

Yuppie Democrat Targets Blacks, Poor, Elderly

Clinton's Killer Budget—Death and Taxes

"New breed" Democrat Clinton's February 17 economic speech was just what the bourgeoisie ordered. He wants those of us who have some income left to be taxed to pay for the ruling class' fiscal irresponsibility and parasitism. Clinton's "Throw Momma from the Train" budget slashes Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals, and even goes after Social Security. For the poorest part of the population, which has grown enormously in the past decade, he threatens to "end welfare as we know it" by simply removing recipients from the rolls after two years.

If this isn't bad enough, there's more to come, when Hillary Clinton unveils her "health care" proposals, which sound like pretty nasty medicine. After her bubba hubby gets done taxing gas, she's going to go after cigarettes and alcohol, the few small pleasures working people can still afford to take their minds off this miserable society. While the Clintons talk of health coverage for all, they aim to slash away at government-financed medical and hospital care for the tens of millions on welfare and others—many of them black and Hispanic—who aren't covered by employer insurance plans. By the profit-driven logic of the capitalist medical system,



Clinton axes health care for the poor: above, patients wait hours for care in federally funded family planning clinic.

cutting Medicare and Medicaid payments means even fewer doctors and hospitals will accept those patients.

Clinton has also proposed a one-year wage freeze—a 4 percent cut in real wages—for the country's 700,000 heav-

ily black federal employees. "It's not fair!" exclaimed one outraged \$20,000-a-year government agency worker in New York. It sure ain't, but fairness is not a quality this greedy ruling class is known for. Meanwhile, despite the sup-

posed economic "recovery," unemployment continues to climb.

In New York City, unemployment rose to a staggering 13.4 percent in January, the highest rate in the 25 years since the Bureau of Labor Statistics started keeping figures. The number of homeless families in NYC rose 14 percent just in the months between July and October, and is slated to climb another 45 percent over the next year. In Detroit, almost one-third of the population scrapes by below the official poverty line. Across the country, a record 14 million people now rely on miserly welfare payments. These are the people Clinton wants to "sacrifice."

The fact is, the American bourgeoisie wants higher taxes on the majority of the population and cutbacks in social programs because the only other really big budget item left to slash is military spending. And for all the squabbling between the Pentagon and the White House, there is a ruling-class consensus that any substantial cut in funding the gendarmes of the "New World Order" is taboo. In his televised address to the nation, Clinton hinted that Reagan and Bush were responsible for jacking the debt up sky-high. But he never explained

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Germany

Case Dismissed Against Spartakists Who Tore Down Nazi Flag

BERLIN, February 17—In a trial at the Tiergarten Administrative Court today, the case was dismissed against four supporters of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) and the Committee for Social Defense (KfSV) who were charged with tearing down an enormous swastika flag at the Pariser Galerie next to the Brandenburg Gate in June 1992. Toralf Endruweit, Spartakist spokesman and former SpAD candidate in the March 1990 DDR (East German) parliamentary elections, declared in a statement to the court: "As the numerous statements of support show, the court has, to put it mildly, gotten heart palpitations."

He continued: "We won't allow this blood-soaked banner to just hang any-

where. We tore it down on 23 June 1992 and burned it. We are proud of that, and will do it again if necessary. We did it in the name of all anti-fascists."

About a hundred demonstrators gathered before the beginning of the trial in front of the entrance to the court, chanting: "Swastika means genocide, destroy the flag everywhere!" and "1, 2, 3, 4—No Nazi flag here! 5, 6, 7, 8—Stop the Nazis with workers power!" Representatives of the Jewish Group of Berlin, the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism), the SDAJ (German Socialist Young Workers), the KPD/ML (Communist Party of Germany/Marxist-Leninist), as well as the SpAD, spoke in the demonstration organized by the KfSV, in which many anti-fascist youth participated.

At the demonstration, Atiye Eksi said in a moving declaration: "My son Mete Eksi was slain a year ago by racist youths. They have not yet been put on trial. They were set free. But those

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The Spartakist 4 who were arrested for tearing down Nazi flag, at rally outside Berlin courthouse, February 17.



ADL Connection to CIA/FBI Exposed

SAN FRANCISCO—A sensational but secretive FBI investigation of a local cop suspected of selling police intelligence files to U.S. citizens to South African and Israeli agents has provided a glimpse into a sinister web linking secret police operations in the three countries. Right in the middle of this dirty spy network is the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which in the name of fighting anti-Semitism targets political opponents of the Zionist rulers.

This scandal has also blown the cover off political spying by the San Francisco Police Department. After revelations of decades of surveillance—in particular against nearly 100 organizations at the 1984 Democratic convention, including the ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild and groups opposed to U.S. intervention in Central America—a 1990 court ruling ordered the SFPD to destroy its massive political intelligence files. Now SF police chief Tony Ribera admits the files have not been destroyed. And only last year, then police chief Richard Hongisto ordered cops "to gather information on East Bay activists suspected of being involved" in protests against the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 29 January).

At the center of the storm is one

Tom Gerard, a career SF police officer who skipped the country suddenly last November and resurfaced in the Philippines. Gerard was originally trained as a bomb expert by the SFPD. In 1982 he took a leave of absence to work secretly for the CIA in El Salvador, where he helped train the death squad junta's army for three years. He was also the SFPD's "official liaison" to the FBI. Welcomed back to the police force in 1985, Gerard was assigned to the intelligence unit, where "one of [his] jobs was to gather data, including rumors, about Arab Americans and pro-Palestinian groups" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 16 January).

Enter Roy Bullock, art dealer and paid "investigator" for the ADL. Bullock infiltrated the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee to spy on its members, and was also seen at an anti-apartheid rally attended by South African exiles. Gerard admits he and Bullock secretly passed information to the South African consulate, apparently including an FBI file on the Black Muslims. Some of these files, "which were supposed to be classified, eventually wound up in the hands of the Anti-Defamation League" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 January). In May 1991 Gerard joined other police officials on an all-expense-paid "ADL law enforcement mission" to Israel. It

turns out that San Francisco's current mayor and then police chief Frank Jordan went on a similar ADL-financed trip to Israel in 1987.

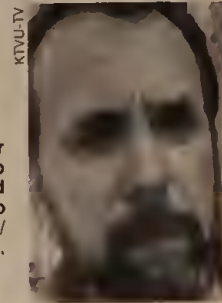
Gerard seems to have been quite energetic, to say the least. According to columnist Warren Hinckle, Gerard met a member of the notorious Royal Ulster Constabulary at a "law enforcement clambake in Washington, D.C." who later showed up at the SFPD "accompanied by two British Special Branch Intelligence agents" (*San Francisco Independent*, 29 January). As Hinckle notes, this fuels suspicions by local Irish groups about the SFPD's role in three recent Bay Area arrests of escapees from Northern Ireland's notorious H-Block prison.

Who else have they been spying on, when, and for whom? The FBI clearly doesn't want its victims to find out. All the search warrants have been sealed, and a San Francisco Superior Court judge rejected an *Examiner* appeal for their release. But the victims of spying have a right to know. Because they are in grave danger.

Remember the FBI's own murderous COINTELPRO targeting the Black Panthers for extermination. A lot of Central Americans are in California because they fled their homes in fear of the U.S.-trained death squads. For decades the Mossad has done the CIA's dirty work, particularly in Latin America, Africa and the Near East. And the Mossad has long had a close partnership with South Africa's secret police.

The FBI has specially targeted Arab Americans for harassment and persecution, at the behest of the Zionists in Israel and in the U.S. The "L.A. Eight," seven Palestinians and a Kenyan woman, have been fighting for five years against a witchhunting government vendetta which seeks to deport them on the sole charge of their alleged political sympathies for the Palestinian PFLP. During their legal fight, government plans came to light to throw Arab Americans into concentration camps in time of war. Now, with Israel deporting hundreds of Palestinians as suspected supporters of the fundamentalist Hamas group, the FBI is tracking all potential "Hamas supporters" in the U.S. Notably, one of the names in Gerard's voluminous files was that of Mohammed Jarad, a Palestinian American grocer from Chicago who was arrested as a "Hamas terrorist," along with two other American citizens, while visiting relatives in the West Bank.

Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin



Sinister SF cop Tom Gerard linked to FBI/CIA/Mossad.

has hailed Gerard as a "hero." And what of the ADL, which has been furiously denying that it has anything to do with the Mossad or the Israeli government? Bay Area ADL spokesman Elliot Bien boasts that the Zionist outfit "shares information on extremist groups with law enforcement agencies" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 24 January). And while the "extremist groups" include the KKK and the pro-Nazi "Institute for Historical Review," the ADL is also notorious for "disinformation" and spying aimed against pro-Palestinian and leftist organizations. Several years ago, in the course of pre-trial discovery, we came across a February 1985 ADL letter to the SFPD which revealed that they had cooperated in spying "on the Spartacus [sic] Youth League's activities on San Francisco State University's campus."

In the fall of 1988, the ADL launched a massive "disinformation" drive aimed at sabotaging a successful labor/black mobilization in Philadelphia initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee, which spiked a threatened Klan/Nazi skinhead provocation (see "ADL Redbaiters Defame Anti-Klan Protest," *WV* No. 465, 18 November 1988). As we noted at the time: "The Zionists hate our guts because we have their number: they do nothing to defend Jews against racist terror here and they cheer on racist terror against Palestinians in Israel."

We demand full disclosure of all the links between the SFPD, the ADL and the American, Israeli and South African political police. While the Democrats call on the district attorney to initiate yet another investigation alongside those already supposedly being pursued by the SFPD and FBI, the only sure thing is that all these cover-up "investigations" will do nothing to safeguard those targeted by the murderous cops and feds. We fight for the socialist revolution that will sweep away the capitalists together with their secret police. ■

Hitler's Takeover and the Soviet Union



TROTSKY

The end of January marked 60 years since Hitler's rise to power and 50 years since the surrender of German forces at the Battle of Stalingrad, which led directly to the Red Army's victory over the Third Reich in 1945. Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition had fought for a united front of Communist and Socialist workers as part of a revolutionary strategy to smash the Nazi menace before it took power. In that context, Trotsky also



LENIN

raised the possibility of the Red Army intervening to assist the German workers struggle. But the Social Democrats and Stalinists allowed Hitler to march to power unchallenged, just as decades of Stalinist sabotage have now allowed the triumph of counterrevolution in the ex-USSR. Trotsky addressed the absence of workers resistance to the Nazi takeover in a March 1933 article.

