

Reformist Left Wallows in Democratic Party Swamp

The Clinton Quagmire

William Jefferson Clinton picked up where his predecessor Bush left off—bombing Iraq, locking up Haitians fleeing terror and poverty, demanding more “sacrifice” from workers, minorities and the impoverished as unemployment continues to soar. Now Clinton is talking of bombing Serbian positions in Bosnia and maybe even sending ground troops into the Balkan quagmire. Clinton and Attorney General Reno recently exacted the ultimate “sacrifice” from a small integrated religious sect in Waco. Yet from the moment Clinton emerged as the front-runner in the 1992 Democratic primaries, a host of supposed socialists clamored onto this yuppie racist’s bandwagon. Now these fake-left “Friends of Bill” are clamoring for him to “keep his promises.”

After 100 days in office, Clinton admits to being “out of focus,” though increasing sectors of the bourgeoisie see the new administration as out to lunch. The *Economist* (10 April) bemoans “amateurishness” over Clinton’s foreign policy misadventures. As for his campaign promises, Clinton has promised nothing but more pain and no gain for working people, minorities and the poor.

Clinton’s message to the ghettos and barrios is drop dead, as he moves to slash nearly \$100 billion in social benefits over the next four years, and proclaims “the end of welfare as we know it.” For all the Clintons’ talk of universal health care and occasional posturing against profit-gouging insurance companies, Clinton was in their hip pocket even before he got elected. His “managed competition” scheme is the brain child of insurance giants like Blue Cross and Prudential, who combined in an “Alliance for Managed Competition” last fall.

Clinton has more millionaire representatives of big business in his Cabinet than even Reagan and Bush had. His call for “equal sacrifice” spells higher taxes for the middle class and working people; his labor secretary Robert Reich is dead-set against any increase in the sub-poverty-level minimum wage. Clinton’s only sop to organized labor, the so-called “striker replacement bill” which would ban the hiring of permanent scabs, is in fact a corporatist measure designed to force all industrial disputes into mandatory arbitration.

The Mother’s Day 1985 bombing of the black MOVE commune in Philadelphia was the signature of the Reagan years. Democrat Clinton waited only three months to etch his signature into the collective consciousness, with the coldblooded, televised incineration of 86 men, women and children in the Branch Davidian compound in Waco. With two Southern Baptists at the top of the administration, it’s no surprise that they’d move to clean out an off-beat religious group in this Zion of the Texas Bible Belt. Clinton found himself an attorney general who was ready to go out and

Massacre in Waco, Saber Rattling over Bosnia



Imperialist commander in chief Clinton greets troops returning from U.S. “humanitarian” invasion of Somalia.

kill babies. So Reno “made her bones” at Waco.

To the downtrodden masses of the world—at home or abroad—the Democratic “lesser evil” represents no less murderous and oppressive a “New World Order” than its Republican predecessor.

Buying the “Death of Communism”

Twelve years of Reagan and Bush have taken such a toll on the ostensible American left that they have devalued even their standard nickel-and-dime reformist expectations of a Democrat in the White House. Tailing the Democrats is nothing new for these outfits, but in the old days it was done with a nudge and a wink and talk of “all out to fight the right.” Now their support to the yuppie Dixiecrat in the White House is open and unabashed.

The Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA), of course, called on their supporters to be “enthusiastic partisans of Clinton’s victory.” Even as the trial of the racist cops who beat Rodney King was becoming the launching point for a massive police-state buildup in Los Angeles, the Communist Party’s *People’s Weekly World* (27 February) declared that “The new administration marks a change in the struggle against racism because we will not be dealing with the Reagan-Bush open defense and promotion of racism, racist brutality and discrimination.”

But what’s new and noteworthy is that a number of left groups are closing up shop to become Democrats pure and simple. In the past year, the political landscape has been littered with a growing number of corpses of reformist groups and periodicals. When it came to communism or socialism, these outfits never

walked the walk, but nowadays they don’t even talk the talk.

Last July the *Guardian*, that self-proclaimed “independent radical news-weekly,” ran a front-page fund appeal entitled “The Last Guardian?” Well, almost—it actually turned out to be the next to last. Following the November election, its social-democratic equivalent, *In These Times*, headlining “Opportunity Knocks” under a photo of Clinton, changed its format to suit its desired role as house organ of the new administration. They hope to follow in the footsteps of their mentor, DSA founder Michael Harrington, who hired on as an adviser to JFK. And at the time of the inauguration, the *Nation* proffered its rabid advice in a special issue of “Memos to Bill,” yearning for “a new faith that

government can help people’s lives.”

Among various self-styled communist groups, there was a stampede into oblivion. Gus Hall’s Communist Party USA suffered a major split in late 1991, reducing it to an ossified sect as a whole layer of social-democratic elements split to form the red-white-and-blue “Committees of Correspondence” (CoC). A tiny Stalinist offshoot, the Communist Labor Party, dissolved itself this January, forming the equally true-blue American “National Organizing Committee.” And the Marxist-Leninist Party, former cheerleaders for Albania’s Enver Hoxha, is openly discussing whether to be or not to be. Meanwhile, the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, followers of Ernest Mandel, also bit the dust, with most of

continued on page 12

The Rise and Fall of the BLACK PANTHER PARTY



SEE PAGE 8

Pirkle Jones





# Free Mondo and Ed Poindexter!

On March 9 Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (David Rice) appeared before the Nebraska parole board, which for the first time recommended that the Board of Pardons commute Mondo's life sentence to a term of a set number of years. This makes Mondo eligible for parole after 22 years in prison, framed up under the FBI's racist COINTELPRO vendetta against the Black Panther Party and its supporters.

Mondo and Ed Poindexter were Black Panther Party supporters and former leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. They were convicted of the 1970 killing of a cop in a bomb explosion on the perjured testimony of a scared 15-year-old, Duane Peak. After initially stating he acted alone in placing the bomb, Peak was threatened

with the death sentence, and was offered a deal in which he pleaded guilty to juvenile delinquency in exchange for framing Mondo and Poindexter. Although Peak named four others as well, the prosecuting attorney, Art O'Leary, said he was only interested in Mondo and Poindexter. At a 1970 deposition O'Leary told Peak, "It doesn't make any difference what the truth is concerning you at all."

Five volumes of FBI COINTELPRO documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act revealed that evidence was intentionally withheld because Omaha's deputy police chief believed it would be damaging to the prosecution. Among the withheld evidence was information concerning deals made between the prosecutors and Peak,



Nat Weinstein

as well as the tape recording of the phone call which brought the cops to the bomb site. A 1970 FBI memorandum baldly stated, "Assistant COP [chief of police] GLENN GATES, Omaha PD, advised that he feels that any use of tapes of this call might be prejudicial to the police murder trial against two accomplices of PEAK...."

Mondo is an award-winning writer and artist, and has a monthly column carried in the *Lincoln Journal*. Poindexter's case will be reviewed by the Parole Board in June. We urge readers to send letters now to the Board of Pardons, P.O. Box 94754, Lincoln, NE 68509-4754, calling for Mondo's immediate release. Write the Nebraska Parole Board, 801 W. Van Dorn Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68522, to demand freedom for Ed Poindexter.



Committee to Free Rice/Poindexter

Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (David Rice), left, and Ed Poindexter, jailed supporters of the Black Panther Party.

"The Mexican government among others has protested the scheduled execution. Mr. Herrera's case illustrates once again the racist nature of the death penalty. Mexican American Leonel Herrera was tried by a jury which included a police detective who had investigated the case, and friends and relatives of the dead police officers. Poor and Hispanic, like many of those on death row, Mr. Herrera was pronounced dead by the Texas judicial system as soon as he walked into that courtroom eleven years ago—so the state of Texas sees no need to consider new evidence of his innocence now.

"Texas harbors a sordid history of innocent men on death row who only through desperate luck were able to escape excruciating and horrifying death. We have only to mention Randall Dale Adams and Clarence Brandley, who even now the state is vindictively pursuing for child support he couldn't pay during his nine years on the Row.

"The coals have barely cooled outside of Waco, and bodies of still more victims remain to be shoveled into bags. Yet the state of Texas along with the federal gov-



TROTSKY

## Black Power and Class Power

*In the mid-1960s, under the impact of the defeats of the civil rights movement in the North and disillusioned with the Kennedy-Johnson White House, black militants raised the slogan of "black power." Recognizing the potentially revolutionary impulse behind this slogan, our organization sought to link the black revolt against the "white power structure" to working-class struggle against the capitalist system. As against the radical nationalism then current among black militants, we raised the program of revolutionary integrationism, the fight for black equality by the multiracial American working class under communist leadership.*

The adherents of "black power" are usually the most militant elements who have adopted the term partly because of its militant sound and partly because of its repugnance to white liberals. Thus the "black power" movement contains a number of radical points and methods which have caused the bourgeois press to shower vicious abuse on it. Some "black power" advocates profess to reject middle-class values and desire to serve "human" values; they generally favor independent political action such as the Black Panther Party in Lowndes County; they see the connection between the Negro struggle at home and anti-imperialist struggles abroad, as in SNCC's recent statement on Viet Nam; and they discuss the use of armed self-defense against racist terror. In short, the "black power" movement is raising questions whose answers lie outside the framework set up by the capitalist class.

However, as yet the movement has not become consciously anti-capitalist. It has rejected what it knows as liberalism but is unsure of how to go further. Lacking a conscious orientation towards the working class, and constantly surrounded by bourgeois propaganda, the movement may yet fall prey to bourgeois politicians with radical phrases or else become hopelessly isolated and demoralized....

The victory of the socialist revolution in this country will be achieved through the united struggle of black and white workers under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard party. In the course of this struggle unbreakable bonds will be forged between the two sections of the working class. The success of the struggle will place the Negro people in a position to insure at last the end of slavery, racism and super-exploitation.

—"Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom,"  
Spartacist supplement, May-June 1967



LENIN

## Supreme Court Murder

At 4:39 a.m. on May 12, Mexican American Leonel Herrera was injected with lethal chemicals. Ten minutes later he was dead—a "legal" state murder that exemplifies the bloody injustice of America's Halls of Justice. Three months earlier on January 25, the Supreme Court declared that new evidence of his innocence did not entitle Herrera to a hearing before execution. In his final statement Herrera insisted, "I am an innocent man and something very wrong is taking place tonight."

The Rehnquist court had already pronounced Herrera dead in February of last year, when it agreed to hear his appeal but refused to stay the execution. If a state court had not intervened to issue a stay, Herrera's body would have been long cold before the Supreme Court ever decided whether or not he had a right to a new hearing! Happy to put the nails in the coffin they built for Herrera over a year ago, Rehnquist & Co. rejected four late-hour appeals in Herrera's final hours.

With legal constraints disappearing and bipartisan legislatures expanding the list of crimes punishable by death, the death toll grows higher each year. Thirty-one people were executed in the U.S. last year, the greatest number since 1962. With Clinton in the White House the death row speedup has accelerated, with executioners churning out corpses at nearly one a week. Already next week, the state of Texas has scheduled the execution of another Mexican American, Pedro Solis Sosa.

Just hours before Herrera was executed, the PDC sent the following protest to Governor Ann Richards:

"The case of Leonel Herrera is particularly infamous. It is with this case that the state of Texas insists that it has the right to execute even those who are innocent. In a blood-curdling decision the Supreme Court agreed, ruling that new evidence which may prove his innocence is not grounds for a new trial. Even Justice Blackmun has called this 'perilously close to simple murder.'



Leonel Herrera

ernment continues to feed the judicial machinery of death.

"The Partisan Defense Committee demands: Stop the execution of Leonel Herrera!"

Around the world, opponents of the barbaric, racist death penalty are rallying to the call to save death row political prisoner and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal. To join the campaign for Jamal we urge readers to contact the PDC.

\* \* \*

We encourage WV readers to continue to support and build the PDC. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. You can aid the program to support class-war prisoners and other activities by becoming a monthly sustainer. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, New York 10013. ■

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# On the Communalist War in Bosnia

Dear Editor:

I have been reading WV for many years (almost 20) and must comment about your coverage of ex-Yugoslavia. I believe that there are some unexplained inconsistencies in WV's position concerning the conflict. To begin with, unless the bourgeois press is completely overestimating the danger of annihilation of the Bosnians, shouldn't the Spartacist League be in favor of self-defense of the Bosnians? At what point will the Spartacist League be in favor of military support to the Bosnians? The press never seems to report Bosnian atrocities against other populations, it is true, but militarily it looks evident that the Bosnians are definitely the weaker force.

I'm writing this April 24, and it may be that tomorrow the U.S. will bomb the Serbs or let the Bosnians have arms. Nevertheless, this does not put an end to the practical questions I am trying to raise in this letter. Marxists can't politically support nationalists, either the Serbs or the Bosnians. It could change tomorrow, and the Bosnians, with U.S. support, could do to the Serbs what everybody else is doing to them. But for at least a year now it seems to me that one has to be a bit of an ostrich not to see that the Bosnians are getting the worst of it.

Isn't Bosnia looking more and more like the situation with the Ibo tribe in Nigeria—Biafra? Wasn't the Marxist position no political support to nationalism but in cases where whole populations are being threatened with extinction Marxists extend military support to defend the beleaguered population? The Spartacist League had a (retrospective) position of support for Hebrew workers in 1949, didn't it, because the SL believed (erroneously) that the Jews were in danger of being thrown into the sea? The SL supported the Hebrew workers militarily even though there was no working class political axis to support and Jewish terrorists were indiscriminately killing Palestinians. The reason for abandoning this position was new evidence that Hebrew workers were not under any real threat of extinction at the time. Nevertheless, the logic of the SL position, extending military support for populations under threat of extinction, still holds, does it not? The support for the Hebrew workers in 1949 was done despite the fact that imperialist intentions in the area supported Israel.

On the other hand, no such military support was extended by the SL to the Greeks living on Cyprus when Turkey invaded. Is it because the Turks made it known they were after only half of the island? What would have happened if they decided to annihilate the Greeks?

In the U.S. the SL has a position of supporting armed self-defense of blacks threatened by the Klan. Is this position only for the U.S.? Isn't self-defense a basic democratic right? It applies to Alabama in the 1960's but not to Bosnia in the 1990's?

It is obvious to anyone who reads the papers that the main reason the Bosnians are being slaughtered is because they don't have the arms necessary for defense. The SL has a very well-defined position against gun control. Relatively speaking, gun control is in effect in Bosnia. They can't defend themselves. Everyone else can. Does this mean that the SL position against gun control applies only to the U.S. and not anywhere else in the world?

