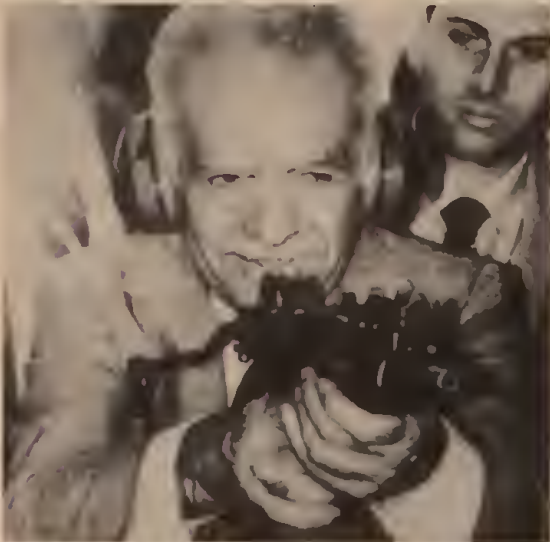


Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!

Palestinians Shafted by Phony "Peace" Talks



Harnik/Government Press Office



Bakhshandagi/Rapho

Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir brandishing Uzi submachine gun. Palestinian Intifada mass revolt defied Zionist occupation and state terror on the West Bank and Gaza.

The heads of both the Israeli and Jordanian delegations at the Near East talks in Madrid started out their speeches with the word "peace." But whether you say it "shalom" or "salaam," there was no peace around the conference table—and there will be no peace in the region until the Zionist butchers and their bourgeois Arab counterparts, all propped up by imperialism, are swept away by socialist revolutions.

Bush and Baker are seeking to forge a Pax Americana in the Near East over the corpses of more than 100,000 Iraqis

Pax Americana Means More Slaughter

slaughtered by the U.S.-led murder machine earlier this year. They want to put an end to the interminable "squabbling" between the Zionist state and its Arab neighbors which makes this region

a prime nuclear powder keg. This has been Washington's goal for decades. Now, with the Soviet Union out of the picture, they think they can forge a stable "consensus" with everyone bowing

down to U.S. imperialist hegemony.

The Americans' imperial ambitions far exceed their ability to enforce them on this crazy quilt of entrenched national, communal and religious antagonism. But one thing can be said with certainty: there is no place in Bush's "New World Order" for the long-oppressed Palestinian nation. Despite all the hoopla about a "historic opportunity," and the self-congratulatory crowing by petty-bourgeois Palestinian leaders that they finally have a place at the conference

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Noriega Trial: The Bush Connection

Panama: U.S. Invasion Killed Thousands

The case of *United States of America v. General Manuel Antonio Noriega* was supposed to be the legal paradigm of George Bush's "New World Order." U.S. courts indict the leader of a sovereign country on charges of violating U.S. laws which are held to apply outside U.S. territory. The Panamanian strongman becomes No. 1 on Washington's wanted list in the international "war on drugs." A full-blast propaganda campaign turns pock-marked "pineapple face" into the personification of all evil. Then U.S. cops of the world track down the culprit in his lair and bring him to "justice." But the

show trial currently under way in Miami isn't exactly going according to script.

Actually, it wasn't supposed to happen at all. Used to be that CIA "assets" who had become debts were simply "terminated with extreme prejudice," as was the fate of Trujillo in Santo Domingo and Diem in Saigon. But since the assassination business was declared off-limits for the Company after Nixon's Watergate fiasco, the Reagan/Bush style has been to declare war on the malefactor's country and then target Numero Uno's home under

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Bush and Noriega together at Panama City airport in 1983. These two CIA men go back a long way.

Free Gary Tyler!

On December 4, Gary Tyler will again appear before the Louisiana Board of Pardons to seek release from the racist frame-up which has stolen 17 years of his life. He was framed on charges of killing a white student in 1974, when Tyler's school bus was attacked by a racist mob of 200 organized by the KKK outside recently desegregated Destrehan High School. When Tyler intervened to stop a deputy from harassing a black student after the shooting, he was dragged to the sheriff's department, brutally beaten, and stuck with the bogus murder rap. David Duke, then a rising star in the KKK, now Republican candidate for Louisiana governor, made a name for himself by rushing into

town to organize vigilantes.

It was a classic Southern frame-up. The "murder" weapon—a .45 planted by the cops under Tyler's bus seat (and "discovered" after the bus was taken to the police garage)—disappeared after forensic tests showed that the bullet actually came from a .22. To make their case, Destrehan cops terrorized Larry Dabney into testifying against his classmate: "The deputies didn't even ask me what I saw. They told me flat out I was going to be their key witness." Dabney, who has since recanted, was told to "sign the statement they put together for me or I was going to jail for ten years."

After the hanging judge told the all-white jury it could presume Gary Tyler



Breaux/Louisiana Weekly
Gary Tyler, victim of racist frame-up.

was guilty, he was convicted and sentenced to the electric chair. Two years later the U.S. Supreme Court declared Louisiana's death penalty statute unconstitutional and Tyler's sentence was commuted to life. Though the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1980 declared the trial "fundamentally unfair," Gary Tyler remains locked up in the notorious hell of Angola prison due to the legal technicality that his lawyer failed to object to the outrageous constitutional violations at trial!

Last year the Board recommended a reduction of Tyler's sentence, which would have qualified him for parole in five years. But Governor Buddy Roemer, a lame duck after losing to KKKer Duke in last month's primary, denied clemency. On November 5 the Partisan Defense Committee wrote to Roemer demanding Tyler's immediate release. Send letters calling for Gary Tyler's free-

dom to: Governor Buddy Roemer, P.O. Box 94004, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.

Bright yellow sun beats down from aqua blue skies. Groupers and angelfish swim peacefully around potbellied snorkelers. St. Croix, Virgin Islands—tropical bliss for U.S. tourists, grinding poverty and racist oppression for the native population.

An American colony since 1917, the U.S. Virgin Islands is an exploiters' paradise of tax shelters and naked racist exploitation. For daring to organize against U.S. colonial rule, Virgin Islander Haniff Shabazz-Bey has spent nearly half his life in the Marion, Illinois prison "Control Unit," the victim of a notorious racist frame-up.

Following the brutal murders of eight tourists at the plush Rockefeller-owned Fountain Valley golf course on 6 September 1972, the U.S. government sent in a 300-man invasion force and placed the island under virtual martial law. The FBI, U.S. Army helicopter crews and Navy command units from Puerto Rico armed with nerve gas and machine guns conducted house-to-house searches, hunting down all known opponents of U.S. colonialism. Roadblocks were set up, blacks dragged from their cars, searched and hauled off for interrogation. Community organizer Haniff Shabazz-Bey, recently returned from Vietnam with an undesirable discharge for expressing his black nationalist views to his racist officers, was among five charged with the golf course killings.

The feds used an unflinching prosecutorial strategy—to force Shabazz-Bey to

continued on page 5



TROTSKY

October 1917 and the World Revolution

The workers of Russia rose to power under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party on 7 November 1917 (October 25 in the old Russian calendar) based on the perspective of world socialist revolution. The Stalinist bureaucracy which subsequently usurped political power from the Soviet proletariat destroyed its Bolshevik vanguard and repudiated the internationalist program of Bolshevism. Undermined by decades of



LENIN

Stalinist sabotage, the Soviet Union is now in the grip of a capitalist-restorationist drive. Writing on the fifteenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Leon Trotsky emphasized that an international revolutionary perspective was key to defending the gains of October. That is what guides the International Communist League in struggling to defeat the forces of counterrevolution.

The leaders and the masses saw in the October upheaval only the first stage of the world revolution. The thought of an independent development of socialism in isolated Russia was, in the year 1917, neither defended nor supported nor formulated by anybody. In the following years as well the whole party without exception viewed the economic construction as the substructure of the material base for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the preservation of the economic alliance between city and country, and finally as the creation of points of support for the future socialist society which could be developed only on an international basis.

The road to the world revolution has proved to be much longer and more tortuous than we had hoped and expected fifteen years ago. To the external difficulties, of which the historic role of reformism showed itself to be the most important, were added the internal ones, above all, the policies of the epigones of Bolshevism, false to their core and fatal in their consequence. The bureaucracy of the first workers' state—unconsciously, but that is no excuse—does everything decisive to prevent the birth of a second workers' state. The knots tied by the bureaucracy must be untied or cut in order to proceed on the road to the revolution....

The economic successes of the Soviet Union are very great but, as we celebrate its fifteenth anniversary, its contradictions and difficulties have taken on threatening proportions. Lags, interruptions, and disproportions bear witness in the first place to wrong leadership. But that is not the whole of it. They reveal that the construction of a harmonious society is possible only through an uninterrupted experience extending over decades and only on an international basis. The technical and cultural obstacles—the gulf between city and country, the difficulties of import and export trade—prove that the October Revolution demands continuation on an international scale. Internationalism is not a convention ritual but a matter of life and death.

—Leon Trotsky, "Fifteen Years!" (October 1932)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 538

8 November 1991

Remember the Greensboro Martyrs

Twelve years have passed since the Greensboro Massacre. In broad daylight, the KKK/Nazi death squad drove up to a black housing project in Greensboro, North Carolina, where an anti-Klan rally was gathering. With cool deliberation, the killers took their weapons out of the trunk, aimed, fired, and drove off. Five leftists, civil rights activists and union organizers lay dying in pools of blood, others were wounded or maimed for life. These were the opening shots, carried out under the Democratic Carter administration, of the Reagan years' war on labor and blacks.

Greensboro was a conspiracy of the fascists and their patrons in the capitalist state. From the outset, the KKK and Nazis were aided and abetted by the government, from the G-man who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations to the "former" FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade of death and the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. Two successive all-white juries acquitted the killers of all charges, affirming once again the meaning of "justice" in this racist capitalist state.

"Greensboro"—the name cries out for justice, for vengeance. When the liberals claim it was a "shootout" and say to ignore the fascists, when the lynchers say they want to parade in their white sheets in our neighborhoods, we remember Greensboro by mobilizing to stop them. Immediately after the massacre, when the fascists sought to march in black Detroit, we organized a labor/black mobilization to stop them, as we have done from Washington and Philadelphia to Chicago and San Francisco.



Greensboro Daily News

Nelson Johnson, a survivor of the Greensboro Massacre, kneels by slain comrade.

In Boston last March, the Partisan Defense Committee initiated a united-front protest against another deadly dangerous KKK/Nazi, David Duke, the "Klan in a suit." Today Duke is in the runoff election for governor of Louisiana as the bourgeois parties, and even some on the left, maintain a conspiracy of silence on his fascist past...and present (see "SWP Soft-Pedals Fascist Duke," page four).

We honor the Greensboro martyrs—Cesar Cauce, Michael Nathan, Bill Sampson, Sandi Smith, James Waller—and rededicate ourselves to the fight against fascist terror. The working class in power, the third American revolution, will ensure there shall be No More Greensboros!