The complete absence of resistance on the part of the German workers has provoked certain troubles within our own ranks. We expected that the onward march of the fascist danger would surmount not only the perfidious policy of the reformists but also the ultimatum sabotage of the Stalinists. These hopes were not confirmed. Were our expectations false? This question cannot be put in such a formal manner. We were obliged to proceed from a course based upon resistance and to do all in our power for its realization. To acknowledge a priori the impossibility of resistance would have meant not to push the proletariat forward but to introduce a supplementary demoralizing element....

If the internal situation in the USSR had permitted, the Soviet government, at the time of Hitler's first approach toward power, should have mobilized some army divisions in White Russia and the Ukraine, naturally under the shield of defending the Soviet borders.... Naturally, the Red Army cannot replace the German workers in making the revolution; rather, it can only assist the revolution of the German workers. But in different stages this assistance can have different manifestations. For example, the Red Army can assist the German workers to begin the revolution.

What paralyzed the German proletariat was the feeling of disunity, isolation, and despair. Merely the prospect of armed assistance from the outside would have exercised an enormously encouraging influence upon the vanguard.

—Leon Trotsky, "Germany and the USSR" (March 1933)

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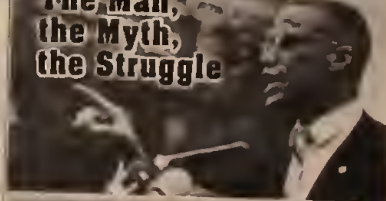
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February 1993

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Ruhr Steel Workers, East German Metal Workers Up in Arms



Coal miners demonstrate solidarity with steel workers in the Ruhr, heart of Germany's industrial powerhouse. Kartenberg/Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung

Germany: Bosses Throw Down the Gauntlet

The following article is adapted from *Spartakist No. 100*, published by the *Spartakist Workers Party of Germany*, section of the *International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)*.

FEBRUARY 21—The Ruhr, Western Germany's industrial heartland, is boiling with working-class anger. Steel bosses are threatening to slash 30,000 jobs and shut down the blast furnaces altogether at historic production sites. In response, thousands of workers have gone into the streets day after day, from Eisenhüttenstadt on the Polish border to Bavaria in the south. The wave of demonstrations could easily escalate into strikes and plant occupations. After 20,000 workers and their families occupied highway B-1 in a torchlit "night of a thousand fires" in Dortmund, the first wildcat strike broke out in the town of Siegen on February 18. But isolated protests will fail unless the heavy battalions of the proletariat, East and West, including the strategically placed and militant immigrant component, are mobilized in united struggle.

For there is a concerted capitalist offensive under way. The coal magnates are threatening to lay off thousands more in the Ruhr area. Simultaneously the metal industry cartel unilaterally canceled union contracts which called for raising wages in the East German states to 82 percent of the Western level on April 1. While talking of a "solidarity pact," the Bonn government, industrial barons and the SPD "opposition" are using the old tactics of divide and rule. As a result of the international steel crisis, Western bosses want to shut down production entirely in the area of the former East German workers state. Krupp-Hoesch plays off steel workers in the Ruhr cities of Dortmund and Duisburg against each other. But this could backfire. On February 10, some 25,000 metal workers from East and West came together in a jobs protest in Magdeburg.

The potential for sharp class struggle is enormous. But the workers' hands are tied by the social-democratic union bureaucracy. Lines of torches are just as impotent in stopping layoffs as "candle chains" are in warding off attacks on immigrants—and such nationalist popular-front tactics are just as treacherous in chaining German workers to the German bourgeoisie. A steel workers' banner addressed to Bonn politicians declared, "You Need German Coal and German Steel." The DGB labor federation and IG Metall union tops are calling for a month of "actions," culminating in a

"March of 100,000" on Bonn on March 26. This could easily be turned into a nationalist march on Brussels, as SPD politicians led by Johannes Rau, prime minister of the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen, thunder against American protectionism and cheap imports from East Europe.

At a national steel conference meeting on February 16 in Duisburg that brought together 500 plant council members, there were many complaints that March 26 is too late. But the purpose of this delay, and of a month of local actions, is to blow off steam. *Because the SPD politicians and social-democratic union tops are supporting the steel plant closings.* The SPD state government says that it "can't secure either the threatened jobs or the endangered production sites" (*Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 February). And when IG Metall chief Steinkühler calls for "maintaining steel center Germany" it means dropping the union's opposition to closing any steel centers. At the Duisburg meeting, the metal union leader said the union was "helpless in the face of a situation in which hundreds of thousands are threatened with unemployment. We have nothing to offer" (*Berliner Zeitung*, 17 February).

Just listen. Here is the head of a 3.3-million-member labor organization, which boasts of being "the strongest union in the world," confessing it can do nothing in the face of a frontal assault on its membership! This is a stunning declaration of the bankruptcy of labor reformism in the epoch of capitalist decline. In fact, IG Metall and the other German industrial unions have tremendous power. It is the pro-capitalist politics of their leaders that paralyze them. When Steinkühler, Rau and SPD leader Engholm call for a "national steel conference," they are begging to continue the institutionalized class collaboration of the "social market economy" synthesized in the fraud of "co-management." But there is nothing social about the market economy in times of sharp capitalist crisis.

After World War II the bourgeoisie set up an elaborate social welfare state to ward off the threat of Communism. But with the collapse of Soviet Stalinism, the capitalists see no need to continue such expensive sops to the workers. Barely two and a half years after capitalist reunification, it's almost universally recognized that the "German model" of a high-wage welfare state is a thing of the past. Having taken on the "burdens" of a world power,

the masters of the Fourth Reich are intent on jacking up the rate of exploitation. Steinkühler himself recognizes this, speaking of the "spectre of a crisis of the system." But he has "nothing to offer." The *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, that voice of the bankers, ironically remarks that "militant 'struggle actions'" don't attract investors. Militant struggle actions for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay, for equal pay for equal work, could bring together the economically powerful industrial workers of the West with millions of their class brothers and sisters in the East, half of them now jobless, who know from their own experience in the DDR that unemployment can be eliminated in a planned economy. But a planned economy cannot be sustained in a single country, much less half a country.

The job-slashing European Community steel barons are targeting Italy and Spain as well as Germany. Coming amid a Europe-wide recession and Europe-wide worker unrest, the labor showdown in Germany underscores the decisive importance of the fight for international, revolutionary leadership of the working class. It is to resolving this key question that the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) addresses itself.

Class Struggle in the Fourth Reich

Since 1990, the imperialist rulers in Bonn have carried out the biggest

hostile takeover in history, annexing and destroying the bureaucratically deformed workers state of the DDR and establishing economic overlordship throughout East Europe. But they did it on credit, and they want the workers to pay for it. Today they are weighed down by mounting debt, and the workers are in no mood to pay for the bosses' rapaciousness. Christian Democrats, Free Democrats and Social Democrats wrangle over the terms of a hypocritically misnamed "solidarity pact," as the SPD joins the governing coalition in gutting the right to asylum for refugees and legitimizing "constitutional" intervention by the Bundeswehr around the globe. Rather than solidarity, the pact proposed by the "chancellor of lies" aims at getting the population used to "hard times," with lower unemployment benefits, fewer holidays and sick days, and higher taxes.

Seeking to prop up sagging profits, Kohl has undertaken privatization of the post office and the railways. But by proposing to impose user fees on the sacrosanct autobahns, he may have shot himself in the foot. While the bourgeoisie is talking tough, ever since Kohl got a slap in the face in the ÖTV public workers strike last May the German ruling class has been nervously looking at its bankbooks. No more 5.4 percent wage increases—in December IG Metall's Steinkühler settled for 3.3 percent for steel workers. And in January, the ÖTV's Wulf-Mathies stuffed a 3 percent deal down the throats of her members in the West—a full percentage

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Dortmund, February 17: 20,000 steel workers and supporters march with torches in "night of 1,000 fires," protesting threatened steel mill closures. Der Spiegel

Young Spartacus

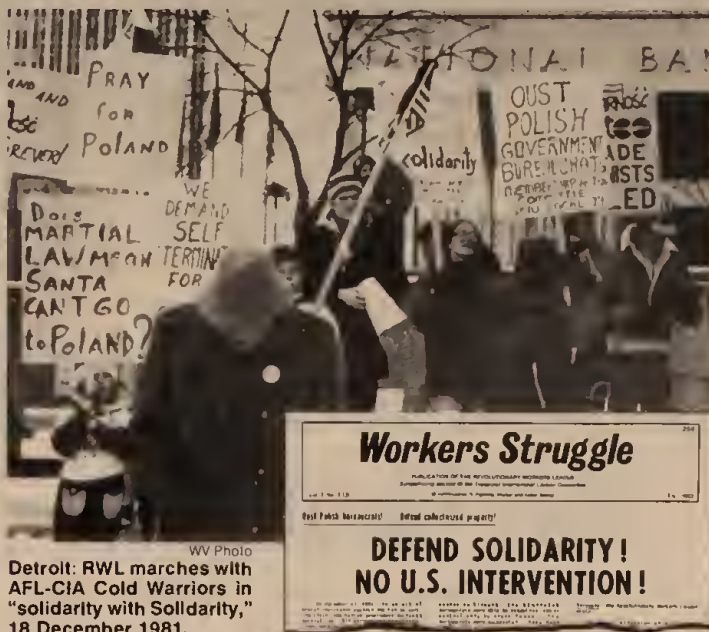
RWL: Mitosis of a Cult

A vocal group of militant youth based in Detroit and Ann Arbor has been making its presence felt at some women's and gay rights demonstrations around the country in recent months. It's called the National Women's Rights Organizing Committee (NWROC). Unlike feminists who explicitly support the capitalist Democratic Party, NWROC claims to stand for a workers party. It advocates "direct action" in abortion clinic defense mobilizations, instead of reliance on the police and courts. NWROC boasts that its "leadership" in such actions in Buffalo and Baton Rouge last year inflicted resounding defeats on the anti-abortion higs of Operation Rescue and virtually "forced" the Supreme Court to uphold *Roe v. Wade*.

