

Prop 187 Spearheads Racist Frenzy

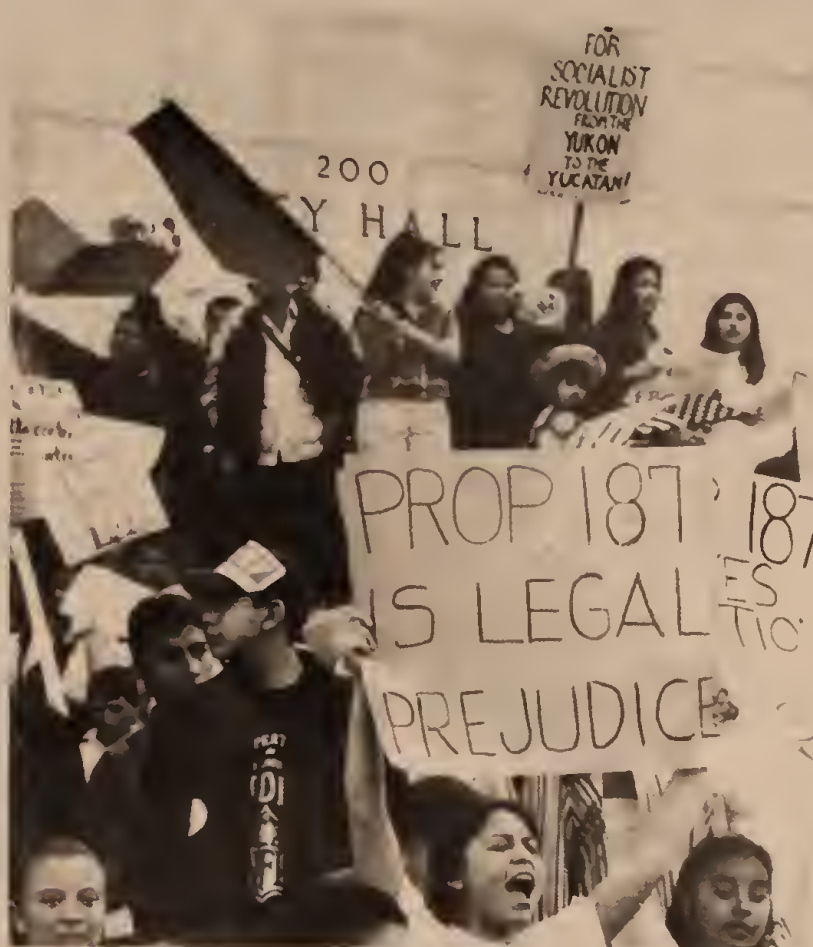
Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

The passage of Proposition 187 in California last month, coupled with the national electoral victory of right-wing Republican candidates, opened up the floodgates of racist reaction against *all* immigrants, both legal and "illegal." In other states with large immigrant populations, particularly Texas and Florida, similar measures are being proposed which would deny medical care to undocumented immigrants and throw hundreds of thousands of their children out of school. Republican reactionary Newt Gingrich, soon to be Speaker of the House, claims his "Contract with America" would save \$22 billion by canceling government services to immigrants. Meanwhile, Clinton and the Democrats are scrambling to prove their anti-immigrant credentials by moving to militarize the Mexico/U.S. border and step up deportations of "illegal immigrants."

Prop. 187 especially targets the most vulnerable of the immigrant communities: Governor Pete Wilson's first proclamation after his re-election was to bar undocumented immigrant women from receiving prenatal care and senior citizens from entering nursing homes. The day after the election, special hot-lines were flooded with calls from distraught immigrants reporting incidents of discrimination and racist attacks. Throughout the state, Latino workers reported harassment for simply speaking Spanish on the job. Prop. 187's supporters ghoulishly rejoice, claiming that the misery inflicted on the immigrant community will force a mass "self-deportation."

In the weeks before the November 8 elections, there were mass mobilizations of tens of thousands of opponents of Prop. 187, as well as daily walkouts by thousands of high school students. Although mainly Latino, the protests were also joined by some Asian students. Latino truckers threatened to shut down the port of San Pedro in protest against the racist measure. But in the aftermath of its approval by a 60 percent majority, instead of a militant fight against the racist onslaught, mainstream anti-187 organizations such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) advocate "peaceful and legal means to challenge what has happened here in California."

Numerous lawsuits challenging Prop. 187 have been filed, postponing some



As protests swept California against immigrant-bashing Proposition 187, students and garment workers demonstrated outside Los Angeles City Hall on November 7.

aspects of its enforcement. The Los Angeles Unified School District, together with the L.A. City Council, has filed a lawsuit seeking to prevent the expulsion of an estimated 100,000 undocumented students in L.A. alone. A 1982 Supreme Court ruling, *Plyler v. Doe*, declared a similar law in Texas unconstitutional, but law is a reflection of the balance of class forces, and in the current anti-immigrant frenzy, the bourgeoisie's high court may well overturn such precedents.

Former New Left celebrity Mario

Savio, speaking last week at Berkeley on the 30th anniversary of the Free Speech Movement, was loudly applauded when he called for massive non-compliance with Prop. 187 if it is implemented. Individual non-compliance with this police-state victimization of immigrants is an elementary act of decency. But what is needed is collective action by the force with the organization and power to defeat this legal xenophobia: the integrated labor movement. The unions (most of which opposed Prop. 187 on paper) should take the lead in

mobilizing at the head of the immigrants and minorities who are most directly threatened by this racist backlash.

Moreover, organized refusal by teachers and health care workers to act as links or cooperate with the *migra* cops can have a real impact if it is solidly backed up by the unions. Thousands of teachers have signed pledges not to comply with 187, and the UTLA (United Teachers of Los Angeles) has told its members to ignore the prop. But their words must be turned into action, which can't be expected from a bureaucracy that also ordered its members not to lead student walkouts. What's needed is a labor-centered anti-capitalist fight to defend these most oppressed sections of the working people.

Black Question Is Key

Prop. 187 is not simply a savage attack on undocumented as well as "legal" immigrants. It is the spearhead of a racist campaign against the Latino communities, including those whose forebears lived in California long before any Anglos got there. Thus, 75 percent of Latino voters—who are overwhelmingly born-in-the-U.S.A. citizens—opposed Prop. 187. But half of black and Asian voters reportedly backed the anti-immigrant ballot proposition.

While the anti-Latino nature of Prop. 187 is perfectly obvious, it is less clear to many that this measure is part of a broader racist offensive whose main and central target is the black ghetto poor. Depriving "illegal" immigrants of food stamps and their children of school lunches will *legitimately eliminating these programs entirely*. The bipartisan drive to "end welfare as we know it," in the words of Bill Clinton, has been given an enormous boost by the passage of Prop. 187.

At the same time, anti-immigrant hysteria is being used to turn blacks against Latinos. From the standpoint of the American ruling class, the most disturbing aspect of the 1992 L.A. conflagration, following the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King, was the

continued on page 10

Defend North Korea Against Imperialism, Counterrevolution!

For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!

SEE
PAGE
SIX

Hands Off South Korean Workers, Leftist Students!



Tony Cliff and the Korean War

London
5 October 1994

Dear Comrades,

Without wishing to take any position on the alleged behaviour of the ISO which, if true, sounds pretty bad and which you describe in the *Young Spartacus* section of *Workers Vanguard*, No. 605 (2 September), you are quite inaccurate in your characterisation of the split on the Korean issue in 1950 and, doubtless unwittingly, repeat the slanders of Gerry Healy.

Tony Cliff did not "line up with British and American imperialism" as you put it. The predecessors of the IS group took up a "defeatist" position and the majority a "defencist" one. In practical terms there was no difference. Gerry Healy did not seriously propose a campaign of sabotage and running off to join Kim-il-Sung's armies—that is what defencism means. His support was confined to the editorial pages of *Socialist Outlook*. The reference back of the Labour Party NEC's report, proposed by Ratner on behalf of the majority, at the Labour Party conference in October 1950 was "defeatist" rather than "defencist" and,

as Ratner himself has told me, was supported by the delegates influenced by Cliff and his *Socialist Review* group. In practical terms the two positions made no difference and did not in any way prevent working together on the issue or necessitate a split. And Cliff did not leave the International—he was expelled. This expulsion by Healy was therefore frivolous, as frivolous as my own expulsion from the IS group by Cliff's acolytes in February 1976 though some might regard my case as mere farce following the tragedy in 1950. To prove Healy's frivolity the Grant grouping abstained from voting for Cliff's expulsion and were immediately afterwards expelled for abstaining though they had a defencist line!

Knowing your commitment to an accurate history of the movement I am sure you would not like this error of your young comrades to go uncorrected.

Yours fraternally,
Ted Crawford
(in a personal capacity)

WV replies: What we wrote in denouncing the International Socialist Organiza-



U.S. Archives

Communist guerrillas taken captive by U.S. occupation army and Seoul puppet forces during Korean War.

tion's thuggery was that the ISO's political origins go back to "Tony Cliff's break with the Trotskyist movement in the 1950s when he lined up with British and American imperialism in the Korean War." Ted Crawford does not dispute the fact that the split with Cliff in 1950 was over Korea; rather, he seeks to trivialize the political significance of Cliff's Stalinophobia.

Whatever the crimes of Gerry Healy—and they were numerous—the expulsion of Cliff's supporters for their public refusal to defend the North Korean deformed workers state against Anglo-American imperialism was a principled act. When the question of the Korean War came up for a vote in the Birmingham Trades Council in 1950, a Cliff supporter in the British Trotskyist group (which was then inside the Labour Party) made a statement opposing both "the Russian puppet Government of North Korea and the American puppet Government of South Korea." This was a cowardly capitulation in the face of the anti-Communist frenzy whipped up by the bourgeoisie and the Labour government, which had sent British troops to "fight Communism" in Korea. (For a more detailed account of Cliff's record on Korea, see "For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!" in this issue.)