From where I sit the SL has a problem with this and I really would like to see something cogent written about this in your press. In a military conflict like this

an arms embargo is a death sentence. How will it serve the working class if the Bosnians are slaughtered because the SL has a position concerning interpenetrated peoples and there is no side to choose? Why is the SL blurring the distinction between military support and political support in this instance? Does this represent some sort of pacifism?

A Reader

*WV replies:* In our last issue (WV No. 575, 7 May), the front-page article "U.S./NATO Hands Off the Balkans!" restated and explained our position: "Revolutionary Marxists take no sides in the bloody communalist/nationalist wars ripping apart the former Yugoslavia

capitalism, attempts by one of any such interpenetrated peoples to consolidate a nation-state will inevitably be at the cost of the other(s), whether in the form of forced population transfers, military occupation or other kinds of oppression.

With the breakup of the Yugoslav bureaucratic deformed workers state, the Bosnian Muslims in April 1992 declared Bosnia independent of what was now a de facto Greater Serbian state. The Serbs and Croats rejected being minorities in a Muslim-dominated statelet and fought to attach regions they dominated to Serbia and Croatia. Under bourgeois-nationalist leadership, the division of Bosnia under the guise

land they've lost, driving out the Serbs and Croats in their own version of "ethnic cleansing."

Our reader draws an analogy between the Bosnian Muslims and the Ibos in the Nigerian civil war of 1967-69, when we gave military support to the Biafran army. Wherein lies the difference? Nigeria was (and is) a neocolonial state cobbled together by British imperialism from among ethnically diverse and geographically separated peoples. At the time of the Biafra secession in mid-1967, the nine million Ibos of Nigeria were concentrated in the Eastern Region. An independent Biafran state in no way meant oppression of the Hausas of the Northern Region or the Yoruba of the Western Region. The Hausa-dominated Nigerian Federal Army aimed to subjugate the Ibos, and killed at least two million people to force the surrender of the Biafran army.

Rather than Nigeria, the situation in Bosnia more closely resembles Lebanon or Northern Ireland (Ulster), where attempts to find a bourgeois solution to the "national question" among interpenetrated peoples, ethnic and religious groupings have resulted in decades-long bloody and intractable conflict.

In arguing for military support to the Bosnian Muslims, our reader also appeals to the democratic right of individuals or small communities to defend themselves against violent attack. The analogy of blacks attacked by Klansmen in the American South has no bearing on what is happening in Bosnia. The combatants there are not isolated villagers and local bands of racist terrorists. They are armed forces, numbering in the tens of thousands, linked to and supported by two newly formed bourgeois states (Serbia and Croatia) and a bourgeois proto-state (Muslim Bosnia).

Likewise, the issue of the international arms embargo has nothing to do with providing the civilian population with small arms. There are plenty of AK-47s and other automatic rifles in Bosnia. The Muslim leaders want to acquire heavy weaponry like artillery and tanks for their army. We are not for the imperialist arms embargo, but to agitate for lifting the arms embargo is tantamount to giving military support to the Bosnian Muslim army, which, should it gain the upper hand, would wreak vengeance on the Serbs and Croats. This is *not* a progressive solution.

Refusing to support one side militarily in this all-sided ethnic butchery is hardly "pacifism." As we wrote in the last issue of WV: "Trotskyists fight to build proletarian-internationalist communist parties that will wage uncompromising struggle against all forms of nationalism, and put an end to 'ethnic cleansing' once and for all in a Socialist Federation of the Balkans." ■



as an outcome and motor of capitalist counterrevolution." The bourgeois media, in contrast, have been whipping up sentiment for U.S. intervention by harping on the theme of supposed Serbian "genocide" against "the Bosnians." "A Reader" premises his arguments on this war propaganda. Nevertheless, the questions raised are worth answering.

In the first place, Bosnia is not a nation and there is no Bosnian nationality. As a province in the Ottoman and then Habsburg empires, Bosnia was a region of three very closely related South Slavic peoples who became thoroughly intermingled in the course of many centuries. Forty-five percent of the population in this former Yugoslav republic are Slavic Muslims, a third are Serbs and 17 percent are Croats, all speaking the same language (Serbo-Croatian). No region within Bosnia is close to being ethnically homogeneous. Even the border areas with the greatest concentrations of Serbs and Croats had large Muslim minorities.

A resolution adopted by our party in 1974 stated: "the democratic issue of self-determination for each of two nationalities or peoples who geographically interpenetrate can only conceivably be resolved equitably within the framework of the proletariat in power" (quoted in "Birth of the Zionist State: A Marxist Analysis, Part 2," WV No. 45, 24 May 1974). This referred to the situation of the Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples in Israel and is equally relevant to the case of Greeks and Turks in Cyprus, also cited by the writer. Under

of self-determination has necessarily led to massacres and brutal population transfers, now called "ethnic cleansing." This is a war for territory. It is of no concern to the contending nationalists whether those they are trying to push out live or die—they just want them somewhere else. To compare this to the Nazi Holocaust (the current refrain of the Western media) is to diminish Nazi genocide, which was aimed at *completely exterminating* Jews, Gypsies and other "Untermenschen" (subhumans).

The Montenegrin liberal Aleksa Djilas, unlike Western liberals who scream "genocide," proposes a bourgeois-democratic solution for the three contending peoples:

"The solution to the Bosnian tragedy is therefore division into three units: Muslim, Serbian and Croatian. Serbian and Croatian units should be allowed to join Serbia and Croatia respectively. Of course, the Muslim unit, situated in central Bosnia, should be much larger than at the moment either Serbs or Croats are ready to accept."

—New York Times, 16 April

However, the bourgeois-nationalist leadership of the Muslims, too, is unwilling to accept the democratic rights of the other two peoples.

Right now the Muslims are, as "A Reader" puts it, "getting the worst of it." But if the Mitosevic regime in Serbia, under pressure from the Western imperialists, cuts off support to the Bosnian Serb militias and if the Muslim army receives heavy weaponry as Clinton favors, the military balance of force can quickly be reversed. In that case the Muslim army will move to retake the

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# Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win!

## For a National Coal Strike!

CHICAGO, May 17—Two thousand coal miners walked off the job at a handful of mines in Illinois and Indiana a week ago in what United Mine Workers (UMW) president Richard Trumka called "strategic, selective strikes" against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA). During a tour of the striking UMW locals last week, Trumka blustered that all 60,000 miners covered by the expired contract might end up on strike if the bosses didn't "come to their senses." But he quickly added, "I hope that doesn't happen."

A national UMW coal strike is urgently needed now! By striking only Amax, Zeigler and Arch Minerals, Trumka is playing the bosses' game, calling out a tiny fraction of the union while the rest of the BCOA outfits replace the lost profits of the handful of struck companies. In Boone County, West Virginia, "Trumka" and "selective strike" are curses—these miners went out during February, before being ordered back without a contract by the UMW chief. And now, after a 60-day contract extension, another set of UMW locals are left to go it alone.

The *Chicago Tribune* (11 May) gloated that "Analysts doubted whether the limited strike would have much effect on the nation's slumping coal industry because of the ample amounts of stored coal at mines and utilities." UMW members must *stop the flow of coal* to cut off all the mine owners' profits. This means demanding that union rail, barge and longshore workers "hot-cargo" (refuse to handle) all coal shipments. It also means sending *roving pickets* to shut down unstruck and non-union mines, like miners did during the great coal strike of 1977-78.

Then there were 18,500 miners producing almost 60 million tons of coal in Illinois. Now only 8,830 workers mine the same amount of coal. Less than 30 percent of coal mined in the U.S. today is from UMW-organized pits. BCOA operators use "double breasting," the opening of non-union subsidiaries, to wipe out hundreds of UMW jobs. Scores of miners die each year in miserably paid jobs at non-union mines from West Virginia to Illinois. These are the fruits of 20 years of pro-Labor Department "reformers" in the UMW, from Arnold Miller to Trumka. In fact, Trumka's 1988 contract encourages the coal bosses to shut down union mines, as they are only required to hire three out of every five miners from the ranks of the UMW.

As the companies' labor costs per ton plummet and worker output soars, Trumka pleads, "We are simply asking that...UMWA members get a fair share of the new jobs they helped create through their hard work." But the profit-hungry coal barons aren't interested in Trumka's pipe dream of "cooperation." Not appeals to the bosses, but *union power* is the key to reversing the bosses' attacks on labor. The UMW must launch an aggressive organizing drive based on militant action: mass pickets, secondary boycotts, sitdown strikes. The first step today is a solid UMW strike against the whole BCOA and its "independent" satellites.

## Greyhound: A "Model" of Betrayal

Their strikes were a symbol of the 1980s—twice Greyhound drivers, mechanics and clericals struck against a company intent on wiping out the union. The first strike, in 1983, was marked by a huge outpouring of support from unionists across the country—and by the grotesque betrayal of the union tops who hung the strikers out to dry for 47 days. The second strike against Fred Currey, the archetypical corporate raider, began on March 2, 1990. The 9,000 strikers endured hundreds of arrests, RICO charges, injunctions, jail sentences and even the murder of picket Robert Waterhouse in Redding, California. But again they were sacrificed to class collaboration, amid consumer boycotts, empty "solidarity" rallies and appeals to the capitalist state to "outlaw" scabbing—the kind of "militant" window-dressing specialized in by NYC Local 1202 head (and Workers World darling) Harold Mendelowitz—as the strike was frittered away.

Now, after more than three years, the AFL-CIO bureaucrats in Washington, and their reformist toadies like the Communist Party's *People's Weekly World*, are proclaiming "Victory for Greyhound Strikers!" On April 20, Amalgamated Transit Union president James La Sala called the six-year contract "a model for labor-management relations in our country." It's a model all



Greyhound union militants in San Francisco stop scab bus at 1990 rally to honor labor martyr Robert Waterhouse.

right—for betrayal. Of the 9,000 strikers, 550 will be recalled to work—alongside the scabs who took their jobs and have been given superseniority. (Another 1,500 strikers had already gone back, most after union sanctions against returning to work were lifted last May.) Many strikers charged for strike activities are still being targeted by the capitalist courts, including driver Roger Carthwa, who is facing a second trial in Connecticut.

The much-ballyhooed \$22 million in back wages to settle ATU labor board charges is less than one-tenth of what the company was liable for. One financial analyst bragged that the settlement was of "no cost to the company," while it guaranteed labor peace through 1998. It is not surprising that even after three years out of work, 43 percent of the strikers voted to throw this back in the ATU bureaucrats' face.

In 1990 we warned that "the Greyhound strikers are being set up as the next 'strike martyrs' by the cynical and cowardly union bureaucracy." Rather than looking to Democratic Party mayors, governors, Congressmen and now the president—who are one and all enemies of the workers—there must be a fight to forge a class-struggle leadership fighting for a revolutionary workers party and a workers government. The working class will not forget the pro-capitalist traitors who engineered this bitter defeat—nor the cheerleaders of the reformist left who greased the skids for them.

## Labor Must Come to the Aid of Bessemer, Alabama Strikers!

ATLANTA, May 16—Combative Steelworkers at Trinity Industries have been on strike for eight months, defending their health benefits and the very existence of the union at the Bessemer, Alabama rail car plant. The more than 500 strikers, members of United Steelworkers Local 9226, have stayed solid, refusing to buckle to the company's demand that they abandon 57 workers fired for defending their picket lines. More than 30 strikers face frame-up charges in the bosses' courts. Now Trinity is threatening to close the plant on June 3, and is already removing machinery from the factory and moving work to its other plants.

At a March 6 "Solidarity" rally dominated by the USWA tops, a striker angrily told WV that if the strikers "had kept doing what we did in October, the strike would have been over in a week." He was referring to the mass picket which toppled the guard towers of the company goons and shut the plant down tight. But the USWA tops, echoed by the misnamed *Militant* newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party, hailed the strike-breaking injunctions handed down by a local judge. As one striker told the International reps, "You guys are telling us to cool out. You're drawing \$60,000 a year—I'll take the \$60,000, you walk the line, then I'll cool out."

Birmingham labor, especially steel workers and coal miners, must come to the aid of the integrated Trinity strikers with mass pickets and a plant occupation to keep the machinery in Bessemer. Led by black and

white Communists, steel workers used the sitdown tactic to win a dramatic CIO victory in Birmingham in 1936. Trinity employs 10,000 other workers at scores of plants across the U.S., including one organized by the UAW in Greenville, Pennsylvania which has worked throughout the Bessemer strike. On the strength of a militant sitdown, Bessemer strikers can appeal over the heads of the UAW bureaucrats for other Trinity workers to back their strike in action. Trinity recently signed a big contract to deliver 150 rail cars to Burlington Northern by July. Railroad workers must hot-cargo Trinity products! A victory in this battle in the "Pittsburgh of the South" would be a spur to organizing integrated labor throughout the open-shop South.

## Victory to Jersey Supermarket Strikers!

MAY 17—United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1262 is locked in a battle with supermarket bosses across northern New Jersey and counties north of New York City. The issue for the workers, many of whom earn only \$6.00 an hour for part-time work, is defending their health care benefits. As the strike by Local 1262 spread to 58 stores last weekend, the employers responded by locking out workers at another 72 stores. The 28,000-strong local, mainly women and minorities, represents workers at 312 Shop Rite, Grand Union, Pathmark and Food Town stores in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. It is the largest private-sector union in New Jersey.

Workers had been without a contract since April 10, but the UFCW didn't pull anyone out until May 7. As the strike spread and lockouts mounted, the union tops let the bosses order union workers to train the same scabs who were to replace them! Despite a federal court injunction limiting pickets to four, and heavy intimidation and harassment by cops and rent-a-goons, the spirited strikers have received widespread support



Picketing New Jersey grocery workers protest lockout by Pathmark bosses.

from workers in the community. When a WV sales team joined the picket line, a striker with the bullhorn chanted "What do you get when you have a class-struggle strike?" and the pickets yelled "Victory!"

But the union bureaucrats' reliance on a consumer boycott is a dead end—instead the power of labor must be mobilized through secondary boycotts and strikes. Right now, Teamster drivers are "observing" the picket lines by leaving their trucks outside the stores to be unloaded. This is playing by the bosses' rules. UFCW strikers: Throw up pickets at the warehouses and shut down all 312 stores now! Victory to the supermarket strikers!