A reality check seems to be in order. NWROC is the latest in a long line of front groups concocted by the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), an opportunist sect that has been playing eastern Michigan's I-94 corridor for 10 these past 20 years. While claiming to be Trotskyist—even professing support for the Spartacist League's (SL) basic documents (up to 1971!)—the RWL is utterly hostile to the communist principles that guide authentic revolutionaries.

Even its stand for women's liberation is a fraud: the RWL is mired in thoroughly bourgeois feminist organizations like NOW which handcuff women to their oppressors and thus are an *obstacle* to the liberation of women, minorities and working women in particular. NOW scandalously invited the FBI to set up a recruitment hooch at NOW's 1991 national conference—yet all it took was some hot air from Molly Yard about a "third party" for the centrist RWL to look to this white ladies auxiliary of the Democrats to...build a workers party! And the pro-Clinton NOW looks pretty good compared to some of the anti-woman outfits the "radical feminists" of the RWL have supported internationally, like the Iranian mullahs who imprisoned women behind the veil, and Polish Solidarność, which has banned abortion as part of its clericalist crusade.

But NWROC is shrinking and the RWL itself underwent mitosis in a bitter split between its two central leaders in the summer of 1991, when Peter Sollenberger broke away to form the Trotskyist League (TL). Leland Sanderson was left as king of the RWL's Ann Arbor sand castle with some newly recruited youth, whom he has tried to hold together with mindless single-issue activism, grandiose delusions of mass influence and a



WW Photo
Detroit: RWL marches with AFL-CIA Cold Warriors in "solidarity with Solidarity," 18 December 1981.

steady diet of radical lifestylism in place of politics. For subjectively revolutionary youth, the RWL is a dead end.

Spectre of Spartacism Haunts the RWL

We long ago described the RWL as a cult—the organizational emanation of Sollenberger/Sanderson's egos—and the documents around its split provide a real worm's-eye view. The 270 pages of documents devoted to "The Split in the International Trotskyist Committee," published by the TL, are nearly devoid of politics but chock-full of the most personalistic, apolitical charges and exposés. Much of it revolves around which of the two gurns was the more "tired" and "irresponsible." During the Persian Gulf War, say the Sandersonites, Sollenberger "appeared to have vanished. Repeated urgent messages left on his answering machine received no reply at all." The Sollenbergerites counter that Leland "spent much of the mid- and later 1980s a recluse in his apartment with his phone unplugged, writing one incomplete document a year."

Hovering over the split was the RWL's anti-Spartacism, which has animated the group since its inception. Sollenberger's "Tendency for a New Course" charged that Sanderson was leading the RWL through a "Spartacist-style degenera-

tion," raising "angular" slogans designed to turn people off. One Sollenbergerite wrote:

"Leland, years and years ago, said—and it hardly needed to be said then—that without the SL the RWL never would have been what it was. I want to communicate particularly to younger comrades who want to understand the transitional method, that you must know the history of the SL in order to know the history of the RWL."

—Ron L., "The Transitional Method and the RWL" (August 1991)

"Why didn't Peter and Leland, who were collaborating on everything at that point, why didn't they both join the SL?" asks a Sollenberger supporter in the split documents. "I said the main reason to me was that although the SL had the Transitional Program from Trotsky, they did not have the transitional method, which is something harder to define...." That "hard to define" quality is the reformist "method" introduced by the latter-day Socialist Workers Party, which reduces Trotsky's Transitional Program—a program to guide the proletariat in struggle for state power—to a series of separate, reformist demands. Typically, the RWL will tack on a radical-sounding slogan and march as the left tail of some liberal mobilization aimed at pressuring Democratic Party politicians to legislate a reform.

The RWL version of history is that the Spartacist League "degenerated" in the early 1970s, roughly coincident with the arrival in the proletarian bastion of Ann Arbor of two Harvard graduates who had just decided *not* to join the SL. The problem for this centrist duo was how to carve out some turf for themselves between the revolutionary SL and the popular front. They could not ignore us, because increasingly Spartacists are recognized as the Trotskyists in the U.S. and internationally. So, in classic centrist fashion the RWL negatively defined themselves against us, peddling their wares as the soft-core "Trotskyists." While occasionally mouthing an orthodox-sounding word or two about Soviet defensism, opposition to the Democrats, or the strategy of revolutionary integrationism as the road to black freedom in this country, the RWL made sure that none of it was taken seriously enough to keep them out of

the opportunist action.

Sollenberger and Sanderson spent the 1970s assembling an anti-Spartacist cult around themselves. Their politics, in a nutshell, were and are anti-labor, anti-black, and anti-Soviet. Until 1980 this group had no public press and was known chiefly for its members' *scabbing* during a University of Michigan campus strike in 1977. When they finally began publishing the misnamed *Fighting Worker*, three out of eight pages of the first issue were devoted to trashing the historic principle of the labor movement that *picket lines mean don't cross*. Trotsky said, "Strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army" (Transitional Program), but *Flinching Scab* (as we call the RWL paper) ridiculed the "so-called 'picket-line question'" as a Spartacist "aberration." These Harvard boys also displayed their arrogant petty-bourgeois contempt for "dumb workers" by putting out a rag whose Archie Bunker "workerese" makes the *New York Post* look intelligent.

It was the Spartacist League's commitment—and successes—in the struggle for black rights that particularly exercised this cult. On 27 November 1982 over 5,000 people—leftists, blacks, unionists—joined in a united-front action that stopped the Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. The RWL stayed away and instead joined a pro-Democratic Party diversion two miles from the confrontation with the KKK. Then, using a racist Confederate slur, they actually called SL supporters who organized the successful anti-Klan mobilization "carpetbaggers." On the origin of this term, W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in *Black Reconstruction in America* of the response to Reconstruction by the "white South": "The campaign of slander against 'carpetbaggers' rose to a climax which included every Northern person who defended the Negro...." The RWL still echoes this racist campaign of slander against the real defenders of black liberation.

RWL: Solidarity with Anti-Sovietism

Defense of the gains of the October Revolution against imperialism and counterrevolution has been a defining cornerstone of Trotskyism. Only by giving lip service to this program could the RWL stake any claim to being Trotskyist. In fact, their anti-Soviet appetites grew commensurably with the anti-communism of Cold War II. They bowed to Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution" in Iran. They denounced the Soviet intervention against CIA-backed Islamic reaction in Afghanistan as a "gift" to the imperialists, while claiming to give "military support" to the Red Army. But when it came to backing Solidarność capitalist counterrevolution in Poland, the RWL went whole hog. Marching together with the AFL-CIO Cold Warriors under the banner of "solidarity with Solidarity," the RWL eagerly paid the price of admission to the popular front in the Reagan years.

Against the pseudo-Trotskyist abettors of "bourgeois-democratic" counterrevolution in East Europe and the former Soviet Union, we Spartacists *uniquely* fought against the Solidarność "company union" for the CIA and Western bankers. We were the *only* political party to fight unambiguously against the Fourth Reich's capitalist *Anschluss* (annexation) of East Germany. As the "Russian question" was posed point-blank in the Soviet Union itself, we

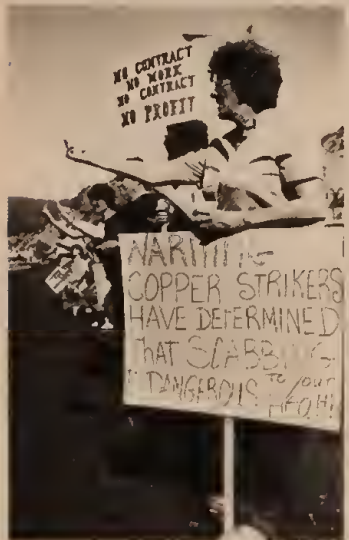


WW Photo
Red-white-blue bourgeois feminists banned socialist literature at abortion rights march in Washington, April 1992. RWL calls on NOW to "build workers party."

fought in defense of the gains of October—for a workers political revolution to sweep away the ossified Stalinist bureaucracy and to smash the capitalist-restorationist Yeltsinite forces. And to the extent our limited forces permit, we continue to fight to win the Soviet working class to a program to reverse and defeat the counterrevolution.

Wherever and whenever defense of the Soviet Union was concretely posed, the RWL flinched. At the time of the August 1991 events, they tried—in the usual centrist fashion—to straddle the harricades. While acknowledging that with Yeltsin's victory, "All the forces pushing for capitalist restoration have been enormously strengthened," they argued for Soviet workers to observe Yeltsin's strike call—i.e., they offered to give Yeltsin's pro-capitalist counter-coup a "working-class" character! How seriously the RWL takes Soviet defensism can be gauged by the fact that even though the RWL split coincided with the August 1991 Yeltsin counter-coup, neither the Sollenberger nor the Sanderson faction had anything to say about this in the voluminous documents on their split!

Yeltsinite counterrevolution succeeded in strangling the Soviet workers state. The change in the class character of the former Soviet state is evident and wrenching for anyone rooted in reality. The introduction of "free market" misery means that rickets, a disease of poverty, now afflicts some 60 percent of Soviet children; that murderous national chauvinism has exploded in bloody conflicts



RWL says Spartacists invented the "picket line principle." Tell that to picketing strikers in 1984 Arizona copper miners strike!

throughout the former Soviet republics; that anti-Semitism, racism and all forms of social bigotry are on the rise.