3 November 1979

For a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

Polish Elections: Protest Against Walesa "Shock Treatment"

WARSAW—The October 27 parliamentary elections registered a sharp protest against the capitalist "shock treatment" being meted out by the government of president Lech Walesa and his economic czar Leszek Balcerowicz.

Balcerowicz's Liberal-Democratic Congress and Walesa's Center Alliance got a bare 7 percent each. They were both swamped by the Democratic Left Alliance dominated by the ex-Stalinist Social Democrats (SdRP), which came in a close second to the Democratic Union of former Solidarność prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who was forced out by Walesa, with some 12 percent each. The official peasant party under the former Stalinist regime also beat out the government parties. The degree of popular cynicism with the current regime was shown by the near 60 percent abstention rate and was punctuated by the strong showing for the Beer Lovers Party (PPPP), founded a couple of months ago by some actors, more as a joke than a political group.

But the election campaign was no joke. Frustration and despair over widespread immiseration was also channeled into significant votes for openly clericalist and anti-Semitic parties to the right of the Solidarność mainstream, like Catholic Electoral Action and the "Christian nationalist" Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN).

What was touted as Poland's "first free parliamentary election" in the postwar era was marked by an ominous wave of anti-Semitism and anti-Communism. "Phantoms of last year's presidential election campaign revived," wrote the ex-Stalinist newspaper *Trybuna*, describing how Stars of David with gallows and the word "Jew" had been sprayed over election posters. The anti-Semitic National Party ran TV broadcasts screaming that the "Judeo-Kommuna [Communism] and Judeo-Solidarność control all political life." A day after one televised tirade by these right-wingers, anti-Semitic thugs carried out an unsuccessful attack at the entrance to Warsaw's only synagogue.

Meanwhile Walesa, who pushed "Who are the Jews?" racist demagoguery in his successful presidential bid last year, issued statements accusing "the people of the Communist system" of being responsible for the bad economic situation and for anti-government demonstrations. Walesa's threats to "lead the streets" against "Communism" were accompanied by former Carter adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who proclaimed in a national television broadcast that the



Solidarność leader Lech Walesa and his friends: anti-Communist, anti-Semitic, anti-working-class.

former "people's republic" had been run by "traitors, criminals and thieves." Though electioneering was officially forbidden the day before the vote, state television carried an inflammatory hour-long program on "Communist crimes," demanding that former Stalinists be arraigned as "gangsters" and "offenders."

The Catholic hierarchy, stung by its failure last spring to push a blanket ban on abortion through the Sejm (parliament), took back its earlier promise not to endorse candidates and issued a public appeal from the pulpits to vote only for "Christian" lists in order to combat

the "disciplined electorate of the former Communist party." *Trybuna* reported that in some churches campaign leaflets were being distributed on election day. One bishop stated outright that Catholics should vote for Catholics, Jews for Jews, and Communists for Communists. These pogromist appeals come in a country where only several thousand Jews remain.

In the aftermath of the elections, with various parties scrambling to form some

sort of tenuous coalition government, Walesa seized the opportunity to put forward his bid to play the role of bonaparte, "offering" to take over as prime minister as well as president. Walesa has long wanted to follow in the footsteps of his idol, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, the fascist dictator of interwar Poland. But his increasingly despised capitalist regime has neither Pilsudski's authority nor his power, and his "offer" was instantly rebuffed.

The ex-Stalinists, whose OPZZ trade-union federation is several times larger than the Solidarność "union," are seen as the only ones organizing mass protest against the "Balcerowicz plan" of IMF-dictated austerity. But their opposition remains carefully within the bounds of transition to a full-fledged capitalist economy. Demonstrations, like the recent "silent marches" by the teachers union, are tightly controlled, with workers from the factories discouraged from attending. As a result, a demonstration by old-age pensioners in September was taken over by vocal anti-Semites. In the days before the vote, SdRP leader Cimoszewicz condemned any demonstrations at all, for fear of upsetting their electoral prospects. Yet a thousand OPZZ miners, their number deliberately kept low by the bureaucrats, staged a protest against the attacks on their pensions on the eve of the election.

In the election campaign, the SdRP-led left alliance did not so much as mention the word socialism, calling only for a social safety net, defense of free education and higher wages under the capitalist state. With unemployment around

10 percent and millions more barely surviving on poverty wages, the Social Democrats do not demand jobs for all but offer only mealy-mouthed opposition to "mass, structural" unemployment. Instead of attacking rising anti-Semitism and anti-Roma (Gypsy) pogroms head-on, they preach "tolerance." Instead of forthrightly fighting clerical attacks on abortion, they call for a "referendum" on the question. In the face of red-baiting attacks following the August coup in the Soviet Union, the SdRP broadcast its opposition to the coup and support to the "democratic" forces behind Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary countercoup.

What passed for Trotskyists in Poland until recently were in fact social-democratic denizens of the Solidarność swamp. *Dalej*, the newspaper of self-styled "Trotskyist" supporters of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat, called for a vote to candidates representing "workers' interests," like a Nowa Huta steelworks leader of Solidarność '80, run by the virulently anti-Communist and anti-Semitic Marian Jurczyk. And Mandel favorite Jozef Pinior's supporters not only ran on the platform of Labor Solidarity, but organized its campaign out of their office.

In contrast, the Spartakusowska Grupa Polski refused to call for a vote to any candidate in the current elections, and sought instead to intervene with a Trotskyist program in workers' protests against capitalist attacks. At the Warsaw teachers demonstration, we were the only ones distributing literature. The SGP is the only organization in Poland which forthrightly opposes the counter-revolutionary tide sweeping East Europe and the Soviet Union, fighting to revive the revolutionary unity of the Soviet, Polish and German workers. Against the clericalist onslaught, we struggle openly against all manifestations of anti-Semitism and fight to defend and restore the full right to free abortion on demand.

In our paper *Platforma Spartakusowców* and in demonstrations we called to "Extend workers resistance to capitalist attacks!" and "Build a Leninist-Trotskyist party" capable of leading to victory the struggle against Solidarność counterrevolution. We used our very limited forces to establish a Leninist pole of attraction and we continue in this vital task. ■

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Wspomnienia rewolucyjnego robotnika żydowskiego

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- 1981—Spartacist Said: Stop Solidarnosc Counterrevolution!
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Crown Heights: FIT Panders to Pogromists

In the aftermath of the death of a seven-year-old black child, Gavin Cato, on the streets of Crown Heights, Brooklyn in August there was an explosion of deadly violence between blacks and Jews of the Hasidic Lubavitcher sect. Cato was struck down by a reckless driver who was part of a speeding motorcade carrying the chief rabbi of the Lubavitcher sect. The same night a Hasidic scholar, Yankel Rosenbaum, was murdered in revenge, knifed by a gang of young blacks.

For three days the Crown Heights area exploded, as blacks and Hassidim stoned each other and black youth battled the cops. Black nationalist demagogues like Sonny Carson and FBI fink Al Sharpton fed intercommunal violence, organizing a march on the Lubavitcher synagogue and diverting the anger of black youth away from the capitalist rulers who are behind the grinding poverty and cop terror in the ghetto. In a grotesque and deadly example of the politics of nationalist despair, the most oppressed victims of racist, capitalist America chanted "Heil Hitler!" and carried signs reading "Hitler didn't finish the job."

New York has been poised at a fever pitch of racial tensions, especially between blacks and Jews. There are poisonous demagogues on both sides, the Farrakhans, Sharptons and Carsons versus the Kochs, Kahanes and Sulzbergers—with the latter having a lot more clout in New York City. In a speech last summer on "multicultural education" Leonard Jeffries, head of the African-American Studies Department at City College, threw his anti-Semitic ravings into this cauldron, adding his voice to those who would see New York ripped by race war. In our article "Death in Crown Heights" (WV No. 533, 30 August), we denounced how "Cops, Nationalists, Zionists Fan Flames in Brooklyn."

As communists we seek to provide the revolutionary answer to the program of nationalist despair and all-sided race-hate that only serves the Wall Street rulers, who, you better understand, are rich WASPs. But fake-left organizations in New York responded to the Crown Heights events by simply disappearing any anti-Semitism (Communist Party) or joining with their banners in the nationalists' provocative march on the Luha-

vitcher synagogue (Workers World Party). And in the wake of this explosion of deadly hate, the supposedly socialist Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT) explicitly *applauded* "attacks against individual Jews" in Crown Heights.

An article on "New Crisis in 'Black-Jewish Relations'" by Steve Bloom in the October issue of the FIT's *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* states:

"It is reasonable to say that the role of the Lubavitchers in collaborating with the police and otherwise promoting the oppression of Blacks within Crown Heights is, on a small scale, analogous to the collaboration of Israel with the imperialist governments around the world in the oppression of Arabs and others...."

"If this is true then a rebellion which directs itself against that oppression—whether it be rock and bottle throwing and even attacks against individual Jews in Crown Heights, or the Intifada in the occupied territories—has to be seen as a normal and positive response on the part of the oppressed people concerned—regardless of whether the specific tactics used are effective, and regardless of whether an anti-Semitic ideology may play a role."

So for *BIDOM* editor Steve Bloom the murder of Yankel Rosenbaum was a "positive response"! This is the Nazi/Zionist policy of "collective guilt" and a recipe for race war.

Slandering the Intifada

The "theoretical" parallel that Bloom and the FIT offer for their vicarious pogromism is a lie. It is not only an opportunist capitulation to the nationalist demagogues, it is a gross slander of the more than 1,000 martyrs of the *Intifada* who were gunned down by Israeli occupation forces and fascist settlers. The Palestinian organization that shares Bloom's appetite for communalism and attacks on individual Jews is the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas. With a shady history of support by the Zionist authorities, Hamas has also sought to impose the *hijab* (headscarf) on Palestinian women—showing with stones those who refused to bow to this reactionary fundamentalism. Of course, it is the racist Zionist rulers who are the supreme practitioners of communalist bloodletting.

Like the black nationalists and Democratic Party hustlers they opportunistically pander to, the FIT is selling anti-Semitism, the "socialism of fools." For

the most part the FIT is an irrelevant leftover from the Socialist Workers Party, gazing resolutely backwards to the SWP's salad days when bourgeois politicians graced the platforms of their pop-front antiwar coalition. But the FIT's mentor, the late George Breitman, was the author of the SWP's infatuation with black nationalism, which led them in 1968 to side with the capitalist Ford Foundation and liberal mayor John Lindsay's campaign to break the power of



Paraskevas/Newsday
Yankel Rosenbaum lies bleeding in Crown Heights.

the teachers union by setting minorities against the UFT.

Here the FIT is on even more dangerous territory as it discovers that "consistent nationalism" leads to...*pogroms*! After a nod to opposing "any resurgence of anti-Semitic sentiment," Bloom launches into a defense of the anti-Semitic crackpot theories of CUNY professor Leonard Jeffries, reprinting lengthy excerpts from Jeffries' speech and merely politely suggesting that he "adapted unacceptably to anti-Semitic sentiments prevalent in the Black community." Bloom advises Jeffries to clean up his act when he rants about a "Jewish conspiracy" against blacks. By changing "the word 'conspiracy' to something else, in every case a valid thought remains," he claims. The

"thought" that remains is: anti-Semitism. The FIT's position on New York City is not different from that of its International which hails as "freedom fighters" the Baltic fascists who helped annihilate the entire remaining Jewish population of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania while working for the Nazis.