## Airline Unionists: Don't Let Kitchen Workers Be Thrown to the Wolf!

SAN FRANCISCO, May 8—More than 1,000 unionists rallied at the San Francisco International Airport today to protest United Airline's threatened layoff of kitchen

continued on page 14



# East German Metal Strikers in Uproar Over "Compromise" Deal

BERLIN, May 18—For the last two weeks, some 40,000 east German metal and steel workers have been on strike against the bosses' tearing up of a 1991 pay agreement which would have raised wages to 82 percent of west German levels on April 1. After two months of demonstrations and "warning strikes," the IG Metall union called unlimited walkouts in Saxony and the Baltic coast state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern at the beginning of May. In spite of 50 percent unemployment in the east and even more in

today, the steel strike was solid and a warning strike and rally had been called at the locomotive plant. Today another warning strike was called and buses took several hundred Hennigsdorf workers to Berlin where they besieged the negotiators. The German ruling class is worried that this struggle, the first major strike in the east since capitalist reunification, and indeed in the last 60 years, could "get out of hand" and become a lightning rod for rampant discontent, leading to a generalized class upsurge.

the east, the imperialist bourgeoisies have launched a broad attack, hitting in particular immigrants and minorities, women and children, the sick and elderly. From Rome to London to Frankfurt, the capitalists want to put an end to the social benefits of the post-war "welfare state," and drive the standard of living of the working class down to the lowest level. German industrialists, paying an average of \$26 an hour in wages and benefits, increasingly threaten to move production to low-wage

DDR with Hitler's Third Reich—but none of the workers applauded. They see around them the devastating results of the destruction of the bureaucratically deformed East German workers state.

Having sold out the DDR to the Frankfurt bankers, the social democrats of the second mobilization of the ex-Stalinist PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) are likewise pushing a class-collaborationist "solidarity pact"—as in 1990, they just want to bargain for "better" terms for the sellout. Even as metal workers were protesting the "pilot deal," on Saturday the PDS' *Neues Deutschland* (15 May) trumpeted a "breakthrough" in the conflict, a "partial victory" making it possible for the strike to be "set aside." But by Monday they discovered that "new hurdles" to an agreement had "surprisingly appeared."

Steinkühler & Co. also seek to divide workers from their class brothers and sisters internationally, pushing German nationalism in the form of protectionist poison. But no "German steel concept" will save the tens of thousands of jobs that are now on the chopping block in the Europe-wide steel crisis. That will require instead, as the SpAD said in its leaflet, "workers' revolution hinging about real internationalist economic planning in the framework of a Socialist United States of Europe."

The key to victory lies in uniting all sectors of the proletariat around a revolutionary program. As the SpAD leaflet noted:

"In particular, the militant Turkish and Kurdish workers, who are strategic to west German industry and have few illusions in the pro-capitalist ideology of the SPD, are on the front lines in strikes. The fight against layoffs must be linked to defense of immigrant workers. Militant strike committees and strike pickets can also be the basis for defense of immigrant worker and refugee hostels and form the core of a future workers militia...."

"The growing fascist attacks, which have escalated on the basis of the German nationalism and devastating economic destruction produced by counterrevolution, have also produced strong resistance. A new generation of radical youth has taken to the streets to defend immigrants and refugees against the Nazi terrorists and attacks by the state. The most powerful and best-organized working class in Europe can be mobilized and crush the Nazi scum like stepping on an eggshell. But here again, the decisive factor is a revolutionary leadership, which as a tribune of all the exploited and oppressed links the struggles of minorities, women and youth with the class struggle of the workers." ■



Independent

Striking metal workers block scab trucks at Hennigsdorf steel plant outside Berlin. East German strikes must be spread to West where Ruhr steel workers have protested closures and layoffs (above).

the metal sector, workers voted overwhelmingly (85-90 percent) to strike. The bourgeois media noted that fighting sentiment was surprisingly strong.

At first the head of the employers association, Gesamtmetall, blustered that the union "can strike until it's dead if it wants." But when a vote for a full strike was held in the other east German states, posing the prospect of 350,000 workers in the streets, suddenly a "pilot deal" was struck under the supervision of the Christian Democratic prime minister of Saxony. Wages would gradually rise to 80 percent of the western level by the end of the year, and parity would be delayed until 1996. "Hardship" clauses could delay that until 1997 or allow companies to drop out, while formally maintaining a region-wide contract. Nothing is said of the real hardships faced by east German workers, of course.

Overall, various escape clauses amount to a whopping 6 billion D-marks (\$3.9 billion) lifted from the workers' pockets to fill the bosses' coffers. East German metal workers are understandably enraged. This comes after their bitter experience with Chancellor Kohl's vote-hustling lie in the 1990 East German elections, that reunification would soon produce a "blooming landscape." Instead capitalism has brought with it a wasteland of shut-down industry, mass joblessness and rightist terror. So while strikers in Saxony voted to accept the deal, steel workers have turned down the pact, and metal workers in Brandenburg angrily denounced the "pilot sellout" and "shut compromise."

When comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) went to the giant Hennigsdorf works yes-

What the bosses fear most of all is an extension of the strike to the core sectors of the industry in the west. In February and March, steel workers and coal miners repeatedly demonstrated in the Ruhr, and last week Mercedes Benz workers in Stuttgart staged a wildcat two-hour work stoppage. IG Metall chief Franz Steinkühler has been careful to limit action in the west to symbolic gestures. But now his credibility has been shot down by reports that as a member of the board of Daimler-Benz he gleaned 100,000 D-marks from insider stock purchases!

Noting that amid a capitalist economic crisis, with mass layoffs and plant shutdowns, isolated strikes cannot achieve much, a May Day leaflet by the SpAD headlined "Metal, Steel, Mines: Full Strike Now, East and West!" and emphasized "Workers Must Fight for Power!" It called for solid picket lines and elected strike committees. The leaflet denounced the treacherous role of the Social Democracy in collaborating with Kohl's wage-gouging, job-slashing offensive, including the call by SPD leader Björn Engholm (who has since resigned in another scandal) for a "second labor market"—i.e., a low-wage region—in the east:

"Down with Kohl/Engholm/Steinkühler's 'solidarity pact,' which is being used to frontally attack the working class. Extending the struggles from the strategic metal sector to the militant public workers could lead to a general strike against the capitalist regime."

The public workers strike in May 1992, while ultimately sold out by the ÖTV union tops, shook the Kohl government. Throughout Europe, as the counterrevolutionary wave has swept

areas like Czechoslovakia, Mexico...or the U.S.

Such a full-scale capitalist offensive can only be fought by a determined class-struggle mobilization of the workers. But the social-democratic union misleaders are wedded to the bourgeois state through the institutionalized class collaboration of the "German model" ("co-determination," union-management "plant councils," etc.). Seeking to prevent a linkup by the combative east German workers, who are far less under the thumb of the SPD, with the economic power of the west German workers, Steinkühler uses every opportunity to whip up anti-Communism. On April 24 in Leipzig he railed against "60 years of dictatorship"—grotesquely equating the

Berlin, April 7: Spartakist Workers Party protests deportation of "foreign" workers from Germany, demands full citizenship for all immigrants.







Cordula Kropke

German women ministers at Croatian nationalist meeting in Zagreb: looking to the Bundeswehr to "pacify" Bosnia.



Der Spiegel

# Fourth Reich Feminists for Blitzkrieg in the Balkans

The following article is translated from Spartakist No. 103 (May 1993), published by the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Daily the imperialists are beating the drums louder for intervention in the Balkans. The Bonn government sends off a "humanitarian" Afrikakorps to Somalia, and Bundeswehr troops man AWACS planes as spotters to bomb Serb positions. U.S. president Clinton calls for air strikes and prepares an expeditionary force of 50,000-plus troops to Bosnia. But now there is something new on the Western front: the feminists and Greens are in the first row beating the drums for the imperialist warmongers. Already during the Persian Gulf War, [German chancellor Helmut] Kohl commanded: no "anti-Americanism," and in the very next "antiwar" marches demonstrators carried "We Are Not Anti-American" signs—until the bombing started, whereupon the demonstrations stopped completely. Even some ostensible leftists supported the carpetbombing of the Iraqi population in the name of defending Israel. But now petty-bourgeois "progressives" and erstwhile pacifists have become the *advance guard* in the imperialist drive to send German troops back to the front.

In a debate moderated by *Der Spiegel* (1 February), the Green leader in the Hamburg parliament, Conny Jürgens, attacked retired Luftwaffe general Manfred Opel (of the Social Democratic Party, SPD) for rejecting the Greens' call for military intervention (made in common with such champions of "human rights" as Prince Oskar of Prussia and Prince Ferdinand von Bismarck): "But when the chips are down, then you chicken out, Herr General." She also demanded that "UN troops should be deployed almost as policemen" in the Balkans. A "police action" is what they called the "UN" (in reality U.S.) war in Korea in 1950-53, that killed six million Koreans. But Jürgens et al. are pushing for the deployment of German troops, for the Fourth Reich to take up where the Third failed even after the massacre of 1,700,000 Slavs in Yugoslavia: "Precisely because of their old guilt the Germans have a special obligation.... The Bundeswehr should participate in such pacification measures." Now their slogan is "Make peace with arms."

The bloc of the Green "Realos" and feminists includes such prominent figures as NDR (North German Radio) Hannover boss Lea Rosh, Rupert Neu-deck (of Radio Germany and the "human

rights" group Cap Anamur), Claudia Roth, Waltraud Schoppe, Ralf Fücks and Daniel Cohn-Bendit (known as "Danny the Red" in 1968 and now the Frankfurt city government official in charge of multicultural affairs). Roth, too, calls for using "semi-police" possibilities for intervention" to disarm the Serbs and try their leaders as war criminals. Greens such as Eva Quistorp, a European parliament delegate, called last year for the UN to bomb Serbian airports and arms factories. And Neudeck, who has made some of the most strident statements on mass rapes, said straight out in January,

have been set up; there have been brutal mass population transfers. But the feminists and Greens are exploiting the issue of widespread rape for even more obscene purposes. Posing as "humanitarians" they are using it as an ideological club to morally rearm the Fourth Reich and prepare the German population for sending in the Bundeswehr.

To that end, on February 6 a conference of some 600 women met in Zagreb, retailed as "International Women's Solidarity" but demanding military intervention to stop the rapes in Bosnia. It was organized by Lea Rosh, whose fem-

(SPD), the rabid anti-Communist witch-hunting Berlin minister of "justice," jetting into Zagreb fresh after the flop of her show trial against former DDR head of state Erich Honecker.

From the beginning this orgy of bigotry was a Croatian war propaganda show. All Serbs were hanned from attending. The conference couldn't agree on a declaration because the Croats insisted that only the Serbs be named as guilty of rapes and "ethnic cleansing." When the *only* Serbian woman present (an opponent of the Milosevic regime) managed to sneak up to the microphone, over 100 Croatian women marched out—even though she also condemned Serbian soldiers.

What hypocrisy the Fourth Reich feminists show! The German sponsors and their parties were the ones who along with FDP foreign minister Genscher screamed "self-determination!" for Croatia and Slovenia, and pressured Bonn's European allies to back this, thereby dismembering Yugoslavia and igniting bloody ethnic war in the area. Tlten through "constitutional" racism they slashed the right of asylum in Germany, barricading the borders to the war's victims. Bonn has even required women to present written proof they have been raped before they can enter the country!

During World War II in Yugoslavia the populace, particularly women and minorities, knew that when Tito's Partisans with the red star came to town you were safe. In contrast, the Croatian Usta-sha committed savage genocide against the Serbs. The Chetniks also did their own "ethnic cleansing," when they weren't busy killing Communists. Today in the Balkans, atrocities are being committed not only by the Serbian nationalists but by *all* sides; the truth, however, is not convenient in Bonn's vengeful policy against the Serbs.

Left and right, the press took up the imperialists' cry last summer about concentration camp conditions in Serbian POW camps, but the 40 similar camps known to be run by the Croatian nationalists were assiduously ignored. The feminists claim that 60,000 and more Bosnian Muslim women have been raped, basing these claims on Croatian ultranationalist women's organizations. In January 1992 a special Common Market commission of investigation declared that there were 20,000 cases, but their "evidence" too is shaky. Even Amnesty International has sharply criticized the extensive exploitation of the mass rape reports as a propaganda weapon.

In the March issue of *konkret* magazine, Horst Schneider trenchantly ex-



AP

Evacuation of Bosnian Muslims fleeing Srebrenica. German Imperialists precipitated bloody breakup of Yugoslavia.

"What do we have an army for if we don't want to use it?"

The "alternative" *tageszeitung* also knows which side it's on as inter-imperialist rivalries sharpen, writing on April 17: "Unfortunately hardly any notice is taken in the German public that the construction of a Greater Serbia is by no means encountering disapproval in France and Great Britain, particularly in light of the fact that Germany's increased influence in Eastern Europe is regarded with suspicion...."

The battle cry the feminists have taken up here is mass rape by Serbian forces in Bosnia. There is no doubt that there have been horrifying attacks on non-Serb women, particularly by so-called "Chetnik" bands; as their models they look back to the Serb royalists who fought against the Communist Partisans in World War II. Thousands of women have been raped, concentration camps

inist rhetoric also earns her a sympathetic hearing in *taz*. In TV talk shows, Rosh, who specializes in "coming to grips with the past," has been urging "reunited Germany" to own up to its "responsibility" and stop hiding "in the shadow of the past."

Look at the rogues' gallery of German-nationalist politicians they invited. Rosh bragged on SAT-1 TV, "We are going to Zagreb...with a lot of German women ministers." Christian Democratic Bundestag president Rita Süßmuth was one of the sponsors. (Even Hillary Clinton sent a letter of greeting.) There was a bevy of SPD bigwigs including Herta Daubler-Gmelin, Regine Hildebrandt, Cornelia Schmalz-Jacobsen, and Greens such as Waltraud Schoppe and Eva Quistorp, one of the most rabidly militarist. There were Niedersachsen women ministers, an Austrian woman minister, and none other than Jutta Limbach



# U.S. Feminists Beat Imperialist War Drums

Is there nothing the American feminist establishment won't do for Bill and Hillary Clinton and the bloody aims of the U.S. ruling class? As the new administration threatens to send bombs, guns and troops to the remnants of the former Yugoslav deformed workers state, some of the loudest war cries are coming from the liberal wing of the American capitalist class. And leading the charge are the imperialist feminists. Cheering on Attorney General Janet Reno, who proved by ordering mass murder in Waco that she can run the killing machine of domestic repression, now imperialist feminists are screaming "bombs away" over Bosnia.