To alibi their backhanded support for Yeltsin, the RWL cynically argues that the Soviet Union still exists. Only now, after the counterrevolution has triumphed, can they finally find something to defend—"nationalized" property. Like the Labourite social democrats, the RWL elevates nationalized property to the highest pedestal—and remains utterly indifferent to the key question of *which class rules*. Let's look at what Trotsky had to say on the question:

"Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon the nationalized economy. But what does such a type of temporary conflict between the economy and the state mean? It means a *revolution* or a *counterrevolution*. The victory of one class over another signifies that it will reconstruct the economy in the interests of the victors."

—"Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?" (November 1937)

A NAIL in the Coffin

Unable over the years to build any stable presence outside its Michigan home base (save for a small satellite in the Bay Area), in 1990 the RWL recruited



Washington Post

a layer of feminist youth from Simon's Rock College in western Massachusetts and began to intervene in antiwar activities around the country. Its front group NAIL (National Anti-Imperialist League) was based on the slogan "Victory to Iraq!" While this may have attracted some young militants as a healthy alternative to the "bring our boys home" crowd, for whom any call for the defeat of U.S. imperialism was anathema, NAIL in fact sought to be the "left wing of the possible"—the left tail on the social-patriotic popular-front coalitions, which included liberal Democrats like Jesse Jackson.

In contrast, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs fought to build a proletarian-revolutionary pole against the popular front. Opposing the "yellow ribbon" brigade, we forthrightly demanded: "Defeat U.S. Imperialism—Defend Iraq!" Against class-collaborationist appeals to Democratic "doves," we fought for labor strikes against the war. We sought to turn opposition to the war into class struggle to bring down this imperialist ruling class, the main enemy of mankind. And we called for workers revolution throughout the Near East against the Zionist butchers, sheiks and bonapartist colonels, including Saddam Hussein.

In contrast, the RWL's call for "victory to Iraq" simultaneously implied military support to Iraq in its takeover of Kuwait and political support to the "anti-imperialist" Saddam Hussein, a former U.S. ally responsible for the massacre of Iraqi Kurds and Communists. Sanderson even refused to allow RWLers to carry a banner reading "For Workers Revolution Throughout the Middle East" at the 26 January 1991 demonstration in Washington. Reportedly Sanderson declared at the RWL conference the following June: "If the RWL could have had eighteen banners, they all should have said 'Victory to Iraq!'" (quoted in Peter S., "Statement on Behalf of the International New Course Faction," August 1991).

The utter unseriousness of Sollenberger and Sanderson's dispute over Gulf War slogans was revealed in the rivalry for support within the RWL's International Trotskyist Committee (ITC). Both the Sollenberger and Sanderson factions had only praise for the ITC's Italian grouping—until its leader, Franco Grisolia, came down on Sollenberger's side. Only then did Sanderson, the ITC's supposed "international secretary," notice that the Italians "did not have a position on the war" and that Grisolia, as a central committee member of Rifondazione Comunista (a split-off from the Italian Communist Party), had refused to fight against his party's support for imperialist UN sanctions against Iraq (see "Swamp Things: Combined and Uneven Developments in the USec," WV No. 562, 30 October 1992).

Lifestylism and Cult "Politics"

The RWL's breakup allowed each of the two gurus the chance to pursue the same opportunist program according to their variant appetites. Sollenberger,

who sees his opportunity for international influence in the crumbling fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) of Ernest Mandel, spent a year sniffing around the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT), which last fall liquidated into Solidarity, a frankly anti-Soviet and anti-Leninist organization. Sollenberger's TL continues to pursue regroupment in the reformist swamp of the USec's American supporters and has tailored its politics accordingly: Issue No. 1 of *International Revolution*, the TL's "theoretical/agitational newsletter" (September 1992), came out in support of "independent" bourgeois candidate Ron Daniels. Having noticed that both the FIT and Solidarity were backing this former campaign manager for Democrat Jesse Jackson, the TL baldly observes: "Daniels' campaign provides an opportunity for left regroupment."

While Sollenberger took out most of the RWL's older members—trade unionists and pop-frontist coalition builders—Sanderson was left with the energetic "Simon's Rock youth." The RWL emerged from the split declaring that it would "place the revolution on its agenda again" (why and when they took it off the "agenda" went unexplained). The main vehicle for RWL activity remains NWROC. NWROC is a textbook example of how centrists are "inclined to cringe before those who are more moderate," as Trotsky put it. NWROC's call for a demonstration at Clinton's Detroit "town meeting" on February 10 declared, "We must no longer rely on Clinton." And an NWROC resolution for the upcoming gay rights march in Washington proclaims:

"Like the Democratic Senators who stole our votes by 'promising' to fight for abortion rights just before they let Clarence Thomas be confirmed as a Justice of the Supreme Court, Clinton has stolen our votes and then taken a dive in the first round of the renewed fight for lesbian/gay rights." (our emphasis)

CARPETBAGGERS ON THE PROWL

WHAT IS THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE?

The Spartacist League is a small, white, middle class group with a lot of money. In its nearly twenty years of existence, it has failed to accomplish the two main tasks of a socialist organization:

- 1) building a class struggle wing in the unions and
- 2) leading up the working class organization with people fighting other oppressions—racism, sexism and anti-gay attacks.

Instead, the SL has turned to creating imaginary "Labor/Black mobilizations against the Klan/KKK."

WHAT IS THEIR GAME?

With these fake mobilizations, they go to campuses around the country and try to recruit white, militant anti-racist students. The Revolution—these "Fantasy Island Fascist Fighters," had courage militant students to check out the RWL.

THE NEED IS FOR A UNITED FRONT

In the last four years, the SL has claimed five successes: Detroit '89, San Francisco '89, Los Angeles '89, Chicago '89, and Washington D.C. '89. The first two were small and isolated, while the other three were organized by united fronts not including the SL. In so case did the SL have any role in these events?

We stopped the Klan in Washington, November 1982. RWL went to pop-front gabfest, reviled militant anti-fascists with racist slur of "carpetbagger."

"No longer" rely on Clinton? Clinton has stolen "our" votes? Did these self-styled revolutionaries actually vote for Clinton?

Devoid of a revolutionary program, the RWL is a cult whose *only* "program" is petty-bourgeois lifestylism. Rather than fighting to mobilize the social power of the working class, when facing off against Operation Rescue at abortion clinics RWLers lie on the sidewalks simulating sex and chant, "I fuck to come, not to conceive!" (So who cares?) These puerile antics, aping late-'60s "guerrilla theater," rehash the New Left "personal is political" message that "liberated" lifestyles are the road to social emancipation.

Similarly, the RWL's only "program" for gay liberation is "outing." They scream about the SL's so-called "closet rule," lying that our gay members are "forced" to go "straight"! Not at all. We fight against the special oppression of homosexuals as a Leninist tribune of the people, mobilizing the working class to defend gay rights and to strike down the bourgeoisie's stultifying "moral" codes. Thus when the Nazis threatened to attack Chicago's gay pride parade in 1982, it was the Spartacist League that initiated a mass labor-centered mobilization and brought out hundreds of blacks, gays, Jews, and unionists to defeat the Nazis and defend the gay community and themselves. This kind of united-front mobilization is unthinkable for the lifestyle sectoralists of the RWL.

As to the sexuality of members of our organization, we believe what consenting individuals do in bed is nobody's business but that of the individuals involved. Our party and all of its members fight for gay rights, not by flaunting their personal lives, but *politically*. In contrast, the RWL lifestylists elevate sexual preference to a political principle. Last fall's horrendous murder and mutilation of a

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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Down With Flags of Racism!

If the saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words," is even remotely true, then the picture I saw must be worth, at least, two thousand words.

The picture, published in the *Workers Vanguard*, shows a man with suspenders, holding a long metal pole with a scythe-like cutting device on its end, ripping a huge flag from a wall mounting in June 1992.

The flag?

A dark field with a light circle in the center, boasting a massive black swastika—the symbol of Germany's fascist past; the symbol of the Third Reich, the Nazis.

The wall from which it was hung? Not a dingy beerhall, where neo-Nazis gathered, but high, on a public wall near the Brandenburg Gate, in the heart of Berlin, part of a so-called government "historical display."

The man-in-suspenders, a supporter of the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (or Spartakist Workers Party of Germany), instead of being publicly applauded, found himself and several SpAD comrades taken into police custody for daring to disrespect the symbol of the Nazi terror.

He, Toralf Endruweit, Werner Brand, Ronald

Krüger and Renate Dahlhaus, found themselves under arrest, until the spontaneous demonstration formed by people who witnessed the action, including supporters of the Kurdish Workers Party, demanded and got their immediate release.

Now Endruweit, Brand, Krüger and Dahlhaus are going on trial, by a state that seems bent on honoring and resurrecting the symbol of Nazi state terror—the swastika.

The picture of Endruweit ripping the Nazi death symbol down brought to mind pictures of southern black legislators, climbing atop state capitols in Dixie, to tear down the flag of the Confederacy, a symbol of slavery. Several were arrested.

As offensive as the crossed bars and stars of the Confederate flag was to African-Americans, so too must the swastika flag enrage and offend Jews, Romani (Gypsies), Communists and homosexuals, all of whom were fed to the gas chambers and death ovens, while the Nazi banner flew above carnage.

In the ripping down of the Nazi flag from the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, the SpAD supporters did the right thing—better still by burning the racist rag.

For over a year since the flag was torn down, newly

reunited Germany has exploded in a murderous orgy of *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* (German for hostility to foreigners) aided, abetted and exploited by unprincipled politicians from the major parties.

Since Reagan's salute to the Waffen SS in the Bitburg cemetery a mushrooming of neo-Nazi and skin-head terror has gripped Germany, marked most recently by the firebombing murder of a Turkish family of longtime immigrants several months ago.

In this hour then, as the state tries to embark on its Fourth Reich, progressive forces must put aside their partisan interests and applaud the ripping down of the racist rag bearing the swastika.

Demand freedom and acquittal for Endruweit, Brand, Krüger and Dahlhaus!

Support the SpAD defendants!

Down with the flag of racism and reaction!

Aus der Todeszelle, hier spricht Mumia Abu-Jamal.

From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

14 January 1993

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.

German Workers...