For in every case nationalists, who place "their" nations above others, have at least a fascist wing. While national self-determination is a democratic right, *nationalism*, which is false consciousness, is a fraud. National appeals are always a way for the rulers, present or would-be, to tie the masses of workers and other poor strata to the masters of the nation. Hitler, an almost perfect nationalist, fought against *anything* he saw as transnational: Judaism, communism, the Catholic church, the Masons. Of course, the nationalism of the oppressed contains a kernel of truth. From Ireland to the *Intifada*, you find not only a fascist wing but also sections that come pretty close to the communists.

Blacks in New York City are not the same as post-World War I Germans, but they do have something in common: they are peoples in despair. They have completely different reasons for the despair. In the Germans' case, they lost an imperialist war. Blacks in America moved heavily into the industrial proletariat in World War II, but in subsequent economic contractions, as a chronic reserve army of the unemployed they were confined in ghettos, and, particularly over the last decade and a half, a whole generation of youth has been increasingly thoroughly lumpenized. So today, struggling in the exotic conditions of Brooklyn, they have fallen into the old Russian tradition of "kick the Yid." And the Hasidic Jews are preconditioned to expect exactly that from their experience in the old country.

In this situation, the FIT position is an abomination. If there is anyone left in the FIT who wants to make a revolution, who wants to destroy the stranglehold of the Democratic Party and its black front men who exploit black misery by playing the anti-Semitic card, we suggest they look long and hard at where their organization has come down on Crown Heights.

A dozen years ago, during another bloody, fratricidal confrontation in Crown Heights, the Spartacist League fought the SWP and other reformists who jumped on the nationalists' anti-Semitic bandwagon as they sought to make Jews the scapegoats for capitalism's war on the black masses. As the Spartacist candidate for NY state assembly said then in denouncing the SWP: "There's nothing in any kind of communist program that calls for marching on a synagogue." ■

SWP Soft-Pedals Fascist Duke

The oddball reformists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) have hit a new low. For years the eclectic Castroites of the SWP have ludicrously attempted to portray American farmers as akin to oppressed Latin American *campesinos*. That's made for some pretty strange bedfellows. As we wrote some years ago in "Strange Sprouts in Barnes' Yard" (WV No. 326, 25 March 1983):

"The SWP's main competitor in this milieu is the fascistic anti-Semitic organization of Lyndon LaRouche.... Perhaps the next *Militant* will tell us, 'Where the Klan goes wrong on democratic rights'."

Seems like Jack Barnes' outfit decided to confirm our prediction, or perhaps all those years spent down on the farm have left the SWP with masbbed turnips for brains. An election leaflet by SWP candidates in New York purporting to tell

"The Truth About the Vote for David Duke" prettifies this fascist with a face-lift, with yet more cosmetic surgery—never once does it mention the words *Klan, Nazi or fascist*!

Like the capitalist politicians who play down Duke's KKK past and present as a mortal danger to blacks, labor and all those the fascists target, the SWP describes Duke only as an "outspoken racist" whose "radical right-wing appeal is designed to tap into deep frustration felt by middle-class layers and a layer of working-class whites"—evidently the same electorate the SWP wants to "tap into." (In San Francisco, the SWP is running for sheriff and district attorney.)

The thoroughly reformist SWP, these would-be "cop socialists," can no longer even recognize fascism much less organ-

ize to crush it. The Spartacist League, in contrast, has responded to the ominous rise of American fascism by organizing massive labor/black mobilizations to stop these killers when and where they've reared their heads in major urban centers across the country.

In fact, the SWP provides these lynchers and cross-burners a platform to incite racist genocide by meeting them in TV studios for oh-so-respectable "candidates' debates," as they did with California's Grand Dragon Tom Metzger! The SWP also emerged as the "socialist" defenders of Nazi war criminals Klaus Barbie (the "Butcher of Lyon") and Karl Linnas, whose extradition to the Soviet Union they opposed, protesting that "Linnas, Barbie, and other war criminals like them are scapegoats" (*Militant*, 12 June 1987).

Ever since the Greensboro Massacre of 1979, we repeatedly emphasized that the growth of KKK and Nazi terror at home was the domestic reflection of U.S. imperialism's drive for capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. And today, while David Duke crows that he is "the Boris Yeltsin of American politics," the SWP viciously climbs atop

the barricades outside Yeltsin's "White House," crowing "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup" (*Militant*, 6 September). Which just goes to show that, while the SWP loves Cuba, and they love reformism, when the two come into conflict, they love reformism more.

So internationally these fake-socialists cheer the counterrevolutionary Yeltsin, who boasts of having dealings with the Pamyat fascists for years, as he seeks to immiserate the Soviet working people by smashing the remaining gains of the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917. Back on the farm, the SWP seeks to woo Duke's voting base by soft-pedaling this deadly dangerous fascist.

To find out the truth about Duke, see the Partisan Defense Committee leaflet, "Stop KKK Hitler-Lover David Duke!" (WV No. 523, 29 March), which launched a 1,500-strong mobilization against his appearance in Boston. A class-struggle workers party must be built to sweep away the Dukes and the racist system for which they are the shock troops. As for the "left" apologists for fascism and counterrevolution: heads up, SWP, here comes the broom. ■

AP Interviews CPers and Spartacist on Collapse of Stalinism

Following the botched Moscow coup last August and the counterrevolutionary counter-coup, the Western media have trumpeted ever louder the supposed "death of Communism." As a result there has been an unusual spate of coverage of self-proclaimed communists in the U.S. On October 14, the Associated Press released a feature by AP reporter

Rayner Pike focusing on lifelong members of the Communist Party. Hearing of the Spartacist League's September 13 "Defend Cuba" demonstration in New York, Pike also interviewed SL Central Committee member Joseph Seymour presenting the views of Trotskyism. We reprint below the AP story, edited for space.

"Old Reds: Fall of Communism Not Discouraging"

By Rayner Pike, Associated Press

Old Reds who have stuck with the American Communist party through decades of ideological wind shifts say they are taking the fall of communism in the Soviet Union in stride.

Events in the former citadel of world communism and its Eastern bloc are not a demoralizing cataclysm but only a glitch in the scientifically inevitable triumph of Marxism, say these true believers.

"How can a person like me get demoralized? I remember standing at Temple University in the height of McCarthyism with a petition for the Bill of Rights and couldn't get one student to sign it, and that did not demoralize me," says Frances Gabow of Philadelphia, a party member for 52 years.

Mrs. Gabow, 71, and other longtime Communists, in recent interviews, largely echoed the line laid down by Gus Hall, the 81-year-old party chairman.

Hall, who went to jail for eight years in the 1950s for being a Communist, has said communism would return to power in the Soviet Union. He also asserted that the crisis has spurred party growth in the United States among people with socialist leanings who see the future endangered.

Mrs. Gabow, a Communist since 1939, said she followed her father, a garment worker, into the party in the Depression era because "we were fighting for relief, to free the Scottsboro Boys, against war and fascism, for the defense of Spain."

In the red-hunting McCarthy years, the 1950s, she nearly went to jail and she and her children became ostracized in their community and were targets of vigilantes.

"My children were trailed by the FBI to and from school," she said. "I had crews of FBI agents sitting outside my

door. They were trailing me to see who I was seeing. It stopped people from speaking to me, from associating with me.... My family was intimidated and terrorized."

Now a member of the party's district committee for eastern Pennsylvania, Mrs. Gabow declared: "As long as I have a brain and hands, I will be active."

Victor Perlo, a major Red bogeyman during the postwar anti-Communist frenzies and now a principal party voice on economic matters, said developments in the Soviet Union were no surprise.

"I've seen it coming for a couple of years. Gorbachev and the group around him were leading the country down the garden path," Perlo said.

"It's disturbing because it creates a very dangerous power situation in the world, but it doesn't end communism."

Perlo, 79, held low- and middle-level federal government jobs from 1933 to 1947 in such agencies as the National Recovery Administration, War Production Board and Treasury. Then in 1948 he and others, including Alger Hiss, were fingered as spies for the Soviet Union by a witness at a congressional hearing.

He takes wry satisfaction that three of his chief tormentors—J. Parnell Thomas, Roy Cohn and Richard Nixon—eventually suffered greater loss of reputation than he.

Thomas, chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, went to jail for payroll padding. Cohn, who as a young federal prosecutor tried to get Perlo indicted, was disbarred for dishonesty and fraud. Nixon, a HUAC member, was the first U.S. president in history to resign, leaving office in disgrace during the Watergate scandal.

"If I were starting out today, I'd be looking for something like the Communist Party, for an organization that

unbroken and politically outspoken. His supporters have recently stepped up their activities to publicize these brutal conditions and win support for his fight for freedom. The PDC was invited to a gathering for him in Santa Barbara, California on September 25, and sent a spokesman to express our solidarity.

The hideously exploited black workers of the Virgin Islands showed their militancy in fighting the 1984 lockout by Amerasia Hess Oil, the main employer on the island of St. Croix. It is this social force, the black proletariat, linked to its class brothers in the mainland U.S., that has the power to smash colonial rule and win freedom for all imprisoned victims of U.S. imperialism. Free Haniff Shahazz-Bey!

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



September 13: Spartacists demonstrate in defense of Cuba against U.S. imperialism after Gorbachev announced Soviet pullout. WV Photo

had a record of being tested in all kinds of battles for the people," said Herb Kransdorf of Chicago. "Never mind those pygmies who stand on the sidelines and throw stones at us."

Kransdorf, born in New York 74 years ago, is labor secretary of the Illinois party. He has been a Communist since 1936, when as a young merchant seaman he fought to democratize his union.

"It was a struggle in which the Communists played a major role in breaking away from a very corrupt union, under which seamen had to get their jobs through kickbacks," Kransdorf said. "We changed all that. We set up a democratic union hiring hall and did away with Jim Crow."

What about events that disillusioned or revolted many American Communists and drove them from the party, such as Stalin's alliance with Hitler and Khrushchev's revelations of Stalin's tyranny?

"I felt that things like Khrushchev's report showed that the people and the party were taking the lead to bring those things out and see that they didn't happen again," Kransdorf said.

He also said he thought at the time that "the negative things were either fabricated or exaggerated," and besides, outside pressures from capitalist countries forced the Soviet Union "to take certain measures to assure their continued existence."

One branch of communism, the Trotskyist Spartacist League, holds that the Soviet Union and its American followers have been wrong since Stalin won out over Leon Trotsky to succeed Lenin in the 1920s.

"(Trotsky) predicted a long time ago that unless the Stalinist bureaucracy was overthrown by the working class, then one way or another it would lead

to a capitalist counterrevolution," said Joseph Seymour of Alameda, Calif., a member of the league's central committee and the editorial board of its newspaper.

