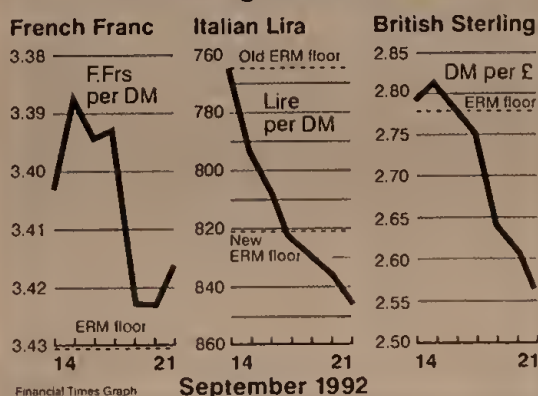


## Fourth Reich Bankers Detonate...

### Currencies Against the D-Mark



Der Spiegel

# Euro-Chaos

Currency speculators dump lire, pounds, francs as European Monetary System shatters.

A single European currency by the end of the century—an economic and political union—a common foreign policy backed up by an independent armed force—a new European superstate. For months, ever since the West European summit in the Dutch town of Maastricht last December, the world has been bombarded by this kind of Euro-nonsense. But now it's all been blown sky-high. With the French "yes, but" vote on the Maastricht treaty and particularly the spectacular European currency crisis in mid-September, the mirage of a united

capitalist Europe has evaporated.

"Europe's plans for economic union are flying apart before the world's eyes," understated the *Wall Street Journal*. In Sweden—staid, square, solid Sweden—the central bank was charging 500 percent interest to its member banks to stop the run on the krona. The Bank of England lost a quarter of its total foreign-exchange reserves in one day in its hapless effort to defend the pound, while the French have to date lost half their reserves trying to hold the line on the franc. The British chancellor of the ex-

chequer and German chancellor Helmut Kohl exchanged insults that in former times would be a prelude to a duel.

By the time the Maastricht treaty was nearly voted down (carrying by 51 to 49 percent) in the French referendum on September 20, European monetary "unity" had already been destroyed by the German Bundesbank and international financiers. "Sunday's vote will be like kicking a dead body," commented a Swiss banker a few days before. Meanwhile, the Germans are exalting the "super" deutschmark as if it were an

ancient sacred idol. The German tabloid *Bild-Zeitung* crowns "Oh you lovely mark," along with displays showing how much cheaper are Scotch whisky, Spanish leather jackets and vacations in Italy than a few weeks ago.

The shattering of the European Monetary System intersecting the near-defeat of Maastricht in France signifies a sharpening of *interimperialist tensions within Europe*. We are beginning to see the unraveling of the European Community (EC), the economic glue which for three

*continued on page 6*

## Workers Revolt Against Capitalist Austerity

# Red Hot Autumn in Italy

MILANO, September 28—From Milano in the north to Palermo in Sicily, hundreds of thousands of workers, pensioners and students are pouring into the streets daily in the largest and most militant strike wave to convulse Italy since the "hot autumn" of 1969. A series of regional general strikes brought 100,000 into the central piazza in Florence on September 22, 150,000 in Milano on the 23rd, tens of thousands more in Naples and Torino on the 24th and 25th, and upwards of 200,000 pensioners marched in Rome on the 26th. For the first time since 1980, 90 percent of the workers at Fiat joined the strike. And these were not bureaucratically orchestrated events but an explosive working-class revolt, directed not only against the bosses but also against their own sellout leaders.

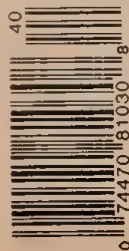
Newspaper headlines and conversations are filled with talk of "*la rabbia*"—the rage directed at the brutal cutbacks ordered by Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, who wants to impose sacrifices of "blood and tears" on the working class. Emboldened by the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe and the Soviet Union and the fracturing of the once hegemonic Italian Communist Party (PCI),

*continued on page 9*



Angry workers battle police in Torino in mass eruption against new capitalist austerity measures.

La Repubblica





# National Lawyers Guild Anti-Communist Ban on RCP

The rad-lib National Lawyers Guild, that weather vane of middle-class "progressive" opinion, has decided that now the "Death of Communism" is in, it's time to kick reds out. At its August 1992 national convention, the NLG upheld bans by their San Francisco and New York City chapters on defending or giving legal aid to the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). So in the Big Apple and the Bay Area, the NLG will no longer provide legal observers or lawyers for RCP events, nor will it defend RCPers arrested at RCP-initiated demonstrations. Behind the NLG's ban is pure and simple anti-communism. At issue is the right of an ostensibly Marxist party to exist in the "New World Order."

It's no coincidence the NLG ban comes just as the Maoist RCP has been increasingly targeted for repression. Their flag-burning stunts over the Persian Gulf drew not only media attention but arrests and a vicious prison

sentence for Cheryl Lessin (see "Defend RCP Flag Fetishists!" WV No. 518, 18 January 1991). Following the explosion of anger in Los Angeles over the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King on video and got away with it, L.A. authorities singled out the RCP as instigators of the "riots." And the RCP's support for the Peruvian Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas has drawn sinister attention. The U.S. and other governments have been pressured by Peruvian diplomats to "shut down" foreign supporters of the group. A major piece on Sendero in the *New York Times Magazine* (24 May) included photos of the RCP's Revolution Books and insinuating quotes from "experts" on "terrorism."

The ostensible reason for the Bay Area NLG's original 1991 ban was the RCP's supposedly "blatant homophobic politics." This is a blatant fig leaf. For years, "Chairman Bob" Avakian's RCP has held the classic Stalinist reactionary position

## NLG Does Not Represent (Communist Party) RCP

What follows is the position paper of the National Lawyers Guild Demonstrations Committee as written 11/7/91.

Effective July 17, 1991, The Demonstrations Committee of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild will no longer provide legal services to the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) because of their blatant homophobic politics. The Demonstrations Committee through its staff coordinator, will not provide lawyers or legal observers to the RCP as an organization for RCP-sponsored events. We will not, however, screen individuals for RCP affiliations for RCP-affiliated

rights, environmentalist, housing, and anti-war movements. On the other hand, we will continue to provide legal services to groups who seek to defend the rights of all people, including the genocide of and/or violence against the RCP.

The RCP's politically motivated and illegal activities, including the current RCP program to "eliminate the capitalist system" and "struggle will be waged to eliminate the capitalist and

san francisco  
**sentinel**

4 June 1992

Adapting to the "Death of Communism" line in their rad-lib milieu, National Lawyers Guild refuses to defend Maoists of RCP.

upholding the ("proletarian") family; in line with this they call to "ideologically remold homosexuals." Ludicrously attempting to "explain" this position today, RCP'er Stephanie Tang writes to the *SF Weekly* (5 February) that "women...need to turn to revolutionary Maoism, not the partial solution of lesbianism." This New Leftover idiocy that equates sexuality with political positions, however, has in practice lately been buried by the RCP, which has defended gay groups and women fighting for abortion rights—not because of any change in their Stalinist "principles," but because these issues have become so obviously a cutting edge of capitalist social reaction.

Amid the swirl of charges around the Bay Area NLG ban on the RCP, some very sinister slanders were retailed by a Bay Area gay paper, *The Sentinel*, whose publisher charged in a 7 May editorial that the RCP had a secret "war plan" to "march down to the Castro and burn it down" in the wake of the L.A. upheaval! The same *Sentinel* piece, titled "Jordan and Hongisto Deserve Praise," effusively hailed Mayor Jordan and then-police chief Hongisto (who engineered the seizure of a rival gay paper, the *Bay Times*). When the RCP responded to these smears, the cop-loving, communist-hating *Sentinel* printed the NLG's ban on the RCP.

A "Statement of Protest" distributed at the NLG's convention in Chicago this summer appealed to the Guild's tradition of "progressive legal defense," noting that "Refusal to defend the RCP sends a message to the government, police and right-wing bigots that they may attack the RCP without fear of being confronted by Guild lawyers." The statement, signed by lawyers across the country as well as RCP supporters and victims of the 1950s McCarthyite witchhunts, noted that the Guild has defended the RCP for nearly two decades.

In fact, the NLG's legal defense has always been determined by what's acceptable or trendy ("politically correct") in "progressive," i.e., liberal bourgeois, circles. It was founded to support the "New Deal," as a petty-bourgeois component of the class-collaborationist "People's Front" between the Stalinists

and FDR Democrats. In 1940, the NLG refused to defend the Trotskyists, the first victims of the anti-communist Smith Act, only to itself be labeled a Communist front group in the McCarthyite witch-hunt. In the '60s, the NLG proclaimed itself the legal arm of the "Movement"—and sued the trade unions. Reflecting the breakup of the New Left, the Guild became a seething mess of sectarian tendencies—at one point the Maoist October League even attempted to exclude homosexuals from the NLG!

We have plenty of political differences with the RCP, and with the National Lawyers Guild, as well as many gay and lesbian organizations. Yet the Partisan Defense Committee and the Spartacist League have consistently—and uniquely—defended organizations of labor, the left and oppressed groups, irrespective of their political views, which have come under attack by this capitalist state, its cops and courts. Our defense efforts have included everyone from the RCP's Cheryl Lessin (who burned a flag in Cleveland to protest the Persian Gulf War) to NAMBLA (North American Man-Boy Love Association, a group many gay and lesbian organizations shun).

In our old-fashioned way, we look back to the IWW tradition that "an injury to one is an injury to all." The NLG, meanwhile, would do well to ponder the 1945 words of Lutheran churchman Martin Niemöller, who was sent to a concentration camp by Hitler: "First they came for the communists, but since I was not a communist I did not protest. Then they came for the Jews, but since I was not a Jew I did not protest. Then they came for the Catholics, but since I was not a Catholic I did not protest. When they came for me, there was no one left to protest."

\* \* \*

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TROTSKY

## For a Socialist United States of Europe!

The outbreak of the first imperialist war in 1914 signaled that the forces of production had outgrown capitalist property relations and the nation-state system. In revolutionary opposition to World War I, Trotsky raised the slogan of a Socialist United States of Europe, and this was later incorporated in the program of the Communist International in Lenin's day. Stalin later abandoned this perspective in favor of the nationalist utopia

of building "socialism in one country." Opposing Stalinism, in 1928 Trotsky reaffirmed the organic unity of proletarian revolution in Europe.

A more or less complete economic unification of Europe accomplished from above through an agreement between capitalist governments is a utopia. Along this road matters cannot proceed beyond partial compromises and half measures. But this alone, an economic unification of Europe, such as would entail colossal advantages both to the producer and consumer and to the development of culture in general, is becoming a revolutionary task of the European proletariat in its struggle against imperialist protectionism and its instrument—militarism....

The United States of Europe represents first of all a form—the only conceivable form—the dictatorship of the proletariat in Europe.

—Leon Trotsky, "The 'French' Peace Program" (September 1915)

Geographically and historically, conditions have predetermined such a close organic bond between the countries of Europe that there is no way for them to tear themselves out of it. The modern bourgeois governments of Europe are like murderers chained to a single cart. The revolution in Europe, as has already been said, will in the final analysis be of decisive importance for America as well. But directly, in the immediate course of history, a revolution in Germany will have an immeasurably greater significance for France than for the United States of America. It is precisely from this historically developed relationship that there flows the political vitality of the slogan of the European Soviet Federation. We speak of its relative vitality because it stands to reason that this Federation will extend, across the great bridge of the Soviet Union, to Asia, and will then effect a union of the World Socialist Republics.