To Crawford, this was a matter of no

"practical" difference. But defense of the bureaucratically deformed/degenerated workers states has always been a cornerstone of the Trotskyist program. Cliff's defection over Korea mirrored that of Max Shachtman and a minority of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the context of the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact. Shachtman abandoned defense of the Soviet Union for the "third camp"—what Trotsky dubbed the "camp of the stampeding petty bourgeois"—provoking a sharp factional struggle with the SWP majority led by James P. Cannon. While fighting for proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, Trotsky unwaveringly argued for unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against internal counterrevolution and imperialist attack. In a speech on the Russian question during the faction fight, Cannon spoke powerfully on the programmatic gulf which Crawford seeks to obscure:

"Defensism and defeatism are two principles, that is, irreconcilable positions. They are not determined by arbitrary choice but by class interests. 'No party in the world ever succeeded in harboring these two antipathetic tendencies for any great length of time. The contradiction is too great. Division all over the world ultimately took place

continued on page 4

In Defense of Immigrant Workers

California's Prop. 187 is the spearhead of an escalated nativist and racist campaign against immigrants, especially Hispanics and Asians. Throughout U.S. history, such attacks have been used by the capitalist rulers and their agents to divide and weaken the working class. In the 1920s, government persecution of foreign-born workers was abetted by the nativist fascists of the Ku Klux Klan, who targeted traditionally Catholic Irish, Italian and East European immigrants. A special target of deportation roundups were immigrant "reds" and labor organizers in the mass production industries. During this period, the newly formed Communist Party, then known as the Workers Party, was in the forefront of the defense of foreign-born workers.

TROTSKY

LENIN

The millions of foreign-born workers are facing new dangers.

The message of President Coolidge to Congress, and the plan of Secretary of Labor Davis have revealed the plans of the capitalists against the foreign-born workers. Congress will in the very near future consider bills on registration and fingerprinting of the foreign-born workers. New special annual taxes and new discriminating special measures against the foreign-born workers will come up before Congress in the near future.

The Workers Party was the only political party which, as far back as a year ago, in its last convention, brought to the attention of the workers these great dangers. We have begun a big movement for the protection of foreign-born workers.

The convention authorizes the Central Executive Committee and District Executive Committees immediately to take steps to initiate a united front with all organizations which are willing to join in such a campaign. The Convention of the Workers Party pledges our Party to carry on a big campaign in the next year, for the protection of foreign-born workers, and calls upon every worker to organize the united front of native-born American and foreign-born workers against the criminal plans of the Coolidge administration, Ku Klux Klan, and American Legion patriots. The workers must recognize that the attack against the foreign-born workers is but a new attempt of the capitalist offensive against the suppressed and ill-paying laboring masses of the basic industries.

—Workers Party of America, Third National Convention, "Resolution on the Protection of the Foreign-Born Workers" (January 1924)

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The closing date for news in this issue is December 6

No. 612

9 December 1994

ANC Border Guards for South African Capitalism

November 14, 1994
Oakland, California

To the WV Editorial Board:

Dear Comrades,

The article "South African Workers Fight Mandela Austerity" (WV No. 610, 11 November) in denouncing the neo-apartheid government's anti-immigrant campaign states, "This has included placing electric fencing along the border with Mozambique and Zimbabwe." This implies a new policy. It isn't. Electric fencing was the policy of the old apartheid regime of the Nationalist Party. It has been a death sentence for untold numbers of desperate "illegal" immigrants. The fact that Mandela's government continues this policy exposes more clearly its repugnant role as junior partner in a neo-apartheid capitalist regime.

Don C.

WV replies: Comrade Don is right. The article was referring to a 65-mile extension of the electrified fence along South Africa's northern border with Zimbabwe, announced by Deputy Defense Minister and prominent South African Com-

munist Party leader Ronnie Kasrils in early November. Fences were originally built on the borders with Zimbabwe and Mozambique in the mid-1980s, when ANC guerrillas fighting the apartheid government were infiltrating from these countries. Now the African National Congress' military arm, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), has "merged" with the apartheid troops and guards the borders.

The extension of the electrified fence is part of a xenophobic campaign against "illegal" immigrants, who have streamed into South Africa since the April elections only to find their hopes of a better life in the "new" South Africa dashed. The *Financial Mail* (9 September) reports that unions "are increasingly strident in decrying the tide of migrants streaming into the country, undercutting prices, grabbing low-wage jobs and aggravating crime and the already critical unemployment level." While COSATU labor federation leader Sam Shilowa tells foreign workers to "go back home," proletarian revolutionaries in South Africa must demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants. ■

L.A. Child Dies Without Treatment Prop 187 Kills

People are already dying as a result of Proposition 187, the racist ballot initiative in California to deny medical care, education and other public services to "illegal" immigrants. Less than two weeks after passage of the measure in the November 8 elections, a 12-year-old Orange County boy, Julio Cano, died of leukemia after several days' illness and a critical delay in emergency care attributable to 187. "Julio's parents, illegal immigrants from Mexico, say they were afraid to take [their son] to the hospital because they feared being asked about their immigration status" (*Los Angeles Times*, 24 November).

Young Julio got sick on a Tuesday, but his hard-working father, Constantino Ramirez, had to wait until he got his meager paycheck on Friday before he could take his son to a local clinic—they had to walk because they have no car. There they were given antibiotics and told to monitor the boy's condition. On Saturday, the father phoned from work to check on Julio, whose condition had worsened: the boy could not speak or open his mouth. When firefighters responded to the 911 call, Julio's breathing and heartbeat had stopped, and he never revived.

"Please put in the newspaper," the grief-stricken mother, Rosa Cano, told *La Opinión* (27 November), "that since we arrived here my husband and I have always worked, earning at least the minimum wage of \$4.25 an hour. We have always paid our taxes and we have never asked for a single dollar from the gov-

ernment," she added pointedly. Nevertheless, Julio Cano and his parents were the victims of a racist backlash, extending from "white flight" suburbs to the California state house and the White House.

Throughout the state, for immigrants—legal or "illegal"—Prop. 187 is a death threat. As one immigrant coalition activist noted, "As far as they're concerned, their entire life changed on November 8."

Asked about the tragedy in a TV interview, Governor Pete Wilson responded by coldly dismissing "stories of that sort" and blaming "illegals" for the "tremendous burden" they supposedly put on hospital emergency rooms. Democratic Senator Barbara Boxer echoed the Republican governor, ranting that California "must be fully reimbursed for costs incurred" by undocumented immigrants (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 December). And the leading organizer for Prop. 187, Alan Nelson (director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service under the Reagan administration), chimed in: "187 will make it a lot tougher for illegals to stay here, that's the intent" (*Los Angeles Times*, 26 November).

But this vicious intimidation could backfire. The parents of young Julio now vow to stay and fight: as Constantino Ramirez eloquently said, "In memory of Julio, we need to stay here to fight against 187 which has brought us so much injury to all Latinos."

While liberals, Latino activist lawyers



and others try to assure the targeted immigrants that implementation of Prop. 187 has supposedly been stayed by court order, the fact is that it is *already* having its intended deadly effects. That same week, a 59-year-old woman from Shanghai died at San Francisco General Hospital from a brain hemorrhage caused by leukemia. "The woman's fear of deportation had led her to delay seeking treatment until she had bruises all over her body and a blind left eye" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 November).

Clinics in Los Angeles are reporting as much as a 60 percent drop in prenatal examinations because of no-shows, while immunizations against infectious childhood diseases such as measles, polio and diphtheria have nosedived even more sharply. In the SF Bay Area, the Alameda County health director warns of a coming public health crisis if immigrants do not come in for primary care, since communicable diseases like TB will not be caught before spreading. We say: Free, quality health care for all! Now legal immigrants and U.S.-born

Latinos are discovering that they too are targets of this racist attack. In Stockton, three teenage girls of American Indian and Latino ancestry tried to buy a pizza on the way home from school but were refused service when they could not produce naturalization papers! "I thought this Proposition 187 only affected illegal immigrants," the bewildered mother of one of the girls said (*Stockton Record*, 19 November). Attorneys for Latino groups report their "phone lines are swamped by calls from legal citizens complaining they are being asked for proof of citizenship, arrested for no reason, denied public and private services and harassed."

Meanwhile, multiracial protests continue to erupt against Prop. 187 and its deadly effects. Sit-ins at Cal State L.A. and UCLA resulted in nearly 50 arrests, including two members of the UCLA Spartacus Youth Club. We demand: Drop all charges against anti-187 protesters!

To defeat the vicious anti-immigrant offensive, it is necessary to mobilize the multiracial working class, in California and around the country. Particularly in L.A., immigrant workers have played a key role in energizing the labor movement. In recent years, militant struggles have been waged by the SEIU "Justice for Janitors" campaign, hotel workers, drywall construction workers and the Latino truckers who shut down Los Angeles ports last year and staged a caravan from San Pedro to L.A. City Hall on November 7 to protest Prop. 187.

Currently, the heavily Latino Hotel Workers Local 11 is fighting a bitter battle to save the jobs of more than 500 unionized workers at the Los Angeles Hilton and Towers complex, which is owned by the South Korean Hanjin conglomerate. Significantly, Korean community leaders in L.A. are calling on the South Korean capitalists to accede to the union's demands. If the American working class is to move forward, it must overcome the racial antagonisms deliberately fostered by the bourgeoisie to "divide and rule."

The Spartacist League calls on labor to vigorously defend immigrants against government scapegoating. Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! ■

Boston: Racist Mob Targets Housing Integration

It looked like a rerun from Boston in the 1970s, when racist mobs terrorized black schoolchildren during the busing crisis. This October 13, upwards of 800 whites marched through South Boston protesting "forced housing," i.e., the desegregation of the three housing projects in this impoverished white ghetto. Some of the marchers even sported the same racist R.O.A.R. (Restore Our Alienated Rights) flags they brandished 20 years ago.

In response to court-ordered integration of the "Southie" projects, Democratic Party politicians like City Council president James Kelly, who headed the racist, anti-busing South Boston Information Center in the '70s, have whipped up a frenzy of hate against blacks, Asian Americans and Hispanics. At a raucous "emergency community meeting" at the Gavin School in September, Kelly rallied against "black males in hooded sweat-shirts" who "intimidated" area residents. When Mary Mathurin, a black woman, courageously stood up to say that she was also a victim of crime, and that her children were being attacked by whites, she was shouted down and told to "go back to Roxbury where you belong." Signatures were collected at the meeting for a "South Boston Community Action

Corps," patterned after the anti-busing mobs.