(continued from page 3)

point less than inflation. So the leaders of these powerful unions are now imposing real wage cuts.

This is coming to a head over the East German metal workers, where after ripping up the contract stipulating a 26 percent wage increase (while steel wages and benefits are barely half the Western level), the bosses are now "offering" 9 percent, less than the rapid increase in prices. The bourgeoisie clearly has its sights set on turning the annexed Eastern states into a cheap labor reserve. The DGB cried "provocation" and "black-mail." The Berlin-Brandenburg IG Metall leader Wagner called it a "declaration of war" and promised "the hardest resistance." But while Wagner talks of "plant by plant" walkouts, the head of the industrial employers association called strikes "by far the lesser evil."

The bosses are clearly calculating that with such massive unemployment (the DGB lost a million members to layoffs last year, more than 600,000 of them in the East), the unions won't be able to strike. They figure on the IGM/DGB using the same kind of partial and "warning" strikes as usual. But metal remains the strategic core of German industry. Solid nationwide strike action by steel, metal, coal and auto workers, East and West, including plant occupations, would have enormous power, especially in alliance with transport and government workers, furious at the wage cuts recently imposed on them, and in coordination with steel workers in the rest of Europe. What's needed is a class-struggle program and leadership to mobilize this power.

East German workers are outraged: after the "unity lie" comes the "wages lie." They feel cheated because after 40 years of Stalinist rule, most thought Kohl's lies that capitalist reunification would soon bring prosperity and a "blooming landscape." Instead East Germany has been devastated, with industrial employment slashed by 75 percent as the capitalist victors set out to atomize the working class. Yet for all their anger, the consciousness of large sectors of working people of the ex-DDR does not go beyond pure economism. And this

full-force capitalist offensive cannot be defeated by isolated strikes. Precisely because of the economic crisis, any serious working-class resistance to the consequences of counterrevolution will have to become a political challenge to the rule of capital.

In the West, many workers have also soured on reunification, saying that the Berlin Wall shouldn't have been torn down. But this can easily become anti-Ossi (East German) chauvinism. And the labor brass with their program of simple trade unionism end up bolstering such sentiments. Thus a "we in the West" IG Metall leaflet says, full of sympathy for the bosses, that "Companies in East Germany really aren't doing well.... One can really ask then how they can manage a

level, the SPD has been in office for years, and declares itself "helpless" in the steel crisis.

When steel workers in the Ruhr, among whom many of the best fighters are Turkish and Kurdish workers, rallied in 1987-88 to prevent the shutdown of the Rheinhausen steelworks by Krupp boss Cromme, the occupation of plant and company offices and the takeover of the "solidarity bridge" over the Rhine created what an SPD parliamentarian described as a "prerevolutionary situation" (*WDA*, 18 February). But there was no revolutionary party to galvanize this resistance to "Cromme's coup" into a struggle for power. The bankrupt program of "reforming" capitalism is now turning into the destruction of trade-

many of the best activists and fighters. The Spartakists, who fought tooth and nail against capitalist *Anschluss* while other so-called socialists bargained over the price for the sellout of the DDR, today call upon class-conscious workers to take the lead in fighting the anti-communist witchhunt, and in forming workers defense groups to protect their immigrant coworkers against the murderous attacks of the Nazis who will provide the strikebreaking stormtroops for capital. An SpAD leaflet issued in conjunction with a campaign for workers defense of immigrant hostels ("Stop the Nazi Pack with Workers Power!", 28 January) quoted from Trotsky's 1938 Transitional Program:

"Scabs and private gunmen in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. Strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army.... In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers' groups for self-defense."

Not since the world economic crisis during the Weimar Republic have there been as many unemployed in Germany as there are now in the East. The crisis in the Ruhr is the deepest since "Zero Hour" following the collapse of Hitler's Third Reich. There will not be a "second economic miracle" of German capitalism. Last fall, German bankers provoked the explosion of the European monetary system; today a trade war with the U.S. is looming. The intensifying recession in Germany is taking Europe down with it into economic and political chaos, which could last years. The *New York Times* (19 February) recently declared that "the German standard of living, like the American one, is probably in for a long period of stagnation, and perhaps even some decline."

A social-democratic manifesto, issued last December by former chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Mercedes-Benz boss Reuter and others, asked worriedly, "Will democracy continue to be accepted if it can't justify itself by constantly improving the well-being of its citizens?" We Marxists, in contrast, declare that declining capitalism is destroying the living standards of the working people, as well as their hard-won democratic and trade-union rights, while engendering racist terror and a drive toward war. This makes more urgent than ever the need to forge a Trotskyist party to lead the fight for socialist revolution to sweep away this bankrupt system. ■



Berlin, 19 October 1991: 1,000 Vietnamese and others protest Nazi attacks. Spartakists call for workers to defend their immigrant colleagues.

26 percent wage increase." The answer of Steinkühler & Co. is to look to the (capitalist) state, and push for bringing the SPD into the government.

The PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) of Gysi and Bisky, meanwhile, supports the SPD's version of a "solidarity pact" with the usual "butter not guns" reformist rhetoric—this time with the PDS slogan "construction helmets not blue helmets." The kind of protectionist poison that the SPD is pushing today leads to the guns of interimperialist war tomorrow. And at the state

union gains. We Trotskyists call instead for a program of transitional demands leading from today's immediate needs to bringing down the capitalist boom-bust system of unemployment, racism and war.

SPD leaders Rau and LaFontaine's deportation policy of "Roma [Gypsies] out," like the SPD/DGB's "buy German" protectionism, fuels racist terror. And as Rostock and Mölln show, Nazi terror seeks to divide and intimidate the working class by targeting first its strategic immigrant component who provide

Flag Case...

(continued from page 1)

who on 23 June 1992 destroyed the Nazi flag are to be hauled into court on 17 February 1993. Are we still living in the Third Reich? Has Germany still not overcome that period?" Also today the Berlin prosecutor brought charges against Turkish friends of Mete Eksi for the "crime" of having survived the fascist assault in which he was killed.

The charges against the four Spartakists, Werner Brand, Renate Dahlhaus, Toralf Endruweit and Ronald Krüger, were brought amid a monstrous rise in Nazi terror and racist murders throughout Germany. In Rostock it has now been confirmed for all to see that the police made a pact with the Nazi gangs who burned down an immigrant hostel, in which 115 Vietnamese barely escaped death. As KfsV spokesman Werner Brand said: "This was a state-authorized pogrom! Now the Bonn regime is carrying out the Nazis' program on a national scale, with the energetic support of the SPD, by destroying the right to asylum. Now they are employing 1,500 Nazis on the Polish

border in order to hunt down refugees." The Nazis are cold-blooded killers. After the racist pogroms in Rostock and the Nazi murders in Mölln, everything indicates that SDAJ member Olaf Heydenluth in Suhl, Freiburg activist Kerstin Winter and Muhlhausen leftist Mario Jüdecke must be added to the list of murdered leftists and anti-fascists which already includes Mete Eksi and Silvio Meier.

After first bringing charges against the four Spartakists, in January, as the case was becoming a cause célèbre, the Academy of Arts in Berlin withdrew the charges, saying it did not want to "be placed in the position of defending a Nazi flag." Showing the political pressures in play, the judge wrote that there is "no public interest in trying them under the present circumstances (right-wing radical tendencies)." Still the state prosecutor continued to press charges, until the case was finally dismissed in today's proceedings.

In its call for today's protest demonstration, the KfsV declared, "Let's put the successor state of the Third Reich on trial, the state that protects the swastika flag and makes use of the fascist gangs." Renate Dahlhaus, Spartakist candidate in the 1990 federal parliament



Victorious Red Army tramples Nazi swastika, Austria 1945. No "art object," swastika stands for hideous torture and murder of millions.

elections and speaker at the anti-fascist mass demonstration on 3 January 1990 at Treptow Park, stated: "In order to bring down the capitalist state that is the

breeding ground for fascist terror, we need a revolutionary party which leads the working class to revolution as the champion of all the oppressed. ■

Statements of Solidarity

Demand Charges Be Dropped

Dr. Israel Shahak is a renowned fighter for Palestinian rights and a survivor of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

Jerusalem
10 February 1993

As a Holocaust survivor and as a fighter for human rights for all human beings in the Occupied Territories and in Israel, I want to express my horror at the rise of the neo-Nazi or other fascistic movements in Germany. I want to support the Spartakists who protested courageously against this horrifying phenomenon and are charged with destroying a so-called "work of art." I want to remind the German people that it was such behavior of being tough on defenders of democracy and human rights, while really supporting or at least being lax to the Nazi forces before 1933, which allowed Hitler and his Nazis to come to power. I demand that all charges should be dropped against the Spartakists and in the same manner that all those who fight for democracy and human rights and who oppose the neo-Nazis should not be prosecuted. Convey my feelings of support and encouragement to your comrades, especially those who are awaiting this unjust trial.

Israel Shahak

An Honor to Be Brought Up on Charges in This Country

Hamburg
15 February 1993

Concerning: Charges of Burning a Nazi Flag

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indicative of the condition of this country when on the one hand people are brought up on charges for having destroyed Nazi emblems, while on the other hand judicial hearings against the culprits are dropped.

Thus a couple of days ago, preliminary hearings were dropped against Ruth Kellermann, who in the days of the swastika flag prepared racial-diagnostic reports on Gypsies, and thus participated in the systematic murder of many thousands of Roma and Sinti.

Under these circumstances, it is an honor to be brought up on charges in this country!

Best wishes,
R.J. Kawczynski
Chairman, Rom & Cinti Union

A Symbol Which Awakens Agonizing Memories

Milano
10 February 1993

The Jewish Community of Milano bears witness to its spiritual closeness with and understanding for those who have been prosecuted for having shown their utterly democratic and anti-Nazi sentiments by ripping up the symbol of an aberrant system, a symbol which



Atiye Eksi, the mother of a Turkish youth murdered by the fascists, gives solidarity greetings to anti-fascists who burned Nazi flag, at February 17 Berlin rally.

awakens agonizing memories among those who suffered its persecution.