—Leon Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin* (1928)



LENIN

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Liz Gordon

EDITOR: Jan Norden

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## SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 • (212) 732-7860

### Atlanta

Box 4012  
Atlanta, GA 30302

### Detroit

Box 441043  
Detroit, MI 48244

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(202) 872-8240

## TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

### Toronto

Box 7198, Station A  
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## From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

### Patience in Idaho vs. Overkill in Philly



The mountainous regions of Idaho, huddled in the nation's Pacific Northwest, became home briefly to bloody conflict between the government and a member of the White Supremacist Christian Identity Movement.

Latest reports state that C.I. follower, Randy Weaver, after the death of his teenage son and wife by government officials following a shoot-out, surrendered to the government after an 11-day standoff, in late August, 1992.

Christian Identity, which reportedly merges Old Testament beliefs with more modern 20th Century white racist teachings, has been bubbling and brewing in Idaho and the Pacific region for decades.

The strike that lit the match was a tightening net of surveillance on Weaver by government agents, who claimed the C.I. follower violated a bench warrant for not showing up for court on weapons charges. Weaver was quoted as saying the government set him up with the gun case, and a mid-month shoot-out between the Weaver party and the feds left two dead: Weaver's son and a U.S. Marshal.

Federal and State cops rung the Weaver compound in a textbook case of the "wait-'em-out" theory, and except for the later sniping of his wife, and wounding of him by government gunners, they displayed enor-

mous patience. When Weaver was finally tired out, and surrendered to what they call "ZOG" (Zionist Occupation Government), he wasn't beaten, kicked, pummeled, nor rifle-butted into submission.

He was presumably searched, handcuffed and put under arrest, and his three surviving daughters were turned over to other C.I. folks in the hills of Idaho.

What a contrast between the government's treatment of MOVE and C.I.!

In the 1978 MOVE confrontation, the MOVE men, upon arrest, were shot, beaten (on videotape!), and the women were threatened with death. The babies were ripped from mothers and sent to government centers where they were harassed, probed, interrogated, and several forcibly shorn and fed foods which violated their faith. The "reason"? They said a cop was killed, hence over-reaction.

In the infamous May 13th (1985) confrontation, the police, armed with U.S. Government weaponry, hardly waited 11 hours, much less 11 days, (and here, no cops were killed!) before dropping a bomb on a house that they knew was inhabited by half a score of men, women and babies.

In one instance, to borrow an Old Testament figure, the state used the patience of Job; in another, they

used the swiftness and cruelty of Herod.

To non-whites like the writer, the notion is incapable that the U.S. Government, as it stands, is already white supremacist.

Even though one of their officials was killed in the initial shoot-out, the government didn't call in an air strike, didn't fly in a helicopter, and dropped no bombs, in this rustic far-away-from-the-big-city site. When the alleged gunman (not Weaver) emerged, he wasn't slamdunked like Delbert Africa in 1978 (or Rodney King even, in 1991!). He was treated like a human being—a white human being.

In Philadelphia, America's fifth largest metropolis, they ripped a house apart with people (black) in it in 1978; and in 1985, transformed it into a death oven, killing at least 11 MOVE people, including babies, who, like the 1978 crew, were guilty of nothing, but a civil eviction notice, and killed no one.

The survivors of 1978 got 900 years in prison.

The one rebel who survived 1985 got seven years, for surviving.

The rest got death by incineration.

Who's really opposed to this government?

2 September 1992

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Philadelphia black journalist, is on death row at Pennsylvania's Huntingdon state prison. Framed up because of his political views, Jamal faces death for his defiance of the racist, capitalist order. His columns appear periodically in *Workers Vanguard* and other newspapers.

To get involved in the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the death penalty, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, Drawer R, Huntingdon, PA 16652.

## Remembering Bill Edwards

We print below excerpted remarks of comrades Don Alexander and Gene Herson at the memorial meeting for Bill Edwards at the San Francisco hall of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Bill died on August 5 at age 72. He was a retired member of the National Maritime Union, and this year he was the vice presidential candidate of the Socialist Party. In the 1930s Bill was a member of the Young Communist League, and during the '50s McCarthyite witchhunt was victimized by the FBI while working at the Oakland Naval Base. Bill was also a member of the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense since its founding in 1983. The August 14 memorial, organized by Jack Heyman and attended by 75 of Bill's relatives, union brothers and comrades, was also addressed by trade unionists who fought alongside Bill through his more than five decades as a union militant and anti-racist activist. Statements were read from Congressman Ron Dellums and the Socialist Party.

\* \* \*

**Don Alexander:** We in the Spartacist League, Labor Black League and Partisan Defense Committee extend our condolences to the family and friends of Bill Edwards, whose sudden death saddens us all. Bill had a long history in the labor movement. Bill had various interests which took him in many directions. Over a number of years he was active in the struggle for the rights of working people, black people and other oppressed minorities.

Bill joined the Labor Black League in 1983 following the Spartacist campaign of Martha Phillips for Oakland city council. Bill was active in the work of the LBL, attending demonstrations and rallies. Some of the photos on display are indications of some of his actions with us. In 1983 he joined with us and many other anti-racists in fighting to keep two phone workers—an interracial couple, Ray Palmiero and Lauren Mozee—out of jail for defending their picket lines against racist union-busters. He

demonstrated in 1985 against the racist provocation at San Francisco General Hospital in which the bosses and their union flunkies attempted to build a separate Jim Crow toilet for black electrician Jeff Higgins.

In 1984 when Democrat "Dixie" Dianne Feinstein flew the Confederate flag of slavery from SF City Hall, the LBL mobilized twice to tear down and keep down the Confederate flag of slavery. We tore it down and Bill Edwards was a proud participant in this campaign. Bill also was a foe of apartheid slavery. He marched alongside labor and black militants in our emergency demonstrations to save the lives of anti-apartheid militants.

In 1985 and 1987 he stood with us in rallying for the freedom of Germino Pratt, America's foremost class-war prisoner. Bill was concerned that we fight to abolish the racist death penalty, and through his efforts we got a regular column for Mumia Abu-Jamal in the *Sun Reporter*.

Recently, in the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict, Bill felt very strongly about our program of mobilizing labor to defend blacks and Latinos against racist state oppression. Bill visited L.A. during this period, talked to many desperate black youth who have been written off by the racist rulers. Bill wanted to fight for a militant mobilization of L.A. labor, especially for the ILWU to defend the besieged black population. He talked to us about this, and then with Dave Arian, ILWU International president, and with Local 13 in L.A., which got nowhere.

Bill took seriously his membership in the LBL. He was attracted to our class-struggle program for black freedom and working-class emancipation. In 1990 the LBL raised money for me to go on a tour of East Germany, to the former DDR to help mobilize revolutionary class opposition to the drive toward capitalist reunification, and to inform the East German working class about the brutal realities of race and class oppression in the U.S. When I told Bill that we wanted his support for this trip, he told me that

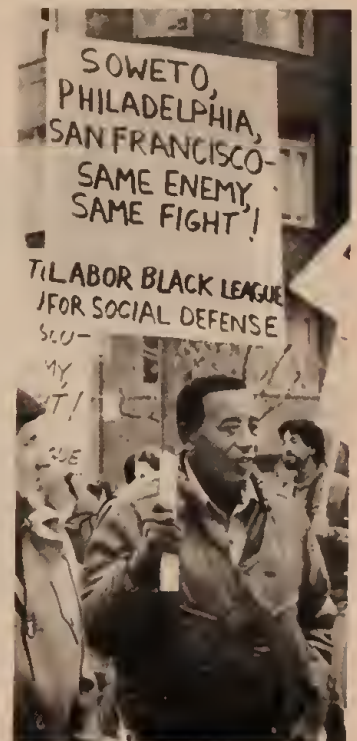
his son had just come from Germany, and had witnessed the increased boldness of fascists in Berlin. Bill liked our anti-fascist action at Treptow, and came through. Along with other LBLers, he provided money for me to travel there on behalf of the SL and the LBL, which is in fraternal alliance and programmatic solidarity with the Spartacist League.

It is fitting to remember Bill's actions and solidarity with the SL/LBL which intersected our fight for black liberation through proletarian revolution.

**Gene Herson** (statement read at the memorial meeting): Bill Edwards was a decent man who wanted to make the world a decent place. He called himself a socialist and he was active throughout his life in causes of labor and black liberation. Bill worked in any way he could to further these ends. He tried everything. He traveled all avenues to pursue his goals, often admitting (with an embarrassed smile) that some of his forays were futile and counterproductive. He believed in democratic trade unions controlled by the rank and file. He particularly involved himself in the struggle of blacks in South Africa. He understood the inextricable connection between the class struggle and the black struggle.

I met Bill in 1968 in the National Maritime Union. He was a steward on the Moore McCormack Lines and I was in San Francisco organizing a union oppositional group, the NMU Militant-Solidarity Caucus. Bill felt very conflicted about supporting a reformist oppositional leader, Jim Morrissey, and, at the same time, our Caucus which had a class-struggle orientation. Nonetheless, Bill backed our Caucus against Morrissey when it came to taking a stand supporting the Vietnamese struggle against U.S. imperialism, defending the victimized Black Panther Party, or calling for a labor party counterposed to the Democrats. Bill also worked with the electoralist Socialist Party.

Then, from time to time, Bill and I would have a drink and he would good-naturedly hear out my criticisms of his sometimes conflicting strategies,



Bill Edwards at 1985 San Francisco demonstration.

Undaunted, he would murmur something about his good intentions. That's how I remember Bill: an irrepressible optimist and eternally committed to the greatest good for all working people. He never maneuvered for his own personal benefit; he worked for whatever he thought would bring some gains or even the possibility of gains for his ideals.

Bill was an extremely intelligent, capable guy. He could have succeeded in any number of fields, but he devoted himself to advancing the conditions of black people and the cause of labor. Over the years, whenever I or anyone in the Partisan Defense Committee or the LBL would call Bill to work on a campaign or project, Bill always pitched in, approaching his many contacts in the labor movement. I'll miss him and I'll miss our work together. ■





Der Spiegel

Yeltsin regime smashed August 15 strike of Russian air controllers, now prosecutes leaders on criminal charges.



Viktor Ivanov

# Yeltsin Breaks Russian Air Controllers Strike

MOSCOW—In its first direct assault on the workers movement here, the counterrevolutionary regime of Russian president Boris Yeltsin is engaged in a vindictive campaign to crush a union that crossed it. Last week, the government began criminal prosecution of the Federation of Air-traffic Controllers Trade Unions (FPA), which carried out a one-day strike on August 15, shutting down more than 40 of the country's airports. Union headquarters were raided and ransacked, documents seized and officials hauled in for questioning. The impact of this is all the more telling as the air con-

trained personnel to direct air traffic, the union called off the strike after one day on the basis of a personal assurance by Yeltsin's vice president Aleksandr Rutskoi that there would be no reprisals against the workers.

Rutskoi's promise to the air controllers was immediately revealed to be a lie, as the government launched criminal proceedings against the strikers. One union leader in Kursk was arrested the day after the walkout, and some 15 others have been victimized through transfers, demotions and firings. FPA president Vladimir Konusenko has threatened another strike, to be joined by the "free" miners, pilots and other unions, if the victimization continues.

Yeltsin and Rutskoi, as part of their drive to erect a capitalist state, are clearly intent on a calculated provocation against this union, which represents 7,000 of Russia's 8,000 air traffic controllers. With the prospect of mass unemployment in the coming months, as the capitalist-restorationist government begins its plan to privatize the bulk of Russian industry, the possibility of an upsurge of mass workers struggles is evident to all. If the counterrevolutionary regime succeeds in crushing this relatively well-off workforce—remember Reagan's destruction of the American PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981!—this will set an ominous precedent, and put in place the legal machinery to take on the inevitable workers struggles to come.