This latest racist outburst follows a series of attacks on South Boston's few minority residents over the summer. The tone for these events was set on May 7, when fascist führer James Barrett of the Mississippi-based Nationalist Movement carried out a race-hate rally, under immense cop protection, on the steps of South Boston High School. In the aftermath of this provocation, there were two separate attacks on Asian youths, an assault on a Hispanic woman, the torching of a black man's car and at least one cross-burning. We pointed out that it was indeed ominous that Barrett was able to recruit some youth from the Irish of South Boston: historically, Catholics have been among the victims of nativist, anti-immigrant American fascism.

South Boston is one of the poorest white enclaves outside Appalachia. The capitalist rulers are pitting poor whites against poor minorities for scarce, dilapidated and roach-infested public housing. A recent survey pointed out that the southwest corner of South Boston (where the housing projects are located) has the highest concentration of households headed by white women of any neighborhood in the country. Meanwhile,

the recent passage of state-wide Ballot Question No. 9, which outlaws all of Massachusetts' woefully inadequate rent control programs, is sure to increase homelessness among the elderly and the poor.

As elsewhere in the country, Boston's bourgeois politicians are fanning the flames of racism under the banner of being "tough on crime." But despite an increase in assaults (many directed at blacks and other minorities), violent crime in South Boston has declined by 17.8 percent since 1988, the first year that minorities were allowed in the projects there. And a recent investigation in the same projects shows that, per capita, whites are more likely than blacks to be arrested for criminal acts.

The "anti-crime" crusade means increased cop terror against oppressed minorities. On September 13, while a helicopter hovered overhead, scores of state, local, housing and transit cops swooped down on the Mission Hill housing development in Roxbury, arresting 107 "trespassers." Black men visiting relatives were caught in the dragnet, handcuffed and hauled off to the Suffolk County House of Corrections. As one resident put it, "They're taking innocent people, grabbing them like they're a piece

of fish" (*Boston Globe*, 15 September).

Then, on October 19, nearly 100 local, state and federal cops staged a pre-dawn raid at the Franklin Hill project in Dorchester, arresting 13 black "suspects," including a mother of four dragged off in handcuffs in front of her children.

Earlier this year, on February 7, a young black man, Benjamin Schoolfield, was shot and killed at pointblank range in the western Massachusetts city of Springfield after the van that Schoolfield was driving was mistakenly reported as stolen. The killer, policeman Donald Brown, was fêted by his fellow cops in June after he was exonerated by an all-white jury. At the feast, Brown was presented with a ham—a ritual associated with Ku Klux Klan lynchings.

The racist mobilization against public housing desegregation is a product of the defeat of school busing, which was killed by liberal Democrats in Congress while racist mobs stoned buses carrying black children into Southie two decades ago. While reformists like the Socialist Workers Party preached reliance on the capitalist state, calling on Republican president Ford to send federal troops to "protect" blacks from the racists, the Spartacist League campaigned for labor/black mobilizations to defend black schoolchildren and for extending busing to the privileged suburbs.

The struggle for basic needs like integrated, quality schools and housing requires mobilizing the working class and all minorities against the capitalist system which spawns the racist mobs. The Spartacist League fights for the program of *revolutionary integrationism*. For black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

In the aftermath of the 1994 midterm elections, with both Democrats and Republicans heating the drums for the death penalty to show who is "tougher on crime," pressure is building to throw the machinery of state murder into high gear.

In Pennsylvania, where an execution has not been carried out in 32 years, Steven Duffey was scheduled to die on December 6. As we go to press, the execution has been temporarily stayed. But he and over 170 others remain on the executioner's list.

Pennsylvania has the fourth-largest death row in the country. Foremost among those threatened by the executioner is political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, sentenced to death in 1982—four years before Duffey. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, supporter of

Pennsylvania Execution Threat

the MOVE organization and prominent broadcaster—known as the "voice of the voiceless" because he spoke out for the oppressed—Jamal was framed for the killing of a Philadelphia cop.

The Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police is on a campaign demanding the execution of Jamal. State Representative Michael McGeehan, author of a bill to push through executions, said he's "specifically interested in [Jamal's] case. We're going to see him die."

The Partisan Defense Committee, the class-struggle legal and social defense organization affiliated with the Spartacist League, is campaigning to save

Mumia Abu-Jamal. To join this effort, contact the PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. Telephone: (212) 406-4252.

We print below a statement by the PDC protesting the threatened execution of Steven Duffey.

4 December 1994

Governor Robert Casey
Harrisburg, PA

Dear Governor Casey:

We are writing to protest the planned execution of Steven Duffey, now scheduled for December 6. Capital punishment is barbaric and an outrage against jus-

tice and decency. We demand the execution not be carried out.

The lethal injection which takes Mr. Duffey's life, and each and every one of these "legal" murders necessarily enhances the brutalization of society in all respects.

Thirty-two years have passed since Elmo Smith, the last person executed in Pennsylvania, died in the electric chair. The resumption of this state sponsored barbarism, with the execution of Mr. Duffey, places in immediate danger the lives of the more than 170 death-row inmates in Pennsylvania, the majority black or Hispanic.

We demand the execution of Mr. Duffey be stayed and his death sentence commuted.

Sincerely,
Paul Cooperstein

Extend the Strike! Shut Down MacBlo!

Labor Showdown on Vancouver Island

VANCOUVER—Members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers (CEP) and building trades unions in Port Alberni, British Columbia gave a taste of labor power on November 24, when a 300-strong picket line drove a scab "security" squad out of town amid a hail of fists, hoots and snowballs. The strike-breakers, protected by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, were trying to serve an injunction issued by the B.C. Labour Relations Board against union pickets outside the MacMillan Bloedel pulp mill compound in central Vancouver Island. But the company thugs who had charged and spat at picketers ended up sprawled in the mud, the pages of their injunction scattered by the wind.

Last summer MacBlo, the biggest of the profit-bloated forestry conglomerates which are the mainstay of the B.C. economy, broke a 45-year closed-shop agreement by bringing in scab subcontractors for construction work on its Nexgen mill project. Ten years ago, the building trades unions did 80 percent of all construction work in B.C. Now it's less than 20 percent. Meanwhile, mechanization and "restructuring" threaten 20,000 job losses in the pulp industry by 1997.

For the last two months, angry work-

ers from across British Columbia have flooded Port Alberni with well-organized and effective pickets which have stopped the scabs (who are in a company-created "union," dubbed a "rat union" by picketers). When scabs tried to disembark from the Vancouver Island ferry, workers threw up a picket line and stopped them. Again, when they fled the Island by ferry on November 24, some found their tires slashed. Unionists and their wives have taken more than 60 arrests for "illegal" picket activity. Even *advocacy* of picket lines has brought outrageous charges of contempt of court. *B.C. labor must demand: Drop the charges now!*

In late October, a 1,000-strong picket shut down the scab site for two days. Then on November 10, the CEP struck the existing MacBlo mill by the Nexgen site. Marching out to the cheers of construction unionists, the 850 pulp workers immediately swelled the lines while the scabs were squirreled out of town under police protection.

The bitter fight at Port Alberni recalls the 1992-93 strike at the Giant gold mine in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. For a full year, strikers there also faced off against scabs and their RCMP protectors. In a frontal attack on all Cana-



People's Voice

Militant pickets at Port Alberni have sent scabs running.

dian labor, Yellowknife striker Roger Warren is now on trial, railroaded on first-degree murder charges in connection with the death of nine scabs in an underground explosion in the notoriously unsafe mine. *Drop all the charges—Free Roger Warren!*

The showdown at Port Alberni is a battle for all labor. The militant mass pickets and walkout by the mill workers at Alberni have stopped the scabbing, for now. The bosses are seeking a court injunction in order to call out the RCMP and run scabs this week. What's needed is to extend the strike to all MacBlo facilities province-wide, including to the powerful IWA-C woodworkers union, with its large number of South Asian members. The unity needed to bring MacBlo to its knees requires a hard fight against the racism and anti-immigrant poison that the bosses and their agents use to divide and paralyze workers' struggle.

A class-struggle fight will meet with the sabotage of the union misleaders and their friends in the New Democratic Party, which runs the B.C. provincial government. They are already working overtime to derail this struggle, preaching adherence to the bosses' strike-breaking laws. CEP local president Doug Lesire called the routing of the scabs a "black eye" for Port Alberni. B.C. Federation of Labour president Ken Georgetti loudly condemned picket line "violence," echoing the anti-union media. On November 29, Georgetti got the annual B.C. Fed convention to adopt a call for a losing "consumer boycott" of MacBlo products, explicitly counterposing this to mass pickets and other militant labor tactics which can win.

The labor tops turned the B.C. Fed convention into an NDP campaign rally, conveniently ignoring the New Democrats' strikebreaking against teachers and other workers. In 1975, the last time the NDP social democrats were in office, they passed the most sweeping strikebreaking law in provincial history against 60,000 wood/pulp workers, Teamsters and retail clerks. The memory of this betrayal is very much alive in Port Alberni, where many pulp workers tore up their NDP membership cards in anger back in '75.

The Port Alberni struggle has struck a chord in the working class as thousands see a chance to fight back against the bosses' attacks. B.C.'s union movement has historically been among the most militant in North America, but labor's power has been shackled by and to the pro-capitalist New Democrats. We address ourselves to the most class-conscious elements to split the NDP and win its working-class base to the struggle to build a revolutionary leadership. What's needed is a leadership that can stand rock-solid in the face of cop, court and scab attacks, a leadership that combats racial, national and sexual divisions. The successful mass union-centered mobilization in Vancouver that sent fascist scum packing in January 1993 is an example of how labor can champion the cause of all the oppressed.

