularly ghetto youth, who have no education, no job, and no hope of getting either. The decay of American cities has produced a wasteland of social pathology, of massive drug addiction and violent crime. As liberal Democrats call for an "Urban

Storm" to solve the urban crisis, the response of the government at all levels, from the Republican White House to black Democratic mayors, is to increase the number of jails and cops.

Some years ago, AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland accused the bosses of waging a "one-sided class war." The central responsibility for this state of affairs lies with the misleaders of the workers movement, who have gone along with billions in givebacks that have gutted their own unions as they grovel to demonstrate their higher loyalties to the capitalist system. As a result, the number of major strikes last year was at the lowest point since the end of World War II (when they had an actual strike ban). The treachery of the labor tops is shown by their acquiescence in the massive spread of scabbing (now called "permanent replacement workers"). And since the unions aren't producing benefits, it's no surprise that the unionized sector of the industrial workforce is now about 15 percent. Nevertheless, over 20 percent of black workers are unionized, reflecting greater militancy and awareness of the oppressive reality of capitalism.

The internal contradictions of American imperialism are enormous. But to take advantage of them requires above all the forging of a leadership prepared to fight the class war—which the bourgeoisie is waging at home with the same ferocity it used against the Iraqis, devastating American cities, shutting down industry, all in the name of profits. As

we wrote in the iSt document on the threat of World War III:

"The world bourgeoisie has at its disposal enormous political experience and economic reserves. If the history of the 20th century proves anything it is this: within the social context there is no situation in which the bourgeoisie cannot prevail, if there does not exist a revolutionary party capable of wresting power from its hands. Revolutionary proletarian parties are not built overnight: it took two generations of ferment in the Russian intelligentsia, the dress rehearsal of 1905, and years of patient underground work among the proletarians of the tsarist empire to produce Lenin's Bolsheviks. But if the small forces which adhere today to the revolutionary program of Lenin and Trotsky do not succeed in forging themselves into parties with the experience, will and authority among the masses to lead a successful proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries, there will be no future for humanity." ■

Kohl...

(continued from page 3)

Suddenly Kohl's imperial ambitions are rankling the nuclear nuts in the White House who think the world belongs to them.

As events pave the way toward an "unthinkable" nuclear World War III, Kohl's embracing the corpse of "Old Fritz" symbolizes German imperialism's age-old *Drang nach Osten* (drive to the East). Bush, meanwhile, borrows from Hitler's lexicon in declaring a "New

World Order" while raining high-tech mass murder on hapless Iraqis in the one-sided Persian Gulf "war." With the demise of the Stalinist regimes in East Europe and the death agony of Soviet Stalinism, whose rule was the antithesis of communism, the imperialists are celebrating the "Death of Communism." The ghoulish reburial of Frederick the Great as the declaration of an aggressive new German Reich, the charred remains of Iraqis trying to flee Kuwait on the "highway of death," forecast what's in store for humanity as the imperialists compete over their division of the spoils in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

We of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) uniquely said "No to capitalist reunification!" when the rest of the left was capitulating before the imperialist onslaught. While a chorus of self-proclaimed "leftists" in this country join in the imperialists' anti-Communist celebration, we recognize that now more than ever it is desperately necessary to fight for the genuine communism of Lenin and Trotsky. After the horror of the Nazi Holocaust, the continued rule of capital—which now seeks to extend its system of raw exploitation, poverty and racism to East Europe and the Soviet Union while interimperialist rivalries heat up—threatens all of humanity with the nuclear Armageddon of World War III. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Bosses Locked the Doors, 25 Workers Die in Fire

Carolina Poultry Plant Inferno

Labor/Black Struggle to Organize the South!

ATLANTA—25 workers were killed and 55 injured on the morning of September 3, when a fire swept through the Imperial Food Products chicken processing plant in Hamlet, North Carolina. The workers, predominantly black women, were trapped inside because the owners had padlocked fire doors to prevent "theft" of chicken parts.

Rescuers heard workers banging on doors, screaming "Let me out!" Huddled bodies poised for escape were found clumped together at the exits. Twelve workers asphyxiated in a cooler where they sought in vain to take refuge from the billowing smoke. Forty-seven of the 90 day-shift workers who stumbled out, gasping for air, had to be hospitalized.

These horrible deaths were no accident, but capitalist mass murder. William Dixon, who had worked at the plant for many years, told *Workers Vanguard* that the locked doors were standard operating procedure at Imperial: "You had to get someone from the front office to come unlock the doors. You'll notice none of the officials or boss men lost their lives."

Nor have any of the owners or management been arrested for their crime of murder.

Triangle Shirtwaist Fire Again

The blaze originated when a hydraulic oil line ruptured, the oil vaporized and was ignited by the open gas flames of the deep-fry vats, producing an explosive fireball. Flames soared to the roof where insulation caught fire and



Rottet/Raleigh News & Observer

Racist anti-union bosses are responsible for mass murder in North Carolina fire. Left: grieving relatives of victims, many of whom were trapped behind padlocked fire doors.

unleashed deadly toxic fumes.

Imperial provides chicken parts to fast-food chains. The profit-gouging owners were shipping chicken out the next day, even before the dead were buried. The owners had relocated from Pennsylvania to the rural non-union South. In Hamlet, they were the biggest low-wage sweatshop employer in a town of less than 7,000 people with a white political structure willing to cooperate.

A spokesman for the Black Workers for Justice in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, who spent several days in Hamlet right after the fire, told WV: "You could see the plant was a deathtrap—a tragedy

waiting to happen. There are plants like this all over the South. They go right into communities where they know they're going to attract a poor black workforce. Eighteen of the 25 who died were women, the plant is 85 percent African American, there are some Native Americans and some whites."

Just as the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Co. fire in New York, where 146 Jewish and Italian young immigrant women perished behind locked factory doors, illuminated the hideous exploitation of the garment trades, the Hamlet fire has thrown a glare of national attention on the poultry industry in the South.

Runaway shops like Imperial have made poultry producing the biggest farm industry in North Carolina, larger than tobacco, with more than 30,000 workers statewide. The workers are typically women, black, and work for near-minimum wages of between \$4.90 and \$5.60 an hour. They are particularly subject to carpal-tunnel syndrome from constant repetitive tearing of chicken parts.

There were no sprinklers at Imperial. Not one government agency had inspected the plant in the eleven years of its operation, despite a spate of fires. Before the fire, the company's other

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Naso/Newsday

IRT No. 4 subway car after the crash in Union Square station, Manhattan.

Death on the IRT

Just after midnight on August 28, a devastating derailment at the Union Square subway stop in Manhattan killed five passengers and injured more than 200. The crash of the IRT No. 4 express was one of the worst New York City subway accidents of this century. The impact threw train cars and human body parts all over the tracks and demolished over 20 steel structural supports holding up the road above. Before the ten-car train crossed the switch to the local track at 45-50 mph (four times the safe speed),

a signaling device should have triggered an emergency brake. But the inadequate safety device failed to stop the train's first car from jumping the tracks and slamming into a massive air compressor.

Considering the scope of the destruction, with the lead car sliced in half lengthwise, another wrapped around supports, it could have been a repeat of the Malbone St., Brooklyn crash of 1918, when an untrained scab motorman lost control of his speeding train, killing

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