The Jewish people, who above all others suffered under the Nazi boot, ardently hopes that Germany can free itself from any legacy of the tragic past, and express with concrete acts of justice a sincere anti-Nazi and democratic consciousness.

Chief Rabbi
Dr. Prof. Giuseppe Laras

The Height of Irresponsibility

Professor Willi Sitte, a prominent East German painter, is a former member of the Academy of the Arts, Berlin, and until 1988 was the president of the DDR Association of Artists.

Halle
14 February 1993

For rubbish, greasy scraps of paper and banalities to be publicly declared art, even by experts, is a daily affair and appears tremendously liberal and democratic.

But for a symbol of the "Thousand Year Reich," which was responsible for suffering, oppression, death and destruction of millions worldwide, to be played up in a state of law as a work of art, in

an objective and normal fashion, is the height of irresponsibility.

Willi Sitte

Thanks for Striking Blow Against Nazis

Chicago
4 February 1993

To the Court:

I am astounded to learn that removing a banned symbol of Nazism, the swastika, is now a crime in the new Germany.

have attacked a piece of cloth) uniquely disturbing.

Not only should all charges be dropped against the four supporters of the Spartakist Workers Party, these brave anti-fascists should be publicly thanked by the court for having struck a symbolic blow against the new Nazis who are once again shedding innocent blood on the streets of Germany.

Sincerely,
William A. Pelz, Ph.D., Director
Social Sciences Program
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
DePaul University

Swastika Flag: Bloody Shroud Which Has Covered Two Peoples

The Klarsfeld family are French Zionist Nazi hunters who have tracked down mass murderers such as Klaus Barbie and documented U.S. government protection of this "Butcher of Lyon."

Paris
13 February 1993

"The struggle for Germany's rebirth is a battle of symbols. It is the world's good fortune that the blood-red flag with the swastika has triumphed in Germany. The swastika is the sacred symbol of the fight against the Jewish race destroyers. In the future, it will be forbidden to Jews to hoist and to wave the colors of the Reich and the Nation."

These words were spoken 48 years ago, on 17 September 1935 before the Reichstag by Goering, who had been

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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We Ripped Down Nazi Flag, and We'd Do It Again

We print below the excerpted statement by Toralf Endrueit to the Berlin court on February 17 on behalf of the four Spartacist defendants.

First of all I want to state that the swastika is no "art object." This Nazi symbol is a threat and means murder. The swastika stands for the horrendous murder of six million Jews, of Roma, Sinti, homosexuals and other minorities, of communists and anti-fascists. We won't allow this blood-soaked hanner to just hang anywhere. We ripped it down on 23 June 1992 and burned it. We are proud of that and will do it again if necessary. We did it in the name of all anti-fascists. And to make it clear who put an end to the horror of the Third Reich, we hung up the following banner: "The Red Army Smashed the Nazi Regime!" For this state would like to eradicate the memory of this, would like to avenge the victory of the Red Army and the expropriation of the capitalist enterprises.

We were charged with trespassing and material damage, by a court of the German state in which no Nazi judge has ever been condemned for his crimes. We and many others call this state, which is ruled by the same bourgeoisie that brought the Nazis to power in 1933, the Fourth Reich. And this state, which feels itself stronger than ever following capitalist reunification, is now carrying out a monstrous witchhunt against those who have fought and are fighting against fascism. And the flip side of this coin is state repression of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrant workers and all immigrants. The state repression that has kindled the flames of the daily and deadly Nazi terror.

I would like to emphasize that from the very beginning we Spartacists said openly and unambiguously: "No to capitalist reunification!" It was on this program that I ran for the DDR Volkskammer in March 1990. Today our struggle against its devastating consequences goes on.

We Spartacists defend the victims of the anti-communist witchhunt affecting all layers of society. We Trotskyists demanded the freeing of Honecker, and continue to demand the freeing of the other representatives of the DDR such as Kessler, Stoph and Mielke.

And we demand the freeing of all the anti-fascists who are being brought up

Spartacists on trial for "crime" of ripping down giant Nazi flag near Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.



on charges for having relieved fascists of their insignia, jackets and propaganda, and now are sitting in investigative detention for supposed politically motivated "theft."

We have received the support of Karl Kielhorn, a member of the Dachau Survivors Association, who says, "The only swastika I like is the one crushed beneath the boots of the Soviet soldier with the child on his arm at the memorial for the fallen Soviet heroes in Treptow Park." I am proud that Spartacists initiated the 250,000-strong mass rally in Treptow against the Nazi desecration of the Soviet memorial and in defense of the Red Army on 3 January 1990, which is plenty of proof of the deep anti-fascist sentiments of Berlin working people.

The court claims we illegally destroyed objects of art. Was the flag installation supposed to be provocative, shocking art according to this state? Well, as a communist and active lover of art I let myself be provoked, and spared the anti-fascists, Jews, immigrants and tourists near the Brandenburg Gate additional terrors. You don't have to hang up swastika flags to be terrified at the Nazi horrors, you only have to open the paper or turn on the TV to be shocked at the real, deadly terror of the Nazi bands.

We received much international sup-

port, including from Israel Shahak in Jerusalem, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen and fighter for human rights, from the Klarsfeld family of Nazi-hunters in Paris, and from Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row in the state of Pennsylvania. Our comrades also destroyed a Confederate flag in San Francisco in 1984. It hung on a flagstaff in a square adjacent to City Hall, and Richard Bradley climbed up and cut it down. The flag of the Southern Confederacy is, so to speak, the swastika of American fascists, who would reverse the outcome of the Civil War.

Last June we ripped down the swastika flag, and then, following the state-approved pogrom in Rostock, following the fascist triple murder in Molln committed by a Nazi who had just been released by state authorities, in December of last year this state had the audacity to charge us. Now the court, judge and prosecutor may well wish to drop the charges, since "no public interest exists." Well, we think that public interest in this case is so great, as demonstrated by the numerous statements of support, that the court has, to put it mildly, gotten heart palpitations at prosecuting to the bitter end a giant idiosyncrasy of this state. If charges are indeed dropped, then it's because it is politically too uncomfortable for the court. Here I'd like to say that we offer

heartfelt thanks to all those who supported us in this case.

Many of those supporters were present on January 30 in Berlin at a trade-union-supported hostel defense. We are proud to have made certain, on the 60th anniversary of Hitler's seizure of power, that at a large hostel, hundreds of Vietnamese and Mozambican contract worker colleagues could spend a safe night. We initiated this for political reasons, because the organized workers movement must be mobilized to stop the Nazis effectively. We know Trotsky and the Left Opposition in the '30s had the right program for stopping the Nazis, but the Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaders allowed the Nazis to come to power without real resistance. Hundreds of thousands of trade unionists, linked in a united front with all anti-fascists, have the social power to put an end once and for all to the Nazi rabble that today is again murdering anti-fascists and immigrants under the sign of the swastika. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Sitting in the spectators' seats here are representatives of thousands of youth who wish to fight the Nazis. To you I say the fact that these charges were brought against us is yet another proof that the call for hanning the Nazis is only an impotent appeal to this court, designed to lull us to sleep. In 1932 the SA was banned, and despite this Hitler was able to come to power. Ultimately it will take socialist revolution to eliminate the breeding ground for the Nazis. Class struggle is necessary to put an end to capitalism, which at every crisis brings the fascists out of their rat holes again. Stalinism is dead, communism lives. The paralyzing influence of the Social Democracy must be repelled. We need an international party armed with the revolutionary program which can take on the bourgeoisie of the Fourth Reich and of the entire world. This is what the Spartacists are fighting for. ■

It takes money to fight the Fourth Reich! To defray the costs of this campaign, send donations to the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Station, New York, New York 10013, earmarked "No Nazi Flag."

RWL...

(continued from page 5)

homosexual seaman who had "come out" in Japan should serve as a reminder to the RWL lifestyleists that the social norms of Ann Arbor and Simon's Rock don't prevail in 99.99 percent of the world. Our last issue's front-page article is in defense of gays in the military.

As for the RWL, the split documents reveal that Sollenherger and Sander-son were in *everyone's* closet. Sollenherger's followers are denounced for "the exploitation and manipulation of the psychological distress of comrade R." They respond by reporting: "May 13, 1991—Leland and Shanta attend Ann Arbor Local meeting and denounce Judy L. and Paul L. for wanting to be parents. Shanta claims that Judy L. is betraying the women's and lesbian liberation movement as a lesbian in a monogamous relationship who wants to have a child."

Where the RWL has a real "closet rule" is in its *politics*. At the February 10 Detroit demonstration, called to protest the ban on gays in the military, there was not a single placard or chant against

the imperialist military itself, nor any open RWL presence (RWL members were there solely as NWROC). Despite the RWL's pretensions that NWROC is a "united front," it is nothing but a class-collaborationist *front group* in which "socialists" act like liberals in order to attract...liberals. Well, you reap what you sow. At NWROC's conference last November, one woman complained, "I don't give a shit about Marx, Lenin or revolution. I just want to talk about NWROC."

Building a Genuine Leninist-Trotskyist Party

To those youth around the RWL who do care about Marx, Lenin and revolution, we say: revolutionary politics is serious business. The sweep of capitalist counterrevolution across East Europe and the former Soviet Union are catastrophic events that have completely redefined the world we live in. The post-WW II "equilibrium" is shattered. Unity of the imperialist powers, maintained for decades by the "Communist menace," has broken down as economic rivalries intensify as a result of the worldwide economic crisis and the race to carve up new markets in the former Soviet bloc.

The U.S. terror bombing of Iraq, the shredding of Yugoslavia into its warring ethnic component parts, the imperialist starvation of Africa and invasion of Somalia are all reflections of a New World Disorder which threaten broader, nuclear confrontations.

But against the bourgeoisie's false triumphalism over the "death of communism," the class struggle manifestly lives. From Greece to Germany, all of Europe has been rocked by the highest proletarian strike wave in years. The multiracial upheaval across the United States following the verdict freeing the racist cops who heat Rodney King terrified the American ruling class and put them on notice that they lord it over a deeply disgruntled and potentially explosive population. In East Europe, the ex-USSR, and especially Poland, the working class has begun to fight back against the ravages of capitalist restoration.