The showdown over the air controllers strike is also important for the actors on the government side. Rutskoi has presented himself as a friend of the working people by demagogically denouncing the "free market" extremism of Yeltsin's economic policymakers, notably acting prime minister Yegor Gaidar. But during the August strike, Rutskoi called a press conference "at which he waved an air-traffic controller's payslip for 40,000 roubles, claiming bogusly that the union was striking for a wage of 70,000 roubles, 20 times the national average. In fact he had got hold of a payslip representing two and a half months back-pay" (*Guardian* [London], 19 September). Soviet workers should note well the actions of this phony "friend of labor."

The air controllers and other "free" unions—which broke away from the official unions that in fact were an arm of the Stalinist bureaucracy—have been militantly pro-Yeltsin and openly support the restoration of capitalism. Their model is Lech Walesa's Polish Solidarność, favorite "union" of the CIA and the Vatican. The Independent Miners Union (NPG), the most important of them, is directly tied to the "labor"

lieutenants of U.S. imperialism. When AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland visited Moscow in May 1991, the air controllers informed him that they would have guided his plane even if they had struck. The *AFL-CIO Bulletin* (May 1991) reported that, "at a dinner at Spaso House, the American Ambassador's residence, President Kirkland saluted the leaders of the Independent Miners Union, the air traffic controllers, and air line pilots." Yet now the air controllers are threatened with the PATCO treatment by Yeltsin, another favorite of the "AFL-CIA."

Except for the coal miners, these unions are based on the labor aristocracy (air controllers, pilots, railwaymen, etc.), highly skilled workers in strategic sectors of the economy. They thought they would have considerable economic leverage in a capitalist market economy. For their part, the coal miners have a central role in the Soviet industrial economy and were recognized as the heart of the workers movement by the old Stalinist rulers. Thus many miners, too, believed they would have a strong bargaining position in a capitalist labor market. In reality, capitalist restoration will bring massive *deindustrialization*, reducing Russia, the Ukraine and other former Soviet republics to neocolonial suppliers of raw materials to West Europe, North America and Japan.

Miners—who had economic security in the planned, collectivized Soviet system—would find themselves competing with the highly mechanized strip mines in the western U.S. and Australia as well as South African coal extracted by super-exploited black workers. Key to the economic viability of Aeroflot—the largest civilian air carrier in the world—is that aviation fuel was made available at a small fraction of the world-market price. Now, the IMF (the world bankers' cartel) is demanding that Russia *increase* the internal price of oil *five-fold*, which among other devastating effects would ground most of Aeroflot's planes. Thousands of Soviet air controllers would find themselves without a job. Meanwhile, the unions set up to carry out counter-revolution are now finding out that capitalism means union-busting.

In his interview with the ICL, Brodulev emphasized that the air controllers were not demanding higher wages, their main concern was improved flight safety. But if the Yeltsin-Rutskoi regime met this union's demands, it would encourage other Russian workers to strike against the restorationist regime as their living conditions are ravaged by hyperinflation and mass unemployment looms. We Trotskyists support the air controllers strike, whose pro-Yeltsin leaders are now up against the

Yeltsin regime, while we underline the need for a genuinely communist vanguard that fights Yeltsin-Bush counter-revolution down the line. Such a leadership would seek to expand strikes into a working-class offensive throwing up soviet organs of proletarian power to restore the USSR on the basis of Leninist principles.

Criminally, the various has-been Stalinist losers, who masquerade as "communists" while tying themselves to the most reactionary nationalist and outright fascist forces, have lined up with Yeltsin and Rutskoi in opposing the strike. A representative of Toiling Russia, the coalition dominated by the Russian Communist Workers Party of Viktor Anpilov which has been behind the anti-Yeltsin protests in Moscow and elsewhere, also denounced a similar strike in the Ukraine in early September of miners, railway engineers, pilots and air traffic controllers because the leadership of the "independent" unions which called them is anti-Communist and pro-Yeltsin.

The old official trade unions, led by entrenched Stalinist hacks, tell the workers not to make trouble but rather to support the more nationalistic and conservative figures in the new regime like Rutskoi and Arkady Volsky, head of the Union of Industrialists (ex-Stalinist managers seeking to become capitalists). In an interview with the ICL, a spokesman for the independent railway drivers union remarked about the official unions, "the prevailing sentiment among them is conservatism and embarrassment." The resulting opposition to strikes plays into the hands of the counter-revolution, and is an important factor in explaining the passivity and disorientation of the Soviet workers in the face of Yeltsin's catastrophic assault on their livelihoods.

It is necessary for workers in the "free" unions to draw the lessons of Yeltsin-Rutskoi's breaking the air controllers strike. Capitalist restoration will bring not prosperity and freedom but Third World-level poverty and police-state repression. Workers in the old Stalinist-led unions must understand that the differences between Rutskoi and Yeltsin, between Volsky and Gaidar, are squabbles over *who* will serve as agents of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo in exploiting and degrading the workers of Russia and other former Soviet republics. At a recent demonstration against the privatization of the mammoth Zil auto plant in Moscow, a spokesman for the ICL told the assembled workers:

"I'm from the former DDR where a counterrevolution took place already two

continued on page 11



AP  
American PATCO air traffic controllers dragged off in chains in 1981 as Reagan government smashed strike.

trollers had actively aided Yeltsin's counter-coup in August 1991, supplying information about military movements. Now they're experiencing what capitalist counter-revolution is really about.

As reported below in an interview given by FPA vice president Vladimir Brodulev to representatives of the International Communist League in Moscow on August 25, the regime unleashed a full panoply of strikebreaking forces against the one-day walkout. KGB secret police and OMON special militia units were called out against the strikers and military personnel were ordered to act as scabs. Faced with this onslaught and the danger of civilian aircraft catastrophes posed by the criminal use of



# Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win!

## Victory to Yellowknife Gold Miners!

VANCOUVER—For over four months, 240 miners in Canada's Northwest Territories have been fiercely battling an all-out union-busting attack by Royal Oak Mines Inc., owner of the Giant gold mine in the territorial capital of Yellowknife, just 300 miles south

forcing the company to bring them in by helicopter. Women have organized in CLASS, the CASAW Ladies Association Support System.

The companies, their cops, courts and media are bringing their full power to bear, trying to crush this militant strike as a warning to all labor. In a July letter of solidarity to the NWT Federation of Labor, the Partisan Defense Committee in Toronto called for "coordinated, mass labor action—in Vancouver to shut down Pro Con's anti-union outfit, in Northern Alberta to close



Fool's Gold

RCMP assaults picket line of striking gold miners in Canada's Northwest Territories.

of the Arctic Circle. Despite being shot at and tear-gassed by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), despite over 100 arrests and 42 firings, the strikers have held firm in their determination to bring scabherding Royal Oak to its knees. Now the members of Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers (CASAW) Local 4 face their greatest test as the company, cops and the capitalist press have launched a deadly witchhunt.

On the morning of September 18 there was an explosion at the 750-foot level of the mine. Nine scabs died. While the company didn't even notify the police for 90 minutes, the RCMP quickly declared it a case of "criminal homicide" and "multiple murder," looking to hang the union. Encouraged by company bosses to "kick some ass," scabs unleashed a reign of terror that night, attacking strikers in the bars and on the streets. At the union office two women were injured by flying glass. One striker told WV that he'd "been threatened to be shot" and related that the wives and children of others have been forced to flee the town, fearing for their safety. All labor must rally to the defense of the embattled Yellowknife unionists!

CASAW spokesmen immediately, emphatically denied any union involvement in the incident and pointed to Royal Oak's history of dangerous safety violations, especially concerning explosives. Union members have learned that the scabs were traveling with explosives on a "man car"—a violation of a cardinal rule that you never transport explosives with workers. This hasn't stopped the RCMP—"Gestapo for Royal Oak," as signs at the mine entrance put it—from targeting strikers for questioning and investigation.

A while back, CASAW's newspaper, *Fool's Gold*, wrote that the battle at Royal Oak "is developing into one of Canada's historic labour struggles.... It has pitted a group of determined, rugged miners against the U.S.-style union-busting tactics of Royal Oak's president, Margaret Witte." This is the first time in Canadian history that there has been scabbing on a hard rock mine strike. Witte has explicitly modeled her strike-breaking operation on the Phelps-Dodge rampage against Arizona copper miners in 1983-84.

Giant is the sixth largest gold mine in Canada, producing 190,000 ounces per year. Royal Oak has spent over \$2 million hiring scabs from Pro Con Mining and Tunneling and turning the site into an armed camp patrolled by Pinkerton cops imported from the U.S. complete with vicious dogs, night-vision cameras and "intelligence-gathering equipment." These thugs-for-hire have been backed up by the courts and nearly 75 RCMP cops who at every step of the way act "as agents of the company," as CASAW president Ross Slezak said.

Enforcing an anti-picketing injunction that was slapped on the union right from the start, the "Royal Oak Mounted Police," as strikers call them, fired shots as they confronted angry unionists on June 2. But the strikers were not cowed—they defended themselves with baseball bats, clubs and axes. They've met each attack with renewed resistance. Strikers drove out the first group of "security guards" brought in by Royal Oak and successfully stopped the busing in of scabs,

their airstrips. An injury to one is an injury to all! The organized working class has the power to do it, but not if it plays by the bosses' rules. The Royal Oak bosses are playing hardball. To win, labor's got to do the same."

Expressing "deep appreciation for the support you have shown us," CASAW Local 4 president Bill Schram appealed for further assistance: "The battle we fight here could be repeated in your own area, if other employers follow the example of 'our' scabbing company. Help us defeat this corporate assault!" Criminally, the brass of the Canadian Labour Congress has turned a deaf ear to this plea, refusing to flex labor's power. Left isolated, some CASAW leaders are appealing for the federal government (which ultimately controls the Northwest Territories) to intervene. But the feds have already intervened, sending in the RCMP to protect scabs and to witchhunt the union.

While going after unionists in Yellowknife, the government and the RCMP are protecting and covering up for the owners of the Westray mine in Pictou County, Nova Scotia. There, on May 9, a ghastly fireball of methane gas and coal dust blew the roof clean off the minehead: 26 miners working deep underground had no warning and no chance. As the Trotskyist League of Canada wrote in its newspaper *Spartacist Canada* (Summer 1992): "This was cold-blooded capitalist murder, a straight exchange of workers' lives for cash and votes! The Westray mine was a deathtrap and everybody involved knew it, from the profit-gouging mine bosses who pushed it through to the venal politicians who swung the funding." Lock up the Westray murderers and throw away the key!

As the battle of Royal Oak so clearly illuminates, the bosses' state is the conscious enemy of working people. To take on that state and win, the working class must also become conscious. Organized into a revolutionary workers party, courageous and determined militants can triumph not only against the likes of Royal Oak but against the whole capitalist system and shed their blood no more for the profits of the bosses. Victory to the CASAW strike!

## NYC Transit Militants Demand: "Stop the Scapegoating of Robert Ray!"

With stunning hypocrisy, Manhattan D.A. Morgenthau has gone all out to make transit worker Robert Ray the scapegoat for the deadly dangerous conditions the capitalist rulers of NYC have created in the subways. Ray, a member of Transport Workers Union Local 100, was the motorman in the horrible derailment of an IRT train at the Union Square station which killed five passengers in August 1991. He is now on trial on five counts of second degree murder, facing jail for 25 years to life.

When the Partisan Defense Committee demanded

that the D.A. drop the charges against Ray, it noted: "Not only has the TA refused to install modern computer switching and speed controls as have other transit systems, at Union Square even the antiquated signals and tripping devices were positioned so they couldn't stop the derailment. Overworked and underpaid like his co-workers who drive, maintain, repair and clean the trains, Mr. Ray is being used as a scapegoat by the TA and city officials whose budget cuts are preparing future 'accidents'."