This is the perspective that the Trotskyist League of Canada supporters have emphasized on the picket lines and at solidarity rallies, part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party which can lead the fight for workers power. *Victory to the Port Alberni strikers!* ■

Korean War...

(continued from page 2)

along this line. Defensists at home were defeatists on Russia. Defensists on Russia were defeatists at home."

When the Korean War began, the British Trotskyists issued a special supplement of their newspaper *Socialist Outlook* (4 July 1950) in which they declared that "the armies of the North are conducting a progressive war. They are entitled to the active assistance of the workers and the oppressed peoples of the whole world." The Trotskyists also issued an antiwar pamphlet consisting of letters from Lance Corporal Bill Tyler, a close sympathizer who was killed in Korea and who had distributed their press among British soldiers on the front.

Crawford cites Harry Ratner. But in his book *Reluctant Revolutionary*, Ratner, then a member of Healy's group, recalls the Trotskyists' principled position at the time: "we did criticise the Stalinists and the Communist Party; but we did this within the overall context that we were on the side of North Korea and of the Soviet Union, in the context that the main enemy was imperialism and that the Stalinist Moscow and Communist Party policies were how not to fight

imperialism" (emphasis in original). It was this defense of North Korea that Cliff fled from, following on the heels of "left" Labourites like Fenner Brockway who had formerly worked with the Healy group inside the Labour Party.

A decade and a half later, when their pro-imperialist line was not selling well to young militants in the Vietnam antiwar movement, the Cliffites manufactured a spurious rationale that, unlike Korea, the Vietnamese struggle was purely one of "national liberation" and therefore worthy of support. In fact, both were struggles for national and social liberation that also posed defense of the deformed workers states. Then, as Cold War II revved up in the 1980s, the Cliffites' "third camp" ("Neither Washington nor Moscow") position again found them openly lining up behind imperialism: backing the CIA-backed *mujahedin* against the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, cheering on Lech Walesa's pro-imperialist Solidarność in Poland, hailing Yeltsin counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in August 1991.

In belittling Cliff's break with Trotskyism, Crawford amnesties these pro-imperialist, social-democratic politics. For revolutionaries, "which side are you on" in the class war is key. The Cliffites were, and remain, on the wrong side. ■

Young Spartacus

Spartacus Youth Clubs Welcome New Members



The following two membership applications were submitted to the San Francisco Spartacus Youth Club. We are proud to welcome these new recruits to our ranks.

I wish to join the Spartacus Youth Club. I am eager to assist, to the best of my abilities, a group that will lead the workers to victory over the capitalist exploiters. I want to participate in the formation of a better society, a society in which inequality and exploitation will have no place, and where those who work will rule.

For many years my knowledge of Marxism was rather vague. However, I have long been a witness to the exploitation of the working class, and to the ever increasing amounts of violence used against it by the bourgeoisie.

Proposition 187 is a warning sign, an indication of the anti-foreigner hysteria that possesses society. This proposition is an effort by the bourgeoisie to divide the proletariat, to turn worker against worker. It serves as a homing beacon for the enemies of the working class and sends them a personal invitation to come out to California and beat up minorities on behalf of the bourgeoisie.

Recently, an apologist for Hitler materialized in Berkeley, California. This creature, which goes by the name of David Irving, planned to treat his audience to his own highly original opinion of the Holocaust: It never happened. While some might dismiss Irving as the product of a solitary hiccup of evolution, one glance at his followers is enough to dispel this notion. The members of his audience—many sporting swastikas and other Nazi insignia—served as vivid but painful reminders of a time when mankind swung through the treetops. Enough workers were on hand to bring down the curtain on Irving's performance, but this cheerleader for der Führer and his loyal army of followers pose a growing threat to the proletariat.

The health care crisis is another sign of the times. Clinton's promise of uni-

versal coverage has remained exactly that: a promise. The Pied Piper of Little Rock used it to lure the naive—including me—into the Democratic Party in 1992. Once implanted in the White House, Clinton felt no need to make good on his promise—it was junked as being "too impractical."

It has been two years since the election and the health care system hasn't changed one iota. The bourgeoisie still get the best care money can buy, and the workers must make do with companies that place profit over the quality of care. This outrageous and immoral system has led to the death of my father and to the severe physical disabilities of my mother and one of my nieces.

Public education remains a sham. One always knows that when the call comes to cut frivolous government spending, public schools are the first to feel the crunch. This holds true from local elementary schools to the big state colleges. Rather than deprive themselves of lim-

ousines and expense accounts, the fat cat capitalist rulers gut institutions meant to serve the needs of the workers. The result is always the same: the bourgeoisie sends its children to expensive private schools, and the children of workers struggle to get an education in overcrowded, underfunded classrooms.

The fall of the workers states in Europe has unleashed a monster, a bourgeois Godzilla determined to crush the world under its heel. Suddenly the capitalists have opportunities to exploit and oppress that they never thought possible just a short time ago. Millions of demoralized workers in Russia and Eastern Europe are being put to work making money for the bourgeoisie. Five years ago the capitalists would have been sent packing, but today they are welcomed by those willing to sell out their fellow workers in order to make a quick buck. No longer held in check by Russia, the American bourgeoisie is free to meddle with any country it chooses. It descends on country after country, "liberating" the populace and clearing the way for Coca-Cola, layoffs, and the unemployment line.

I am tired of the Yankee Doodle patriotism I see everywhere. The smug, self-righteous attitude of so many Americans disgusts me. How can I believe America to be the greatest country in the world when I see so much misery and suffering around me? And worse, how can I support a system determined to export exploitation and racism to every corner of the world?

I can't.

My conscience will no longer allow me to lend my support to a system that feeds off inequality, that pits man against woman, black against white, young against old. Capitalism is a system that locks workers in a pointless struggle, a struggle that wastes valuable energy and resources. It's a system that benefits a few at the expense of many. All workers must realize that we cannot win under capitalism, and that the only way to beat the system is to change it.

I strongly believe that now is the time for action, and I stand ready to do my share of the work in building a new and better society. I believe that the Spartacist League will be instrumental in this

task and I fully agree with its statement of purpose. I would feel honored to be accepted into the Spartacus Youth Club, and if admitted, I agree to follow its program, decisions, and rules.

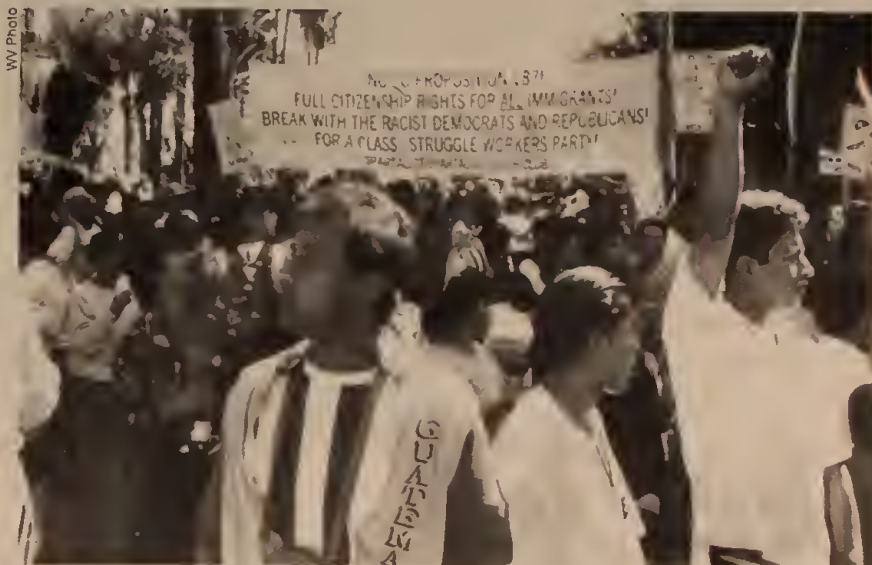
Susan
San Francisco

Do you enjoy living in a society filled with racism, poverty, homelessness, oppression, and police brutality? Firstly, class struggle and inequality were brought to my attention when I moved from a middle-class suburb into an El Salvadoran working-class neighborhood located in downtown L.A. Next, I moved into a black neighborhood in Venice, where domestic gang violence claimed at least four lives a week. Here, I split the cost of rent with another leftist, and continued my work as a political graffiti artist. In addition to arresting me for defacing private property, the Los Angeles Police Department destroyed a legal mural that I painted on my high school. Thus my seditious animosity, and interest in revolution, was sparked.

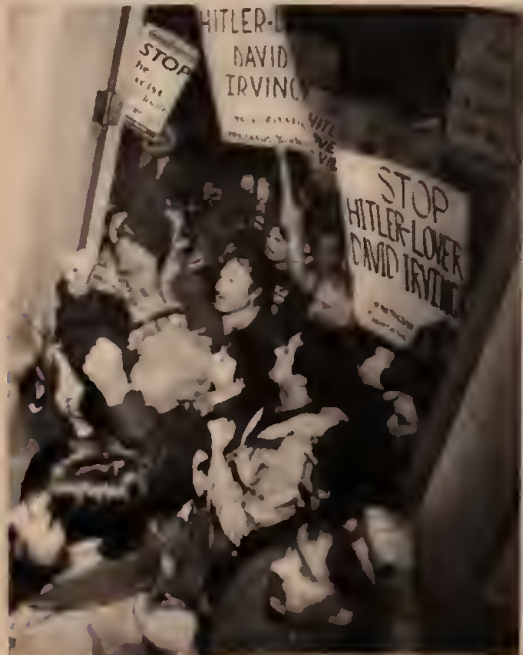
I am interested in joining the SYC because I feel that the Spartacist League is a true revolutionary party that can lead the working class in an all-out conflict with the system. I agree with the program of the SL and will abide by the discipline of the party. Moreover, a massive general confrontation between capital and labor remains inevitable under capitalism due to the minimal share of national income going to the working class, and the increasing share going to profits. Also, the current newspaper strike exposes the ruling class' intention to weaken union organization, drive down wages, cut social services, and slash jobs. Furthermore, this [San Francisco Chronicle] strike reveals the motives of the trade-union leaders, whose main concern is to preserve their balancing role between workers and employers. At the crucial moment they will inevitably betray. Therefore, I'm motivated to smash the bourgeoisie's state, and replace it with a society of real freedom and equality in which there is no longer a state or any oppression of people by people.