Seymour, 47, said he was no more surprised than Trotsky would have been by the fall of Soviet communism, but Trotsky "would have been surprised that it took so long to happen."

Although their faction and the Soviet and American Communist parties have been historically and bitterly at odds, Spartacists have no cause for gloating, he said.

"We consider it a massive historic defeat for the working class, because Trotsky oriented toward a proletarian overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy, not their overthrow by capitalist forces," Seymour said.

"Obviously the sight of people pulling down the statues of leading Bolsheviks is not something we want to see, but neither is it something we did not anticipate. Nor did we have the same kind of illusions that the Soviet Union was a bastion of socialism."

Major war might grow out of socialism's being toppled in the Soviet Union, Seymour said.

"Certainly one of the things that prevented conflicts between the United States and Japan and Germany from reaching the critical peak of World Wars I and II was their common hostility to the Soviet Union. With Soviet power broken, at least temporarily, one can expect an intensification of conflicts between the major capitalist powers."

Such a turn, he suggested, might open the door to socialist revolution in capitalism's strongholds, just as the chaos of World War I paved the way for the Bolshevik Revolution. ■

PDC Notes...

(continued from page 2)

"confess" they beat him, hung him by his feet from trees and shocked him with cattle prods. Then they wrapped his head in a plastic bag and forced water down his nose. Just to be safe, they got a judge, Warren Young, who "happened" to be a former Rockefeller attorney and legal counsel for the golf course. After nine days the jury declared themselves "hopelessly deadlocked," but Young refused to dismiss them, forcing the jurors to keep at it until they reached a guilty verdict. Nine jurors subsequently testified to being threatened with FBI investigations during the deliberations. Four signed statements that they had been forced by the judge, police and FBI to enter a guilty verdict.

For 19 years Shahazz-Bey has maintained his innocence of this horrible crime. The victim of repeated hearings by guards, one of which left his hearing impaired, and subjected to sensory deprivation in the high-tech torture chamber of Marion prison, Shahazz-Bey remains

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BOSTON



U.S. soldiers "detain suspects" during bloody Imperialist Invasion of Panama, December 1989.

Noriega Trial...

(continued from page 1)

the Pentagon's "decapitation" strategy. This was supposed to be the fate of Muammar Qaddafi, Saddam Hussein and Manuel Noriega, but the top guns of the USAF missed their mark. In the latter case, the U.S.' 1989 Panama invasion succeeded, but Noriega survived. And ex-CIA chief Bush is worried that his former flunkie could sing.

For more than a decade and a half, Noriega was Washington's man in Panama. He received juicy payoffs (the government says \$320,000, he says over \$10 million) in return for supplying the U.S. with intelligence on Cuba and Central America, aid in arms trafficking plus other favors. But in 1985-86, as the Reagan administration sought to turn the contra war into a full-scale invasion of Sandinista Nicaragua, Noriega got cold feet and fell afoul of his imperialist masters. Suddenly the U.S. "discovered" that "El MAN" (a nickname from Noriega's initials) was deep into drug trafficking, or at least money laundering for the Medellín cartel. No matter that the U.S. had known this at least since 1974.

After one Reagan administration faction first tried to force him out, a ten-count indictment against Noriega was handed down by a Miami grand jury in 1988 accusing him of taking \$4.6 million in payoffs from the Colombian drug lords for services rendered (mainly doing nothing), permitting the cartel to transship hundreds of kilos of cocaine to the U.S. through a network of clandestine landing strips, permitting cocaine labs in Panama, providing a safe haven for wanted traffickers and permitting the deposit of hundreds of millions of narcodollars in Panamanian banks. Part of the aim was to go after Cuba's Fidel Castro, whom the feds claim was mediating a dispute between Noriega and the Medellín big boys.

Tortilla Flour and Hired Testimony

When Bush launched "Operation Just Cause," brutally attacking Panama on 20 December 1989, one of his pretexts was to bring in Noriega, who had just been formally named head of state. U.S. planes launched "smart bombs" at the Comandancia, HQ of the Panama Defense Forces, and managed to reduce the surrounding poor neighborhood of El Chorrillo to rubble. But Noriega survived and eventually sought refuge in the Papal Nunciatura. After the Americans spent days trying to blast him out using high-decibel heavy metal rock music, the general surrendered and was flown to Miami in handcuffs. After initial legal sparring, the Justice Department agreed to treat him as a prisoner of war.

Meanwhile, the U.S. occupying army combed through Noriega's headquarters looking for any conceivable "evidence" to nail him. A Pentagon report said they had found "a desk stuffed with porno-

graphy, a closet containing a portrait of Adolf Hitler, voodoo paraphernalia and 100 lbs. of cocaine." This turned out to be Spanish-language copies of *Playboy*, a Time-Life photo history of World War II, some Indian carvings by Panama's San Blas tribe...and the "coke" was nothing but tortilla flour stockpiled for a siege! But even though the Pentagon seized thousands of pages of documents, and has directly controlled the country for almost two years now, they came up with no "smoking gun."

Oh yes, they found that Mrs. Noriega and many of her husband's cronies had secret accounts in the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. But since the BCCI turns out to have been a full-service bank for the CIA and the drug cartel, it's not clear whether the large sums flowing into Noriega's numbered account were the alleged \$4 million from Medellín, Colombia or the \$10 million from Langley, Virginia. As for the money laundering, the Justice Department faces the problem that some of the leading banks involved were pillars of corporate America like Citibank, and prosecuting them could be problematical. So the feds decided to rely instead on a rogues' gallery of bought-and-paid-for witnesses.

In exchange for squealing on their former *patrón*, these stool pigeons cut themselves some pretty deals. A total of \$1.5 million has been reportedly paid out to loosen their tongues (see "Nice Work If You Can Get It" on page seven), and that's not counting \$600,000 already paid to the family of drug kingpin Max Mermelstein in the Justice Department's "witness protection program." Former Colonel Del Cid, who described himself as "General Noriega's errand boy," had a 70-year sentence reduced to 30 months, making him eligible for release by early 1992. Between what Noriega's lawyer Frank Rubino calls "get-out-of-jail cards," narcobucks and testi-money, this bunch will make out like bandits.

For all this largesse, the government's witnesses haven't delivered much on the stand. Del Cid reports carrying payoff

money in envelopes, but didn't actually see it. He said he could tell it was cash because he "felt" the contents. Yet the man who says he handed it over to him for delivery to Noriega, drug runner Floyd Carlton, said it was delivered in hard cardboard boxes wrapped in plastic. Carlton, in turn, reported that Noriega was initially "exceedingly upset" at his attempts to set up a deal with the drug traffickers, and that the general didn't know about each of his flights. The problem with the cocaine lab is that Noriega took U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration officials along to shut it down.

Next on the government's star witness list is Carlos Lehder, who stands out among the sleazy Colombian drug lords for being an ostentatious fascist, with a "movement" that brandished Hitler portraits and gave the stiff-arm salute. As for transshipment of drugs bound for the U.S.—which is vital to the prosecution, since without it there isn't any basis for action by American courts—Rubino got Carlton to admit he never saw what happened to his cargos after they were off-loaded. But when Noriega's lawyer tried to question the drug-running pilot about his involvement in Oliver North's drugs-for-guns operation supporting the Nicaraguan contras, the judge ruled this out of order.

Contras and CIA

Judge Hoeveler wants to keep the trial away from George Bush at all costs.



"Free market democracy" at bayonet point: U.S. soldier "protects" supermarket from starving population during U.S. invasion.

While pursuing the supposed "Castro connection," concerning a 1984 meeting with the Cuban leader in Havana, Hoeveler has ruled that classified records of Noriega's 1983 conversations with then vice president Bush in Panama City are "irrelevant" and inadmissible. In a court order, he declared that the defense will be "precluded" from raising anything concerning the "contra pipeline" defense. And more broadly, he has ruled that he will not allow "politics" to intrude on what the prosecution is portraying as "just another drug case." This is key for the government. As *New York*

Times reporter Larry Rohter wrote:

"If ever there were a case that Federal prosecutors cannot afford to lose, this is it. Having invaded Panama, spent large amounts of taxpayer dollars preparing the case, and cut deals with the unsavory collection of renegade pilots, drug smugglers and corrupt businessmen indicted with General Noriega on cocaine trafficking, money laundering and racketeering charges, the United States Government has elevated the stakes. If the general walks, the Bush administration risks ridicule at home and abroad and perhaps further examination of its methods in dealing with dictators."

—*New York Times*, 29 September

Exactly that is the subject of a detailed 105-page submission by Noriega's attorneys trying to force the government to release classified documentation, in particular concerning "Noriega's assistance to the United States...in the arming and training of the Contras," and "the CIA's knowledge that pilots flying weapons to the Contras were also transporting drugs to the United States." Much of the heavily censored document is a superficial and slipshod account of CIA destabilization and disruption campaigns in Latin America, Southeast Asia and elsewhere around the globe. But when it comes to Noriega and Panama it gets specific.

"General Noriega's relationship with the United States began in 1958 while he was a cadet at the Peruvian Military Academy," it states, referring to his spying on fellow cadets. When Noriega returned to Panama and joined the

National Guard, his commander was then-major Omar Torrijos. At that time "the CIA wanted Torrijos, who was on their payroll, to monitor communist influence among banana growers" working on United Fruit Company plantations.

"In 1964 and 1965, officers from the [U.S.] 470th Military Intelligence Brigade helped Torrijos establish an intelligence capability.... Torrijos picked Noriega to oversee the modest intelligence-gathering operation."

The document notes Noriega's training in intelligence operations at Fort Gulick (Canal Zone), Fort Bragg (North Carolina), Israel, Taiwan and at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas, infamous in Latin America as the "School for Dictators," since virtually every military strongman on the continent was trained there.

Torrijos took power in an October 1968 coup, reportedly with U.S. backing, but soon Washington was worried that he was moving too far left. When the 470th Mil Int Group tried to pull off a coup, Noriega remained loyal to the general, for which he was rewarded by being named to head Panama's military intelligence, or G-2. The defense lawyers' submission continues:

"Now he had an official institutional link that included access to large sums of CIA contingency funds.... It was officially justified as support for 'institutional cooperation,' but in fact it was a slush fund turned over to the head of the 'cooperating' intelligence agency to do with as he desired.... Over the years, the CIA gave Noriega over \$11 million from this fund.... Noriega became the CIA's man in Panama, an alternative to the man con-



U.S. battleship *New Jersey* in Panama Canal. For Yankee Imperialism, the canal and 13 American military bases alongside it are linchpin for domination of Latin America.

Radio Havana on Bribed Testimony in Noriega Trial

"Nice Work If You Can Get It"

The following item was broadcast by Radio Havana Cuba on October 9.

This is "Dateline Havana," I'm Mike Haines.

The daily newspaper *Granma* today turns its attention to what promises to be one of the longest-running circuses in Miami's history, and possibly the most expensive as well. Yes, what else but the show trial of the man who has been declared guilty a thousand times over by the U.S. media, former Panamanian general Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Four weeks into the hearing on a variety of drug-related offenses, the long procession of prosecution witnesses continues. And, *Granma* journalist Orlando Oramas León points out, many of them are being paid to testify with U.S. taxpayers' money, or else, to put it bluntly, have been bought with promises of reduced sentences, pensions and other little tidbits.