Militants in the Committee for a Fighting TWU, who have campaigned in Local 100 to institute elected union safety committees with the power to shut down unsafe jobs on the spot, are calling on transit workers to fill the courtroom in solidarity with Ray, and to demand that their union take up his defense. The Committee has blasted the dirty job that Local 100 president Sonny Hall has done on Ray. Within hours of the accident, Hall capitulated to the TA's demand for drug testing of the entire workforce, setting up militants and minorities for firings.

## Cops and Courts Out of the Union!

Glaringly absent from the Centre Street courtroom has been any organized solidarity from the New Directions caucus—but not because they don't know where the courts are. In fact they have made a habit of dragging the union through the capitalist courts, while praising the "fighthack" of racist Rikers Island prison guards, in order to advance their penny-ante bureaucratic careers. When Hall imposed drug testing on the Local, New Directions leader Tim Schermerhorn ran to the courts. Now ND is using federal anti-labor laws to sue Local 100 for \$7 million!

As soon as he rammed through the TA's contract last spring, Sonny Hall turned his guns on New Directions. Four members of this mealy-mouthed "opposition" were brought up on ludicrous charges that they "kidnapped and held hostage" some of Hall's geriatric cronies! What really infuriated the Hall gang was that hundreds of transit workers swept into their own union hall to confront the bureaucrats over the rotten sellout contract. One of Hall's racist hacks called a black worker "boy," and another threatened ND leader Cor-



WV Photo

Transit workers march over Brooklyn Bridge in February in demonstration against sellout contract.

ine Scott. Hall finally kept protesting TWUers out of their own hall by calling in the NYPD!

But instead of mobilizing the membership against Hall, New Directions ran to the courts, filing a suit in June asking the government to intervene against Hall and award them huge punitive damages out of union funds. But both ND "militants" and the Hall bureaucrats are united in pushing and begging the Democrats, when it's the Democratic Party of Cuomo and Dinkins that's putting the screws to the transit workers.

The Committee for a Fighting TWU has denounced both Hall's kangaroo court charges and ND's use of the bosses' state against the union. The Committee put forward a motion in union division meetings this summer, calling on workers to "oppose and condemn the Sonny Hall officers and New Directions for using the bosses' courts and cops against our union. Keep the government out of the unions!"

In a leaflet during the explosion of anger against Hall's sellout last winter, the Committee pointed to the political struggle that must take place to forge a new leadership: "The key to unleashing our power is breaking from the gang of Democrats and their flunkies in the union leadership who are cracking the whip for the capitalists.... We need a fighting workers party that will fight for a workers government." ■



# Euro-Chaos...

(continued from page 1)

and a half decades held together competing West European capitalist states in the American-dominated NATO alliance against the Soviet Union. But with the collapse of the Stalinist-ruled deformed workers states of East Europe and the ascendancy of capitalist counterrevolution in Russia, the Cold War imperialist alliances are coming apart.

Commenting on the Euro-currency crisis, New York investment banker and publicist Jeffrey Garten noted: "What we've seen in the last 18 months is the lowest level of international financial and economic cooperation possibly since the end of World War II" (*Wall Street Journal*, 17 September). Two and a half years ago the postwar era came to an end when the disintegrating Soviet bureaucracy under Gorbachev abandoned East Germany, thereby reversing the Red Army's victory over the Nazi Third Reich. In March 1990, West German chancellor Kohl won a decisive election in the German Democratic Republic (DDR) by falsely promising instant prosperity with reunification under the deutschmark.

West Germany was transformed from a Cold War ally of American imperialism into an aggressive Fourth Reich seeking mastery of Europe. Germany's rulers envisaged an empire of the D-mark stretching from the Balkans to the Baltic, from Siberia to Iberia. In the summer of 1991, the Bonn regime strong-armed its EC partners into recognizing the independence of Croatia and Slovenia—traditional German clients—thereby precipitating the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia. Half a year later at Maastricht, Kohl triumphantly proclaimed a new era of West European unity marked by a common currency and a new military force independent of the American-dominated NATO.

But since then, things have not been well for the masters of the Fourth Reich, who are now squabbling among themselves and with the rest of the world. The German-instigated breakup of Yugoslavia has led to uncontrollable, expanding nationalist warfare in the Balkans. The Kohl regime's efforts to force German working people to pay more for the annexation of the DDR provoked a paralyzing strike of half a million public service and transport workers in May—the biggest strike since the late 1940s—which ended in a stand-off. Murderous attacks on immigrants by Nazi skinheads in Rostock and elsewhere intensified fears throughout Europe of a strong nationalist Germany. And the Bundesbank's high interest-rate policy further depressed the already depressed West European economy and has now thrown world financial markets into chaos.

In an orgy of imperialist triumphalism, only yesterday Bush proclaimed a "new



**Glorification of deutschmark symbolizes annexation of East German workers state by capitalist West Germany in 1990. Costs of reunification have destabilized West European bourgeois order.**

world order" as the U.S. war machine devastated Iraq. Kohl and French president Mitterrand promised a "United States of Europe." But the end of the Cold War has brought increasing disorder and interimperialist conflict. The uprising of black and Hispanic poor in Los Angeles last spring, the German public workers strike, the Tokyo stock crash and now the crisis of the European Community all point to growing instability in the centers of world capitalism. The immediate prospect is of a period of turmoil, giving rise to sharp class struggles.

A harbinger is the explosion of workers' rage in Italy following the devaluation of the lira and devastating austerity measures proclaimed by the Italian government under orders from Frankfurt bankers. Hundreds of thousands of workers have poured into the piazzas denouncing the sellout union tops. And Greece, the poorest country in the European Community, is now convulsed by massive strikes of more than a million workers, from bus drivers to bank clerks.

## Monetary Order and Disorder From Bretton Woods to Maastricht

International bankers demand a system of fixed foreign-exchange rates so that debtor countries cannot repay by inflating and devaluing their currencies. Instead, debtor states have to pay by extracting real wealth—in Marx's term "surplus value"—from their working class and other toilers. This bankers' order was embodied in the gold standard of 19th century capitalism. All major national currencies were fixed in terms of gold, which was used to offset imbalances in trade. The gold standard was killed off by the inflationary explosion accompanying the first imperialist world

war of 1914-18, and the effort to resurrect it was buried under the wreckage of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

At the 1945 Bretton Woods conference after World War II, the victorious and predominant American imperialist state installed an international monetary system based on its own national currency. The dollar was fixed and exchangeable into gold at a set price (\$35 an ounce); other currencies were supposed to be pegged to the dollar. The subsequent

**Rostock: murderous pogroms against immigrants by Nazi-led gangs heightened European fears of a resurgent nationalist Germany.**



weakening of U.S. economic and political power in the capitalist world, accelerated by the defeat in the Vietnam War, led to the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system. In 1971, U.S. president Nixon devalued the dollar in terms of gold, ushering in a period of international monetary anarchy.

Freed from the "discipline" of fixed exchange rates, capitalist governments financed their budget deficits by printing more money. Balance-of-trade deficits were "adjusted" by currency devaluation. The 1970s was a decade of accelerating global inflation, fueled by the price boom in oil and other natural resource commodities. World bankers began screaming for the restoration of monetary "discipline." But American capitalism was no longer strong enough to enforce such discipline on a global scale.

West European finance capital, dominated by the banking houses of Frankfurt, moved to restore a fixed exchange rate system on a regional basis. Set up in 1979, the European Monetary System was later exalted by British Tory (Conservative) leader John Major as "a modern-day gold standard with the deutschmark as the anchor." Formally, national currencies were pegged to the so-called ECU (European Currency Unit),

an artificial unit of account which is actually the D-mark in drag. Member states could change the value of their currency vis-à-vis the ECU only within a narrow range.

The creation of the European Monetary System was part of a general program in the dominant capitalist countries to eradicate the inflationary conditions of the 1970s. New right-wing regimes—Thatcher in Britain, Reagan in the U.S., Kohl in West Germany—came to power pledging tight money and cuts in government spending for social programs. These deflationary policies helped push the capitalist world into the depression of 1982-83 as unemployment in North America and West Europe reached the highest levels since the 1930s. The depression also broke the boom in commodity prices, forcing poor Third World countries to repay their loans from Wall Street, the City of London and Frankfurt at far higher real interest rates than when these loans were contracted.

In the early 1980s, France under the new social-democratic regime of François Mitterrand at first tried to swim against the economic stream with expansionary fiscal and monetary policies in the face of world deflation. The French Socialists' attempt at "Keynesianism in one country" led to massive capital flight, forcing successive devaluations of the franc. In 1983, the Mitterrand regime did a sharp U-turn and has since carried out austerity policies in the name of the *franc fort* (strong franc) which would meet the exacting standards of right-wing monetarists. French workers paid the price with a decade of mass unem-

ployment, particularly among youth and immigrant workers.

Having humbled the French social democrats, the Frankfurt bankers—backed up by Wall Street—were able to keep the poorer Mediterranean countries of the European Community in line. An economist with the central bank of Greece noted that the European Monetary System (EMS) "imposed greater discipline on the policies of inflation-prone countries." The ruling classes of Italy, Spain and Portugal accepted the discipline of the EMS in exchange for the financial hacking of the D-mark. In principle, the Bundesbank was committed to defending the existing exchange value of the lira, peseta and escudo, thus making the southern tier of the European Community more attractive to foreign investors.

Amid the mood of capitalist triumphalism over the ascendancy of counter-revolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union, the rulers of capitalist West Europe proclaimed their intent to establish a common currency. However, underlying the Maastricht agreement were conflicting programs as to how a currency union would operate in practice. French and Spanish social democrats envisaged a European central bank which would dilute the present power of



**Trainloads of refugees flee nationalist bloodletting in Bosnia. German imperialism instigated breakup of Yugoslavia.**



the Bundesbank and more generously provide ECUs to cover their budget and balance-of-payments deficits.

Fat chance! German bankers insist that a European currency union must be a dictatorship of financiers, dedicated to tight money and free from even a semblance of democratic or popular control. In the words of former Bundesbank head Karl-Otto Pöhl:

"If we are to have a European monetary regime, then it has to be as good as, for example, the Bundesbank's. And a European central bank can only achieve price stability if it is independent in its monetary policies of the EC institutions and governments."

—Alberta M. Shragia, ed.,  
*Euro-Politics: Institutions and  
Policymaking in the 'New'  
European Community*  
(Brookings Institution, 1992)

Pöhl's colleagues have now destroyed the existing European monetary regime even as the Maastricht treaty is being debated.

## Bundesbank Torpedoes European Monetary System

In the 1960s, the Common Market was viewed by many Europeans as an American plot to economically dominate the continent. This was the theme of French journalist Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber's famous book, *Le défi américain* (The American Challenge). Today German publicist Theo Sommer, chief editorial writer for *Die Zeit*, whose publisher is former Social Democratic chancellor Helmut Schmidt, writes of a united Europe as a bulwark against the U.S. and Japan:

"The danger cannot be completely dismissed that the triangular cooperation of Europe-North America-Japan may give way on three sides and the trilateral cooperative world of today could be replaced by a world of three colliding blocs.... If the fatal course of events cannot be prevented, then a single, united, unified Europe of the peoples of the Old World would at least offer the best chance for self-assertion."

Hitler, too, saw a *Festung Europa* (Fortress Europe) as the Old World's best chance at "self-assertion."

However, German reunification and the collapse of Soviet power, far from giving an impetus to greater European "unity," had just the opposite effect. These developments sharply increased the conflicts of interest among the bourgeois national states comprising the European Community. During the Cold War, West Germany served as paymaster of the NATO alliance against the Soviet Union. In a 1979 statement by the international Spartacist tendency urging a boycott of the elections to the phony European parliament in Strasbourg, we wrote:

"The EEC [European Economic Community] was originally set up in the mid-1950s as part of the American-directed reorganization of West Europe against the Soviet bloc. Washington policymakers were concerned that French opposition to German dominance of Europe could lead to a revival of Paris' traditional alliance with Moscow, as in the 1935 Stalin-Laval pact. The Common Market was and remains an economic compromise essentially between the French and German ruling classes in the context of their political/military alliance against the USSR."