Richard T.
San Francisco

Los Angeles
SYC members
Join mass
protest against
anti-immigrant
Prop. 187,
October 16.



Young Spartacus



Protesters rout
Hitler-lover David
Irving and his
Nazl cohorts
In Berkeley,
California,
October 13.
SYC fights for
labor/black
mobilizations to
stop the fascists.

For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!



South Korean police state is a tinder box. Rail workers demonstrate on eve of strike in June (left); students protest in April against U.S. deployment of Patriot missiles against North.

Hands Off South Korean Workers, Leftist Students!

The agreement between U.S. and North Korean negotiators in Geneva in October came after almost two years of pounding imperialist threats and blackmail. Under the terms of the pact, North Korea has agreed to restrictions on its nuclear reactor program in return for promises from Washington of supplying its fuel/power needs (to be financed mainly by South Korea and Japan), as well as the beginnings of diplomatic relations with the U.S. The Clinton administration extorted a promise of eventual inspections of North Korean military facilities, while reasserting its position as arbiter on the peninsula and more broadly in the North Pacific.

The Seoul regime initially carped about a deal being made behind its back, but South Korea's big business magnates have been pushing for a rapprochement with Pyongyang as a step toward capitalist reunification of the peninsula, which was divided in the aftermath of World War II. Shortly after the pact was signed, the South Korean government announced that it was dropping its ban on direct trade with the North. Meanwhile, in Washington, the new Republican majority on Capitol Hill is threatening to scuttle the deal, railing that Clinton is selling out to the North Korean "Communists." At the same time, the Asian-Pacific economic summit in Jakarta, Indonesia was dominated by "negotiations" between Washington, Tokyo and Seoul over financing the agreement. Behind the "peace" talk is the spectre of escalating turmoil in this pivotal world arena.

The pact was signed the day after the period of official mourning for North Korean leader Kim Il Sung ended. The death of the 82-year-old Kim in July unleashed a flood tide of speculation in the bourgeois press about the future of the Pyongyang regime and the isolated deformed workers state over which it rules. The media was filled with unconfirmed rumors of a succession crisis and wild tales of mass starvation and imminent collapse, many of them fueled by the anti-communist propaganda mills of the South Korean police state. Much of

this was deliberate disinformation aimed at augmenting the U.S.-orchestrated hysteria over North Korea. Meanwhile, the imperialist media largely blacked out reports of the widespread labor and student struggles which rocked the capitalist South throughout the summer and the draconian repression meted out by the "democratic" Kim Young Sam regime in Seoul.

The recent agreement was announced after talks resumed in late September between the U.S. and North Korea, aimed at resolving the crisis manufactured by Washington over Pyongyang's supposed nuclear bomb. Weeks before his death from a heart attack on July 8, Kim Il Sung struck a deal with former U.S. president and "human rights" imperialist Jimmy Carter. The Pyongyang regime agreed to freeze its nuclear program and cede control over 8,000 spent fuel rods recently removed from a reactor in Yongbyon in exchange for U.S. promises of more modern, light-water reactors—which produce less plutonium—to replace the graphite-controlled

ones North Korea has or is building. This is essentially what Washington has now agreed to.

The plutonium that U.S. rulers really want to assert control over is the tons of it hoarded by Japan, as the *New York Times* (20 August) suggested in a front-page article: "Japan plans to obtain 50 tons more over the next 15 years, mainly produced in European plants, and within seven years it plans to open up a huge new reprocessing plant of its own. If diverted to weapons use, those supplies could produce thousands of nuclear weapons." During the Cold War Korea was a trip-wire for a nuclear third world war against the Soviet Union. Today it is a platform for American attempts to dominate Asia and the Pacific Rim, as the U.S. seeks to keep its Japanese "ally"-cum-rival in line by turning the "confrontation" with North Korea on and off. In the post-Cold War new world disorder, the struggle to redivide the globe for exploitation among the major imperialist rivals—Japan, Germany and the U.S.—is no longer restrained by common hostility

to the Soviet deformed workers state.

Japan now has the fourth-largest military in the world, including a significant naval force. Earlier this year, the Foreign Ministry "drafted a legal opinion holding that under international law, nuclear missiles can't be deemed illegal" (*Wall Street Journal*, 2 August). The Japanese press recently revealed the existence of a 1969 Foreign Ministry document which called for a nuclear capability. The document stated: "For the time being Japan's policy will be to not possess nuclear weapons. But it will always maintain the economic and technical potential to manufacture nuclear weapons, and will see to it that [Japan] won't accept outside interference on this matter."

The U.S. ruling class—which wiped out the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the only use of nuclear weapons against anyone anywhere—wants to maintain its overwhelming nuclear hegemony. Meanwhile, Japan's rulers are indeed moving to remilitarize and are staking out their claim to hegemony over their former "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere." The Spartacist League/U.S. and Spartacist Group Japan, sections of the International Communist League, join in opposing the renewed drive toward bloody interimperialist conflict between these two rapacious bourgeoisies, declaring: The main enemy is at home!

Washington's on-again, off-again "peace" moves notwithstanding, North Korea remains subjected to imperialist embargo and other war provocations. Clinton and the Pentagon have readied reinforcements for the 37,000 U.S. troops still stationed in the South. The U.S. can still threaten to resume its "Team Spirit" military "exercises," which amount to practice invasions of the North. Meanwhile Admiral Ronald Zlatoper, U.S. commander in the Pacific, explicitly invoked the occupation of Haiti to declare that "some very strong military force can influence diplomacy" (*New York Times*, 1 October).

Despite periodic ravings in the American press about an imminent North



Leftist students face off against police phalanx in Seoul, June 1991.

Spartacist Canada

Korean invasion, it is the U.S. and South Korea who act like they're about to restart the Korean War of 1950-53. The "truce" line along the 38th parallel DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) bristles with high-tech armaments and concentrations of U.S. and South Korean troops, who maintain a "pumped-up air of vigilance," as Ian Buruma reported in the *New Yorker* (12 September) on a recent visit to Korea, while their North Korean counterparts show "no sign of overt hostility or belligerence."

Meanwhile, the Seoul regime has been acting as though it already is at war, rounding up thousands of trade unionists and student activists under the draconian National Security Law for alleged pro-North sympathies. It is the elementary duty of the international working class to rally to the defense of the embattled workers and students of South Korea against capitalist repression and to defend the North Korean workers state against imperialism and counterrevolution. We demand the immediate release of all arrested South Korean trade unionists and student protesters! Hands off the labor and left movements! Hands off North Korea!

South Korean Powder Keg

Though somewhat more restrained than in previous years, the annual "spring offensive" by South Korea's unions nonetheless demonstrated the explosive character of class struggle in the South. Particularly since the massive strike wave of 1987-88, which forced the military dictatorship to grant direct presidential elections and led to the rise of an independent labor movement, the South Korean proletariat has demonstrated enormous combativity and courage in the face of severe repression. The election two years ago of Kim Young Sam, a former leader of the "democratic" opposition, marked a recognition by the South Korean ruling class that labor upsurge could no longer be contained simply through military measures. But, as we noted earlier, "Kim's election is little more than a transparent 'democratic' veneer for the South Korean police state" (*WV* No. 574, 23 April 1993).

Kim Young Sam's mission from the *chaebols* (industrial conglomerates) was to rein in the turbulent working class, drive up the rate of exploitation in the face of an economic downturn and roll back the concessions won in 1987-88. Last year the regime limited wage increases to about 8.5 percent, with inflation running between 20 and 30 percent. This year, the government-sponsored and "AFL-CIA"-advised Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) agreed to a ceiling of 5 to 8 percent. An independent union coalition, Chonnodae (Korean Council of Trade Unions), has succeeded in winning many unions away from the FKTU. When independent unions challenged the wage-gouging deal, the government came down hard.

Exacerbating the *chaebol* monopolists' fears of militant labor struggle is the presence of an active student move-

ment hostile to the U.S. imperialist presence. Throughout the spring and summer, a wave of bitter strikes by the independent unions against the government-directed austerity drive coincided with an upsurge in student struggles against the Kim Young Sam regime. An editorial in the English-language *Korea Times* (22 June) on a strike threat



Clinton at "demilitarized" zone along North Korean border, July 1993, as part of U.S. campaign of war provocations.

by rail and subway workers vituperated against "Outlaw Workers" and warned against links with "radical students" aimed at "triggering a united anti-government struggle."

The next day, 6,700 members of the outlawed Chonghyong independent train engineers union walked off the job in defiance of a government ban on public employees' strikes, paralyzing rail transportation throughout the country. The engineers had already been planning a strike over demands centering around wages, reinstatement of fired militants and inhuman work schedules which can mean 24-hour shifts. But the strike was moved up in protest against pre-dawn raids by 6,000 riot police aimed at dispersing workers' rallies at union offices. Despite the arrest of more than 600 union members and the mobilization of troops and retired workers as scabs, the railway system was effectively shut down for several days; in Seoul, striking engineers simply took the locomotive keys home with them.

Subway workers in Seoul and Pusan, who have gone on strike every year since 1987 (in some cases letting passengers travel free beforehand), joined the walkout, again flouting the anti-strike laws. As cops and troops stood guard outside stations, thousands of riot police staged raids on campuses and churches in search of strike militants. When police attacked workers' demonstrations, the strikers defended themselves with steel pipes. Chonnodae's call for a general solidarity strike met with scattered response, and in the aftermath almost 800 engineers were fired in the largest government purge ever. By June 29, most of the rail workers were back at work, as the government struggled furiously to prevent the strikes from spreading, fearing a

repeat of the "Great Workers Struggle" of 1987-88.