The International Communist League (of which the Spartacist League is the American section) recognizes that this period is fraught with dangers and opportunities. We seek to actively intervene in the struggles of combative workers and youth around the world with a Bolshevik program capable of leading

those struggles to victory. We don't play with politics. We know that young militants have to understand how Stalinism became the gravedigger of the October Revolution if they are to be trained in preparing the next October through the struggle for a Leninist-Trotskyist International. It is this steadfastness of political program and resolution of purpose that make the International Communist League unique. Join us! ■

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Budget...

(continued from page 1)

why. The "voodoo economics" of the Reagan years financed a massive bipartisan military buildup aimed at cracking the Soviet Union.

This was paid for by borrowing from Wall Street and Tokyo. The upshot of over a decade of massive borrowing is that federal government interest payments have quadrupled, from \$50 billion in 1980 to \$200 billion last year. Today interest on the debt takes third place in the budget, after Social Security and the military, dwarfing aid to education, welfare, public health and everything else. And since "Reaganomics" poured all of the available economic surplus into the Pentagon or squandered it in speculation by Wall Street freewheelers like Michael Milken, there's been precious little productive investment.

The second half of the '80s saw increasing attacks on Reaganomics by spokesmen for big business. Under the pressure of Wall Street, there was an attempt at bipartisan deficit-cutting in late 1990. However, the Republican right—who believe in representation for the rich without taxation—rebelled. And Bush was unwilling to sell a tax hike with the kind of "soak the rich" rhetoric the Democrats occasionally indulge in.

Clinton: Ross Perot with K-Y Jelly

Then came the 1992 election campaign, which was dominated by the economy. Sinister multimillionaire Ross Perot was quite open and aboveboard about demanding "sacrifices" from the American people to restore the financial health of the capitalist state. Perot got good grades from business leaders and the media for laying it on the line. Clinton, too, claimed he would reduce the federal deficit, but without raising taxes on the "middle class"—a term now used to embrace everyone between the Rockefeller and the homeless.

Basically Reagan and Bush have

already cut the heart out of every social program except for so-called entitlements like Social Security and Medicare. In 1987 Peter G. Peterson, a former Nixon commerce secretary turned Wall Street big shot, wrote an influential article in the *Atlantic Monthly* arguing that the U.S. should shift resources from keeping old people alive to more "productive" uses. Significantly, Peterson was one of many business executives who supported Clinton.

So while vilifying Dr. Kevorkian for assisting suicides by terminally ill people, the bourgeoisie proposes euthanasia through cost-cutting. Of course, Social Security doesn't just affect the old people who get it. Most people aren't about to dump their aged parents in a homeless shelter or refuse to pay for an urgent operation when Medicare won't cover it all. So cuts in Medicare and increased taxes on Social Security benefits are in effect a broad-based attack on the living standards of all working people.

No "Peace Dividend," No Peace

A few years ago there was much talk, especially among liberal Democrats and the reformist left, about the "peace dividend" which would become available through big cuts in the military budget following the collapse of the Soviet bureaucratically degenerated workers state. Yet Clinton's proposed cuts of an additional \$60 billion over the next four years amount to barely a couple of percentage points in total military spending. The "savings" will be more than eaten up by rising interest payments to the loan sharks of Wall Street, Tokyo and Frankfurt who financed the war drive.

But mainly there is no "peace dividend" because there is no peace. The American ruling class waged a cold—and sometimes hot—war against the Soviet Union not only to restore capitalism to the land of the October Revolution, but also because Soviet military/political power obstructed U.S. subjugation of the rest of the world, notwithstanding the Kremlin Stalinists' reactionary-utopian



Stricklin/Atlanta Journal and Constitution

While liberals prattle about "peace dividend," miles of M-1 tanks are lined up for shipment to Persian Gulf as U.S. imperialism plays cop of the world.

pursuit of "peaceful coexistence." Without Soviet hacking, the Cubans could not have liberated their country from the clutches of the sugar companies and the Mafia, nor could the Vietnamese workers and peasants have driven out the U.S. imperialist army.

As the Kremlin bureaucracy was visibly collapsing during the last months of the Gorbachev regime, in early 1991 Bush declared a "New World Order" as he terror-bombed Iraq, a former Soviet client state. In his last weeks in office, Bush, with Clinton's support, invaded the East African country of Somalia, using the "humanitarian" pretext of preventing starvation. Now Clinton is making noises about intervening in Bosnia, wracked by bloody communist warfare set off by the breakup of the Yugoslav deformed workers state.

Washington's drive to be cops of the world is not just big-power machismo but is designed to maintain and expand capitalist spheres of exploitation and markets. While America's rulers have in recent years invested precious little

within the boundaries of the U.S., they have hundreds of billions tied up in loans to Third World despots as well as factories, oil fields, mines, etc. from South Korea to South America. They need a big military machine to protect this wealth, not only from popular uprisings, but also from their imperialist rivals, Japan, Inc. and the German Fourth Reich.

Clinton's tax-and-cut budget is designed to balance the books of the debt-ridden American rulers by immiserating the rest of us. As we wrote on the eve of the presidential elections (*WV* No. 561, 16 October 1992):

"There will be no end to the politics of misery unless the working class and poor rise up and seize the country's productive wealth from the directors of the Fortune 500 corporations and the Wall Street financiers. Only a globally planned socialist economy can rebuild America's decaying industrial base, provide homes for the homeless and a decent life for all working people and their children. Break with the two parties of capitalist misery—For a workers party to fight for a workers government!" ■

Coal Strike...

(continued from page 12)

lights to videotape and harass pickets outside this mine in the heart of UMW District 17. Inside Harris No. 1, management scabs are running the longwall equipment as Eastern Associated threw down the gauntlet to keep the coal coming.

The big business press is also full of unsolicited advice to the UMW on how to be "peaceful, legal," but miners know from their own history that strikes are won on the picket line by stopping the scabs. Unfortunately, the UMW ranks are saddled with a leadership loyal to the capitalist Democratic Party and eager to play by the bosses' rules.

On February 19 seah coal began moving out of the Rocklick prep plant on a CSX rail line. Union brothers who work the CSX trains should be mobilized in a fight to stop scab coal! Instead, Trumka's people say it's OK to run coal out of struck mines. The UMW tops, sounding like a bunch of company lawyers, claim it's OK to haul coal mined and stockpiled before the strike. They argue that since it's coal company management scabs who bring the coal out of the preparation plant, the rail workers who haul it aren't "really" scabbing. We say, no union man should handle scab goods under any circumstances!

As we go to press, Eastern and the UMW announced that 300 miners would return to work at contract and small "punch" mines that supply the Rocklick and Sundial prep plants. But when the trucks loaded with coal got to the Rocklick plant on February 22 they were

met with UMW pickets who turned them around.

If the whole UMW came out, the miners would have tremendous clout in approaching the rail unions to join their fight. UMW-mined coal may only be 27 percent of the total, but that still packs a whopping economic impact. With the rail unions and Teamsters on their side, the UMW could stop 100 percent of the nation's coal from going anywhere. But it was precisely in order to outlaw such militant union action that the Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin anti-labor laws were passed. To wage such a class-struggle fight means a clean break from Trumka's Democratic Party "friends" like Clinton, and a fight for a workers party. The Mineworkers and the CIO weren't built by obeying injunctions and begging Congress or the state legislature in Charleston for an end to "permanent replacement workers."

Miners shouldn't forget the stab in the back that Trumka handed Pittston strikers during their ten-month-long strike in 1989-90. During the summer of 1989, 50,000 miners wildcatted in solidarity with the Pittston strikers, but Trumka ordered them back to work. He followed that betrayal with another one, by stopping the powerful occupation of the Moss No. 3 processing plant in southwest Virginia that September. Not once during the Pittston strike did the UMW call on rail workers to "hot cargo" seah coal. Pittston miners took thousands of arrests following Trumka's "civil disobedience" strategy, but it was the wildcat and occupation of Moss No. 3 that made the coal bosses sweat.

The mine workers are engaged in a class battle, but the UMW officialdom in Washington, D.C. wants to be a group

of "responsible, reasonable" negotiating partners with the coal companies. Violence-baiting against the miners from the cops, the courts and the coal barons who own the courts, politicians and newspapers is sheer lying hypocrisy. As one Local 6608 member at Montcoal said, pointing to the "Eastern Associated" sign at his mine, "I'll tell you the people responsible for the violence. It's the people over there on that sign and the government and the courts." *Stopping the scabs* is simple self-defense. And real "solidarity" with the miners strike means mobilizing the natural allies of the UMW in the rail, steel, longshore and power workers unions to *stop the seah coal*.

West Virginia miners know about the 19-month-long strike at Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation by the United Steelworkers. Many miners joined USW picket lines last year and donated to the strike fund. The gutsy Ravenswood steel workers prevented the company from carrying out its union-busting scheme, but the rank and file of USWA Local 5668 were stuck with an agreement that allowed scabs to stay in the plant and in the union. The settlement of the Ravenswood strike also left a brave union man, Robert Buck, to twist in the wind after the courts made an example of him. Buck was railroaded to prison for 33 months on charges of possessing an explosive device. He was really jailed because he wouldn't wear a wire and spy on his union for the feds.

As our reporters visited union halls and picket lines, they distributed information and appeals to the miners about Robert Buck and the campaign to free him. Picket shanties throughout the West Virginia hollows carry posters demand-

ing his freedom. So while the *Charleston Gazette* and the phony socialist SWP's *Militant* praise the Ravenswood strike as a model for the miners—i.e., pursuing a strategy of boycotts and "corporate campaign" negative publicity—*Workers Vanguard* told the truth: the bowing and scraping of the union tops before capitalist "law and order" cost the courageous Ravenswood workers 20 hard months and Bob Buck's job.