Exploiting the hideous reports of mass rape and sexual brutality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they're calling for the American jackboot to "save" the Bosnian Muslims from the terror of the Serbian nationalists. Feminist bookstores circulate form letters to Clinton calling for "strong, meaningful action... NOW to protect the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina." Liberal *New York Times* columnist Anna Quindlen tags the Pentagon "the Rescuers" and calls for Bill Clinton to adopt "a clear mission, a clear plan" to do the "right thing" in Bosnia. Supposedly more militant feminist groups like the rad-lib Women's Action Coalition demand "a strengthened U.N. peacekeeping force" in the Balkans.

But the most grotesque of the feminist warmongers is lawyer Catharine MacKinnon, the queen of the anti-pornography witchhunt against sexual privacy over the past decade. Along with the National Organization for Women Legal Defense and Education Fund, MacKinnon has filed suit in a New York court against Serbian president Radovan

Karadzic, charging him with ordering the widespread raping of Bosnian women as part of "ethnic cleansing." By calling on the court to issue an injunction against Karadzic, they're taking Washington's line that the U.S. has "supersovereignty" throughout the world...and establishing a "legal" pretext for U.S. military intervention, like Bush's invasion of Panama to get General Noriega.

In her zeal to mobilize the forces of U.S. imperialism, MacKinnon has been playing the numbers game on rape in the former Yugoslavia. She was reported in the *Washington Post* as putting "the total at more than 50,000 women and girls raped, and another 100,000 killed." Human Rights Watch executive director Aryeh Neier admonished, "Citing inflated numbers that are not based on firm evidence could depreciate the horror of the crimes if it turns out that 'only' 2,000 or 5,000 rape victims can be identified" (*Nation*, 1 March). In a January 1993 report, Amnesty International also cautions that:

"the issue of the rape of women (and of other atrocities committed in the conflict) has been widely used as a propaganda weapon, with all sides minimizing or denying the abuses committed by their own forces and maximizing those of their opponents."

In a letter to the *Nation* (3 May) MacKinnon smears all concern for the truth of the matter as "ignoring rape" and shamelessly baits Neier: "After reading his column, would you report your rape to this man?"

But "men" are not the only ones raising questions. A letter in the rad-lib feminist *Off Our Backs* (May 1993) by Tanya Renne of the Center for Women in Zagreb, Croatia notes that MacKinnon is representing the Croatian nationalist women's group Karetta which focuses

exclusively on Serbian war atrocities: "I understand the distinction MacKinnon is making between the Serbs who are raping systematically and 'ordinary war-rape.' MacKinnon does not, however, mention the fact that Croat and Muslim forces are engaging in this 'ordinary war-rape behavior'."

This issue of *Off Our Backs* has a 16-page pullout on "Serbia's War Against Bosnia and Croatia," which is one big call for U.S./UN intervention. The "left" wing notes that given the U.S.' "history of imperialism many of us instinctively cringe at the mention of intervention," but urges readers to "conceptualize the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in feminist terms." This means sending arms to the Bosnian Muslim government and coming out for "just intervention" by "our government." But the bulk of the special pullout is on the attack by four Bosnian women's groups represented by MacKinnon on a tour on "Rape in War" sponsored by the Washington, D.C. women's group MADRE. Their central accusation is that MADRE didn't talk about "specifically genocidal rape" in Bosnia.

In attacking Neier, MacKinnon also talks of "genocidal" rape. Are she and her clients referring to killing of rape victims? Not at all, what they are referring to is "the forcible impregnation of non-Serbian women" in order "to produce what Serbs regard as 'chelnik' babies." The suffering of women subjected to the horrors of rape and other forms of sexual violence is not what concerns these ultra-nationalists—they're only concerned about what Southern segregationists called miscegenation, "race-mixing," or as Hitler called it "race polluting." (Radlib Croatian nationalists have also denounced Croatian feminist writer Slavenka Drakulic as a "witch")

for lacking "a sufficiently nationalist world view," as shown by her having married Serb men!)

In addition to blatant racism, these latter-day Ustashis lionized by the imperialist feminists are virulent anti-communists. Karetta and the other Croatian nationalist women's groups also attack the MADRE tour for including speakers who were "empowered during the communist regime to speak for women," and one who wrote for a "Yugoslav pornography magazine" (she was another of those labeled "witches").

So German "pacifist" Greens, anti-Serb nationalists and the American feminist establishment (along with their rad-lib "sisters") are all looking to the agencies of international imperialism to save Bosnian women. NOW even called for sanctions by the IMF (International Monetary Fund), the hated international bankers' cartel which for decades has subjected hundreds of millions of the Third World poor to brutal starvation policies and which is now doing the same to the Soviet working people suffering the lash of counterrevolution.

The craven political services performed today by American feminists for the goals of imperialism underline yet again that feminism is a political movement of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois women whose "concern" extends only to removing barriers to their own success within this stinking capitalist society. With Hillary Rodham Clinton and Janet Reno basking in positions of power at the top levels of government, bourgeois feminist organizations like NOW and their frenzied attack dogs like MacKinnon exercise their new political clout by calling for bloody war by the most rapacious ruling class on the face of the earth. ■



Under protection of Nazi Wehrmacht, clerical-fascist Croatian Ustasha (above) massacred Serbs, Gypsies and Jews in World War II.

posed the militarist use to which the topic of mass rape in the former Yugoslavia has been put by the Greens and feminists. But *konkret* editors Gremliza and Schneider also beat the war drums for the U.S. "Desert Slaughter" and supported Israel. Now they complain that the Greens/feminists were silent then about the rape of Kuwaiti women by Saddam Hussein's troops—one of the "atrocities" invented by the mass media as imperialist war propaganda.

How is it that these "peace" movement veterans are now the hawks? In the later '70s and early '80s the strengthened German imperialists strove to undermine the workers states *economically*. That was the point of the SPD's *Ostpolitik* (eastern policy) and the objective basis for the pro-imperialist "peace" movement in West Germany. Reflecting this shift the Greens and other "left" satellites of the SPD openly embraced resurgent German nationalism—in leftist coloration. These forces cheered everything that smelled of counterrevolution—from the SPD/church-supported "peace" movement in the DDR and clerical-reactionary Solidarność to the feudal mujahedin "freedom fighters" in Afghanistan. (Today

the plight of Afghan women at the mercy of the murderous Islamic fundamentalists interests them not at all.) And now that the Soviet deformed workers state is no more and German imperialism has been enormously strengthened by the capitalist counterrevolution, they are pressing for Germany to capture its "place in the sun" with blood and iron, corresponding to the dawning epoch of the "New World Order."

For congenitally anti-Soviet "left" nationalists, falling over themselves to step out of the "shadow of the past," the emotion-laden topic of mass rape is convenient as no other in touching a special nerve. The reports last fall of the mass rape of Muslim women in Bosnia "happened" to hit Germany just as feminist Helke Sander's anti-Soviet film came out about the rape of German women by the Red Army in World War II. What this means was explained by Neudeck in a TV panel discussion on January 23 moderated by Lea Rosh: "We are experiencing a terrible situation...the rape of an entire people." With his mother, grandmother and older sister, as a child "I really also experienced this terrible situation...of rape in Germany as well"

## Cap Anamur: "Human Rights" Anti-Communists for Hire

One of the groups that has been most vociferous in demanding Western, particularly German, military intervention in Bosnia is the "Cap Anamur" emergency medical committee headed by Rupert Neudeck. The activities of this outfit are drawn together by a common thread of anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism. It was founded in 1979 with the aim of saving Vietnamese "boat people" and enjoyed the support of right-wing Bavarian leader Franz Josef Strauss. During the Reaganite '80s, Cap Anamur was active in Afghanistan. In Angola last year, it took on a new project: clearing mines, using former East German tanks donated by the Bundeswehr. (Of course, this operation, in which two Angolans were killed, consisted of clearing *government* mines, not those of the South African- and CIA-financed UNITA.)

In the former Yugoslavia, Cap Anamur has taken up the cause of raped women in Bosnia. Drawing on 30 million D-marks appropriated by the German federal government for treating the women victims and another 300,000 DM from the SPD-Green Niedersachsen state government, Neudeck's organization rented several houses in Croatia. But when the president of Germany's parliament, Christian Democrat Rita Süsmuth, traveled to one of these homes near Zagreb in January in order to hand over a check, according to the German leftist newspaper *Arbeiterkampf* (10 March), what she found was not rape victims but "40 armed and drunken Croatian soldiers." In their publicity, fundraising and "aid" campaigns, these "human rights defenders" are cat's paws for imperialist intervention.

(*konkret*, March 1993). For 12 years, Nazi propaganda minister Josef Goebbels deluged the German population with such filth about the "subhuman" Slavic "Ivan" who was out to "pollute" Aryan womanhood. Neudeck's picture of "history" rivals the vilest fascist "Bolshevik menace" posters with leering "Slavic" faces under the red star.

In one breathtaking blow Neudeck turns on its head the most barbaric epoch in human history. In this war the *Red Army smashed Hitler's Third Reich* and liberated Europe from the fascist nightmare—of genocide and "ethnic cleansing" through savage industrialized mass murder on a scale unparalleled in human history. The rapes committed by the Red Army were largely due to Stalin's nation-

alist policy and were fed by an elemental desire to get revenge for the scorched-earth destruction by Hitler's Operation Barbarossa. As is well known, Red Army officers shot soldiers for committing rape, in contrast to the policy of the imperialist Allies in the West.

The hysteria of the Nazis' Croatian Ustashi allies—with death camps like Jasenovac, where the holocaust against the Serbs and Roma [Gypsies] was not mechanized but carried out by brute force—sickened even Hitler's officers. The Ustasha were smashed by the *Partisans under the command of Tito*. And this is the old score which a reunited German imperialism is out to settle with a little help from its feminist friends and peace movement graduates. ■



# The Rise and Fall of THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY



## A Revolutionary Marxist Analysis

Jeffrey Blankfort

We reprint below an abridged version of a talk given at a Spartacist educational in New York City on April 10, by Spartacist League Central Committee member Don Alexander.

One of the characteristics of a fighting revolutionary vanguard party is that, through its communist program, it serves as the memory of the struggles of the working class and oppressed. In this regard, a number of the racist criminals who were involved in the bloody suppression of the Panthers are busy trying to smash working people. Imperialist criminal Richard Nixon was one of the chief architects of the bloody campaign to crush the Black Panthers. Nixon today is offering his services on behalf of the capitalist class, advising Clinton as to how best to promote vicious capitalist exploitation and social misery in the ex-USSR. Desperately seeking to find a way out of the economic blind alley of moribund U.S. imperialism, Clinton and Wall Street are further propping up Yeltsin and other bloodsucking Russian capitalist exploiters, dubbed "democrats" and "reformers."

Here at home, the empty promises of this "new Democrat," who was elected among other means by signing a death warrant that sent to his death a brain-damaged black prisoner, are also reflected by the lengthening unemployment lines, the even more savage killer cuts in social services, medical care, edu-

cation, along with racist police murder and terror, and the drive toward a racist police state, which is graphically illustrated in Los Angeles, and not only in Los Angeles, if we reflect on the preparations around the trial of the cops who beat Rodney King.

Now a number of the former Panthers have made their peace with this monstrously racist capitalist system. Former Chicago Panther Bobby Rush is now a Democrat in Congress. Bobby Seale publishes his barbecue books and sings the praises of self-help, i.e., black capitalism. Elaine Brown, Erica Huggins, Kathleen Cleaver are all reconciled to the rotting bourgeois social order. And Huey Newton, who was hounded by the police for years, ended up apolitical, a drug addict. He was gunned down on the streets of West Oakland by a drug dealer. Of course, this gladdened the hearts of the racist cops that oppress us throughout this country.

The people who remain unhowed and unbroken, like Geronimo Pratt and Mumia Abu-Jamal, are imprisoned because of their political beliefs and are the victims of ruling-class vengeance. In 1968, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover stated, "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries." And of course, during that period, the Black Panthers in particular and black radicals in general knew that you were

going to be dead. The government had their "black extremist" squads, and their U2 surveillance plans, to spy and track the civil rights protesters.

Today more than ever, radical black workers and youth especially have every reason to be communists, Trotskyists, and fight alongside white, Latino and Asian workers for the expropriation without compensation of the parasitic capitalist class. The racist capitalist system is set up to exploit and kill us. The racist bipartisan "war on drugs" ensures that, for the vast majority of black and Latino youth, "head start" means long years in prison, police clubs, police bullets and early graves.

From Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, who has ties to the Duvaliers, to "put them to death" Virginia Democratic governor Wilder, to the nationalist demagogues Farrakhan and Al Sharpton, to Jesse Jackson and the Democratic mayors like Dinkins, a sizable number of black overseers help keep the oppressed black masses down. Echoing the racist garbage of their capitalist masters, they blame black people for their horrible oppression. This small petty-bourgeois layer represents the 20 percent of the black population that benefited from the civil rights movement. Their theme song is "We Have Overcome." When the capitalists say jump, they say, how high?

Along with the racist dogs in the Democratic and Republican parties, they

supported the white racist imperialist invasion and murder in Somalia, and supported U.S. imperialism's bloody massacre of over 100,000 Iraqis. One could safely entertain the proposition that, if they were alive at the time of the Civil War, they would have remained on the masters' plantations. I'm tired of hearing how these enemies of the black masses and working class supposedly can't be criticized, because they "inherited a mess." But there were Rodney Kings before Rodney King.

If workers were in power, if we had a workers government in America, what happened to Rodney King or Dr. Gunn, the abortion doctor recently murdered by a "Right to Life" fanatic in Pensacola, would never have happened. And if isolated instances of such madness occurred, the perpetrators would find no resting place—because the long arm of working-class justice would ensure that. We live in a class society, a capitalist society based upon the brutal exploitation of the working class by the capitalists. We don't have to go hungry and homeless—there's plenty to go around, and we have to build a fighting, racially integrated, multiracial revolutionary workers party and organize to take what's ours.

The Black Panther Party represented the best of a generation of radical black youth who wanted to smash capitalism and make a revolution. They embodied the hopes and aspirations for black freedom of an entire generation which sought to strip away the sense of powerlessness and hopelessness of the long-oppressed black masses.

The FBI's J. Edgar Hoover targeted the Panthers for destruction, calling them public enemy number one, and "the greatest threat to internal security." To kill Black Panthers, the FBI revived COINTELPRO, the counterintelligence program, which was originally set up in 1956 against the Communist Party, and unleashed the most savage and systematic campaign of racist murder in modern American history. Some 233 out of 295 FBI COINTELPRO actions against black organizations were against the Panthers. At least 38 Panthers were murdered by agents of this racist capi-



Principal leaders of Black Panther Party from left: Bobby Seale, Huey Newton, Kathleen and Eldridge Cleaver.



talist state, through the instrument of COINTELPRO.