Noriega's defense attorney Frank Rubino is quoted as saying: "The bribes that are being paid out to get people to testify are incredible, and the amounts amazing. Well, if I offered my witnesses [the same thing], it would be 'obstructing the course of justice'."

Rubino said that the prosecution, which is a polite way of saying the U.S. government, has paid out up to \$1.5 million to secure anti-Noriega testimony. Several of the lucky recipients are themselves drug smugglers, if not worse. According to Rubino, Tony Aizprua, a Panamanian witness, has received \$510,921. Max Mermelstein, a U.S. citizen, has been given a quarter of a million. Boris Olarte,

\$199,000. José Blandón, \$169,000. And two other witnesses have received \$278,000 and \$102,000. They, however, prefer to remain anonymous. Well, wouldn't you?

Another character guaranteed to melt the hearts of the sternest jury is former Panamanian officer Luis Del Cid, who has been persuaded to spill the beans,

dates, contradicted himself, and ended up taking back most of what he had said in court the previous day. It's not only presidents and aspiring CIA chiefs who have little lapses of memory, it seems.

Amnesia and problems with dates, not to mention facts, are assuming epidemic proportions at the Noriega trial. But while ex-pilot Floyd Carlton testified

Noriega with attorney Frank Rubino. U.S. show trial judge has barred evidence of Noriega/CIA collusion and Contragate links.



whether real or invented, on his ex-commander in chief in return for a reduction in his own sentence, residence in the United States, guaranteed personal protection and an undisclosed amount of financial assistance for an indefinite period. Nice work, if you can get it.

Key witness Del Cid, when cross-examined by Rubino on Noriega's behalf, confessed to having trouble with

himself into a tight, seething knot of contradictions, he was however lucid enough to recall that he received a monthly check for \$1,200 from the U.S. taxpayers in recognition of...something or other. Let's hope he remembers to cash it.

Today's *Granma* article points out that while many observers of U.S. justice are uneasy at the number of prosecution

witnesses who have come to cozy arrangements with the Bush administration over their own murky past in return for declarations against Noriega, the judge, William Hoeveler, insists that this is in no way a political trial.

The latest upset, says Oramas León, is over the fact that the prosecution, in flagrant violation of U.S. legal practice, has obtained a secret list of intended defense witnesses. It seems the federal marshals responsible for citing defense witnesses to appear handed over a full list of who they were to a former U.S. ambassador, who in turn gave it to the State Department, who sent it to the Department of Justice, who are, of course, the prosecution.

To add to the embarrassment, the ex-ambassador turns out to be none other than Lewis Tambs, who was U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica at a time when the CIA was supplying weapons to the Nicaraguan contras in aircraft which regularly made the return trip loaded with cocaine.

The more you dip into the larger-than-life details of this trial, the more obvious it becomes that this is a show that will run and run. The bizarre legal precedents are endless. How to explain, for example, that the star of the show, I mean the chief defendant, is not only a de facto prisoner of war, but at the time of his arrest was also the armed forces commander in chief of a country with which Washington maintained formal diplomatic relations?

Today's article in *Granma* adds that Judge Hoeveler has refused to accept as evidence a photo of General Noriega with a certain Mr. George Bush, taken at a time when they were still the best of friends, not to say business partners, in a manner of speaking. Maybe this is just the judge's way of showing he has the chief defendant's best interests at heart. After all, if somebody's willing to have his picture taken in such dubious company, who can say what crimes he might be guilty of. ■

sidered a dangerous leftist by American intelligence. Omar Torrijos."

Torrijos called Noriega "my gangster," but the American description of him as "rent-a-colonel" was more accurate.

Former Director of Central Intelligence Stansfield Turner reported that at one point Noriega was making \$223,000 a year from the CIA alone, more than any federal official including the president. In addition to supplying his U.S. patrons with information on leftist regimes and guerrilla movements, Noriega also did dirty work for the Company. This included offering Panama as staging point for the CIA's sabotaging of Nicaragua's oil depot and port of Corinto. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* (31 May) reports that he provided the U.S. with sensitive information on "the negotiating posture of the Panamanian government during the Panama canal negotiations." And there are suspicions that he was behind the 1981 death of Torrijos in an unexplained helicopter accident.

Noriega's ties to the U.S. in general and the Reagan administration in particular are notorious. We have published letters to Noriega from the head of the DEA expressing the agency's "deep appreciation for the vigorous anti-drug trafficking policy that you have adopted" (May 1986) and saying that the "DEA has long welcomed our close association and we stand ready to proceed jointly against international drug traffickers" (May 1987). It is interesting that two recent books, one by Kevin Buckley (*Panama: The Whole Story*), who lauds right-wing Republican Senator Jesse Helms, and another by John Dinges (*Our Man in Panama*), who praises liberal Democratic Senator John Kerry, take an almost identical line on exonerating the U.S. for its long association with this notorious thug.

But while liberals and conservatives join hands with the Bush administration in pushing the prosecution of Noriega, some retailing tales of his ties to Castro, others emphasizing his aid to the contras, what neither say is how Washington is trying to use the Noriega case to bolster U.S. imperialist domination of Latin America. In the first instance this involves control of the Panama Canal. Helms was the leading opponent of the Canal treaties, and in the 1976 presidential election Reagan made a big issue of the negotiations, declaring that "when it comes to the Canal, we bought it, we paid for it, it's ours, and we should tell Torrijos and company that we are going to keep it."

In the aftermath of the U.S. invasion, U.S. control of the Canal has been reinforced. (While the Canal Zone formally disappeared as a result of the Carter-Torrijos treaties, the Canal Company which runs the operation is a U.S. government corporation.) There is now talk in Washington of "privatizing" the Canal rather than turning it over to the Panamanian government in the year 2000. And meanwhile the U.S. military dominates the isthmus with 13 military bases in the "former" Zone. If Puerto Rico serves the U.S. as a giant aircraft carrier and naval base to control the Caribbean, Panama is the linchpin for U.S. military operations throughout Latin America.

Made in USA

From its inception in 1903 to today, Panama has always been a de facto American colony. Its "independence" from Colombia was declared under the protective guns of the USS *Dixie* and USS *Nashville*, and the document which certified its birth, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903, is notorious as "the treaty that no Panamanian ever signed." U.S. secretary of state John Hay declared that

the terms of the treaty were "very satisfactory, vastly advantageous to the US and we must confess...not so advantageous to Panama" (quoted in John Weeks and Phil Gunson, *Panama: Made in the USA* [1991]). Rather than issuing its own currency, the country has simply used the U.S. dollar as legal tender, calling the almighty greenback the "Balboa" for form's sake.

So it's not out of character that the current president Endara was sworn in on a U.S. air force base, nor that American "advisers" control every department of the Panamanian government. When former officials of the Panama Defense Force (now called the Public Force) tried to stage a coup last December, they were put down by the Americans. Meanwhile, drug money laundering continues apace, as the roly-poly corporate lawyer Endara sits on the board of the biggest money laundering bank in Panama City. When partial elections were held in January 1991, Noriega's party (the PRD) won all

the seats. And now there are rumblings of a general strike by Panama's unions against the Yankee-imposed regime.

The Noriega "trial" is not only a farce and a legal travesty, it's a façade for U.S. imperial overlordship. The American invasion which set the stage for it killed several thousand Panamanians and led the way for Bush's "Desert Slaughter" of over 100,000 Iraqis. Liberals and many leftists give credence to Bush's phony "war on drugs," the pretext on which Noriega is being tried. Even Cuba's Fidel Castro got into the act with his Stalinist show trial in 1989 of General Arnaldo Ochoa on charges of complicity with the Medellín cartel. Those leftists who buy Washington's "drug war" are only aiding Yankee imperialism's "New World Order."

The "trial" of Manuel Noriega is nothing but the arrogant assertion that the U.S. empire rules the world. World socialist revolution will bring that empire down. ■

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Palestinians...

(continued from page 1)

table, these sham "peace" negotiations are a set-up to yet again knife the Palestinian people.

War Talk at "Peace" Talks

As a precondition for even participating in the Madrid farce, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir and his right-wing government insisted that they have a veto over the composition of the Palestinian delegation, which could only appear as part of a Jordanian delegation, that the Palestine Liberation Organization would be out of the picture, and that Israel would entertain no concessions over the Occupied Territories and Palestinian "statehood"—no matter how token. Yet for all the diplomatic double talk, it was lost on no one that the Palestinian delegation was a PLO delegation in all but name, including open supporters of the Palestinian Communist Party and other components of the PLO.

In Madrid, Shamir got the "peace" talk going by launching into a tirade about the historic and biblical "right" of the "Jewish people" to lord it over the Near East. This was followed by a demagogic denunciation of Syria as a "terrorist state." The Syrian delegate deftly replied by exhibiting a 1947 wanted poster of Shamir for various terrorist attacks against British and United Nations dip-



"New World Order": U.S. president Bush presides over sham "peace" talks in Madrid while Israel steps up bombing of Lebanon.

Heikes/U.S. News & World Report

Haidar Abdel-Shafi declared:

"We come to you from a tortured land and a proud, though captive, people, having been asked to negotiate with our occupiers, but leaving behind the children of the intifada and the people under occupation and under curfew, who enjoined us not to surrender or forget. As we speak, thousands of our brothers and sisters are languishing in Israeli prisons and detention camps, most detained without evidence, charge or trial, many cruelly mistreated and tortured in interrogation, guilty only of seeking freedom or daring to defy the occupation. We speak in their name, and we say, 'Set them free'."

Yet these petty-bourgeois nationalists who claim to speak in the name of

of mail." Asked if such a minimal concession would be acceptable, Sari Nusseibeh, a prominent West Bank intellectual and member of the Palestinian "advisory" delegation in Madrid, replied: "That's what's available in the diplomatic market."

For years, Yasir Arafat's PLO has exploited the sacrifice and heroism of Palestinian fighters with the aim of pressuring one or another regional or imperialist power to wrest from Israel some form of independence, however truncated. Since 1974, the PLO's horizons have explicitly been limited to the creation of a bantustan "ministate" in the West Bank and Gaza. Since 1982, when Arafat called upon the U.S. to rescue besieged PLO fighters in Beirut, his entire strategy has been focused on pressuring U.S. imperialism to pressure Israel.

Now, abandoned by its erstwhile financial backers in the oil-rich Gulf states and with former "rejectionists" like Syria enlisting in Bush's "New World Order," the PLO is prepared to accept even the most humiliating terms to get a place at the table. Camille Mansour, another Palestinian adviser in Madrid, crowed: "You can be skeptical all you want, but I saw the United States President sitting around the same table with our people" (*New York Times*, 1 November). But the Palestinian people are not sitting at that table, they are languishing in the concentration camps of Gaza and the living hell of the West Bank.