That same day, the regime mobilized thousands of police to break strikes in Kwangju, Taegu and Pusan. In Kwangju, 4,000 cops stormed the Kuniho Tire Co. to disperse 2,000 union members and their families, arresting 200 militants. As police fired tear gas, retreating workers

crossing of picket lines for the first time at Daewoo Shipbuilding. Seizing on the war fever whipped up over Washington's confrontation with North Korea, the bourgeois press tried to instigate a chauvinist anti-strike frenzy following the railway workers' action, ranting: "Forty-four years ago, it was the North Korean Communist invaders that stopped the train. Now it is not 'external foes' but 'our fellow workers' who have been halting operations" (*Korea Times*, 28 June).

Seoul's "Democratic" Police State On the Rampage

While the level of strike activity has declined somewhat in the last couple of years, there was a sharp rise in student struggle over the summer. In mid-June, 3,000 police stormed Hongik University in Seoul—to be met by a hail of fire-bombs and rocks—after students captured 54 cops guarding the campus area. Government repression against leftist students had already been stepped up during the spring as part of the war fever spurred by the U.S. campaign for sanctions against the North. Hanchongnyon, the Korean Federation of University Student Councils, was branded an "organization benefiting the enemy," and 124 students were arrested for contact with the North, including ten leading members of the Youth League for Kim Il Sung Ideology. In the wake of Kim Il Sung's death, Seoul escalated its vicious witch-hunt against radical militants. Warning that any expression of grief would violate the National Security Law, the Prosecutor General's office tracked student leaders and organized massive police mobilizations to prevent anyone from crossing the border to attend Kim's funeral in Pyongyang.

On July 13, police raided Seoul campuses and arrested 55 student leaders for organizing mourning committees for Kim Il Sung's funeral. Students responded the next day by attacking police stations around Seoul. Two days later, cops staged a pre-dawn raid at Chonnam National University in Kwangju—a city with a history of militant leftist struggle, where workers and students staged a heroic uprising in 1980—in order to confiscate a secret altar for mourning the North Korean leader. On the day of the funeral, 28,000 riot police spread out to universities across the country, raiding at least five. When the Jesuit president of Seoul's Sogang University charged that Hanchongnyon was communicating with the North via fax and computer networks, the government launched a crackdown even some of the bourgeois media characterized as "McCarthyite."

On June 30, 25,000 shipyard workers at Hyundai Heavy Industries walked off the job in a strike which went on until late August. After a month, the company declared a lockout and a "no work, no pay" policy (previously workers had compelled the company to pay them for time out on strike). When the lockout was lifted on August 17, clashes broke out between workers fighting to continue the strike and those who buckled under company pressure to go back. The strike was finally called off a week later after more than half of the strikers had reportedly returned to work. While the union acceded to the loss of pay during the strike/lockout, the company was forced to accept an 11.3 percent pay hike and an agreement not to bring criminal charges against 49 union leaders.

Shortly after the Hyundai walkout began, union leaders ordered a one-week suspension of the strike "in consideration of the delicate situation at home and abroad" following Kim Il Sung's death, while other unions in the Hyundai empire failed to join the shipyard workers in strike action. Evidence of a deterioration in traditional workers' solidarity was also found in a large-scale

By the end of July, the regime had labeled all student activists as North Korean agents and terrorists, warning that it would deal "strictly" with "impure elements"; 140 students were placed on its "most wanted" list, with rewards of up to \$12,400 for the arrest of some. On August 15, police in Seoul sought to break up massive Liberation Day demonstrations—marking the 49th

continued on page 8

Pantheon Books



North Korean capital Pyongyang was devastated by U.S. during Korean War (above). Planned economy enabled North Korea to provide modern housing and universal social services.



Mario Ambrosius

Korea...

(continued from page 7)

anniversary of the surrender of the Japanese colonial army in 1945—organized by Hanchongnyon and other reunification organizations. Some 20,000 cops occupied campuses, subways and government buildings. At Seoul University, 10,000 students huddled almost as many cops for four hours. Police sprayed tear gas on the demonstrators from helicopters and arrested 2,400 students. The Education Ministry called for a ban on campus protests during the fall term, and university administrations ordered surveillance of entrances, aimed as well at trade unions which use the campuses for meetings.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly has demanded the firing of all "professors who pollute students." In August, nine professors who co-authored a 1990 textbook, *How to Understand Korean Society*, were summoned for interrogation by a district prosecutor's office on suspicion of pro-North Korean writings. When they refused to appear, denouncing the "kangaroo court" proceedings, those of their students who received good grades were also called in for questioning! All told, some 300 or more leftist students have been rounded up recently, three times the number arrested during the whole of 1989, when former general Roh Tae Woo launched a repressive campaign aimed at consolidating his power. *Down with the Kim Young Sam regime's repression! Release all leftist students and worker militants languishing in South Korea's jails! Abolish the National Security Law!*

The Bitter Legacy of Kim Il Sung

Despite the bourgeoisie's attempt to portray South Korean society as seamlessly anti-communist, the widespread manifestations of lament over Kim Il Sung's death reflect a degree of respect for the demonized North Korean ruler. Many regard him as a true nationalist, particularly for his history as a leader of guerrilla struggle against the Japanese. But one does not have to believe Seoul's lurid propaganda to recognize the bizarre character of this ultimate Stalinist cult of personality. In this bureaucratically deformed workers state which claims to be a socialist country, the heir to the "Great Leader" was declared decades in advance to be Kim's son, "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il. Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency solemnly announced that violent storms struck Mount Paekdu, an extinct volcano deemed sacred in Korean mythology, just as "the great heart of the supreme brain of the Korean revolution stopped beating...the ancestral mountain is writhing in grief" (*Los Angeles Times*, 15 July).

In the wake of Kim's death, the Western press ran sensationalist headlines like "Korea After Kim: The Headless Beast" (*Newsweek*, 18 July), conjuring up "worst-case scenarios." The imperialist speculation mills thrive on the fact that North Korea has been an opaque



Birthday celebration in 1992 for Kim Il Sung. Limousine was given to Kim by Stalin. Kim's doctrine of Juche ("self-reliance"), variant of Stalin's "socialism in one country," is obstacle to spread of revolution.

society—including to its own people. But despite dire claims from suspect South Korean and imperialist sources that the population is reduced to eating tree bark or at least suffers widespread hunger, there is nothing to corroborate such reports. For example, there is no evidence of masses of refugees crossing the border into China, where there is an ethnic Korean population. Moreover, even the UN Food and Agricultural Organization estimated that North Korean rice production had the highest yield per hectare in the world between 1979 and 1990, and per capita calorie intake approximated or even exceeded that of South Korea. Yet in 1990, North Korea began importing rice, and grain production evidently plummeted (Gavan McCormack "Kim Country: Hard Times in North Korea," *New Left Review*, March/April 1993).

Central planning also allowed North Korea to achieve a significant level of industrialization. It is often forgotten today that up until the late 1970s, per capita industrial output in the North exceeded that in the South. This changed only with the tremendous influx of Japanese capital. Since then, however, the collapse of the Soviet Union has led to even deeper isolation for the North, cutting off a major source of parts and equipment and oil at "friendship" prices. The gross national product has reportedly been in decline for several years, and the ruling Korean Workers Party admitted last December that production in electricity generation, steel and other key industries was either stagnating or dropping. On top of this, North Korea is forced to devote an enormous proportion of its resources to defense against the ongoing military threat posed by the U.S. and South Korea. Fully a quarter of the North's GNP is consumed by military expenditures; yet at \$2 billion, this is a drop in the bucket compared to the \$15 billion spent annually on "defense" by the South.

Faced with an economic impasse, Pyongyang has apparently opted for the "Chinese" road of introducing capitalist

market "reforms" while maintaining the firm grip of the bureaucratic regime. Kim Jong Il is said to have gathered around himself "what you would call the reformist element in North Korea," according to Selig Harrison of the Carnegie Endowment. It was the younger Kim who invited the sinister Sun Myung Moon—a notorious "anti-communist" who heads the cultist "Unification Church" and has long-established connections with the South Korean CIA—to visit Pyongyang in 1991 and lecture on the benefits of reunification.

Kim Jong Il was also reportedly the force behind last year's revision of the investment laws along Chinese lines and the establishment in 1991 of the country's first "free economic zone," near Rajin and Sonbong in the northeast. Earlier this year, the cities of Nampo and Sinuiju were designated for the creation of more free trade and investment areas. The regime has been aggressively courting IBM among other foreign firms with the lure of a highly trained and disciplined, low-wage workforce. This will result in imperialist economic penetration of the deformed workers state.

In China, this program is rapidly propelling the deformed workers state along the road of capitalist counterrevolution, a road which will be much shorter in North Korea, dwarfed as it is by the *chaebol*-driven capitalist economy to the south. Already there has been a big expansion in South Korean investment in low-wage "labor intensive" joint ventures, and Southern capitalists expect the level of trade with the North to jump five-fold from \$200 million to \$1 billion within a year following the end of Seoul's ban on direct business dealings. According to the *Economist* (16 July), Seoul's "National Unification Board" anticipates under the "China model" raking in superprofits for years by keeping North Korean wages low and the border sealed. "Market reforms" will result in mass misery.

The prospect of the North Korean deformed workers state being opened to untrammelled capitalist exploitation is the result of the pernicious political legacy bequeathed by Kim Il Sung. His autarkic dogma of *Juche* (self-reliance), a Korean version of Stalin's "socialism in one country" steeped in nationalist mythology, means opposition to workers revolution anywhere else. For decades, the bureaucracy has vainly sought to be left alone by the imperialists, while pushing utopian schemes for "peaceful reunification" with the capitalist South.

Its "socialist" gloss notwithstanding, this nationalist perspective undermines the defense of the collectivized economy in every respect, economically and politically. Ian Buruma reports in the *New Yorker* that an official North Korean tour guide speaking about the regime's promises of imminent reunification exclaimed: "Next year, our wall will also fall. And, like the Germans, we will celebrate the liberation of our country." That

a supposed Communist could speak with such rapture of the devastation inflicted on East Germany's working people by capitalist reunification is a measure of the grotesque nationalism which *Juche* has inculcated in the popular consciousness. This sort of "liberation" is also what the South Korean monopolies, the *chaebals*, have in mind. While they may seek a slower and controlled pace of counterrevolution than German imperialism's annexation of the DDR, they too are thirsting to transform North Korean workers into wage slaves.