—"Down with the Common  
Market of NATO Europe!"  
WV No. 233, 8 June 1979

In the 1960s, for example, French president Charles de Gaulle could pressure Bonn into granting better economic terms in the Common Market by threatening to pursue friendlier relations with Moscow. Germany's perpetual and large trade surpluses provided the financial resources to prop up the weaker currencies in the EMS, funnel some aid to the poorer Mediterranean countries, and piece off the restive French farmers through the Common Agricultural Policy. But German reunification led to a sudden redirection of international capital flows to the detriment of West Europe.

After dismantling the industrial base of the former DDR, Bonn had to put millions of impoverished and unemployed east Germans on the dole. Last year, gov-



Trotskyist League of France calls "For workers mobilizations to crush the fascists! Full citizenship rights for immigrants!" In demonstration against Le Pen's fascist National Front in 1988.

ernment transfers to east Germany totaled 180 billion D-marks (equivalent to \$130 billion). This amounted to a mammoth internal export subsidy for west German manufacturers. Additionally, Bonn spent 75 billion D-marks to support the counter-revolutionary Yeltsin regime in Russia and another 105 billion in East Europe to turn the former deformed workers states into Deutsche Bank neocolonies.

Germany's previously small budget deficits ballooned up to 3.5 percent of gross national product (proportionally greater than the deficits of France or Britain) and absorbed 50 percent of personal savings. Last year, for the first time in a decade, Germany ran a balance-of-trade deficit. German publicist Josef Joffe summarized the economic consequences of reunification: "massive deficit spending, massive borrowing and a nasty bout of inflation." As Joffe quipped, Germany had become a junkie in charge of the coke supply.

Not everyone in German ruling circles shared the illusion that the country's economic strength was great enough to dominate Europe from Moscow to Lisbon. Back in 1990, the Bundesbank criticized Kohl for offering too much in the leveraged buyout of the DDR and its president resigned in protest. Subsequently the Bundesbank jacked up interest rates to postwar highs to finance the reunification deficit without depreciating the sacred deutschmark. The discount rate charged to member banks jumped from 3.5 percent in 1989 to 8 percent at the beginning of this year. At the same time, the Bundesbank—backed up by the International Monetary Fund (the world bankers' cartel)—demanded that the Kohl regime slash the budget deficit at the expense of German working people.

German capital has tried to ease the economic overextension by increasing the rate of exploitation of its own working class, organizationally the most powerful proletariat in Europe. This led to the transport and public workers strike last spring, which ended in a political defeat for the Kohl regime and an economic defeat for the European bourgeois-

sies (see "Strikes Rock Kohl's Germany," WV No. 552, 29 May).

In the aftermath of the strike, the Bundesbank ratcheted interest rates still higher. Carlo de Benedetti, chairman of Italy's Olivetti, explained this move was "designed to brake internal demand, attract foreign capital and unload some of the cost of reunification on to Germany's neighbours" (*Financial Times* [London], 15 September).

Instead of the supposed "locomotive" pulling forward the West European economy, Germany became the great compressor. Countries with 10 percent plus unemployment, like Italy and Britain, had to increase their own interest rates, further depressing their economies, to prevent a massive outflow of capital to Frankfurt. "High German rates are hurting everybody," exclaimed one British businessman.

All central bankers are contemptuous of everybody else. But the directors of the Bundesbank act as if they were gods of the deutschmark ruling over a profane humanity. German bankers and their political agents responded to international complaints over high interest rates with snarling defiance. "We cannot accept that others push us around on interest rates," snapped a high official in Bonn's finance ministry (*New York Times*, 22 July).

One has to wonder whether the mandarins of the Bundesbank did not deliberately sabotage the Maastricht treaty, fearing that the proposed currency union would threaten their bureaucratic fiat and eventually devalue the financial assets of German capital. It took no special insight to see that sky-high German interest rates were putting pressure on the weaker currencies in the EMS, like the lira and pound, and were fueling popular opposition to European "unity" under German dominion. The "no" vote on Maastricht in the Danish referendum in June set off alarm bells in European capitals, and Mitterrand staked his political future on the upcoming French referendum. So when German bankers told the rest of Europe to go to hell, they

must have known that's exactly what would happen.

The unraveling began in the northern tier of capitalist Europe. In early September, the Finnish markka was devalued and speculative pressure spilled over the border into Sweden. Since Finland and Sweden are not members, only satellites, of the European Community, the currency turmoil in Scandinavia did not directly threaten the EMS. Italy, however, was another matter, for the Germans were supposedly committed to defending the value of the lira. After the Bundesbank shelled out 24 billion marks trying to repel the speculative sharks in the Mediterranean, the Germans cut their losses. On September 13, the lira was devalued by 7 percent against the D-mark.

As a sop to international opinion, the Bundesbank, reportedly after a secret visit from Kohl, announced the long-demanded cut in interest rates...by 1/4 of one percent. This was so insultingly minimal that it was a signal to international financiers that Italy, Britain and the rest were on their own. For the especially obtuse, Bundesbank head Helmut Schlesinger told the business press straight out that additional currency realignments were necessary.

So the lira took a further beating and currency traders along with major foreign investors in Britain—e.g., American mutual and pension funds—dumped pounds like crazy. The Tory government of John Major, with bitter recriminations against the Germans, announced that Britain was suspending its membership in the EMS and devaluing sterling. There is a nice irony here. A couple of years ago Major opposed and ousted Margaret Thatcher in the name of greater cooperation within the European Community—i.e., closer links between the City of London and Frankfurt banks.

The European Monetary System—a key element in the financial order of capitalist Europe for over a decade—is kaput. The ECU is as dead as the dodo. Sure, Kohl and Mitterrand are pretending that the system can be salvaged and even that plans for a currency union can go forward at a slower pace. International financiers know better. Foreign investors in Britain lost billions because they took the EMS at face value, believing the pound was as good as the D-mark. If next month Kohl, Mitterrand and Major signed in their own blood a treaty pledging that the deutschmark, franc and pound will exchange at a fixed rate forever more, not a single financier on the face of the planet would believe them.

## Popular Revolt Against Maastricht

The Maastricht treaty was killed by the increasing conflicts of interest between the major European bourgeois states under the pressure of international finance capital. Nonetheless, the prospect of a European capitalist super-state—although in fact *illusory*—produced considerable political turmoil for months, polarized public opinion, and led to bitter rifts in the major bourgeois and social-democratic parties.

*continued on page 8*

French auto workers at Renault-Cléon strike in 1991 against Mitterrand, social-democratic agent of French capital.





# Euro-Chaos...

(continued from page 7)

Mitterrand, Kohl and the other architects of Maastricht expected to push the treaty through the various national parliaments with little public debate. Only two of the smallest countries in the European Community, Denmark and Ireland, originally scheduled popular referendums on the question, and approval was assumed to be automatic.

Yet as the implications of the new EC treaty became clear, there emerged a groundswell of opposition expressing all manner of popular discontent. There is fear of German dominance in Europe as well as national egotism in Germany itself ("We won't give up our beloved deutschmark"). Fascists and right-wing demagogues appealed to chauvinist hostility to immigration, supposedly to be liberalized under Maastricht. On the other hand, class-conscious workers recognized that the proposed currency union was intended to hold down and slash wages and social benefits. More generally, Maastricht became a symbol of the arrogant European ruling elites—the jet-setting bankers and corporate executives, the high government officials with their bodyguards and limos, staying in posh hotels as they made the rounds of endless EC conferences.

"Why should Brussels make our laws?" was the main line of the victorious Danish opposition. In fact, no laws are made in the EC headquarters at Brussels, only *agreements* between the member states which can and do tear them up at will. Both right-wingers (Britain's Thatcher) and left-wingers (France's Jean-Pierre Chevènement) peddle the false notion that the European Community is run by a clique of faceless technocrats. The real locus of policymaking in the EC is the Council of Ministers, consisting of the foreign ministers of the member states. The foreign ministers meet behind closed doors, without press coverage, and their deliberations are not made public. This allows them to blame unpopular policies on those famous faceless Brussels bureaucrats.

The European Community is not an embryonic superstate; it is an *alliance* of bourgeois national states balancing their often-conflicting interests. When those interests become seriously out of balance, then EC treaties, policies and institutions count for nothing at all. Witness the present spectacular collapse of the European Monetary System.

Even the smallest member states can negotiate their own terms. Look at Ireland. The Dublin government demanded and got a special dispensation that EC policy could not override Ireland's constitutional ban on abortion. So much for the efforts of social democrats and liberals to portray the European Community as a bastion of "human rights!"

After the Danish "no," the European bourgeoisies realized they had to do some heavy political damage control. So Mitterrand, self-assured of easy approval in a country that had been the prime mover of the Common Market, called a popular referendum in France. But everything Mitterrand touches these days turns to crap. A maneuver intended to bolster the EC helped shatter the existing financial order of West Europe.

Even more so than in Denmark, the referendum in France tapped into elemental—centrally working-class—hostility to the ruling establishment. The media portrayed this opposition as an infatuation with "national sovereignty" stoked by fear of German dominance in a "united" Europe. The fascist Le Pen, of course, was ranting that Maastricht would flood France with immigrants and get a hearing even in working-class areas. While there was certainly nationalistic sentiment motivating the "no" vote, this was combined with an instinctive recognition that the European

Community is an agency of the Paris bourse and Frankfurt bankers.

The maverick social democrat Chevènement and the Communist Party sought to exploit opposition to Maastricht in the name of nationalistic reformism. Chevènement declaimed demagogically: "How many million more unemployed people will have to pay for the blindness of European technocrats in the service of financial capital?" However, his program of economic autarky and inflationary finance will not reduce unemployment one whit; it will simply repeat the debacle of the early Mitterrand regime in which he was a leading figure.

While this was clearly Mitterrand's referendum, the conservative bourgeois opposition campaigned for ratification of the EC treaty (although the neo-Gaullist Chirac did so reluctantly and half-heartedly, with his party split on the question). The intellectual elite and media superstars (Alain Delon, pop

35-hour workweek and points to a unified minimum wage of a thousand ECUs" (*Dossier Rouge* No. 42, June 1992). "A thousand ECUs," Your Majesty, and nothing less—that's what these valiant "revolutionaries" demand! But so long as capitalism remains, the rights of the working people and poor will be crushed by the market. Talk of turning the EC into a "social Europe" is to lull the workers with reformist pipe dreams.

Far worse was the abstentionist line of the workerist philistines of *Lutte Ouvrière*. LO has made its trademark tailing after the moods of the backward sections of the working class (often putting it in close proximity to racist rightists). But this time their fear of the Mitterrand regime falling carried the day. Since LO candidates have gotten about 2 percent of the vote in recent French elections, their call for abstention may well have prevented the outright rejection of the EC treaty—which would have been a decisive political defeat for the

what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty against Japan and America...."

—V.I. Lenin, "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe" (August 1915)

As has been widely noted, the "post-World War world" is tending toward the formation of three main economic blocs: German-dominated Europe, U.S.-dominated North America, and Japanese-dominated East Asia. In the short run, the collapse of the Maastricht project will tend to politically favor America, which can more easily play off the European bourgeoisies against each other. But even if German imperialism emerges from a period of post-Maastricht turmoil strengthened and more able to impose its will economically (and militarily), this would point not to an era of harmony and prosperity but to inter-imperialist war.