Israel Lobby Meets Texas Oil

That the Israelis even deigned to appear in Madrid was the result of considerable arm-twisting by their American patrons. For years the bankrupt Zionist garrison-state has kept its head above water only because of hefty U.S. funding—some \$77 billion since the 1967 war. In carving out a niche as American imperialism's surrogate against Soviet "client states" in the Near East (and as dogs of war against leftist insurgencies in Latin America) and organizing a powerful lobby in Washington, the Israeli rulers came to see hard cash from the American "goyim" as their birthright.

But, as Thomas Friedman noted in the *New York Times* (30 October), "With the end of the cold war, the Israelis can no

longer argue that they are a strategic asset for the United States in the East-West global competition." That much was clear when Shamir tried to do an end run against Bush after he asked Israel to hold off on a request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees to finance housing for the influx of Soviet Jews—and, implicitly, the expansion of West Bank settlements. Bush decided to challenge the AIPAC Israeli lobby, which has financed many a Congressional electoral victory, head-on. And for the first time in a long time the Israeli lobby and its powerful supporters had to back off.

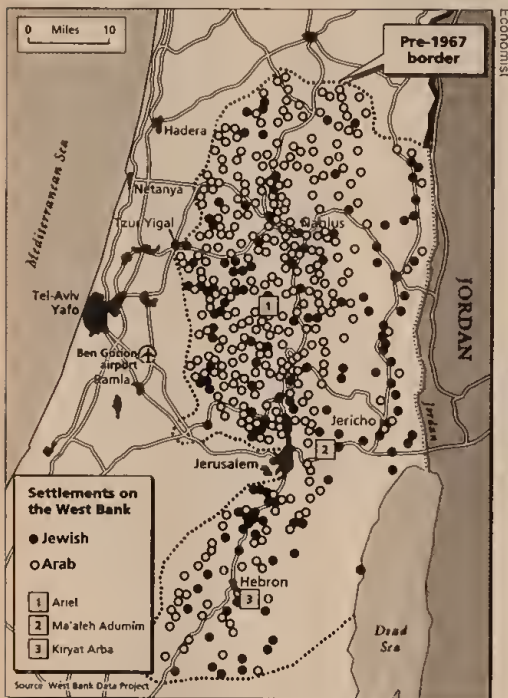
Against vicarious Palestinian nationalists of the New Left, we have insisted that Israel is not an outpost of U.S. imperialism, but a highly dependent ally. For the moment, Washington seeks only to pressure its Israeli client to fall into line and accept American dictates in the Near East. But, as we noted several years ago, "American Zionists would do well to recall that Texas oil millionaires are not exactly the most consistent friends of the Jewish people" ("Palestinian Uprising—A Year of Defiance," *WV* No. 486, 2 December 1988).

For the moment the Israelis have capitulated to Washington. But while the thoroughly bourgeois "Labor" Party and its "Peace Now" left fringe are ardent advocates of the U.S.-dictated "peace" process, the Zionist rulers are far from wedded to the American connection. A cabinet member from the fascist Molodet party, which calls for the forcible "transfer" into Jordan of all Palestinians, railed that Bush was an anti-Semite. And Shamir himself has long considered Bush Israel's worst enemy. The Israelis have for a while been on the lookout for alternative imperialist patrons. Currently, the German Fourth Reich (Israel's second biggest donor) is at the top of the list.

Zionists "Create Facts," Palestinians Die

The Zionist rulers are intent on "creating facts" on the ground, eliminating any prospect of a separate Palestinian entity, let alone an independent state, by eliminating all Palestinians from "Greater Israel." More than 100,000 Israeli "settlers" are already living in the West Bank, and Shamir's fascist "housing" minister, Ariel Sharon, intends to nearly double that number by the end of next year. The Israelis have already "expropriated" half of all Arab land in the Gaza Strip and 60 percent in the West Bank.

Even more ominous is the "seven stars" program, aimed at creating a series of settlements along the western edge of the West Bank. These will extend into Israeli communities in occupied land and thus obliterate any boundary between the Zionist state and the Occupied Territories. A month before the conference, Shamir presided over the inauguration of the first of these, Tzur Yigal, just inside the "Green Line," Israel's pre-1967 border. He declared ominously, "We are saying that we must settle and settle, and that the dream will always be that all the territories are ours, and the areas where construction is going on will



Zionist settlements aid in military control of the Occupied Territories, ultimately aiming at expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank.

lomatics. What the Syrians did not expose was Shamir's Nazi connection and the attempt by his Stern Gang to hire themselves out as enforcers of Hitler's Third Reich in the Near East.

It was a disgusting spectacle from start to finish. War criminal Bush kicked off the talks with an appeal for "peace, real peace." Meanwhile Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, whose job was to second whatever Bush said, made it clear that his main concern was "cash, real cash" from the West to finance the counter-revolutionary "great transformation" of the USSR into a "market economy as part of the world economy." As a *New York Times* (30 October) headline put it snottily, the Soviets were there to be "Waiters at the Table." And the Palestinians were meant to pick up the crumbs. One Palestinian delegate fawningly referred to Bush as "president of the world."

Even so, merely by addressing the dramatic oppression and desperate struggles of their people, the Palestinian delegation came off sounding the most articulate and eloquent amid all the squalor and cynicism. Palestinian spokesman

the Palestinian people are intent on nothing but surrender. Even the much ballyhooed talk of some form of Palestinian "self-rule" or "autonomy" in the Occupied Territories means little more than, as one Palestinian delegate noted, "that we may be allowed to supervise garbage collection and the distribution

Palestinian youth cheer Iraqi scud attacks against Israel.



From Chicago to the West Bank

CHICAGO—"Operation Clean Sweep." Dawn raids. Door-to-door searches for arms and "contraband." Daily harassment and violence—sometimes outright murder—by uniformed "security" personnel. Eviction of critics and protesters. No jobs, no education, no future. Sounds like Palestinian life in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, but it's black American life in the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). Like the Palestinians, CHA residents face a powerful racist government determined to drive them from their homes.

So it took a hell of a lot of *chutzpah* last month for CHA chairman Vincent Lane to take 30 tenants on an educational junket to, of all places, an Israeli kibbutz! "African-Americans must see that we, too, can make the arid deserts of inner-city neighborhoods bloom," he lectured. "Our people rely too much on the government" (*Chicago Tribune*, 23 October).

The idea was to learn from the kibbutzniks about "self-reliance," "economic empowerment" and "community and solidarity." Lane hoped the CHA tenants would return to Chicago ready to take the plunge into self-sufficiency with projects like selling homemade handicrafts or raising veggies in a (non-existent) greenhouse ("Cabrini Green Grocers, Inc.," for instance?).

Lane's pull-yourself-up-by-the-bootstraps propaganda stunt ironically took place in one of the most financially dependent institutions on this planet. The kibbutzim are in fact heavily subsidized by the Israeli government for political reasons: they have historically been key in spawning the shock troops of Zionist expansionism and in the seizure of Arab-titled land.

Israel itself is the world's biggest *schnorrer* (moocher) state, a government

West Bank comes to Chicago: dawn raids, door-to-door searches, no jobs, no schools.



that survives on handouts from its "richer relations"—primarily the United States, which valued Israel's military backing against the Soviet degenerated workers state and its former Near East allies.

The CHA tourists witnessed the effect not of grit and determination but of lots and lots of U.S. greenbacks. Yet it has been the anti-Soviet war drive and the multitrillion-dollar Pentagon buildup that have strangled public housing and other social services in America.

Chicago's housing projects were built in the years following World War II, when an acute housing shortage was centered on the South Side ghetto, where some

375,000 blacks were jammed into dilapidated housing designed for 110,000. Racist city planners sought to preserve Segregation City's color lines by building giant high-rises within the existing ghetto.

Still, in the desperate conditions of the time, people tried like hell to get into the projects. "At least they could have a bathroom inside the apartment," said a member of the Labor Black Struggle League, who grew up in the Ida B. Wells Homes. As late as 1986 the CHA had a waiting list of 20,000 families.

But the malign neglect of the Boss Daley years gave way in the 1980s to a policy of public housing depopulation,

as Democratic mayors across the country shoved Reagan's war budget down the throats of the urban poor. In 1986 Harold Washington, Chicago's first black mayor, ominously commented, "It may be impossible to manage a public housing authority today, given the shortage of federal dollars.... We're dealing with a monster here" (*Chicago Tribune*, 12 December 1986).

Business groups are calling for the razing of CHA high-rises, and at Cabrini Green, which is coveted by Gold Coast yuppies pushing westward, the towers have been quietly emptied down to the eleventh floor. When residents of one project, Lakeland Properties, who had been "temporarily" relocated during renovation, found themselves excluded this summer from their former homes as "potential troublemakers," CHA chief Lane cruelly remarked: "There are some residents who should be in jail or sleeping under a railroad" (*Chicago Defender*, 15 July).

Decent housing is a right! Chicago's integrated labor unions must take action to defend the homeless as well as the victims of CHA neglect. Millions of square feet of (HUD-financed) luxury apartments and Loop office space lies unoccupied. Seize them and house the homeless! Fight for a program of massive public works—employing the unemployed at union-scale wages—to build clean and comfortable housing for all!

It is this rapacious profit system—now extending its tentacles of unemployment, homelessness and racism into East Europe and the Soviet Union—that must be destroyed. Only a workers government led by a multiracial revolutionary party and administering a centralized planned economy will provide housing, jobs and a decent standard of living for all. ■



U.S. troops man "Patriot" anti-missile system in Israel during Gulf War. Zionist rulers considered Washington-imposed "restraints" a humiliation.

be populated right up to the horizon." To make matters perfectly clear, Shamir added, "As far as I'm concerned, the 'green line' no longer exists" (*News From Within*, 2 October).

At the same time the Zionists have been driving to "de-Arabize" and "Judaize" the Gallee and the "triangle" in north central Israel, which have always had Palestinian majorities. Some 120 Arab villages inside Israel are targeted for extinction to make way for Jewish settlement.

The new Zionist push has been aided not only by the Gulf War but also by the collapse of the Soviet Union, which now provides a flood of Soviet Jews who are fleeing economic chaos and rising anti-Semitism. Shlomo Goren, longtime chief rabbi for the Israeli army, cynically indicated that the Soviet Jews will be used

as cannon fodder in the Zionists' "final solution":

"There was a demographic problem because people said if you annex Judea, Samaria and Gaza, you will become a minority after 50 years because of the high Arab and low Jewish birth rate. "What did Heaven do? In order to rescue us from that danger, the largest empire in the world, the U.S.S.R., was destroyed, and millions of Jews from the Soviet Union are streaming here...and they will solve the demographic problem. It was all done by Heaven." —*New York Times*, 29 October

In case you think this is merely the rantings of an old religious nut, here's what Mattityahu Drohles of the World Zionist Organization's settlement department told the *Village Voice* (24 September):

"Judea and Samaria are part of the Land of Israel... According to the Bible I have the right to the East Bank of Jordan too.

For my generation the West Bank is enough. As for the next generation, the East Bank is their problem."