## Robert Williams and the Deacons for Defense

Formed in 1966 by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, the Panthers considered themselves the heirs of Malcolm X, and advocated armed self-defense against racist attacks. The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense had its roots in the failure of the liberal-led civil rights movement to eradicate black oppression. It is customary to regard as the pinnacle of the civil rights movement the 1963 March on Washington demonstration. This is a lie. Malcolm X rightly condemned that demonstration as a "farce on Washington," and a sellout of the black masses by the Uncle Tom black misleaders, from Martin Luther King to Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, and a victory for the hypocritical liberal Kennedy administration's token civil rights legislation.

Early on in the civil rights movement, black militants had challenged King's and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's philosophy of "turn the other cheek, love your enemy." In 1959, Robert F. Williams, an NAACP member and veteran, had formed a National Rifle Association club in Monroe, North Carolina to defend against Klan attacks on civil rights demonstrators. This led to his dismissal by the NAACP; Williams was hounded out of the country, and eventually went to Cuba after he was framed up for "kidnapping" a white couple. Another militant black self-defense organization was the Deacons for Defense and Justice in Bogalusa, Louisiana. The Deacons successfully defended blacks against Klan terror, and we assisted in that effort by raising money. This was captured in our slogan, "Every dime buys a bullet."

In Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, the black masses fought back against the Klan and Bull Connor's sadistic racist cops. During the protests in Birmingham, four black Sunday school girls were killed by a Klan bomb. The Klan also bombed the hotel where King was staying (he was absent at the time), and firebombed his brother's home. The blacks armed themselves and fought back. John F. Kennedy federalized the Alabama National Guard precisely

American Nazi George Lincoln Rockwell leading a pack of snarling racist dogs. SNCC, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, tried to take up the challenge, but it was clear: the racists had won, they had outmobiled the civil rights fighters on the streets while Democratic mayor Daley's cops stood by.

By 1966, SNCC and CORE (the Congress of Racial Equality) had embraced pseudo-nationalism, and the abstentionism of the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, which tailed behind Martin Luther King and the Black Muslims, was a terrible crime and betrayal of the struggle for black freedom. This has cost the revolutionary movement dearly in the number of black militants who could have been won at that juncture to Trotskyism, to revolutionary internationalism, to the program of world revolution.

The Revolutionary Tendency of the Socialist Workers Party—the forerunners of the Spartacist League—fought inside the SWP to win black militants to a revolutionary working-class program and perspective, for the building of an independent Trotskyist vanguard party to lead a fight for power not only in this country, but throughout the world. The Socialist Workers Party subsequently expelled us for our revolutionary politics.

## Contradictions of "Black Power"

As a result of the futility of "bearing moral witness" by packing the jails, by relying on the racist capitalist government and its treacherous liberal front men—and most importantly, because of the passivity of the organized labor movement led by labor traitors—black militants, out of despair, turned to separatism and cried out for "Black Power." As a slogan, "Black Power" frightened the racist establishment, and liberals stopped their checks flowing into the coffers of the most militant civil rights organizations, like SNCC and CORE. We pointed out at the time that the "Black Power" slogan represented in part an attempt to fight for the interests of the black poor, but we emphasized that if the fight for black liberation was not posed in class terms it would serve as a bridge to the Democratic Party of imperialist war and racism.

In comparison to other black nationalist organizations of the '60s, the Panthers sought to organize independently of the Democrats and Republicans. As eclectic, contradictory radical nationalists, their outlook was variously influenced by the teachings of Malcolm X, Frantz Fanon, Che Guevara, Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. Marxism became for them a kind of smorgasbord, from which one picked and chose to suit their momentary political needs. Like New Left radicals as a whole, they rejected the key Marxist contention that the working class, because of its unique relationship to the means of production, held the potential social power to smash the racist capitalist system and state.

This New Left impressionism was exploded by the powerful May-June 1968 French general strike, which was betrayed by the Stalinists. This was the largest general strike in the history of capitalism, and had the French working class taken power under the leadership of a Leninist vanguard party, the face of the world could have been changed. As nationalists, the Panthers looked to the lumpenproletariat—the brothers on the block, the ex-pimps, the hustlers—as the vanguard of black liberation, who, in Fanon's words, represented the "wretched of the earth." Fanon was a West Indian intellectual and champion of the Algerian independence struggle. Fanon's book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, was a political fad in radical circles.

Fanon's emphasis on the cathartic role of violence became for the Panthers the basis for their talk of urban guerrilla warfare. As a ghetto-based revolutionary nationalist organization, the Panthers



May 1967: Armed Panthers at Sacramento State Capitol protest racist gun control bill.

believed that the most oppressed were the most revolutionary, that social revolution would happen as a result of radicalized peasants in the countryside encircling the white European nations, whose proletarians were "bought off" and incapable of making a revolution. So the task, simply put, was to "pick up the gun" to electrify the internal "black colony" in the U.S. They hawked copies of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung*, and they had a song that they sang a lot, "There's a pig upon the hill, if you don't get him, the Panthers will." They had a lot of "off the pig" rhetoric.

The Panthers self-consciously regarded themselves as a vanguard party. But they were not a vanguard party. They were New Left sectoralists. That is, their program was that blacks would liberate blacks, Hispanics would liberate Hispanics, and so on. A sectoralist program, which is a strategy for dividing the ranks of the future proletarian army fighting for state power.

A Leninist vanguard party, that is, a tribune of the people, fights against all aspects of social oppression on the basis of an internationalist revolutionary program. We in the International Commu-

nist League are fighting to build that party, like Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party that in 1917 led the multinational working class to a victorious socialist revolution. Our fighting program of revolutionary integrationism shows the road forward to the assimilation of black people in an egalitarian socialist society.

We believe that the fight against racial oppression is key, strategic for a workers revolution, and without militant, united, integrated class struggle against all wings of the capitalist exploiters, the proletariat cannot seize political power. The American workers revolution needs black leadership. Black workers are crucial components of the multiracial American working class, and can lead a fight on behalf of all of the oppressed and exploited for workers revolution, and for smashing imperialist domination from Puerto Rico to Latin America and Africa.

## Against the Cultural Nationalists

Now, the fight against racist cop terror and murder provided the impetus for the Panthers' initial organization of the black

continued on page 10



Spartacist League spokesman Don Alexander.

because the black masses were no longer following the nonviolent script.

In the summer of 1963, after Birmingham, street protests spread throughout the South. A Justice Department study counted 758 demonstrations in 108 cities during the ten weeks of the Birmingham crisis. In the next five years, black revolts that were spontaneous, unorganized upheavals swept city after city: Harlem in 1964, Watts in 1965, Cleveland in '66, and Detroit and Newark in '67. And when King was assassinated in '68, over a hundred cities saw black rebellions.

The civil rights movement went North in the mid-'60s, and King's SCLC organization ran into a brick wall of racist resistance. King's open housing campaign met with violent racist resistance in the racist enclave of Cicero, with

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- Malcolm X: What's Missing from Spike Lee's Movie
- Activists Remember the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Era
- Imperialism Starves Africa
- U.S. Global Cops Out of Somalia
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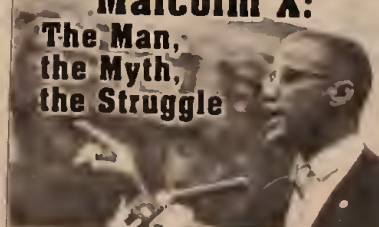
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A Spartacist Pamphlet 51

## Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 10

## Malcolm X: The Man, the Myth, the Struggle



What's Missing from Spike Lee's Movie

Activists Remember the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Era

"New World Order" Neocolonialism in Africa

February 1993

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# Panthers...

(continued from page 9)

masses. Newton and Seale also had to settle their accounts with the "pork chop" cultural nationalists, who argued that black people should spend their time rediscovering their African roots by donning dashikis, selling African artifacts and sitting around cussing out white people. The Panthers had to contend with other black nationalist organizations contesting for hegemony of radical black youth.

The FBI and the L.A. police would eventually find a very useful role for the cultural nationalists against the Black Panthers. In 1969, the L.A.-based organization of US (United Slaves) of Ron Karenga killed L.A. Panther leaders Bunchy Carter and John Huggins on the UCLA campus. The FBI was heavily involved in those murders, like they were heavily involved in the murders of Panthers in San Diego—in fact, more than in L.A., Panthers were killed by US members, with FBI involvement.

The cultural nationalists posed as militants. And some youth today may think that the so-called militant talk about "Afrocentricity," and voluntary self-segregation as a means of eradicating racism, is something new—it isn't. If one examines the politics of Karenga and Imamu Baraka, who was his ally



December 1969: LAPD assaults Panther headquarters. Geronimo Pratt, in jail for the last 20 years, was targeted for "neutralization."

AP photos



italism—that's what *they* meant by "Black Power." And various cultural nationalists run around today, like Spike Lee—that's what *they* mean by "Black Power." This meant concretely that Karenga allied himself with militant-talking pro-capitalist hustlers, backed by white capitalists.

It was noteworthy that the ruling-class co-optation of these phony militants was

the racist oppressors, who immediately smell incipient insurrection. The bourgeoisie fights to keep a monopoly of force to prevent the destruction of their system of democracy for the rich. Clinton and the Democrats are furiously pushing gun control legislation—the better to keep us down. From Robert F. Williams to Malcolm X and the Panthers, historically gun control laws have been used to disarm blacks and the working class. We say that gun control kills blacks! We call on class-conscious workers and fighters for the liberation of the oppressed to defend the right to hear arms, to defend the Second Amendment, to defend ourselves against the murderous ruling class and their bloody hyenas and shock troops—the cops, the Klan, the Nazis, the skinheads and the anti-abortion terrorists.

## Murderous State Repression

Very early on, the racist capitalist state mobilized to disarm the Panthers. In 1968, the California legislature held hearings on the Mulford Bill—a gun control bill pushed by a California assemblyman in the Oakland-Berkeley area. His bill was known in the press as the "Panther Bill," and would have made it illegal to carry concealed weapons. The Panthers fought back—they appeared in Sacramento armed and wearing their black berets, black leather jackets, powder blue shirts and black boots—to challenge this assault on democratic rights. While they were marching on the Capitol grounds to the floor of the assembly, they ran into Ronald Reagan, the California governor, who was talking to schoolchildren. Reagan saw the Panthers coming around the corner, stopped talking, and reportedly started running!

Now the Black Panther Party defied the racist rulers by expressing solidarity with the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions. The Panthers offered to send troops to fight alongside the Vietnamese against bloody U.S. imperialism. At their height, according to David Hilliard in his recent autobiography, *This Side of Glory* (Little, Brown, 1993), they had 4,000 members and 35 chapters. Imme-

diately the bourgeoisie geared up for their destruction. Nixon, J. Edgar Hoover and the bourgeois establishment put together a program for a nationwide search-and-destroy mission. Hoover's directive was to prevent the rise of a black "messiah," and the recruitment of black youth.

The Panther leadership was decimated: Huey Newton was shot, framed up for murdering a cop, and imprisoned for almost two years on that alone. Bobby Seale was jailed for his role in the Sacramento events, and was framed, along with seven others, in the aftermath of the cop riot at the Democratic Party convention in Chicago in 1968. He was also jailed for the murder of a Panther in New Haven, and that era evoked the image of Seale being bound and gagged in court. In West Oakland, 17-year-old Bobby Hutton, the Panther treasurer, was the first Panther killed—he was shot in the back by the cops. Eldridge Cleaver, who was with Hutton, barely survived. Cleaver was jailed, released and forced into exile.

Panther offices were raided and shot up in several cities. In Chicago, as I mentioned earlier, on December 4, 1969, in a predawn raid, Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were killed in their beds while they slept. Police agent William O'Neill, who was Hampton's bodyguard, provided the floor plans to Hampton's apartment. The FBI orchestrated and the Chicago police carried out this massacre.

Two days after the police killed Hampton and Clark, the L.A. SWAT squad attacked the Panthers' office, and for five hours subjected them to thousands of rounds of ammunition. The cops especially wanted to kill Geronimo Pratt, and Pratt's military knowledge saved his life and his comrades. Virtually the entire New York Panther leadership was held for nearly two years in jail, on the ludicrous charge that they had plotted to blow up, among other things, the Bronx Botanical Gardens. It really clearly underscores that fact that the courts haven't much changed since *Dred Scott*, the black slave who sued for his freedom in 1857, in which it was stated, to paraphrase, that black people have no rights that the white man is bound to respect. The white ruling class in this country, and its capitalist courts, have no justice for working people and oppressed minorities.

How did the Panthers fight this? Who did they turn to? Who did they consider their allies? Certainly not the working class, the integrated labor movement—though the basis existed, because briefly, in 1969, the Panthers formed a caucus at the Fremont, California GM auto plant. Hilliard had been a longshoreman for a while; his brother June, a party member, was a city bus driver. And the Panthers knew that there were white workers at a union oil facility, whose heads were being beaten by the scabberding cops, who took up the Panthers' characterization of the cops as "pigs." There was a basis that existed, to link the ghetto to the factories, which required a class-struggle leadership of the labor movement to wage a militant fight against the killer cops,



1969: Chicago police/FBI murdered Panther leaders Fred Hampton (right) and Mark Clark in their beds.

Chicago Tribune



UPI

during that period, the reactionary role of the cultural nationalists, of these Panther-killers, emerges as nothing more than militant-talking pro-police thugs. Ronald Reagan met with Karenga in 1968, and praised him. *The Wall Street Journal* described this meeting, remarking that Karenga is "typical of many militants who talk looting and burning but actually are eager to gather influence for quiet bargaining with the predominantly white power structure."

Following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Karenga met secretly with Los Angeles police chief Thomas Reddin and played an important part in preventing an outbreak of riots in L.A. Many years ago, revolutionary nationalists (myself included then) used to wonder why we'd always hear about the Panther 4 or 7 or 21 on trial, but never the US organization. Dashikis never stopped bullets—why were they so immune to this?

What they were saying was that the first task was to liberate your mind, then fight for revolution—the main problem was that black people suffered from a lack of culture, that culture takes precedence over everything else, that racist *minds* created racist institutions, and that one fought racist ideas, *not* racist institutions. This is a profoundly idealist mystical conception, and it ignores the material economic roots and basis of racism. It had a purpose. The cultural nationalists were advocates of black cap-

very direct and forthcoming: in 1969, the head of the Clairol company gave a nod of approval to a "Black Power" conference in Philadelphia at which Karenga was present. He told his audience that at first the term "Black Power" "very frankly filled me with dread," but it was no longer the case, because he understood "Black Power" to mean "equity," and "empowerment"—that is, "ownership of apartments, ownership of homes, ownership of businesses, as well as equitable treatment for all people."