The European workers are in a race against time. Economic conditions and official policy are pushing toward class battles in which the labor movement must mobilize its strength or face sharp cuts in its living standards. Employer/government attacks on health care in Germany, the bosses' final assault on the *scala mobile* (sliding scale of wages, to compensate for inflation) in Italy, a concerted union-busting offensive in France are already underway. And throughout Europe, racist attacks on immigrant communities are rampant.

The biggest obstacles to workers struggles and defense against racist attacks are the reformist leaderships of the mass workers parties and unions. Italian worker militants have expressed this in pelting the sellout labor chief Trentin with coins. But such outbursts of justified anger and rage are not enough—a genuinely communist leadership must be forged on a revolutionary program.

Capitalist counterrevolution has brought untold misery and fratricidal nationalism to the peoples of East Europe. Yet the nascent bourgeois states, from Wales's Poland to Milosevic's Serbia, are extremely weak and fragile. The Yeltsin regime in Russia, Kravchuk in the Ukraine, etc., are ripping apart the USSR in order to transform the remnants into neocolonies of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo. To prevent this catastrophe, the multinational Soviet working class must defeat the forces of capitalist restoration and restore the USSR on the basis of Leninist principles.

The workers of East Europe face not only economic immiseration but also imperialist-manipulated wars such as those now raging in the Balkans. The workers of West Europe face attacks on their living standards as their imperialist rulers move to establish neocolonial regimes in the East. Like the pre-1914 period, the stage is set for intense inter-imperialist rivalry and war. The blood-sucking banks and multinationals must be defeated and expropriated through revolutionary class struggle. Only a Socialist United States of Europe—based on a planned and equitable division of labor—can provide a decent and secure life for all working people from the coal miners of Siberia to the agricultural workers of Portugal. ■



German public service and transport workers strike in May fought Kohl regime's attempt to make working class pay costs of capitalist reunification.

singer Johnny Halliday) were mobilized for a "yes" vote by Socialist cultural czar Jack Lang. All the beautiful people in France were, *bien sûr*, for Maastricht.

With *haute-bourgeois* arrogance, the director of *Le Monde*, Jacques Lesourne, wrote: "Maastricht seems to have become for a number of our fellow citizens the scapegoat for all our ills, the referendum the occasion for a great letting off of steam." But the men who run the European Community are not scapegoats; they really and truly exploit and degrade the working people of France and the rest of Europe. They are responsible for the unemployed steel workers of Lorraine and dockers of Marseilles. The Maastricht referendum gave unemployed steel workers and dockers a small opportunity to defy the masters of Europe.

The Ligue Trotskyste de France, French section of the International Communist League, stated:

"We call for a no vote...knowing that a victory of the 'no,' by weakening a little more this anti-working class, anti-immigrant and anti-Soviet regime, would open a breach which the working class could take advantage of."

—*Le Bolchévique* No. 120, September 1992

In urging a "no" vote against Maastricht, the LTF emphasized the need for class-struggle opposition to anti-immigrant racism, calling for union-based mass mobilization to crush the fascists and for full citizenship rights for "immigrants" (including the hundreds of thousands who have lived and worked in France for decades).

The pseudo-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, supporters of Ernest Mandel, favored a "no" vote as a pressure tactic to renegotiate the EC treaty in a social-democratic spirit, putting forward a program which did not even speak of "socialism," much less proletarian revolution. Instead the LCR called for "a social Europe" which "instead of crushing rights by the laws of the market, creates harmony from the top." "for a Europe that generalizes the

social-democratic lackeys of the Paris bourse and a humiliation for the entire European bourgeois order.

The most striking thing about the referendum was the clear and overwhelming class division between "yes" and "no," with the working class voting 60 percent against. *Le Monde* (22 September) headlined that in the Paris region "Only the Red Belt Voted Against." The results illuminated the economic geography of France today. Bourgeois Paris and ski resorts of the Rhône-Alpes voted "yes"; the depressed Nord de Calais, suffering the decline of its traditional heavy industry, and the poor port of Marseilles voted "no." In one sense, the opposition won even before the vote was taken. The prospect of a "no" vote fed into the currency crisis which exposed the fraud of the project for an economic and political union of capitalist Europe.

## For a Socialist United States of Europe!

In the heady days after Maastricht, Kohl declared: "What I want is a United States of Europe." But even Rudolf Augstein, editor of the influential *Der Spiegel*, noted that this is not possible without war: "To found a state like in the 19th century, which Italy, the German Reich and the U.S.A. accomplished then, is today no longer a conceivable undertaking without war" ("L'Europe oui, Maastricht non," *Der Spiegel*, 14 September). Of course, it was not possible then, either, without the wars waged by Cavour, Bismarck and Lincoln. Moreover, attempts to create a united capitalist Europe are inherently reactionary. Lenin wrote in 1915:

"From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the 'advanced' and 'civilized' colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary...."

Of course, temporary agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the European capitalists...but to

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# Hot Autumn in Italy...

(continued from page 1)

the Amato government thought it could finally break the back of the combative Italian proletariat. Instead they lit a match, and like the fires of the popular upheaval in Los Angeles, or the union power displayed in the recent German public workers strike, the red flags flying in the piazzas throughout Italy show that capitalist triumphalism about the "death of communism" has not overcome the class struggle.

Indeed, the Italian bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants have clearly lost control of the situation. At Florence on September 22, Bruno Trentin, general secretary of the CGIL trade-union federation, was pelted with a hail of eggs, tomatoes, red paint and bolts from workers shouting "sellout" and "traitor." The scene was repeated in Milano's Piazza Duomo the next day, as workers tossed worthless, devalued coins at union speakers. Likewise in Piacenza and Ferrara, while in Bologna they added potatoes and in Genova stones. The ranks were up in arms over the agreement by the union tops to end the *scala mobile* (the cost-of-living escalator—a hard-fought gain of the 1969 class battles) in exchange for the lying promise that the lira would not be further devalued. As an added insult, Trentin sealed the deal on July 31, just as workers were leaving on August holidays.

Yet on September 13, Amato devalued the lira by 7 percent against the German mark, and three days later it fell sharply again in the Europe-wide monetary crisis. Italy is on the verge of financial collapse (several European banks now refuse to deal in lire). Meanwhile, following the dictates of the Bundesbank in Frankfurt and in order to slash Italy's astronomical budget deficit to comply with the Maastricht treaty limits, the Amato government decreed a package of \$75 billion in drastic spending cuts and tax hikes. This includes a wage freeze and hiring freeze in the public sector, abolition of health benefits like free medicine, and vicious cuts in pensions. Retirees whose lifetimes of toil made millions for the Agnellis and Pirellis are now watching their savings and pensions eaten up by galloping inflation.

Amato was assisted by the treachery of the union tops, who are now justly despised by the workers. The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, has extended its fullest solidarity to its labor flunkies. After Trentin was booed out of the strike rally in Florence, Italy's leading industrialists and politicians—from Fiat

boss Agnelli to "Socialist" prime minister Amato—launched a violence-haiting campaign against Rifondazione Comunista (RC), the "left" split from the defunct PCI. In the recent demonstrations, militant workers have gravitated around the RC's red banners. Yet Rifondazione leader Armando Cossutta condemned the "violence," and appealed to the government to come to its senses:

"The parties of the majority must realize what the situation is. No one is in control of the factories. And if we are able to do our part, it's now time for them to begin to do theirs. Otherwise, within a week, no one will be able to say how it will end."

—La Repubblica, 25 September

## Italy on the Razor's Edge

As we noted last summer amid the wave of Mafia bombings, Italy is in the grip of a far-reaching economic and political crisis (see "Italian Capitalists Demand 'Strong State,'" WV No. 554, 26 June). The bourgeoisie has literally stolen the wealth of the country—the politicians alone are estimated to purloin some \$6 to 12 billion a year. The highways out of Milano, the banking capital of the country, are jammed on Friday afternoons when the bourgeoisie smuggles their *tangenti* (bribes and kickbacks) over the border to Swiss bank accounts. Much-publicized corruption trials have filled the cells of San Vittore prison with members of Milano's most powerful families. Leaders of virtually every parliamentary party, including the ex-PCI, are under indictment. Meanwhile, the country is running an annual budget deficit of almost \$140 billion—about 11 percent of the entire gross national product.

The current dramatic events in Italy are not nationally isolated. Far from it. They are the direct result of the financial crisis shaking the continent and the conflict over the Maastricht treaty, which go straight back to the capitalist reunification of Germany. And the Italian bourgeoisie's drive for a "strong state" has been fueled by the Stalinist collapse since 1989. Today Italy is the weak link of imperialism in West Europe. And the outcome of workers' struggles in the peninsula will have an impact from Paris to Moscow.

Yet in the face of Amato's cuts, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the main remnant of the PCI, supinely accepts "sacrifices" in the name of "European unity." But talk of capitalist "unity" of Europe is a fraud by the bankers and bourgeois politicians which means immiseration of the working people. It means an offensive against immigrant workers waged by the capitalist governments and racist mobs. And it is an attempt to gear up for trade war against the American and Japanese imperialist rivals. In recent referendums on

Maastricht in Ireland and France, the sections of the International Communist League have put forward internationalist opposition to a Europe of the hordes while fighting for a Socialist United States of Europe, which will grow out of sharp class struggles such as the Italian workers are now waging.

Meanwhile, in the boardrooms of



La Repubblica

**Sellout trade-union leader Bruno Trentin was pelted with worthless coins, driven out of strike rally in Florence.**

Milano and Torino calls are being raised for an "emergency government" to "save Italy." Fiat chief Giovanni Agnelli called at a meeting of the European Monetary Union for a "strong government to take unpopular measures...cuts in expenditures, above all pensions and health" (*La Repubblica*, 27 May). After a government crisis lasting three months, they came up with the Amato cabinet, which despite its narrow parliamentary base has proceeded to decree the measures demanded by Agnelli & Co. Now, as cries for a general strike are heard in every piazza and factory in Italy, the labor bureaucrats of the CGIL, CISL and UIL come to the aid of the bourgeoisie with their policy of "rotating general strikes" region by region in order to avoid a showdown with the Amato government.

While the union tops are doing their best to sabotage the strikes, opposition within the unions and in the plants is being expressed by sections of the workers leaving the unions to escape the bureaucratic straitjacket. Part of this discontent has been channeled into various "comitate di base" (rank-and-file committees), which arose first among government workers and spread to the factories, in the first instance the Alfa Romeo plant in Arese, led by union militants coming out of Democrazia Proletaria. While the "Cohas" have picked

up many of the most combative sectors, by abandoning the unions they have left the bulk of the working class in the hands of the pro-capitalist bureaucracy. During the Milano strike rally of September 24, after UIL leader Veronese fled from the platform, the Cohas from Alfa staged a breakaway march of a bare 2,000 workers, leaving the rest behind to listen to more left-talking labor fakers.

With the bourgeoisie attempting to throw the working class back 30 years, what's needed is a powerful general strike to bring down the Amato government and its austerity plans and to restore key gains such as a real *scala mobile*. Such a political mass strike, while beginning as a defensive action, would inevitably and very quickly pose the question: which class shall rule? To counteract the bureaucrats and provide a framework to mobilize and organize mass participation, it would be necessary to form elected strike committees at every level. In a sharp confrontation, these could develop into factory councils, as in 1920, and soviets. Such bodies of dual power would have to organize workers defense guards, in the first instance to defend the factories and smash the fascists. In the process, they could make short shrift of the Nazi skinheads who have been terrorizing African immigrants.

But the key to victory is a revolutionary leadership. Too many times—in 1920-22, 1943-45, 1948, 1969—the workers have risen up, forming factory councils, militias, etc., only to see the struggle dissipated or derailed by red-flag-waving reformists intent on rescuing the bourgeoisie. What's needed is a Bolshevik party.