The "East Bank" is currently known as Jordan. Beyond that "horizon" lie Syria and Iraq—"from the Nile to the Euphrates," as the old Zionist adage goes. And these messianic crazies have atomic weapons—*hundreds of them!* Washington would like its relation to Israel to be that which pertained during the Gulf War, when the U.S. called the shots while "guaranteeing" Israeli security. Israel's rulers considered this a humiliation which they would like to erase, as Israeli civil libertarian Israel Shahak documents in an article in the October *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* titled "Israel Uses Increased US Aid to Prepare 1992 Attack on Syria."

Nationalist Dead End

Whatever Washington's hopes, the intractable nationalist antagonisms in the Near East will not be resolved by U.S. *diktat*. Even as Arafat's people were hobnobbing with Bush and their Zionist tormentors in Madrid, thousands of Arabs demonstrated in the Near East against the PLO's capitulation. George Habash's Popular Front and Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Front, guerrillaist factions of the PLO, co-signed a statement with the sinister Islamic fundamentalist Hamas rejecting "the American liquidation project." Habash also resigned from the PLO executive committee, vowing: "We will attack military installations and we will do our best to spare civilian targets. But let us be clear: we do not consider the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories to be civilian targets"

(*Independent* [London], 1 November).

When we call for Israel out of the Occupied Territories, that means not only the Zionist army but also the "settlements," which are little more than armed outposts of the Israeli military manned by Uzi-toting fascistic fanatics. But Habash, no less than Arafat, looks to the Arab bourgeoisies of the region, who neither can nor want to come to the aid of the Palestinian masses, and indeed have proven time and again their hostility, from Jordanian king Hussein's Black September massacre in 1970 to the current Syrian drive to eradicate a Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Nor are the Palestinian Arab people in any way a military match to the nuclear-armed Zionist state.

Yet, particularly as a result of their forced diaspora from their homeland, Palestinian Arabs have become the most cosmopolitan layer in the Near East. Under a revolutionary leadership, socialist-minded Palestinian militants can play a vanguard role in the struggle for proletarian revolution throughout the region, reaching out to the Hebrew-speaking working people to sweep away all the exploiters and oppressors. This is the only road to guarantee the national rights of *all* the myriad peoples of the region. As we wrote last year:

"A proletarian vanguard must be forged that can break the cycle of bloody wars of nationalist expansion and revenge, leading the Arab and Hebrew-speaking working people in *class* struggle against their own rulers. Defend the Palestinians! Israel out of the Occupied Territories! For a socialist federation in which all peoples of the Near East can live in peace."

—"Zionist Terror on the Rampage," *WV* No. 503, 1 June 1990 ■

France...

(continued from page 12)

crisis for several months. We must all take advantage of this opening to make them cry uncle."

With the collapse of Stalinism in East Europe and the Soviet Union, the bourgeoisie thinks it can celebrate the "death of Communism" and bury the class struggle. Indeed, the Kremlin bureaucrats have always pretended that class struggle and socialist revolution in the West are a utopian dream. However, the wave of strikes by French workers against the social-democratic government of French capitalism recalls what was graphically demonstrated by the general strike of May 1968—the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries has the power to bring down bourgeois rule and open the road to socialism.

Popular Front Against the Workers

Since being elected to power in 1981, Mitterrand's Union of the Left has underlined the grievous consequences of the popular front for the working class. By compromising the independence of the working class, this alliance between the reformist workers parties—the Socialists and (in an informal "corridor coalition") the French Communist Party (PCF)—and part of the bourgeoisie was able to impose on the working class the wage-gouging plans demanded by the bosses. The working-class leaderships, bound by the straitjacket of class collaboration to the Mitterrand government, repeatedly led strikes to defeat, demoralizing the workers. After a decade of popular-front government, the number of strikes fell last year to the lowest level since 1946.

Far from being a "step forward" for the working class as its "leftist" supporters imagined, Mitterrand's popular front has, in the words of Socialist ex-prime

French troops to participate in Bush's neocolonial aggression against Iraq, "immigrant" workers at Flins, united in struggle with their French coworkers, led several dozen work stoppages against repressive measures and intolerable working conditions.

After a decade of anti-working-class attacks, Mitterrand's popular front is deeply discredited. Edith Cresson is the most despised prime minister since de Gaulle's "constitutional" coup d'état established the Fifth Republic in 1958. The popular front in office has meant that any serious labor struggle quickly posed a challenge to the reformist misleaders and their bourgeois allies in the government. Yet virtually the entire French "far left" (including the LCR, LO and PCI, as well as various smaller groups who also falsely claim to be Trotskyist) has supported Mitterrand, however "critically," and their tailist politics render them incapable of leading sharp class

discontent which goes far beyond the strikers' wage demands. Renault president, the hated Raymond Lévy, denounced them as "terrorists." The strikers quickly set up barricades at the plant gates, blocking all trucks so that not a single motor or gearbox could leave the plant. Tents have been set up with TVs and their own electrical supply, a union safety team has been set up and fires are kept going round the clock. Defying a court injunction, the workers maintained their pickets—at times numbering over a thousand and still going strong. The determined strikers even turned back a bulldozer sent to break through the barricades. When the plant manager showed up at the head of 300 scabs (mainly management personnel) he was sent packing under a barrage of rotten eggs.

Initially, although the pickets blocked the movement of trucks, they allowed scabs to slither in and out of the plant. This "tactic" of leaky pickets was pushed by the union tops to show the bourgeoisie that they respect the "right to work"—a "right" which the bosses "respect" with mass layoffs. (Lévy has announced his intention to slash 28,000 of Renault's 68,000 jobs.) By last week the strikers were throwing up solid picket lines, facing down the squads of scabs mobilized by the bosses to break through the lines. Delegations (some 500-strong) were showing up in buses and cars from other Renault plants, the peasant federation has been bringing food supplies and set up a farmers market at cost. On weekends the struck plant has been the site of a popular fête as families gather on the picket line.

From the first days of the strike, Renault management sought to break it by repression. Dozens of union officials and individual strike militants were sanctioned with 5-10 days off work without pay and threatened with firing. But according to law, the company must first inform the individual affected in a formal interview. So each worker affected would show up accompanied by as many as 200-300 concerned coworkers! "An injury to one is an injury to all" is a well-known maxim for united labor struggle, and this impulse has been reflected at Cléon. One union official said that everyone knows that in the CGT there are members of the PCF, LCR, LTF, but we're all united for the strike. In Renault, as is typical in French industry, there are several unions, the largest being the CGT and CFTD. Over the last decade, union membership has fallen as the result of the do-nothing attitude of the union bureaucracies in the face of employer and government attacks. However, the Cléon strike has been marked by repeated general assemblies of the striking workers, including those in the different unions as well as the unorganized. This unity in struggle must be organized in an elected committee responsible for the running of the strike and negotiations.

To win this strike it is key first of all to make it solid and spread it. Gilles Cazin, an LTF militant who has worked

at Renault-Cléon for almost 20 years, has fought for real picket lines to keep out the scabs, for an elected strike committee and for workers' delegations to extend the strike throughout the auto industry. In 1988, Cazin was the candidate of the Ligue Trotskyste for parliamentary deputy, running against former premier Fabius. The LTF has a decade-long history of communist work at the Cléon plant and in nearby Rouen where it has fought to smash racist terror and defend North African "immigrants." As *Le Bolchévique* has been sold to strike picketers and the supplement distributed, this has produced animated debates on Mitterrand, the PCF's role in the popular front, and the need for a workers government.

Appeals for class-struggle action have found resonance among the strikers. A leaflet voted by the strikers on the picket lines and subsequently signed by the local CGT cited the "victims of the austerity policy of the Mitterrand government" in calling on the workers of the region to strike on October 24 "and to converge on Renault-Cléon to join the pickets." On the 24th over a dozen delegations from factories on strike were in front of Renault-Cléon. Among the speakers was an LTF militant who concluded her remarks to much applause by calling on the wives of the strikers to participate actively in support of the strike. A women's committee has since been set up.

A delegation from Renault-Flins was also present and declared their support to the idea of extending the strike to Flins. The link with Flins (where 40 percent of the workforce is "immigrants") is important for the success of the strike in auto. This underlines the importance for French workers to take up the demand of "Full citizenship rights for 'immigrants'!"

With the Cléon plant shut down, Renault has only been able to keep other plants sporadically operating by importing parts from plants in Mexico, Spain and Chile. Renault workers must appeal for international solidarity from fellow workers in Renault branches in other countries. Yet the nationalist line of the PCF and the CGT is an obstacle to this. To their traditional "Produce French" chauvinism has now been added vile anti-Japanese racism. *L'Humanité* (2 November) called for French auto companies "to jointly wage a battle on the European front against the Japanese," and criticized Renault's alliance with Volvo, "a veritable Trojan horse for Japanese penetration in Europe!"

This echoes the anti-Japanese hysteria fanned by Cresson, who also responded to a racist campaign by the Gaullist mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, by calling for "charter" airlines to deport North Africans. Now at a meeting in Berlin, representatives of the Common Market countries joined with the German government in declaring war on immigration. Anti-foreigner racism has also raised its ugly head in this strike. A CGT representative at Cléon even declared:



Renault worker Gilles Cazin leads protest against fascist attack on North Africans near Rouen during 1988 campaign as Ligue Trotskyste candidate for French parliament.

minister Fabius, done the bourgeoisie's "dirty work." After a decade of "socialist" austerity, the wages of French workers are the ninth-lowest in the Common Market, just above Greece, Portugal and Spain. Unemployment has leaped to a record three million. And a special target of Mitterrand's popular front has been "immigrants," who have been subject to massive expulsions and racist police terror in the ghettos. This term is grotesquely applied even to people born in France, children of foreign-born workers who have lived in France for decades!

Yet despite layoffs and expulsions, "immigrant" workers are heavily integrated in French industry, especially in auto. Largely North African workers at the Renault plant in Flins were among the first to strike against the Mitterrand popular front in the early '80s. (The government responded by launching a racist campaign, accusing them of being manipulated by "ayatollahs.") During the Gulf War, while Mitterrand sent

battles. The Ligue Trotskyste, which uniquely called for working-class opposition to the popular front, is fighting to build a Bolshevik leadership in the struggle to sweep away the bureaucratic labor lieutenants of capital.

The Strike at Renault-Cléon

The stronghold of the strikes in Renault has been the plant in Cléon, which produces motors and gearboxes for the entire state-owned company. The bosses have taken over from the Japanese the "just in time" production scheme, which keeps stocks to a minimum in order to cut costs. However, this only works in the absence of strikes, and to the consternation of the bosses it has given this plant a pivotal role. Because of the determined strike at Cléon, other plants have been forced to shut down for lack of parts, at times bringing the entire Renault chain to a grinding halt.

The Cléon strikers have been highly combative, reflecting the wellspring of



Strikers at Renault-Cléon throw up barricades at plant entrances to stop trucks.