In a partial fashion, the Panthers fought the cultural nationalists' cynical withdrawal from struggle and their anti-militant program of cultural nationalism. Huey Newton, in a famous prison interview, noted some of the aspects of cultural nationalism,

"The cultural nationalists are concerned with returning to the old African culture and thereby regaining their identity and freedom. In other words, they feel that the African culture will automatically bring political freedom. Many times cultural nationalists fall into line as reactionary nationalists. 'Papa Doc' in Haiti is an excellent example of reactionary nationalism. He oppresses the people but he does promote the African culture. He is against anything other than black, which on the surface seems very good, but to him it is only to mislead the people. He merely kicked out the racists and replaced them with himself as the oppressor. Many of the nationalists in this country seem to desire the same ends."

Since slavery, armed blacks have always struck fear in the hearts of



Life



Wasser/Newsweek

J. Edgar Hoover and Nixon launched murderous COINTELPRO campaign, enlisting cultural nationalist hustlers like Ron Karenga (right) against the Panthers.



who are armed bodies of men defending capitalist property.

## "UFAP": CP-Style Popular Frontism

But instead the Panthers established alliances with the petty-bourgeois Peace and Freedom Party, who ran Cleaver for president in 1968. This party was a pressure group on the Democratic Party. In the face of fierce, unrelenting ruling-class repression, the Panthers didn't turn to the integrated labor movement—the only social force with the power and interest to fight racist police terror—but clinked glasses with composers like Leonard Bernstein and actors like Marlon Brando, who participated in one of their police patrols. In Berkeley, they backed the formation of a self-flagellating white guilt group called "Honkeys for Huey" to fight for Newton's freedom. The Panthers were trying to augment their forces, and held negotiations with top leaders of SNCC, and briefly Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown and James Forman entered their ranks. This was a very short-lived fusion, because it exploded as Carmichael pressed them to break their ties with all whites, and this led Bobby Seale to publicly denounce Carmichael for playing the Ku Klux Klan game.

In 1969, as the bourgeois repression escalated, the Panthers organized the so-called "United Front Against Fascism" conference, in which the reformist Communist Party played a prominent role. The Panthers discovered the virtues of the counterrevolutionary reform-



Former BPP leaders David Hilliard and Elaine Brown have recently published autobiographical accounts of the Panthers.

mist popular-front program: a class-collaborationist trap which has historically tied the workers to the "progressive wing" of the capitalist exploiters, and which paved the way for the bloody defeats of the working class from China in 1927, to Chile in 1973, and to the horrible bloodbath of the Maoist-influenced Indonesian Communist Party, which left over 500,000 workers and peasants dead in 1965. It also means today in South Africa that the African National Congress program of "power sharing" and a government of "national unity" paves the way for the bloody defeat of the working class. An expression of that, of course, is the assassination that we heard of today, of Chris Hani, the general secretary of the South African Communist Party. There is no possibility of appeasing imperialism anywhere.

The popular-front reformist program meant in this country that during World War II—which was an interimperialist war, and not a "war for democracy against fascism"—the Stalinists supported Roosevelt, backed the internment of Japanese Americans, defended the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, opposed the struggle for black rights, and broke strikes to preserve their alliance with the Democratic Roosevelt regime. At this United Front Against Fascism conference, the Panthers' program was a reformist one, "community control of the police." Today it's dressed up as "community policing," and behind it is the deadly reformist illusion that the capitalist state can be pressured into reforming itself, into dismantling its repressive state apparatus.



James/Philadelphia Inquirer

1969: Mumia Abu-Jamal, then Minister of Information for Philadelphia Black Panthers, is today on Pennsylvania death row, on frame-up murder charges.

The Panthers had a ten-point program, which was a program of mildly liberal reforms. They'd call on the government for reparations, they wanted land. Some of their demands would sound familiar today: they wanted the universities to teach the "true history" of black people and oppressed people in this country, etc. But basically it was a program to reform capitalism, a system based on the bourgeoisie striving for maximum profit, which can't be reformed. We Trotskyists put forth a revolutionary pro-



Elaine Brown

gram, the Transitional Program, which is based upon fighting for the immediate, burning needs of the masses for jobs for all, for decent education, free medical care, etc. And all of these elementary transitional demands immediately pose the question of fighting for power, of linking the struggle around these immediate needs to the struggle to smash capitalism.

The Panthers used gangster tactics to silence their leftist critics, which we vigorously denounced at the time. There were Maoists in the Students for a Democratic Society, and other fake-leftists, who uncritically tailed behind the Panthers and their nationalism—they were vicarious cheerleaders. We fought against their nationalist program, explaining that blacks are not a nation, but an oppressed color-caste forcibly segregated, in this racist capitalist society, at the bottom, although integrated into the political economy. Historically, blacks formed a significant component of the reserve army of labor. Increasingly that's not even the case today, because of the deindustrialization of this country by the rapacious capitalists.

## Glorification of Lumpenism, Male Chauvinism

It is tragic that the Panthers were destroyed by bloody state repression, and there was not the communist intervention of a revolutionary party sizable enough to win the best of these radical black youth. With their military posturing, the Panthers were easy pickings for the mass murderers of U.S. imperialism. You can't build a revolutionary party on

the basis of hero worship and glorification of a street-gang mentality. Hilliard admits as much today, that they consciously built up a cult of personality around Newton. He admits that their glorification of lumpenism caused them a number of problems, and here's one graphic example:

"We send some Panthers in our Panther truck—a contribution from a support group, it has a picture of a springing black panther and the words 'The Black Panther' painted on the side—to San Francisco on a distribution run. Couple of hours later we get a telephone call. Our Panther truck is in a shoot-out. The driver pulls up at a gas station. One guy—Bill Brent—goes to the john while the others gas up. Some time passes. The tank is full, still no Bill Brent. The members look around. Where's Bill? Oh, there's Bill: he's robbing the attendant. The guys in the truck are amazed. They don't know what to do, get him or leave? At that moment the third party arrives: some police drive by, see Bill with the gun, set off their sirens. Freaked, Bill forgets about the attendant and fires on the cops. The rest is pandemonium. Finally, a bullet grazes Brent and everyone's arrested; the Panther truck is seized. Next thing we know, the five o'clock news claims the Party has tried robbing a gas station in broad daylight for the grand sum of seventy-five dollars."

So it's not an abstract question when we insist upon the centrality of the proletariat in fighting to abolish the racist capitalist system.

In 1971, the Panthers suffered a split between the more overtly reformist, Pro-Democratic majority Newton wing, and the urban guerrilla warfare Cleaver wing—a split characterized by murderous internal factionalism, and inflamed by COINTELPRO provocations. The corruption of top Panther leaders nailed down their destruction, like Newton's

luxurious Oakland penthouse overlooking Lake Merritt. Both of the factions sent their factional members onto the streets to murder each other. By 1973, Bobby Seale in Oakland was running as a Democrat in the city elections.

In her autobiography, *A Taste of Power* (Random House, 1993), Elaine Brown is ecstatic on the role of the Panthers in organizing the black vote for ex-judge Democrat Lionel Wilson, the city's first black mayor. Brown talks about the role they played in Jerry Brown's campaign in 1976 for president, and she tells how the Panthers degenerated into criminal thugs holding up after-hour bars and pushing dope.

The physical assaults on Panther women are laid bare in all of their sickening, raw, brutal, bloody and frightening forms. Brown ends her book literally running to the airport in fear for her life. She makes this characterization of her experiences in the black power movement:

"A woman in the Black Power movement was considered, at best, irrelevant. A woman asserting herself was a pariah. A woman attempting the role of leadership was, to my proud black Brothers, making an alliance with the 'counterrevolutionary, man-hating, lesbian, feminist white bitches.' It was a violation of some Black Power principle that was left undefined. If a black woman assumed a role of leadership, she was said to be eroding black manhood, to be hindering the progress of the black race. She was an enemy of black people."

From Stokely Carmichael's (Kwame Ture) statement that the position of women in the movement is "prone," to Eldridge Cleaver's "pussy power" chauvinist filth, to Farrakhan's Nation of Islam segregation of women, the nationalists seek to keep women in their place as baby factories, opposing birth control and abortion as genocide, and women's equality as "the devil's concept"—those are Karenga's words.

From Harriet Tuhman in the Civil War to courageous Fannie Lou Hamer, who fought the rabid segregationists in Mississippi, to many women in the Panthers, black women have been in the forefront of the fight for black freedom. Revolutionary black women belong in our party, and we say to any of you who want to put an end to racial, sexual and class oppression by fighting for international workers revolution: you should join the Spartacist League, which has no interests separate from those of the working class and oppressed. ■

<sup>1</sup>Editor's note: To her credit, while denouncing the rampant male chauvinism in the BPP, Elaine Brown defends the Panthers against the vile attack by black liberal feminist Alice Walker, who dismisses revolutionary struggle in favor of "self" and gay-baits the Panthers as nothing but macho "punks" (see "Black Panthers or Black Punks," *New York Times*, 5 May).

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# Quagmire...

(continued from page 1)

its members heading into the "third camp" Solidarity swamp.

Solidarity leader and veteran Shachtmanite Kim Moody moaned that "the left in the U.S. has decayed beyond the point where a regroupment of some or all of its elements holds out much hope as a perspective in creating a socialist movement in the U.S. in the foreseeable future" (*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, April 1993). In the same vein, a CoC'er pointed to "a crisis of confidence among socialist-oriented activists in the West" (*Dialogue & Initiative*, Spring 1993).

At bottom, what is behind this mass dissolution into the Clinton camp is the destruction of the Soviet Union, the homeland of the Russian October Revolution. Riding the counterrevolutionary tidal wave that inundated East Europe and the USSR, the bourgeoisie crows that "communism is dead." We Trotskyists reply: Stalinism is dead, but communism lives—in the class struggle of the international working class. But the already rickety fake-lefts, whose real politics never went beyond popular-front lesser-evils, and many of whom tailed the anti-Soviet war drive for the last decade and more, have bought imperialism's short-lived triumphalism hook, line and sinker. The bourgeoisie told them that communism is dead, so they are rolling over and dying.

## From Alf Landon to the Last Guardian

It's a familiar scenario in American capitalist politics: a Republican administration wears out its welcome in the White House and the Dems move in to spruce up ruling-class rule. The precedent for reformist support to the capitalist politicians of the Democratic Party versus the capitalist politicians of the Republican Party goes back to the '36 elections, when the CP ran party boss Earl Browder for president as a stalking horse for Roosevelt. The CP's campaign slogan was "Beat Landon at all costs!"—meaning, of course, "Elect FDR at all costs!"

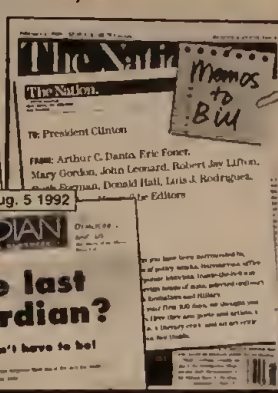
Stalin's nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" meant a futile search for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism abroad. Reeling from Hitler's unchallenged march to power in 1933, the Kremlin openly embraced class collaboration with the People's Front, ordained at the 1935 Seventh Congress of the Communist International. Trotsky called it the "Liquidation Congress" of the Comintern, and eight years later, Stalin liquidated it entirely, to reassure his World War II imperialist allies of his firm opposition to Lenin's program of world revolution.

Preaching that "Communism Is Twentieth Century Americanism," the CPUSA carried this liquidationism to its ultimate

November 1992

1 February 1993

Nov. 30/Dec. 13 1992



Reformists and left liberals wallow in swamp of Clinton's Democratic Party of war and racism.

logic in 1944, rebaptizing itself the Communist Political Association. (But with the first whiff of the coming Cold War the next year, Browder was unceremoniously dumped as a "liquidationist.") By 1948, with Democrat Truman leading the anti-Soviet crusade, the CP tried to resuscitate the popular front in a new guise by pushing the "Progressive Party" of FDR's former vice president Henry Wallace.

The *Guardian* came out of the Wallace campaign, the petty-bourgeois component of this popular front of liberals and Stalinists. The Wallace "third party" soon disappeared, but the *Guardian* carried on as a voice of "peaceful coexistence," passing from Moscow-line Stalinism to Maoism to Third Worldism and back. But with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, there was no longer any need for peaceful coexistence—or for the *Guardian*.

## In Clinton's Times

The unofficial voice of the DSA, *In These Times*, which parades its credentials as a child of the Carter presidency, celebrated the change in administrations with a change in its paper format. An editorial in the 30 November 1992 *ITT* announced:

"The change is more than cosmetic. It is designed to help us meet the challenge of new opportunities created by the election of a president and new members of Congress committed to a reordering of government priorities....

"We will look at the new administration's programs to see whether they are consistent with campaign promises."

What promises do they have in mind? Ending welfare? Putting 100,000 more cops on the streets? Wielding the imperialist "big stick" against Serbia?

Meanwhile, they have made themselves chief lobbyists for Clinton's "managed competition" health care scam and provide a platform for DSA'er Ron Dellums, now head of the House Armed Services Committee (but "a self-described pacifist," we're told) to pontificate on "A New, Improved World Order" (*In These Times*, 22 March). Perhaps taking, to heart Marxist criticisms that opportunists are looking for get-rich-

quick schemes, these opportunists have even issued an *In These Times* Gold MasterCard—now you can go further into debt the "PC" way!

For its part, the CoC (not to be confused with the Chamber of Commerce despite the similarities in political outlook) hailed Clinton's election, and launched a mass postcard campaign offering Clinton "Congratulations on your victory and on your pledge to provide all Americans with universal, affordable health care." The CoC has now become a pole for a social-democratic regroupment of revisionist has-beens, never-weres and wannabes. They are pursuing "liaison" discussions with the DSA and providing a home for various Trotskyoid burnouts, like former Socialist Workers Party leaders Peter Camejo, Barry Sheppard and Malik Miah and a chunk of the Freedom Socialist Party. Meanwhile, the FSP, Socialist Action and Solidarity are all sniffing around the CoC.