## Popular Front Against Workers Revolt

Meanwhile, the Italian rulers are desperately seeking to find a way out of their own leadership crisis into which the workers' protests have thrown them. The "Socialist" (PSI) prime minister Amato is threatening to resign if his social services cuts are "thrown off course." The Christian Democrats, whose clientele feeds from the trough of government welfare spending, are worried that Amato's package could end up destroying their own base. And if the Republican Party (PRI) of La Malfa, which includes Fiat boss Agnelli, is opposed to the government program, it's only because it doesn't go far enough. The Italian bourgeoisie by itself doesn't have the cohesion to confront the enormous pressures generated by a deep economic crisis, a hypertrophied state apparatus and a combative working class.

So "far-seeing" capitalists are now looking to the PDS to pull their

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# Chicago

## Defend Abortion Services at Cook County Hospital!

Starting on September 16, abortion services were offered at Cook County Hospital for the first time in 12 years, under an executive order issued by County Board president Richard Phelan. Anti-abortion bigots were quick to target the poor and minority women who rely on the public hospital as their sole source of medical care. "The hospital will be a battleground. This means war," declaimed Joseph Scheidler, who is notorious for terrorizing abortion clinics around the country. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin denounced Phelan for an "immoral action" that "separates himself" from the Roman Catholic church.

Threatening to "hockade" the hospital and picket physicians' homes, Scheidler said he would summon anti-abortion groups—Operation Rescue, Lambs for Christ, Missionaries to the Preborn, Rosaries for Peace and Life, etc.—to Chicago later in the fall. Scheidler, who calls his outfit the "Pro-Life Action League," was previously arrested for wrecking abortion clinics in Florida and works in league with Ku Klux Klansman John Burt, responsible

for the Christmas 1984 clinic bombings in Pensacola, Florida.

In the face of this threat, NOW and other abortion rights groups tied to the Democratic Party have merely counseled reliance on the police to "do their job." All supporters of women's rights, and particularly Chicago's powerful labor movement, must be prepared to defend Cook County Hospital and stop the anti-abortion crusaders!

In Chicago, over a quarter of a million poor women have no access to gynecological care; infant mortality in the ghetto is 23 per 1,000 births, worse than many Third World countries. For welfare recipients and those without medical insurance, Cook County Hospital is it. Cook County was performing 3,500 abortions a year in 1980 when Phelan's predecessor George Dunne ended the medical service declaring, "The hospital should not be an abortion mill."

Currently, hospital administrators are planning only 30 abortions a week, subject to a slew of infuriating restrictions: abortions only in the first three months, after a 24-hour waiting period, manda-

**Rally for abortion rights, Cook County Hospital, September 17.**



WV Photo

tory counseling of "alternatives," and only one abortion per year for each woman. Even women with Medicaid cards have to fork over \$250—for mothers on welfare that means hungry children. Yet in the first ten days over 4,000 women called the hospital seeking abortions!

Effective access to abortions is increasingly a privilege available only to white, middle-class women. Under the impact of the anti-abortion drive, the number of hospitals performing abortions nationwide has plummeted. Today only 18 public hospitals in six states offer publicly-funded abortions, according to the *Chicago Tribune* (3 September). Abortion services are unavailable in one-half of all urban and 93 percent of all rural counties in the U.S. Phelan's decent but utterly inadequate act is related to plans for a 1994 gubernatorial

run. Meanwhile, Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton wants to keep abortion "as rare as possible."

The interests of poor and minority women will never be represented by this capitalist party with its racist "family values." And while the Democrats talk of guaranteed health care, they praise the Oregon system which amounts to rationing hospital treatment for the poor. The Cook County Hospital abortion battle highlights the desperate need for free abortion on demand, as part of the fight for free quality health care for all. This basic right will only be won by a workers party that sweeps away the profit system, under which the rich expect the finest care at Northwestern Memorial while underfunded Cook County Hospital with its overworked staff is hard-pressed to provide even the most basic services for the poor. ■

## Hot Autumn in Italy...

(continued from page 9)

chestnuts out of the fire. And indeed, these ex-"Communists" turned open social democrats are holding out their hand for a government coalition with the bloodsuckers of the PRI and other sections of the bourgeoisie. As a first stage, in elections in Mantova a joint PDS-PSI-PSDI slate brought together all three parties of the Second International. And in a speech before a crowd of 100,000 in Reggio Emilia, PDS leader Achille Occhetto declared "we are ready to govern," and called for "a government to turn things around." Occhetto limited his criticisms of Amato and repeatedly called for "sacrifices." Austerity? "Give today to receive tomorrow," was his response. PDS in the government? Christian Democratic president De Mita opened the door: "They made the choice to be a government party with the decision to change" their name (*La Repubblica*, 20/21 September).

We Trotskyists warn that if the government coalition is expanded in the present crisis to include representatives of the PDS, such a "popular front" will be an instrument of capital against the

working class. Occhetto would help push through Amato's drastic cuts, and the elimination of the "scala mobile" would be driven home by state power in the name of propping up "democracy." Perhaps the PDS will ask for the post of "justice" minister, like Togliatti in 1946, so they can prosecute RC for "terrorism" on charges of involvement in the throwing of coins at Trentin. But the explosion of workers' rage against the union tops all across northern Italy makes it clear that putting a few reformists in cabinet seats will not suffice to calm the storm. An iron fist will be needed to break the opposition to capitalist austerity, and they may dispense with the velvet glove.

Various pseudo-Trotskyists have made a standard practice of calling for a PC-PS (Communist-Socialist) government, and then find a way of giving back-handed support when the reformists join with sections of the bourgeoisie in exchange for ministerial portfolios. But it is the workers who pay the price. The Mitterrand popular front in France was elected amid a wave of euphoria, with masses singing "La vie en rose" in the streets, but instead it brought mass unemployment, racist attacks on "immigrants," the rise of Le Pen's fascists and virulent anti-Sovietism. In Italy after World War II, Togliatti's PCI disarmed the partisans and betrayed working-class

hopes for a socialist future, making possible capitalist reconstruction (see "Resistance and Betrayal: Italy 1943-45," WV No. 525, 26 April 1991). Even from outside the government, Berlinguer's "historic compromise" with the DC in the 1970s meant fingering worker militants in the factories as "brigadisti" (Red Brigades).

As for Rifondazione Comunista, these longtime PCI reformists who stand on the betrayals not only of Togliatti but also Berlinguer, they are also pushing for a popular-front government. They are seeking to build an opposition mini-pop-front with the camouflaged Christian Democrats of anti-Mafia/anti-corruption "Rete," the Greens and "the advanced forces of the Catholic movement" (statement of the RC national leadership, 19 September). And at the RC's annual festa, PDS parliamentary leader D'Alema was applauded when he called for an alliance of the RC and PDS and for a general strike for a "real government to turn things around." But as French CP leader Maurice Thorez said in selling out the 1936 general strike on the altar of the popular front, "It is necessary to know how to end a strike." And if Occhetto, like French Socialist leader Léon Blum, intends to be inside the government, the RC, like Thorez, will support it from the outside.

What Trotsky wrote in the 1930s is no less true today: "'People's Fronts' on the one hand—fascism on the other; these are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution."

### For a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

Inside Rifondazione Comunista, in turn, one will find all manner of pseudo-Trotskyists, notably the Associazione Quarta Internazionale (formerly Livio Maitan's LCR). And ensconced inside the AQI one can even find ostensible left-wingers like Franco Grisolia and his Faction for the Trotskyist International, who are today posturing to the left of their past incarnations. Thus Grisolia's FTI raises the possibility of "a bloc with the 'conservative' bureaucrats" against the open capitalist restorationists around

Yeltsin at the time of the August 1991 Moscow coup, but this is purely theoretical. When the question was posed sharply in Poland a decade earlier, Grisolia's LOR refused to make a military bloc with the "Thermidorean section of the bureaucracy" represented by Jaruzelski and instead supported the pro-capitalist clerical-nationalist Solidarność of Walesa. Indeed, in February 1982 the LOR and LCR went into the streets in Milano together with the Christian Democrats to protest against the Jaruzelski counter-coup. Instead of blocking with "conservative bureaucrats" they preferred the Black Madonna of Czesłachowa and her CIA/Vatican-backed admirers!

From calling to defeat Solidarność counterrevolution in Poland in 1981, to fighting tooth and nail against the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90, to calling on Soviet workers to disperse the Yeltsinite counterrevolutionary rabble in 1991, it is the International Communist League which has uniquely upheld the revolutionary Trotskyist program of defense of the gains of the October Revolution despite the Stalinist betrayals. And today we insist that what Italian workers need is not a shadow of the PCI of Togliatti and Berlinguer but a new Bolshevik party like that of Lenin and Trotsky.

The image of tens of thousands of militant workers milling around the piazzas of Florence and Milano, spontaneously mobilizing against the reformist tops yet not knowing where to turn, is excruciating. The situation in Italy cries out for revolutionary leadership, yet none is being offered. In the *Transitional Program*, Trotsky writes: "the crisis of proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International." The ICL and its Italian section, the Lega Trotskista, are seeking to build a communist party based on the lessons of the historical experience of the workers movement, of the early Communist International, the International Left Opposition and Trotsky's Fourth International, which must be reformed as the world party of socialist revolution. ■

## Spartacist Forums

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# NYPD...

(continued from page 12)

If there are any cops indicted (unlikely) for the September 19 brawl, the PBA threatens a "Blue Flu" sickout.

A measure of the depraved cop violence now in full sway was the bizarre incident of official vandalism in the Bronx September 18, when sanitation cops deliberately smashed and *totally flattened* a dozen cars which allegedly did not have current registration stickers! Next morning Hispanic businessmen were dumfounded to find their cars twisted like tin cans and the street littered with glass and metal like Beirut after a car bomb explosion. A TV reporter asked the Sanitation Department spokesman why he didn't just put a boot on the wheels? "I have no boots. That'd be Traffic Department," he responded, with perfect cop logic. "I don't think they would do this in any other community," commented an irate Hispanic Bronx resident.

With the cops acting like mad dogs, the liberals are once again floating measures to try to rein them in. Right now, six cops sit on the "Civilian Complaint Review Board" (CCRB). While the proposed all-civilian review board will not put a stop to the rampant police brutality, the bill has essentially become a referendum on racism and cop bonapartism in New York City. As Marxists, we are not neutral in this conflict: the Spartacist League called to mobilize the power of labor in defense of Washington Heights, and we would vote for the removal of cops from the review board. For if the symbolic measure before the City Council is defeated, the already brazen police will be so emboldened that last week's cop riot will look like a tea party by comparison with what they will inflict upon the minority neighborhoods of the city.

New York's rulers are desperate for some democratic window-dressing for police terror because they fear that the blacks and Hispanics are about to explode. Yet not even the cosmetic surgery pushed by Dinkins (replacing the cops with mayoral appointees) will fool anyone into believing they will get justice through the CCRB. *Ninety-nine percent* of the cases brought before the board are thrown out. Of 121 complaints of police brutality stemming from the August 1988 Tompkins Square cop riot against the homeless, which was amply videotaped, there was not one indictment of a cop, let alone a conviction. Moreover, the review board can-

not even order any disciplinary action against police officers.

Civilian review boards are designed to curb the independent mobilization of workers and minorities against police terror by fostering illusions that "neutral" government can "moderate" the "excesses" of the police. Yet the "excesses" of the NYPD are *not* an aberration, but the deliberate means by which the working class and especially the oppressed and combative black and Hispanic poor are kept down. And Mayor Dinkins, who has slashed every social service and shredded every municipal labor contract, has tried to balance between the impoverished ghetto poor and the Wall Street financiers by adding 10,000 new cops—more than the combined totals of the Dallas, Baltimore, Denver and San Francisco police forces!