The defense of the collectivized foundations of the North Korean deformed workers state is increasingly posed pointblank. North Korea cannot continue to survive as a workers state in isolation for an extended period of time. The destruction of the Soviet Union has left North Korea, like Cuha and Vietnam, perilously exposed to imperialist pressure and capitalist restoration. The key to the defense of North Korea's social revolution lies in a revolutionary upsurge of the toiling masses on both sides of the 38th parallel.

Socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist police state in the South must be linked to a proletarian political revolution in the North, leading to a regime of proletarian democracy based on workers councils (soviets). But a united socialist Korea would immediately confront imperialist powers determined to obliterate any obstacles to their proclaimed "New World Order." The urgent task to ensure the *survival* of a revolution in Korea would be to *extend* it throughout the region, breaking out of the confines of this tiny peninsula.



Television factory in North Korea. Until late 1970s, North had higher per capita industrial output than capitalist South.

Korea abuts eastern Siberia in a now-capitalist but highly unstable Russia, offering a direct link to the Russian proletariat. More importantly, China is on the verge of a profound crisis. As the workers upsurge around the 1989 Tiananmen massacre showed, the Chinese proletariat is seething over the destruction of the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed lifetime employment and social benefits, and the concomitant inequality. Already strikes have broken out in the "special economic zones" against the hideous exploitation by foreign capital. And in imperialist Japan, particularly given its sizable minority of oppressed Korean workers, a revolution in Korea could open the road to socialist revolution in this industrial powerhouse of Asia. The critical element lies in the forging of *internationalist* Bolshevik parties in Korea and throughout East Asia.

For a Trotskyist Party in Korea!

South Korea is a garrison state, the capitalist half of a nation divided by the battle line of a class civil war. With the regime in a permanent state of war mobilization, any serious strike immediately comes up against the state and tends

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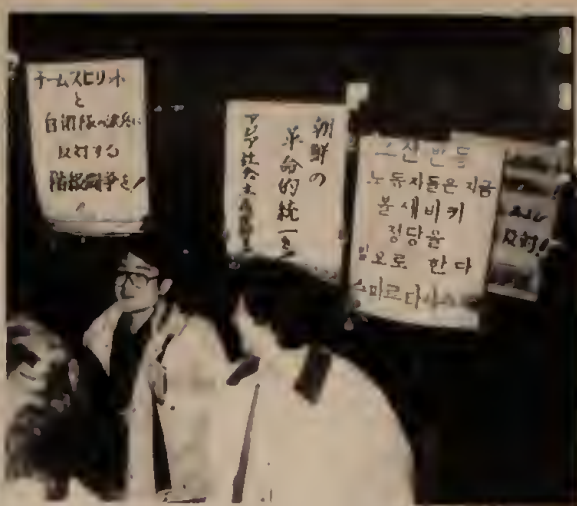
quickly to challenge the capitalist order. To the ruling class, the linking up of South Korean workers with the workers in the North, where the capitalists were kicked out and kept out through heroic struggle costing millions of lives, is their greatest nightmare. And the rule of the *chaebols* is vulnerable; it is not good news for the regime that army enrollment is the lowest ever, with some draftees amputating toes and fingers to avoid serving, while the military academies scramble for recruits. And despite all the resources of a militarized police state, tens of thousands of university students appear to have embraced the South Korean state's main enemy. Kim Il Sung is a hero to these students for fighting against the imperialist oppressors of Korea—first Japan and then the U.S.

But Kim Il Sung and the North Korean Stalinist bureaucracy, wedded to the myth of achieving "socialism" in half a country, have not fought for reunification of Korea through revolutionary struggle by the South Korean masses. In order to win, the Korean working class needs a genuinely communist program of struggle aimed at ridding the country of the capitalists, their U.S. imperialist backers and their counterrevolutionary designs against the North. This requires the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party.

The recently formed independent South Korean trade unions have demonstrated unparalleled militancy under harrowing conditions. But such defensive organizations of the working class are inherently incapable of leading the proletariat to power. Indeed, under a leadership—however militant—which accepts the constraints of capitalism, they are incapable even of consistently defending the workers' interests against the onslaughts of the police-state regime. In the absence of a leadership programmatically bound to an internationalist revolutionary party, the unions will necessarily reflect sectional and national interests. Thus Chonnoda's founding statement comes out in favor of protectionism, tying itself to the interests of the South Korean capitalists *against* those of workers in other countries. And Chonnoda criminally refuses to organize the tens of thousands of foreign workers in the South brought in to do the notorious "3 D" (dirty, dangerous and difficult) jobs.

Student activists, many of whom see themselves as pro-working-class and anti-capitalist, can provide a core of cadre for a revolutionary party. But to do so, they must break with widespread illusions in the nationalist dogma of *Juche*, which is an obstacle to overthrowing the criminal South Korean ruling class. It is the obscurantist ideological smokescreen of the privileged bureaucratic caste in the North, which has a vested interest in preventing the South Korean proletariat from seizing power and expropriating the capitalists. While many Korean leftists are clearly courageous and dedicated, they have little opportunity to acquaint themselves with authentic Marxism and the proud traditions of early Korean Communism (see "Defend North Korea Against Imperialist Provocations!" WV No. 602, 10 June). It was not until the "people's movement" of 1987-88 that the writings of Marx and Lenin were even allowed to circulate in the South.

One organization which has sought to capitalize on this ignorance is the International Socialists of South Korea (ISSK), affiliated to Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in Britain and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) in the U.S. Since its formation in 1990, the ISSK has appealed to leftist students by passing itself off as an authentic Marxist alternative to Kim Il Sung Stalinism and post-Cold War anti-communism. Yet more than any other tendency on the left, the Cliffites have done their utmost to foster the bourgeoisie lie that "communism is dead." The ISSK has recently been the target of vicious



Thousands protest in Kyoto in June against attacks on Korean minority in Japan (left). Spartacist Group Japan fights against racist oppression of Koreans. Spartacist slogans at earlier protest included, "For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!" and (in Korean) "Korean Workers Need a Bolshevik Party!"

anti-socialist repression, with the arrest of two dozen of its supporters, including its leader Choi Il Bung, who was earlier imprisoned for publishing leftist literature (see "Free Choi Il Bung and All South Korean Class-War Prisoners!" WV No. 574, 23 April 1993).

But although they were jailed on charges of "hencelitting the enemy," this group shares the *chaebol* bourgeoisie's virulent hostility to the North Korean deformed workers state. Under the rubric "Neither Washington Nor Moscow," during the Cold War the Cliffites regularly supported every CIA-backed, anti-Soviet force, from Lech Walesa's Solidarność in Poland to the Islamic fundamentalist mujahedin in Afghanistan. Aping Cliff, the South Korean IS grotesquely carries on its newspaper masthead the slogan, "Neither North Korea Nor South Korea, but International Socialism!" When the imperialists hailed the "death of Communism" following Yeltsin's ascent to power in Moscow in August 1991, the Cliffites cheered louder than anyone else, applauding Yeltsin's pro-imperialist counterrevolution with a headline exclaiming, "Communism Has Collapsed."

Opportunistically seeking to curry favor among leftist militants, the ISSK buries its own history, and particularly the Cliffites' criminal refusal to defend the North Korean workers state against the U.S.-led counterrevolutionary invasion of 1950-53. It was this cowardly capitulation to the first imperialist Cold War—with a public statement in 1950 "opposing both the Russian puppet Government of North Korea and the American puppet Government of South Korea"—which provoked Cliff & Co.'s expulsion and defection from the Trotskyist movement (see "The Origins of the SWP: Korea and the Cliff Group," *Spartacist Britain* No. 24, August/September 1980). To justify their refusal to defend the gains of the October Revolution, the Cliffites denounced the Soviet Union as "imperialist" and claimed that (state) capitalism had been restored there as far back as 1928!

Since then, the Cliffites have earned a sordid reputation for routinely crossing workers' picket lines—from the epic 1984-85 miners strike in Britain to campus workers struggles in the U.S.—just as they scab on defense of social revolutions from East Europe to North Korea. The SWP social democrats even crow about recruiting caps, hoisting in a letter printed without comment in *Socialist Worker* (26 June 1993) how they "had a number of prison officers who were in sympathy with our objectives and would read *Socialist Worker*."

Recently, the ISSK's *Workers Solidarity* (August 1994) ran an article on the Korean War with a crude appeal to Korean nationalism, claiming that the war was purely "a test of the big pow-

ers' power...waged on a Third World country's territory." This is a transparent attempt to invoke the anti-communist shibboleth of "Soviet expansionism." In fact, Stalin even opposed Mao Tse-tung's belated drive to rid China of the corrupt Kuomintang landlords and compradors. Because of the collectivized foundations of the Soviet degenerated workers state—and despite Stalin's nationalist and capitulationist policies—when the Red Army moved into the north of Korea in 1945, it liberated the area from brutal Japanese colonial rule. Backed by a wave of worker and peasant struggles, Kim expropriated the capitalist industry which had been run by the Japanese and distributed land to the peasants, carrying out a social revolution from above.

In contrast, in South Korea the U.S. imperialists installed a dictatorial regime of puppets recruited from the Japanese occupation which viciously repressed the masses. When Kim sent his troops south in 1950, they were greeted with uprisings and the puppet army collapsed until the Pentagon massively intervened, under the same UN fig leaf Clinton now finds so useful for his imperialist adventures. Fought to a standstill when the Chinese People's Army entered the war, the U.S. under Truman and Eisenhower was restrained from launching a nuclear holocaust against both North Korea and China only by the fear of Soviet nuclear retaliation. It was and remains the elementary duty of class-conscious workers internationally, particularly in the U.S., Japan and South Korea, to defend North Korea against attack by the imperialists or the Seoul regime. This is what the "third camp" Cliffites scorn.