In West Europe, erstwhile Stalinists sitting atop a mass base can divine a future for themselves in a reshuffled social democracy. In the U.S., however, there is no mass reformist labor party, so CPers, ex-CPers, DSAers and demoralized ex-pseudo-Trotskyists are driven to liquidate into the Democratic Party outright. Those that gag a bit at being open Clintonites pursue one or more of the numerous ephemeral "third party" hustles, from Rainbow Coalition honcho Ron Daniels' presidential campaign to the Labor Party Advocates, NOW's 21st Century Party, the "New" Party, etc., ad nauseam—all of them back doors to the Dems and exits to oblivion.

This unenviable vista makes the American reformists more than a little sensitive to criticism from authentic Marxists. Writing in the *Committees of Correspondence Dialogue & Initiative* (Spring 1993), one CoC'er warns that this new popular-front project could come to nought:

"As long as we have a left that remains vulnerable to the accusations and criticisms of, say, the Spartacist League, we're not going to build a left with genuine mass appeal....

"Being honest in our politics doesn't require painting ourselves bright red.... "It is a fact of American left and social-movement history that the most successful strategies—those that won mass support and achieved valuable political and social gains—have been those most 'right' and most scorned by 'left' critics. Strategies such as the Popular Front of the CP...."

"Bright red"? The CoC et al. barely register somewhere between pale pink and red-white-and-blue on the political spectrum.

The purpose of the popular front was, and remains, to derail revolutionary upsurges of the proletariat. In the 1930s, the Stalinists directly suppressed the Spanish Revolution, opening the door to Franco, while in the U.S. they channeled the massive working-class revolt which created the CIO industrial unions into Rooseveltian liberalism and support for the imperialist war.

Having spent their entire political lives following the lodestar of "peaceful coexistence," these orphans of Stalinism don't even have a distant memory of what communism means. So in the raw winds of Cold War II, they were really bent out of shape, unable to deal with direct confrontation between U.S. imperialism and the Soviet Union. Rather than defending the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, they largely ignored it. When the Polish Stalinists cracked down on Solidarność counterrevolution in 1981, all the CPUSA could do was inanely say, "Poland Heeds Unity Call—Nation Goes Back to Work." When the Soviets shot down Reagan's KAL 007 spy provocation, the CP denied that the jet had been downed.

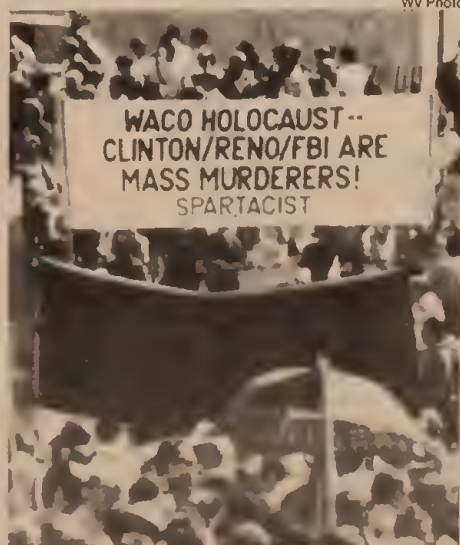
Eight years later, as the Stalinist bureaucracy in the DDR was collapsing and tens of thousands of East Germans were leaving for the West, Gus Hall claimed it was just like the annual spring exodus to Fort Lauderdale! And when a bunch of Gorbachev's top lieutenants pulled a botched coup in August 1991, the Gorbachevite would-be social democrats decamped from Gus Hall's party en masse. As the Reaganite Cold Warriors stepped up the pressure, prospects for reviving a popular front became increasingly remote. And with the demise of the Soviet Union, they no longer felt any split loyalties to the "socialist motherland" and their "own" bourgeoisie, and became "God That Failed" social Democrats.

Fundamentally, these petty-bourgeois reformists do not believe that the working class can take and hold on to state power. For them the Russian Revolution is at best an idealistic dream that was doomed to failure, or a misguided assault on bourgeois "democracy." They can seek their niche in Clinton's capitalist America, but the many millions of workers and oppressed minorities have no recourse other than to fight or die.

With the reformist left in throes of disintegration, having bought the bourgeois lie of the "death of communism," it's now more clear than ever that the Spartacist League represents the continuity of revolutionary Marxism. So if you are now or ever want to be a genuine communist, join us. ■



Clinton/FBI's massacre of Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas (above); Spartacist banner at April 25 Washington demo for gay rights in the military.





# MOVE 1985-Waco 1993

On 13 May 1985, eleven members of the predominantly black MOVE commune in Philadelphia were murdered when the government bombed their home, unleashing a firestorm that destroyed an entire neighborhood. Black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode gave the order, the FBI supplied the C-4 explosives, Philly cops dropped the bomb, and then continued their fusillade of machine-gun and rifle fire to drive those who sought to escape back into the flames.

The MOVE commune had already been targeted by the state—in 1978, 600 Philly cops massively assaulted their home and a cop got killed. The vindictive state slammed nine MOVE members in jail then, and MOVE continued agitating for the release of their jailed comrades. The 1985 massacre was calculated racist state terror, a message of intimidation to black people—and everyone else in the government's sights—that if you get out of line, you could be next.

When the government slaughtered the Branch Davidian religious group in its home outside Waco on April 19, the parallels to the MOVE massacre were inescapable. On May 1, WV spoke with Ramona Africa, who was imprisoned for seven years by the government for the "crime" of surviving the MOVE

massacre. We print below excerpts from her statement.

## Ramona Africa:

The issue that caused the May 13th confrontation has yet to be resolved, that is, the ongoing imprisonment of my nine innocent sisters and brothers for a murder they didn't commit.

MOVE's priority is bringing our people home and getting them out of jail. We want people to understand that we were bombed and massacred because we refused to accept injustice, because we refused to sit back quietly and watch our innocent family members rot in prison.

MOVE, for over 20 years now



**Ramona Africa, survivor of 1985 MOVE massacre, denounced WACO holocaust.**

based on the wisdom given us by John Africa, has told people how brutal and insane those that are running this system are. MOVE has told middle-class white America that they are not exempt from the brutality and insanity of this government. There have been a few examples throughout recent history, for example the slaughter of students at Kent State.

The recent situation in Waco, Texas, is an even more blatant situation. MOVE does not know a lot about the Branch Davidians. We have nothing in common with them, really, except one thing—the brutality and insanity that the government has vented on them, just like they have vented on MOVE.

Any time you have an entire United States government and they perceive a problem with a group, whether it be the Branch Davidians or MOVE, and the government cannot resolve the problem without the death and destruction that we saw in both situations, then something is seriously wrong. The level of brutality and insanity that this government vented on both groups is just unbelievable.

But it is past time that people start believing how out of control those that run the system are. These officials tell people that this is supposed to be a government by and for the people—well, it's time that people took them up on that and really demonstrated that, because it is obvious that those that are running this system don't know what they're doing and are insane.

# Ernest Mandel Accepts Debate Challenge

We print below an exchange of letters between United Secretariat leader Ernest Mandel and the International Communist League. The 24 February letter from the ICL referred to by Mandel was published in WV No. 571 (12 March).

Brussels  
29/4/1993

International Communist League  
New York, N.Y., USA  
Comrades,

This is in response to your letter of February 24, 1993.

1. You tried several times to profit from our audiences—audiences which we called—to state your political positions at length.

We challenged you to let us do the same before your own audience.

To hold such a meeting in Berlin, London or Paris is no answer to that challenge. In those towns you have no audience of your own. Even if it would be you who formally call for the meeting, the people attending would be nearly exclusively our audience, not yours.

The only country where you possibly have an audience of your own (at least till events show the opposite) is the USA. So the only positive answer to our challenge would be you accepting to hold the meeting in New York. We do not want to impose any financial burden upon you, so we propose to hold the debate during my next visit to New York.

2. We do not agree with limiting the topic of the debate to the "Russian question." This is already begging the question. We propose as topic "Building the F.I. today," or "The dynamics of world revolution today." These two topics are identical for us. The so-called "Russian question" should certainly be dealt with in that context.

3. As for the technical side of the meeting, we propose:

(a) Thirty minutes for each side's report.

(b) Fifteen minutes for each side's summary.

(c) Ninety minutes for interventions from the floor, which means a maximum of twenty persons speaking 4 minutes each.

(d) Reports and summaries following the pattern A-B, B-A. I would prefer to be A (to speak first), but if you have strong objections, we can draw straws on it.

(e) Two co-chairpersons guaranteeing that the interventions from the floor are fairly distributed between both sides (and third parties if they ask for it).

(f) The right for each party to tape the proceedings and reproduce them if it considers this useful, but without unilaterally introduced changes of what was actually said at the meeting.

This is no final position and we are quite willing to examine possible counter-proposals of yours. But we have to tell you that on (1) and (2) we are not likely to change our position.

Revolutionary greetings,  
Ernest Mandel

New York  
17 May 1993

Ernest Mandel  
Brussels, Belgium

Dear comrade Mandel,

We have recently received your letter of 29 April 1993.

We accept your proposal to debate in the United States on your next visit. There is no question that you would encounter a substantial audience of our supporters at a meeting held in New York, Chicago or the San Francisco Bay Area. Within that context, we leave the choice of venue to you.

As for the topic, we would propose the title: "The struggle for world socialist revolution today." For our part the Russian question will necessarily be dealt with under such a title—as well

as the reformatting of an authentically Trotskyist, democratic-centralist Fourth International, raising historical questions going back at least as far as the Third World Congress of the Fourth International.

The overall technical framework you put forward is acceptable to us. We would prefer to have the order of presentations (and the consequent reverse order of summaries) decided by the toss of a coin. We would add one point: that the 90 minutes reserved for interventions from the floor be divided into successive rounds, with one speech in support of the first speaker followed by one from

a supporter of neither tendency, followed by a speech by a supporter of the second presenter.

It would be helpful if you could give us early notice of your next planned visit to the U.S., to assist in the organization, preparation and publicizing of the debate.

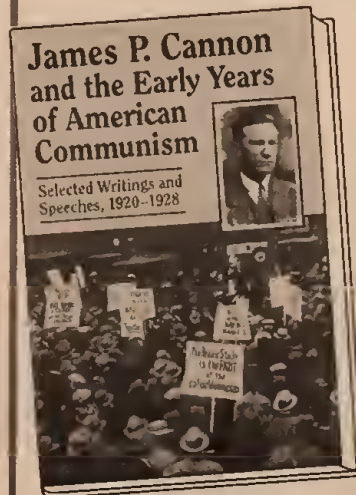
We are faxing this letter to you, and will also send you the original in the post.

Yours fraternally,

Alastair Green  
for the  
International Communist League  
(Fourth Internationalist)

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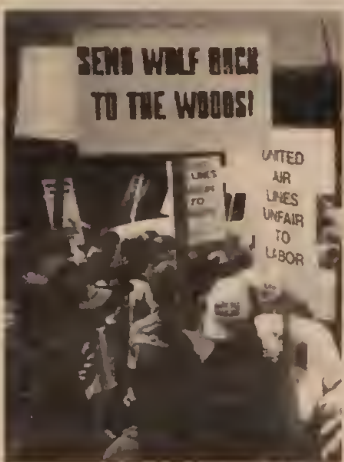
# Hardball...

(continued from page 4)

workers organized by the International Association of Machinists (IAM). In one of a series of rallies held around the country, Machinists, flight attendants, pilots and other trade unionists came out after years of seeing the airlines attack one union after another and demand concession after concession. A WV sales team got a friendly reception, selling over 80 pieces of literature to the crowd.

The kitchen workers who prepare airplane meals are mostly female and minority—black, Latina and Filipina—and are among the lowest-paid airport workers, earning as little as \$7 to \$10 an hour. Unless the IAM agrees to wage and work-rule concessions, United is threatening to sell a total of 17 kitchen operations to non-union contractors paying starvation wages. This will wipe out 5,800 union jobs, including 850 in the Bay Area.

But the union tops who organized the SF rally offered only racist protectionism, appeals to Democrats and consumer boycotts to counter the company attacks. Flight attendants carried signs reading "Invest in US," opposing the hiring overseas of union-organized attendants. Democratic Congressman Tom Lantos



WV Photo

**Over 1,000 unionists rallied May 8 to defend United Airlines kitchen workers threatened with mass layoffs.**

grotesquely denounced workers from Taiwan and Mexico, a racist insult to the Latina kitchen workers. One union misleader blustered that the IAM would launch an organizing drive "the first day" after the kitchens are sold, cold comfort to the union members who would be out on the street.

There was talk of a useless consumer boycott while an effigy of United CEO Stephen Wolf, a wolf "mascot" wearing a dunce cap, was paraded with a rope around its neck. Wolf is a greedy blood-sucker (he "earned" \$18 million in 1991), one of the pack of capitalist wolves who run the airline industry and whose appetite for profits is insatiable. Ever since PATCO, from Continental to Eastern, the airline bosses have been slashing jobs, busting unions, and extort-

ing concessions—more than \$7 billion in the last three years.

Labor's got to draw the line—and this attack on the kitchen workers, who the bosses perceive as the weakest link in the union chain, is a good place to start. The IAM, which organizes 27,000 United workers nationally, including vital maintenance workers, clearly has the power to shoot down this union-busting threat by shutting down United. IAM Local Lodge 1781, which organizes the kitchen workers here, has over 12,000 members. What is needed is a class-struggle leadership that is willing to use this muscle, that knows that playing by the bosses' rules means defeat. For mainly white machinists to fight side by side with women and minority food workers to save their jobs would have a big impact throughout the airline industry. Defend the kitchen workers! ■

# UCLA...

(continued from page 16)

on trumped-up felony charges of vandalism. A former counselor for the Chicano studies program said, "They treat us like wetbacks in our own campus. [Chancellor] Young is the Daryl Gates of the UC system. This is apartheid in Aztlan." The Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club immediately issued a leaflet demanding, "Drop the Charges Against the Ethnic Studies Protesters! Cops Off Campus!"

Over 1,000 outraged students, faculty, campus workers and L.A. unionists staged a very integrated and militant rally on campus the next day. Many anxious students came in search of news of their roommates who had not been heard from since falling into the clutches of the LAPD. The heavily Latino "Justice for Janitors" Local 399 of the Service Employees International Union heard of the arrests of Chicano students, and responded by dispatching a contingent of 100 unionists from their picket line at the Federal Building to march on campus and join the student protest with their signs raised. Union organizer Rocio Saez noted the support they had consistently received from UCLA students, and his members' desire to return the solidarity: "Wherever we see something that is unjust, we have a responsibility to fight it, not only in the workplace, but for students too."