Now black clergy and politicians, including the newly "respectable" FBI fink Al Sharpton, are pushing for more black cops and a requirement that all police new hires reside in NYC. In a city which is now majority Hispanic and black, the cops are three-quarters white, most of whom live outside the city in lily-white cop havens like Rockland County, or in Staten Island, which is really a 'burb not a borough. But regardless of race, the police are the overwhelming source of violence against minorities. Moreover, the black nationalist reverends pushing the "more black cops" line are every bit as racist against Asians (whose stores they lead racist boycotts against) and Hispanics who have been the majority of victims of deadly police force since Dinkins took office.

## Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution

New York City, this center of U.S. (and world) finance capital, is of vital concern to the highest levels of the capitalist rulers. Their current strategy to keep the lid on the largest American city is through a popular-front alliance of "Democratic Socialist" mayor Dinkins with his labor lieutenants like Dennis Rivera and Stanley Hill who keep the exploited and oppressed tied to their oppressors. The big multiethnic unions—hospital workers, transit workers, state and municipal employees, teachers—have been betrayed by their leaders on the altar of the Democratic Party. And the assault on the labor movement goes hand in hand with the rise of cop terror, as the *Daily News* strike graphically showed.

Across the country, state repression of minorities has intensified as the capital-

ists loot and bankrupt the American economy. From being the "last hired, first fired," black workers have become the "first fired, never rehired." Routine cop terror is the means by which America's rulers resolve the contradiction between the lying assertion of formal equality for blacks and their forcible segregation at the bottom of society. From chattel slavery to wage slavery, this whole system has been built on the bedrock of racist oppression. Today, with an entire generation of black youth callously tossed on ghetto streets with no hope of obtaining education or employment, deemed an economically unnecessary, burdensome and politically dangerous population, it should be clearer than



Former federal prosecutor and mayoral candidate Rudolph Giuliani whips up NYPD racist thugs on September 16.

ever that the only way to eliminate the "pattern" of cop brutality is to do away with racist American capitalism whose thugs in blue uniforms are the front line defense of a system of inequality.

It will take a *political* mobilization of the working class in mass social struggle, organizing behind it the masses of the ghettos and barrios, and led by a multiracial revolutionary party to wage the fight for socialist revolution. Labor/black mobilizations, drawing on the power of the big integrated city unions such as transit, hospital, hotel and city workers, have the social power to stop the racist terrorists in their tracks. Cops would think twice about riding roughshod through the South Bronx or Bushwick if they knew the residents had behind them the active hacking of combative unions that defended working people and the unemployed, on and off the job. This requires the forging of a class-struggle leadership in the labor movement that champions the cause of all the oppressed.

From liberals like Dinkins to the racist Giuliani, bourgeois politicians all agree on the "right" of the ruling class to maintain its monopoly of armed force. New York has one of the most stringent gun control laws in the country—this means only the criminals and the cops have guns. The Spartacist League stands for the right of self-defense against racist terror: *gun control kills blacks!* We fight for a program of integrated class struggle against racist attacks as we seek to forge a multiracial workers party that can lead the difficult battles on the road to the socialist revolution, which alone can put an end to racist terror forever.

An article titled "The Police as a Mayor's Political Nightmare" in the *New*

*York Times* (27 September) pointed to the tensions in America's cities where black Democratic mayors were installed after the ghetto explosions of the 1960s and the entrenched white racist police forces grew increasingly bonapartist. In Los Angeles, Tom Bradley presided over the reign of racist terror unleashed by LAPD chief Daryl "Chokehold" Gates and his paramilitary police force which set off a full-scale multiracial ghetto uprising in America's second largest city. As we wrote in our special WV supplement (4 May) when L.A. exploded in outrage over the racist acquittal of the cops who beat up Rodney King:

"The Rodney King verdict has illuminated the whole system of American capitalism, built on a bedrock of racist oppression. It cannot be reformed, it must be smashed. The question is how. The situation cries out for revolutionary leadership, to organize the social power of labor and unite behind it all the oppressed in a struggle for state power that gets rid of the whole rotten racist capitalist system and opens the road for genuine emancipation for all." ■

# Russian Air Controllers...

(continued from page 4)

years ago. I want to tell you that as a result of that 50 percent of the workers are now unemployed and 80 percent of the women. We see racist terror against immigrants, with almost daily fascist attacks against immigrant hostels. "I'm a member of the International Communist League. We are against the privatization and against the counterrevolution. We fight to bring the workers into power. For that we have to unite all the workers. The multinational Soviet working class has to fight. "The workers have to take the power into their hands in a fight against counterrevolution. For that they have to build workers and soldiers soviets. And the workers need a leadership which is opposed to all forms of nationalism, racism and fascism! [applause] "We have to return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky! Down with the Yeltsin government! For proletarian internationalism!" [applause]

\* \* \*

Following are excerpts of an interview with Vladimir Brodovlev, vice president of the Federation of Air-traffic Controllers Trade Unions of Russia, conducted on August 25 in Moscow.

Q: I represent the International Communist League. I would like to learn what happened exactly.

A: We appealed to the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, with our demands on July 4. Our demands did not imply the improvement of social facilities or any change in the existing social conditions. Nor did we require any rise in wages. However strange it may sound, our major concern, the cornerstone, is now flight safety. Some people don't quite understand why the trade union seeks not wage raises nor the improvement of its conditions, but the enhancement of flight safety in the skies of Russia.

The means of communication, radar and navigation facilities used by the air controllers are very worn out and outdated. No modernization is undertaken, our channels of communication permanently go out of order, there are also constant failures in control of the situation in the air. In general, there's a direct threat to the safety of flights; while we are at control panels and radars, controlling the air traffic, there's stress, permanent nervousness.

Q: Where did the strikes take place, and what was the military doing to replace the air controllers?

A: August 15 came. The strike started

at 10 a.m., Moscow time. Before the strike started, we had received confirmations from 97 participating air traffic control centers from different cities—telegrams, protocols of secret ballot, etc. There were 97 air traffic control centers out of 130 in Russia.

However, developments took such a turn that the state machine—you can't call it any other way: the government, the attorney general, the judicial bodies, the KGB, the Ministry of the Interior—came together and formed a single front to fight the 8,000 air controllers of Russia. What did it mean in practice? Vice President Rutskoi immediately sent government telegrams to local authorities ordering criminal prosecution of the strikers. Heads of the Department of Air Transport, in their turn, instructed the local bosses to keep the airports and air sectors open by all means.

Q: So they mobilized the militia and forces of the KGB against the workers on strike?

A: They presented this as maintaining order at the airports, but as a matter of fact, in certain cases OMON [special militia teams] forced our leaders out of flight control rooms, saying "you have nothing to do here." The strike committees were also forced out, in the presence of procurators [state attorneys].

What else happened during the strike? First, the chairman of the air controller union of the Kursk airport had to undergo such an ordeal—very much like in 1937 [during Stalin's purges]. On August 16, at 11 p.m., when the strike was already over, militiamen came to his place, showed him a warrant for his arrest, and he spent two days in prison pending trial.

The military, with no special training, were ordered to take places at air control panels usually operated by civil air controllers. They were not licensed to control air traffic in these air sectors. It was done by order. And it's mere luck there were no accidents. It's just luck people were not killed, and there are no coffins.

We understand that in calling a strike the air controller union took all passengers captive. But we did not expose their lives to danger. Rutskoi and his men took the passengers captive, too. But they *did* expose their lives to danger, and, as a matter of fact, they potentially sentenced all passengers to death. Making the crews board the planes and fly to the closed air zones and airports, and even more, placing untrained personnel at flight control panels. I think they are criminals. There's no other word: they are criminals. ■



## NYPD Lynch Mob Frenzy

### 10,000 Racist Cops Storm City Hall



Cop siege of City Hall: capitalism's hired thugs stage bonapartist mobilization against minimal reform proposal to remove police representatives from "civilian" review board.

SEPTEMBER 28—After acting as an army of occupation in Washington Heights all summer, the NYPD descended on lower Manhattan. Their sinister display of force spells escalating cop war on the ghettos and barrios of New York City, and a clear and present danger to the population at large. After weeks of sparring with the black mayor, and the resignation of the black police commissioner, the cops chose September 16 for their provocation. On that day the City Council opened discussion of a bill to replace the cops on the sham Civilian Complaint Review Board with civilians appointed by the mayor. In a massive mobilization, *ten thousand white cops* broke through police barricades and stormed the steps of City Hall, swarmed up exit ramps and took over the Brooklyn Bridge, stopping traffic and terrorizing motorists.

For three hours downtown New York was held hostage by this vicious, mercenary layer of bribed lowlifes. For one day, Wall Street bankers and government bureaucrats saw the cops the way young black men see them every day—a marauding pack of armed thugs. This rampage touched off a first-rate political crisis in the city. "MUTINY!" screamed the *Post*. The lead editorial in New York's Spanish language daily captured what every black, Hispanic and Jew saw when they flicked on the evening news: "All that this out of control mob of drunken racists was lacking was a flag with a swastika waving over their empty heads" (*El Diario*, 20 September). Even that haughty voice of the ruling class, the *New York Times*, which practically hailed the crackdown on Washington Heights, was worried about this challenge to any semblance of civilian control.

The badge-toting white hoodlums de-

nounced the black mayor as a "washroom attendant" and "crack addict" and carried racist caricatures of David Dinkins with swollen lips and an Afro. Black reporters were beaten and punched, black city councilwoman Una Clarke was called a "nigger," women in lower Manhattan were pawed and harassed by cops spilling out of the bars with beer bottles in one hand and guns in the other. A dozen cars, including those of city councilmen, were damaged by the racists-in-blue, who with a wink from their on-duty ilk, trashed everything around City Hall. From the speakers' platform on Murray Street, the cop rabble was roused by Rudolf Giuliani, the vicious former federal prosecutor who narrowly lost to

Dinkins in the 1988 election and hopes to win the next one by whipping up a racist frenzy.

But the big hero for this police riot was cop Michael O'Keefe who killed José "Kiko" García in Washington Heights last July, touching off days of turbulence in the Dominican community. O'Keefe was exonerated by a secret grand jury in September and is the symbol of cop bonapartism, the latest example that this killer force stands above the law as judge, jury and executioner in the streets of NYC. Enraged that Dinkins consoled the García family and used city funds to fly their son's body back to Santo Domingo for burial, the cops went "wilding" against

the black mayor and the whole city.

Hours after the downtown rampage, four drunk white out-of-uniform cops on a Brooklyn-bound M train picked out a black youth, Yunus Mohamed, and deliberately tripped him as he walked through the train. They called him "boy" and then punched him. Mohamed had no way of knowing the white racists were cops. Like all street-wise city kids he carried something for self-defense and slashed one of his assailants, good, with a box razor. Mohamed was hustled out of the subway car and into a police cruiser and bludgeoned with repeated blows to the head. Mohamed now lies handcuffed to a hospital bed, his jaw wired shut, his face swollen beyond recognition, and his future an uphill battle against being sent up the river on false charges of attempted murder of a police officer! An eyewitness to the cop attack, Miguel Matos, is now himself the target of cop terror. Police cars with "death" written in tape across their windows circle his Brooklyn home every night.

#### New York City Under Siege

The city's rulers are worried because the cops are not playing by the rules. After a decade of racist big-mouth Koch and a city ready to hlow, the soft-spoken liberal black Democrat Dinkins was elected mayor with Wall Street backing, promising to keep labor and minorities in line ("they'll take it from me"). But now the racist cops are slipping the leash. Even the black police organization, the Guardians, denounced the cop riot as a "19th century southern lynch mob" and are demanding arrests of fellow cops and a special prosecutor to investigate Giuliani and the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association.

*continued on page 11*



NYPD rampages against Dominican protest in Washington Heights following cop killing of José "Kiko" García in July.