At the meeting of the top officers of AFL-CIO unions in Bal Harbour, Florida (while Peabody was moving scab coal out of its pits from Indiana to West Virginia), Trumka and AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland announced that the "Strategic Approaches Committee" which masterminded the Ravenswood strike is becoming involved in the UMW strike. In Bal Harbour the same AFL-CIO chieftains who have ruined strikes from PATCO to Caterpillar were busy fawning over Clinton's new secretary of labor, Robert Reich, who wants a "partnership" between labor and the capitalist government—i.e., no embarrassing strikes during Clinton's honeymoon.

The time is now for the UMW to reclaim the coal fields. To organize the unorganized it will take a solid strike that wins. Fight for an industrywide contract! No contract, no work! The key is leadership. PR ploys, boycotts and demonstrating outside the home of the chairman of the board of Peabody will not win a strike. You need a class-struggle leadership prepared to take on the Taft-Hartley "slave labor" law, court injunctions and the cops, as well as the capitalist politicians from plutocrat Democrat Jay Rockefeller to "right to work" Clinton, in order to run the scabs out of the coal fields and out of the country. ■

L.A. On The Edge...

(continued from page 12)

weapons aimed through the sunroofs of police cruisers. Now the paramilitary forces of the LAPD, dressed in grey camouflage khakis, combat boots and black T-shirts with the logo "civil disorder," are being trained in the parking lot of Dodger Stadium for "unusual occurrence" preparation. As the *Los Angeles Times* (3 February) noted, these exercises are "a high-profile, not-so-thinly veiled warning to would-be rioters as the federal trial begins for four policemen accused of brutalizing Rodney G. King."

In the face of a possible teachers strike—which could link the seething resentment and anger in the ghettos and barrios to the power of organized labor—the LAPD is preparing to establish an emergency operations control center in the basement of City Hall, which houses the most powerful, state-of-the-art police communications center in the world. The teachers were set to hit the bricks on February 22, against the school district's "final" contract offer of a 12 percent pay cut! While the *Los Angeles Times* (12 February) fretted over the "prospect of picket line confrontations and 650 campuses with thousands of students and little supervision," the LAPD had mobilized to put an additional 1,000 cops on duty this week. But Willie Brown and the leadership of the United Teachers-Los Angeles (UTLA) are serving as the advance cops, policing against a strike.

Last weekend the UTLA misleaders voted to postpone the strike deadline until March 1 in order to have the membership vote on Brown's settlement package which calls for the teachers' pay cut to be "reduced" to...10 percent! Hypocritically proclaiming the union leadership "would never recommend a pay cut," UTLA president Helen Bernstein said, "it is a decision teachers should make on their own." This is an utterly cynical attempt to wear down and demoralize the ranks of the union, who have already expressed overwhelming opposition to any pay cut. L.A. teachers: Vote it down! Strike to win!

Widespread Sympathy for L.A. Teachers

The 1989 Los Angeles teachers strike was enormously popular. Black, Latino



Striking teachers rally during May 1989 strike. Students joined the picket lines during that popular strike.

and white students swelled the picket lines. Throughout, working-class and minority communities and parents saw the teachers' battle as their own fight for a future for their kids against a school system which condemns them to overcrowded classrooms, prison-like conditions and ignorance. A recent poll showed that 69 percent of the city's population "strongly believe" that a teachers strike would be justified.

Once hailed as the "education state," California now ranks 48th among the 50 states in per capita expenditure on public education. This is the legacy of the 1978 Proposition 13 "tax revolt," a white middle-class backlash against government programs viewed as benefiting blacks and Latinos. In L.A., where this "movement" was spawned, it was linked up with BUSSTOP—a racist mobilization that squashed even the most minimal attempts at school integration.

The same forces are now represented by San Fernando Valley Democrat David Roberti, who is pushing for a Valley breakaway from the mammoth L.A. school district. This is rightly seen by blacks, Latinos and other minorities and working people as a move to further ghettoize their children in decrepit schools. As Diane Watson, who was the only black member of the L.A. school board in the 1970s and is now a Democratic state senator, noted, "It's going to

be a battle of class and a battle of race." But California's black Democrats are desperately trying to keep the lid on any such battle.

A militant teachers strike could galvanize widespread solidarity among working people and minorities to deliver a powerful blow against wage-slashing rulers whose cutbacks have devastated

education, health and welfare. At the time of the multiracial uprising last year, the Partisan Defense Committee and the Spartacist League demanded that the powerful L.A.-area unions such as longshore, aerospace and city workers organize work stoppages and mass mobilizations in defense of the besieged black and Hispanic masses. A UTLA strike could serve as the spark to mobilize the multiracial labor movement. This would give the racist L.A. cops—who lord it over this "open shop" city like the military in a "banana republic" dictatorship—a long overdue lesson in justice.

As we wrote in "L.A. Upheaval Shakes America" (WV No. 551, 15 May 1992):

"The mass eruption in Los Angeles represents a dramatic breakdown of capitalist 'law and order.' Thus on the one hand it poses the danger of a much harsher bonapartist regime marked especially by the police-state repression of any black unrest. At the same time, it can open the road to revolutionary social struggle uniting the working class, whose conditions have been driven down over the past two decades, and the desperate minority poor in the ghettos and barrios."

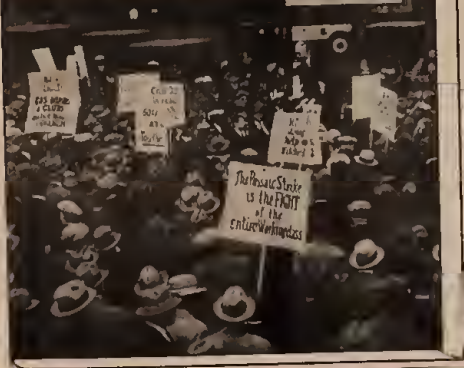
A revolutionary workers party is desperately needed to lead a fighting, multiracial workers movement that champions the cause of the oppressed, rather than acting as the labor cops for the capitalists, holding down and dividing the ranks as the sellout labor officialdom does today. ■



Spartacists join outraged protesters at L.A.'s Parker Center hours after racist acquittal of cop beaters of Rodney King.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Cops, Troops Gear Up Against Blacks, Labor

L.A. On The Edge

LOS ANGELES, February 21—The "City of Angels" is a seething volcano just waiting to explode. Jury selection continues for the federal trial of the racist LAPD thugs who savagely beat Rodney King. The trial of the "L.A. Four," black youths who are charged with the vicious assault on white truck driver Reginald Denny during the multiracial upheaval which swept Los Angeles last April, is scheduled to begin on March 15. Meanwhile, black Democrat Willie Brown, Speaker of the California State Assembly, and union bureaucrats are desperately trying to stop L.A.'s 28,000 teachers from going on strike.

The racist rulers are nervous as hell that Los Angeles will erupt again, and their fingers are on the trigger. On February 17, 600 National Guardsmen descended on L.A. "to test their ability to control a civil insurrection." Code-named "Operation Angel Guard," the exercise was kicked off by a "practice alert" call from the office of California governor Pete Wilson. Troops were deployed to armories in the area. A colonel for the National Guard told the press that emergency ammunition has also been "'strategically located' throughout the state to facilitate a rapid response."

The LAPD is being armed with new weapons for "dealing with the public," like the plastic bullets that were fired on a rally last December in defense of the "L.A. Four" at the corner of Florence and Normandie—the flash point of last April's conflagration. Over 350 cops laid siege to the area for 18 hours, beating residents and terrorizing the streets with automatic

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Los Angeles, February 17—"Operation Angel Guard," California National Guard "practices" crowd control, El Salvador-style. Carey/L.A. Times

Pull Out the Whole UMW with Peabody Strikers! For Real Solidarity—Hot Cargo Scab Coal!

MADISON, West Virginia—Picket lines representing more than 5,000 members of the United Mine Workers (UMW) went up at Peabody Coal/Eastern Associated Coal mines in West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois on the first of the month. The strike against Peabody, which mines 10 percent of all U.S. coal, is the first major labor battle of the Clinton administration. UMW president Richard Trumka called the "selective strike" against Peabody after he arranged a 60-day contract extension with a four-company group of "Independents," and Peabody is the only member of the coal barons' BCOA group to be struck.

This past weekend, one coal industry analyst said that "the company is ready for all-out war." On the heels of this threat, three UMW pickets at the Squaw Creek mine in Indiana were run down by a bus full of scabs. One striker was hospitalized with hack injuries. Another striker at the nearby Lynnvill mine was hit by a delivery truck.

Last week *Workers Vanguard* teams traveled through the coal fields of southern West Virginia and southern Illinois, visiting picket lines and union halls. Miners on picket duty up and down Route 85 and Route 3 in West Virginia told WV that the selective strike is "no damn good—we all have to be out." At

Report from the Coal Fields



Strikers picket outside Montcoal, West Virginia mine and preparation plant, February 19. WV Photo

one picket line, miners were angry that an A.T. Massey subsidiary, Omar, had just settled while they're still out on strike. Massey became infamous during

a 1984-85 strike for its South African-style union-busting tactics. With Trumka at the helm, the Massey selective strike was the beginning of the end of national

strikes. Not only did Trumka's team abandon the industrywide contract in the bitter defeat at Massey, but five Kentucky miners railroaded in the bosses' courts for defending their picket line have been left to rot in prison by the UMW bureaucracy.

The 60,000 members of the UMW are at a crossroads. In 1974 the UMW had over 60,000 members in West Virginia alone! Twenty years ago 70 percent of the coal industry was organized by the UMW. Today, however, UMW-mined coal is down to less than one-third of the total produced in the U.S. The limited strike against Peabody betrays the whole union, which used to be known for its militant application of the trade-union principles of "no contract, no work" and "picket lines mean you better not cross." Worse yet, even the ongoing strike at Peabody and Eastern Associated is being selectively applied—Peabody operations in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Arizona were exempted by Trumka.

At the Harris No. 1 mine in Bald Knob, the notorious union-busting Vance Security goons who were used against miners during the A.T. Massey and Pittston strikes are again plying their dirty scabherding trade. WV witnessed Vance using a truck towing powerful halogen

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