The attacks on minorities in California are escalating as the ruling class tries to balance the budget by sucking blood from the poor. Budget proposals including draconian cuts in public education and health care are pushed through by "liberal" Democrats like Assemblyman John Vasconcellos who chillingly stated, "when you have to starve babies and close universities, you don't have much to hope for."

Latino youth are not accepting this "future" of life on the scrap heap. In April over a thousand high school students, predominantly Latinos, marched out of ten Oakland schools to protest the racist degradation they experience at the hands of the authorities. Last month a protest against the cuts in ethnic studies

# Keep the Scum on the Run! Nazis Routed in Vancouver



Spartacist Canada

VANCOUVER—On May 6, an integrated demonstration of 60 people—blacks, Asians, Jews, unionists, leftists, gays, youth—came out on less than one day's notice to protest and stop a meeting of the fascist "Canadian League of Rights," a gang of Canada's most notorious white-supremacists and anti-Semites. Organized by the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste and the Partisan Defense Committee, the protesters chanted, "No Nazis in Vancouver! Fascists off the streets!" We closed down the meeting hall for well over an hour, repelling repeated fascist provocations, including one Hitlerite's attack with an iron bar. One anti-fascist suffered a crushed toe. But the Nazi ended up later with a yellow streak painted down his back and his head stuffed into a garbage can.

The demonstrators sent a clear message to the Hitler-lovers that Vancouver is a labor and minority town, not a Nazi town. In response, the cops hauled four of the anti-fascist protesters off to jail, holding them there until the fascists had "safely" ended their meeting several hours later.

Following extensive TV and radio coverage, anti-fascist protesters were warmly greeted at work, in restaurants and on the streets with hearty congratulations. Many in Vancouver remember January 22, when thousands of determined anti-fascists, including militant representatives of the powerful British Columbia labor movement, drove a gang of skinhead stormtroopers off the streets of this city. As the TL's call for the May 6 demo said: "Let's keep the Nazis on the run! Labor/minorities have the power!"

at UC Berkeley was broken up by cops, who maced the crowd and arrested 46 students. A reactionary anti-immigrant bill before the state legislature would prohibit any person who is not a legal resident from enrolling in the state's public colleges. As UCLA student and SYC member John Barnard said at the rally on May 12:

"In this system, it is useless to appeal to the racist bourgeois Regents and administration. The only way to ensure quality education for all is to place the university under the control of the workers, students and faculty! For open admissions, free tuition and a living stipend for students! The bourgeoisie is especially aiming its attacks at immigrants.... Last April, during the unrest in L.A., 1,600 immigrants were summarily deported. Haitians are seized on the high seas and either sent back to a brutal military regime or confined in inhuman conditions in the imperialist enclave at Guantánamo Bay. The recent anti-Arab hysteria which was whipped up after the bombing of the World Trade Center has been used to further crack down on Arab immigrants. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrant workers and their families!"

The protests at UCLA and UC Berkeley have narrowly focused on establishing ethnic studies departments and multicultural curricula. But students who seek to fight the marginalization of working-class and minority youth must take this struggle beyond the campuses, and fight to change history, not just the history books. Joe O'Connor, brother of Irish rock star Sinéad, wrote, "LA is an Orwellian nightmare, the rich swilling and luxuriating on one side of the wire, the poor living on the leftovers, while the men with guns keep the two worlds apart.... If ever I saw an argument for communism, it is Los Angeles. You take one look at the city of the angels and you wonder just how much longer the poor will put up with their lot" (Irish Sunday Tribune, 9 May).

As the L.A. Spartacus Youth Club

stated in their leaflet issued to the mass protest on May 12:

"The cops, armed to the teeth, are going after students the same way they went after blacks and Latinos during the L.A. upheaval a year ago and striking Hispanic janitors in 1990. The slap-on-the-wrist King verdict has only emboldened the racist thugs in blue. The LAPD is the local arm of the same racist state that carried out the mass murder of 86 people, members of an integrated religious sect, in Waco for, as the government put it, 'espousing doctrines hostile to law enforcement.' The imperialist U.S. ruling class treats the working population of this country the same way they treat Iraqis, Somalis, and the way they now want to treat the Serbs; as inmates to be beaten into passivity and killed if they resist.... The U.S. ruling class smashes workers and minorities in this country the better to act as top cops of the world, exploiting workers and markets abroad in competition with their imperialist rivals."

"The social power to take on the racist bourgeoisie and win lies with the organized, integrated working class—the labor movement. Students who want to fight racist cop terror and struggle for decent education for all must look to forge links with the powerful unions in this city—longshore, aerospace, city workers—in a fight to get what we need. We've got to build a multiracial workers party to lead that struggle on the road to a socialist revolution, that will rip the wealth of this country out of the hands of the exploiters, so we can begin to build a socialist, egalitarian society on an international scale. Winning students and youth to this struggle is what the Trotskyist Spartacus Youth Club is all about. Join us!"

\* \* \*

In response to the protests, many of the arrested students' charges have been reduced to misdemeanor offenses, but they are facing an urgent and costly legal defense. We urge our readers to send contributions to: UCLA Student Legal Defense Fund, Asian-American Studies Center, 405 Hilgard Ave., 3230 Campbell Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90024. ■

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# May Day in Havana...

(continued from page 16)

a rapid decline beginning with Yeltsin's counter-coup in the USSR, and accelerating impoverishment in recent months.

These days, there is *nothing* to hny for pesos. The stores—except for hard-currency stores reserved for tourists—have *nothing* on the shelves. Many average Cuban workers and youth confirmed this. Increasingly it is necessary to turn to the black market to get basic food-stuffs, let alone "luxury" items like clothes, toothpaste, bicycle tires. Workers are given ration cards at work, but these are often not sufficient. Even a bag of rice, a liter of cooking oil, some beans, some sugar might be available only through the black market.

Cubans eat at their workplaces (usually lunch) but more and more often this is their only meal each day. Rice and beans may be the only food people get for days on end. The ration for eggs is now three a month. The state is trying to make sure people get a minimum nutritional balance.

Vitamin supplements are now being distributed free of charge, all over the country, in part to fight an epidemic of optic neuritis which has caused many cases of blindness. Cubans proudly told us that even in this "Special Period," not a single hospital or medical facility has been closed. There are drastic shortages, but no homelessness and medical care is still free.

The dismantling of the Soviet workers state precipitated the current freefall in living standards. Cubans have a deep hatred of Gorbachev and Yeltsin. In the wake of the disintegration of the Soviet Union the Castro regime is desperately seeking to expand ties with the international capitalist market and end the blockade. Great hopes are also placed in building up tourism, as well as other industries like hiotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and a plethora of goods produced from sugar cane.

To garner hard currency, the Cuban government is trying to build up the tourist industry. Tourism is now so big that a union of tourism workers was inaugurated the week we were there. What struck us was that foreign currency was undermining the peso, the national currency. It is a telling sign of the isolation of Cuba and the effect of U.S. imperialism bearing down. You can sense the population responding accordingly, i.e., having to hustle in the black market for goods, hustling tourists, and the prostitution—the hustling to survive in a tourist economy.

To feed the population, it has become necessary to dramatically increase the voluntary work which most Cubans have to do in agriculture. Reportedly the entire Foreign Ministry was sent out to the fields after getting into trouble with Fidel. Just about everyone takes part—spending weekends or several weeks picking vegetables, cutting cane or doing whatever to make up for a steady loss of agricultural manpower over the years.



Havana: Schoolchildren outside the Museum of the Revolution.

This "time off" normal work is facilitated by the fact that thousands of factories, workshops, etc., are grinding to a halt for lack of fuel, electricity, spare parts, raw materials. This has led to chronic underemployment.

There is groping for straws. An economist from the Cuban CP Political Bureau told us he thinks the Clinton administration includes several individuals with "new thinking" on ending the blockade. *Granma International* runs articles advising Washington that closing down Guantánamo would save a lot of money! There is much talk about how ending the blockade would be "mutually advantageous," that it is "irrational" and "uncivilized." Of course, the new Democratic administration, vying with the Bush/Reagan camp for support among the most rabid, foam-flecked *gusanos* in Miami, hasn't the slightest intention of giving up the military base the U.S. illegally occupies on Cuban soil. In addition to the military threat, they find it a handy place to imprison HIV-infected Haitians fleeing the bloody terror of the Tontons Macoutes.

The minimal aid which Cuha is receiving from international support groups is greatly appreciated, but it's only a drop in the bucket of what's needed. The Castroites see it as part of the propaganda campaign to get the blockade lifted. But many participants have scarcely disguised counterrevolutionary motives. One of the most touted groups, the "Basta!" flotilla from Miami, was a bunch of businessmen yacht-owners who explicitly say the best way to bring down Castro and the Cuban Revolution is by lifting the blockade.

## Internationalism and the Race Question

We were struck by the contrast between our experiences in racist America and life in an integrated, anti-racist workers state (albeit bureaucratically deformed). One young black woman told us, "You see this skin—here in Cuba I know I'm equal and in solidarity with my comrades of all shades of skin. That's the power of our revolution." Everywhere we met guys our age, light-skinned and dark-skinned, who volun-

teered to fight in Angola against the racist South African army and UNITA. They saw many of their schoolmates killed. But we didn't meet anyone who had regrets. They're pissed at what's happening now in Angola, but they're proud to have done their internationalist and anti-racist duty.

At a reception, one of us presented the head of the Cuban Workers Federation with two videos about the combative, largely Latino workers of the Justice for Janitors union organizing



Agencia de Informacion Nacional (Cuba)

"Marlanao Will Resist!" pledged this neighborhood contingent of May Day marchers. U.S. invasion of Cuba would meet ferocious resistance.

drive in Los Angeles, who have courageously defended their strikes against the brutal repression of the LAPD and *la nigra*. We said:

"The question of organizing immigrant labor in the U.S. is key to struggle against the racial divisions that are fostered among the working class. This issue of racism brings up the issue of the liberation of the black population, key in the U.S. If you touch the question of black liberation in the U.S., you touch the question of socialist revolution. "So the tasks are to fight for a workers party based on the unions, to fight for a socialist revolution to bring down capi-

talism. In this we can defend what has been won and gained here in Cuba." At a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new pharmaceutical plant, we struck up a conversation with two electricians. Their construction contingent was receiving a "Vanguard of Labor" award for their hard work in completing the plant and also doing 50,000 hours of voluntary labor. They clapped politely as the union leaders gave themselves awards atop the podium, but they were more interested in talking with us about Nicaragua, Waco, El Salvador, the ex-USSR, the prospects for class struggle in the U.S. One of them fought with the Vietnamese in the early '70s, and recounted laughingly how frightened he was when the U.S. rained bombs down on Hanoi, praising the bravery of his Vietnamese comrades. That kind of internationalism and high consciousness lives in the Cuban working class.

Any U.S. invasion of Cuba would be met with ferocious resistance. Everyone, men and women, in the country receives military training and periodic drills. Several young people we spoke with said they certainly don't want to fight (no bravado here), but that they will fight if there is an invasion.

It will be much harder, though, to prevail against imperialism's other tactic, of slow strangulation with its starvation blockade. Isolated, the Cuban Revolution cannot survive: "socialism on one island" has no future. The bureaucratic leadership of the Cuban deformed workers state is driven to seek accommodation, "peace-



Justice for Janitors campaign faced racist LAPD terror in their union organizing fight (left). Cuban trade unionists were interested to hear the story of their struggle (right).





# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Defend Cuba Against Yankee Imperialism!

### May Day in Havana



#### Eyewitness Report

The following is a report by two trade unionists who recently returned from a trip to Cuba with a solidarity delegation of North American trade unionists.

Nearly one million people marched through Havana in the official May Day march this year. We watched from the reviewing stands: it was an impressive sight as factory contingents, neighborhood groups and youth came to proclaim their defiance of the siege conditions imposed by Washington's vindictive blockade and fostered by the destruction of the Soviet Union. Thousands carried pictures of Che Guevara with the slogan "¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre!" (Ever Onward to Victory). Others brought signs saying "On Our Knees...Never!" and "Socialism or Death!"

There were sports skits and dancers in spandex, funky floats and thundering chants: "¡Viva la Revolución Cubana! Patria o Muerte—¡Venceremos!" Both speeches and slogans had a nationalist thrust. No pictures of Marx, Engels or Lenin—instead there were lots of references to José Martí, Che and, of course, Fidel. Cuban flags and red banners were everywhere. People seemed to be having a good time, but we also got the sense that the mass of the Cuban people really do not want to go back. They do not want to return to capitalism. The revolution is something their fathers and mothers fought for. The revolutionary

determination of the Cuban working class has not been sapped.

But their fierce determination today is facing its most difficult test, as Cuba is threatened with starvation. This is not entirely obvious from the vantage of the tourist sector, which along with the bureaucracy and its invited guests, does not "go without." The bureaucracy and tourism are themselves corrosive to the enormous gains of the Cuban Revolution. But the starvation siege by U.S. imperialism—a total blockade which has lasted three decades, through five administrations, and recently intensified by the Torricelli Act—is the most destructive

counterrevolutionary weapon today. No one knows how long the Cubans can hold out.

The economic blockade is a useful tool for the imperialists, helping to create a black market, a dollar economy, driving a wedge between the masses and the privileged elite. One Cuban journalist remarked, "The truth is that we're still in shock. We've fallen so far, so fast. It's been too sudden to fathom how the achievements of our revolution could be replaced by hunger pangs."

In trips around Havana, one still doesn't find the poverty and degradation of nearly all the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean. In fact, people look well-fed and healthy. But there has been

*continued on page 15*

## LAPD Unleashed Against Minority Students—Cops Off Campus!

### Protests Rock UCLA

LOS ANGELES—Fed up with an administration that wouldn't even meet to listen to their concerns, on May 11 some 500 students at University of California/Los Angeles marched on the Faculty Center to protest a 70 percent cut in funding for the Chicano studies library and to demand that Chicano studies be upgraded to full departmental status. Over 100 students seized the building while hundreds more rallied outside. Vice Chancellor Andrea Rich (a.k.a. the "Ice Queen") responded with a massive police assault, including over 200 thugs from the notorious LAPD. The students were suddenly surrounded by SWAT teams in full riot gear and armed with pepper gas as "blue thunder" helicopters hovered overhead.

Demonstrators were dispersed by club-wielding cops, and ten students who didn't move fast enough were arrested and charged with trespassing—on their own campus! The SWAT teams then stormed the student-occupied Faculty Center. Chained together in groups of six, 83 students were thrown in jail

*continued on page 14*



Spartacus Youth Club joins protest against cop attack on student demonstrators.

Young Spartacus