"We don't have slanted eyes.... It's not part of our culture." It is the duty of every class-conscious worker to stamp out this kind of racist filth: it plays into the hands of the company, undercuts the vital struggle for international solidarity and reinforces the racist climate which Le Pen's fascist movement feeds on as murderous attacks mount against "immigrant" workers and youth.

The Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership

Since the combative strike of railroad workers five years ago, strikes in France have often seen the formation of strike coordinating committees, as is the case in the present nurses strike. These have served to bridge the several unions, and have frequently escaped from the iron control of Stalinist CGT and social-democratic CFDT bureaucrats. French workers are justifiably distrustful of the reformist union leaderships which led them into support for Mitterrand. However, as Lenin explained in his classic work *What Is To Be Done?* the spontaneous organization of workers cannot alone resolve the problem of leadership.

In the microcosm of this key strike, it is being shown with crystal clarity how Stalinism and social democracy sabotage the most elementary workers struggles. While Cléon strikers at a November 1 general assembly chanted "tenir, tenir, tenir!" (hold on) at every mention of going back, *L'Humanité* claimed the workers were "ready to take down the

picket lines if Renault management would guarantee that negotiations would begin on proposals for a minimal specified wage increase and no reprisals"! Meanwhile, the regional CFDT called for "all 5,000 Cléon workers" (i.e., including the scabs) to meet in front of the factory to "vote" on the strike.

May 1968 French general strike: PCF/CGT Stalinist misleaders saved bourgeoisie by liquidating strike rather than fight for power.



Helena Hermes

With the strikers holding firm, the hardline Renault management and many in the media, including *Le Monde*, are pushing the Mitterrand/Cresson government to send in the police. But in the present climate of social tension, particularly after the police charge against striking nurses, this could easily backfire.

Above all: Cléon must not stand alone!

Many Renault-Cléon strikers recall with pride that their plant was among the first to mobilize during the general strike of May 1968. But they must also draw the lessons of May '68, which was stabbed in the back by the national leadership of the PCF and the union tops who hoped to bring in a "left" government of the capitalist state. What that powerful general strike lacked was a leadership with the program and determination to lead the mobilization forward to workers revolution. And now ten years of "left" government has demonstrated the bankruptcy of the popular front as it relentlessly drives down the living standards of the working people and persecutes North African "immigrants."

The Ligue Trotskyiste banner at the Paris demonstration during the one-day general strike of October 24 declared: "Break with Mitterrand! For a May '68 that goes all the way!" As its 19 October supplement to *Le Bolchévique* declared:

"The Mitterrand government is in desperate straits but defends the interests of capitalism with hammer and tongs. Every thoroughgoing workers struggle becomes a political struggle which calls out for a class-struggle leadership. To win, working-class militants must therefore get rid of the bureaucrats who have been completely corrupted through class collaboration, in order to construct a revolutionary workers party. Such a party will fight for a workers government to expropriate capitalism and put an end once and for all to this social system which transforms into misery the enormous riches produced by the workers." ■

L.A. "Rolling Strikes" ...

(continued from page 12)

inner sanctum of the school board. Garment unions have been organizing undocumented foreign-born workers. In the L.A. area, long known as an open-shop, low-wage haven, with a huge influx of Latino and Asian immigrants, events have been building toward a showdown over unionization. Despite the SEIU tops' capitulation, with teachers being told to eat a \$1,800 pay cut, the battle is still pending.

The walkouts began October 28 when union members among the 4,500 nurses in L.A. county hospitals set up picket lines on the night shift. At the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center they wore T-shirts reading "Nurses Survive to Keep Patients Alive." In a medical system with six major hospitals and 47 clinics there are over 1,000 nursing staff vacancies. The strikers are fighting not only for themselves, but for decent medical care for tens of thousands of poor and work-

ing people. As the capitalist courts quickly stepped in with an anti-strike injunction, other units in Local 660 began a series of one-day strikes which included lab technicians, clerical and custodial workers at the hospitals, flood control, sewer and street repair workers, county warehouse workers and truck drivers, and on Monday 5,100 social service workers.

County officials, whose salaries top out at \$163,000 per year, are demanding Local 660 members get no pay increase this year and 3 percent in 1992—in effect a cut, as increased medical benefits and outrageous parking fees would take a huge bite out of workers' paychecks. Only the nurses, grossly underpaid and desperately needed, are being offered a small raise this year. In ordering the nurses back to work, the judge arrogantly denounced their walkout as "an imminent threat to health and safety." Bull! Ask Rodney King or thousands of other L.A. workers and minorities who have felt the clubs of the LAPD—they'll tell you who the "threat to health and safety" is! The members of Local 660—one-third black, 20 percent Latino, over half

women—know this from bitter personal experience.

The SEIU leaders' strategy of one-day, rotating strikes was just a pressure tactic to push negotiations to wheedle a few crumbs out of the Board. Meanwhile, it served to divide the union and dissipate the workers' strength, as has working without a contract for over a month. (Moreover, WV registered a protest with the union over the name of the campaign, "Rolling Thunder," the code name for LBJ's bombing raids over North Vietnam, beginning in 1965, which escalated the war and killed tens of thousands of Vietnamese peasants and workers.) A real strike would win wide popular backing and mobilize active support from union workers, from aerospace in Long Beach and the docks in San Pedro to the sweatshops of the garment district.

The struggle of low-wage and public workers to organize has been energized by the presence of Central American

immigrants who are no strangers to class struggle. It is crucial that the labor movement use its power to fight for full citizenship rights for *anyone* who has made it into this country: down with the racist immigration laws! These union battles have also come up against the police, the armed fist of the capitalist state, making it all the more important to demand: cops out of the unions!

The quiescence in recent years of the historic outposts of industrial unionism in longshore and aerospace is due to the straitjacket imposed by a union bureaucracy bound hand and foot to the Democratic Party and loyal to the capitalist system, which is producing the devastating budget cuts in education, hospitals and services for the poor. What's needed is a class-struggle leadership that will fuse these battles into a struggle for a revolutionary workers party that can lead the fight to sweep away the racist capitalist system. ■

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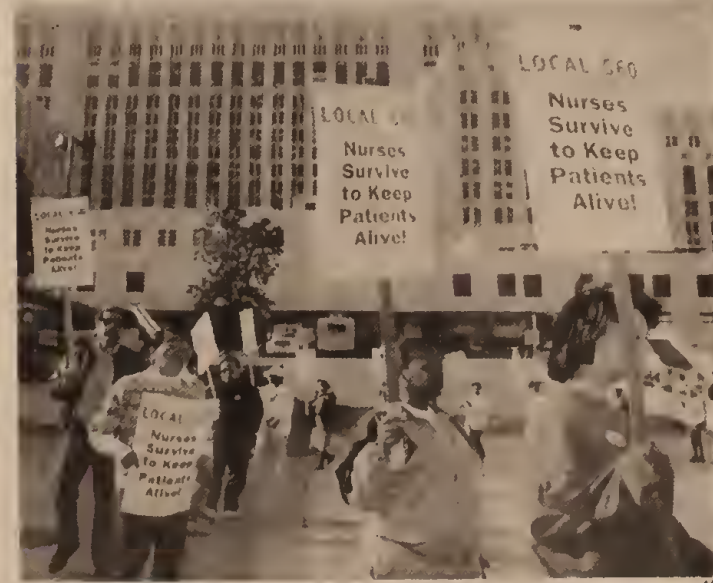
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Striking Los Angeles County nurses, October 29.

Strikes Rock Mitterrand's France



Thousand-strong mass pickets have shut down key Renault-Cléon auto plant, leading to shutdowns of the entire chain.

Trove/Humanite

NOVEMBER 4—After a decade of cruel austerity imposed by the "socialist" president François Mitterrand, the anger of French workers has begun to explode. Over the past month, a wave of strikes by Renault auto workers almost brought the company to a standstill. Striking nurses demonstrating in the streets of Paris stood up to water cannons, tear gas and police charges. Peasants made their anger felt as they repeatedly sacked tax collectors' offices as well as meetings and banquets by government ministers (who were then ordered not to venture into the provinces). On October 24 a one-day general strike shut down the ports, heavily disrupted public transportation in some cities and reduced the production of electrical power, as tens of thousands of striking workers marched through the streets of Paris and numerous other cities.

UPDATE

As we go to press we have received the following report from France:

NOVEMBER 5—At 3:30 this morning, almost 500 CRS (riot police) took over the Cléon plant and opened up the gates. No violence. The CGT union tops made sure there was no resistance

from the 100 or so pickets. The decision was taken by the prime minister. The strike goes on. Only hardened scabs and management personnel went in through a passage formed by strikers on one side and cops on the other. Negotiations with Renault management have begun and are still going on.

Mitterrand tried to head off the upsurge of class struggle by mixing threats, false promises and police attacks. Yet the strikes continued in the hospitals, and walkouts swept Renault auto plants in Cléon, Le Mans, Sandouville and Flins. The bastion of the strikes has been at the Renault plant in Cléon (Normandy), where hundreds of militant pickets have kept the plant shut down since Octo-

ber 17. Despite management attempts to mobilize scabs, the strike has grown increasingly solid and outside support has grown (more than 90,000 francs collected in solidarity donations). Giving an idea of the size of the pickets, every 24 hours 750 liters of coffee are consumed, 2,200 snacks distributed and 1,200 hot meals served. This morning Renault-Le Mans went on strike as well,

locking up the plant manager for several hours and now barricading the entrance to the factory "just like at Cléon."

The Cléon strikers are demanding a 1,500-franc (\$260) monthly wage boost—hardly enough to compensate for the severe erosion of purchasing power. In reality the struggle goes well beyond the question of wages, as our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF) pointed out in a special strike supplement of *Le Bolchévik*:

"To break the resistance of this government ready to do anything to defend capitalist profits (and all the more brutal since they know they're near the end of their rope and are vulnerable), much more than "ordinary" wage struggles are necessary.... Today the ingredients for the necessary generalized counter-offensive by the workers are accumulating. The Mitterrand government is largely discredited and has been in agonizing

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Los Angeles "Rolling Strikes" SEIU Tops Scuttle Strike

Thousands of Teachers Protest Pay Cuts

LOS ANGELES, November 5—On the eve of a first-ever strike by 41,000 employees of Los Angeles County, union leaders called off the action, saying they had reached a "conceptual agreement" with the Board of Supervisors. The Board's "conception" has been to screw the workers, making them pay for health benefits and even parking space. After walkouts in the last week by nurses and other hospital workers, public works and welfare department employees,

momentum was building for a countywide strike. But after 10,000 teachers rallied yesterday against a drastic pay cut, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 660 general manager Gilbert Cedillo put a lid on the county workers' protests, caving in an hour and a half before the pickets were supposed to go up.

While strikes have been falling in the rest of the country, labor struggle has been mounting over the last couple years in Los Angeles. In 1989, a strike by the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) got 8 percent annual raises. Hotel workers fought the giant Hyatt chain. Last year, janitors organized by the SEIU faced off LAPD assaults and won union recognition. Striking teachers' assistants (also SEIU) invaded the

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Thousands of L.A. teachers rally against budget cuts in May.

WV Photo