Only a party grounded in revolutionary internationalism can lead the South Korean proletariat to power against the *chaebol* bourgeoisie and oust the bureaucratic caste in Pyongyang through workers political revolution. A Trotskyist party would draw in all the oppressed behind the working class, basing itself on the program of permanent revolution. Only proletarian state power can emancipate the country from the stranglehold of U.S. and Japanese imperialism and resolve the helated tasks of the bourgeois revolution. Against the Stalinist/Confucian glorification of the family, which serves to maintain the age-old subjugation of women, a revolutionary workers party would act as a tribune of the people, fighting all manifestations of social oppression.

The Korean peninsula is a focal point for confrontation in the turbulent "post-Soviet" world. The North Korean deformed workers state is under direct threat of capitalist counterrevolution orchestrated from Washington, Tokyo and Seoul. North Korean workers are faced with the political bankruptcy of the Stalinist bureaucracy of the deceased Kim Il Sung and his son and heir Kim Jong Il; to defend themselves they desperately need to break out of the isolation exacerbated by the counterrevolutionary collapse of the Soviet Union. The rule of South Korea's rapacious capitalist overlords rests unstably on the intense exploitation of a powerful working class which continues to explode. The need for a revolutionary reunification of Korea is increasingly urgent. For a Korean Trotskyist party, section of a reborn Fourth International! ■

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Prop 187...

(continued from page 1)

unexpected unity of rebellious poor black and Latino youth as they looted stores and battled the police. Now bourgeois politicians—both right-wing Republicans and liberal Democrats—seek to pit the ghetto against the barrio by arguing that the large influx of immigrants from Latin America and the Far East has further impoverished the black masses.

And significant elements of the black misleaders have bought into and are selling this racist lie. A typical representative of the liberal black Democratic establishment is former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who recently chaired the federal government's Commission on Immigration Reform. Yet the recommendations of the Jordan Commission could just as well have been authored by Newt Gingrich or Pete Wilson. They include such police-state measures as a computerized registry of all "legal" workers, a "tamper proof" Social Security card as a step toward a South African-style pass system, increased "border management" and the removal "of those with no right to be here."

A crude example of the nativist appeal being bandied about to justify such measures comes from a black L.A. high school teacher, Ezola Foster, who founded African Americans for Family Values: "These people are taking food off our children's table.... We need to get our house in order before we have an open house for everybody who wants to come to the party" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 October). But life for the impoverished blacks in the ghettos has never been a "party." And black working people must understand: police-state measures directed in the first instance at "illegal" immigrants will be used with no less savagery against themselves.

Immigrant-Bashing and Fascist Terror

As part of Clinton's "get tough" stance on immigrants, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) last week announced that nearly 200,000 Salvadoran refugees formerly granted temporary protected status would face deportation as of December 31. During the civil war of the 1980s, an estimated half a million Salvadorans fleeing American-backed death squad terror came to the U.S. Now that Washington has declared El Salvador (whose president was a sponsor of death squads for the fascist ARENA party) a democracy, the Clinton administration intends to make an example of these hardworking immigrants who went through hell to get here (and who have played a militant role in labor struggles here). Black Haitians, of course, are being kept out by a Coast Guard flotilla, now augmented by U.S. occupation of Haiti. Anti-Communist Cubans, however, will as usual receive special treatment as part of Washington's decades-long war against the revolution "only 90 miles from Florida."

The chauvinist immigrant-bashing symbolized by California's Prop. 187 is not limited to vicious bureaucratic measures. In response to Prop. 187, the Clinton administration launched "Operation Gatekeeper" to seal off the San Diego-Tijuana section of the Mexican border. The tactics are borrowed from the racist "Light Up the Border" campaign, in which right-wing vigilantes, joined by fascist skinheads, sought to intimidate immigrants crossing the canyons around San Ysidro. Meanwhile, poor Hispanic families in the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo valley report stepped-up abuse at the hands of racist Border Patrol and INS agents. From 1980 to 1992, some 1,034 dead bodies were pulled out of the river, of which 144 were shot, stabbed or beaten to death (*The News* [Mexico City], 30 May 1993). This is the grim reality behind all the talk of "immigration control."

The U.S. ruling class is working hard

Clinton administration builds wall to keep immigrants from crossing into Southern California, part of moves to militarize Mexican border.



to deflect the anger of the workers while driving down their standard of living and increasing "productivity" through speedup and layoffs. The Democrats' and Republicans' efforts to outdo each other in anti-immigrant bigotry are emboldening the growing fascist fringe that increasingly targets immigrant and minority communities. Class-conscious workers must defend the right of their foreign-born brothers and sisters who have made it into the U.S. to stay here with the same rights as everyone else. A class-struggle leadership would mobilize real union muscle to lead all the oppressed in a fight to defend immigrant rights, in California and throughout the country. And they would unite the struggles of workers in the U.S. with those slaving under miserable conditions at one-tenth the pay for the same American companies in the *maquiladora* "free trade zone" plants just across the border in Mexico.

Today all defenders of labor, minority and democratic rights must fight to smash the racist anti-immigrant laws, demanding full citizenship rights for all. In fighting against Prop. 187 in California, the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League, held forums by Barbara Franck in Los Angeles and San Francisco under the title, "For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Anti-Immigrant Racism!" We print below excerpts from her talk in L.A. on October 22.

* * *

In the national context, California is an extreme case, and a pace-setter: 654,000 jobs have been lost in California in the last couple of years, and three out of four of those were lost in L.A. County, which is the state's financial and industrial center. Here in the U.S. in the past, and currently in Europe, anti-immigrant assaults have mostly been driven by capitalist economic contractions: that is, immigrants are welcomed during periods of expansion and prosperity, and then they're driven out during crisis.

In the U.S., the ruling class has achieved higher productivity by shrinking the workforce through layoffs and imposing speedup. They've engaged in union-busting to drive down workers' and minorities' standard of living. Nevertheless, the U.S. rulers are worried about the consequences of what they've done. And in particular they fear the non-conformity and potential for struggle that's represented by an immigrant population of brown-skinned peoples who are not particularly loyal to the "American dream."

During the Reagan-Bush years of the 1980s, immigration was encouraged, and U.S. bosses used the influx of malleable labor as a club in the class war, to force down the wages of American workers. But now, the racist

rulers don't like the consequences.

We are also getting a heavy dose of "yellow peril" anti-Asian racism that echoes the Chinese Exclusion Act, which lasted for 61 years, beginning in 1882, at the close of the construction of the railway in the West, which depended on Chinese labor. We are also getting an echo of the vile expropriation and internment of the U.S. Japanese population in concentration camps during World War II.

In the 1860s, California barred black, American Indian and Asian children from its public schools for two decades. So this is not the first time in history the American ruling class has considered this. And in 1910, the San Francisco Board of Education briefly segregated all Asian pupils within the school system.

California has the largest immigrant population in the U.S., and the state will soon become—as the California ruling class is all too aware—the first majority "minority" state. Already, a majority of California's children, 56 percent, are from black, Latino, Asian and Native American families. And Latinos make up 30 percent of the state's population. In fact, in L.A. County, more than half the population speaks a language other than English at home.

We've noted the climate of anti-immigrant social reaction breeds the forces of fascism and race terror. Today in California, we've seen the connection of the anti-immigrant forces to the far right. "Save Our State," for example, is led by two former INS officials, one of whom is a former consultant for the Federation for American Immigration Reform. FAIR is funded in part by the white-supremacist Pioneer Fund, which has also backed such sinister types as William Shockley, who peddled the grotesque racist lie that blacks are inherently inferior to whites.

Prop. 187 and anti-immigrant racism also target labor and precisely the most militant sector of the California labor movement, aiming to make those workers vulnerable. There are plenty of examples of trade-union combativity in California that also demonstrate the potential for a class-struggle fight against anti-immigrant racism. There's the fact, for example, that in May 1992, 400 mainly Hispanic members of SEIU Local 399 staged a defiant march under martial law. In 1990, Local 399's "Justice for Juniors" campaign won a union organizing drive in the face of attacks by the LAPD. This past August, the same unionists marched into the L.A. district attorney's office to demand the release of former Black Panther Party leader Geronimo ji-Jaga (Pratt).

There was the militant strike of "drywallers" in Orange, L.A. and San Diego counties, who won union recognition in the face of mass arrests and deportations. There was the recent par-

ticipation and noted militancy of Latino Teamsters in the militant picket line in Riverside County, which was attacked by scabs and cops. And as a consequence of that, Jesse Acuna, a Latino Teamster, got five years in jail for defending his union during that strike. We call for his freedom now.

It's important for the labor movement to understand that defense of immigrants is defense of the multiracial working class and its unions, of their right to organize and to strike in defense of their interests. The hated *migra* (immigration police) is used frequently as a club against organized labor. But the American labor bureaucracy pushes the poisonous chauvinism of protectionism. The same labor fakers look to the immigrant-bashing and racist Democratic Party, which accuses Pete Wilson of being soft on immigrants.

The scapegoating of immigrants is deliberately intended to divide the working class and thus critically weaken its forces, especially setting blacks against Latinos. It's important for Latinos to understand that the color line is the central strategic question in the United States. Black workers are permanently pushed to the bottom of American society, as the last hired and first fired, while the successive waves of immigrants eventually assimilate into the U.S. at all levels. At the same time, blacks must understand that immigrant-bashing and anti-black racism go hand in hand.

The Spartacist League and the International Communist League stand for a socialist solution to the crisis of capitalism, for a class-struggle fight to build an integrated revolutionary workers party. Only such a party, serving as a tribune of the oppressed, can lead the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, and for full democratic rights for all the oppressed. Only such a party built in opposition to the reformist, popular-frontist program of class collaboration with the capitalist rulers can unite the integrated working class and lead it to power in a workers government. ■

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USAir...

(continued from page 12)

indexes. The *Times* article should have added a more telling index, one which might be called the "debt-load death predictor." Drowning in \$2.4 billion worth of debt and losing \$2 million a day, USAir would rank at or near the top of that surefire predictor of carnage.

The bottom line of the balance sheet determines everything from routes to maintenance to crew training. For example, *Aviation Week* (11 April) reports that USAir "has been reducing gate turnaround time for aircraft at its key hub airports to 25 min. from 45 min." And so fuel checks get cut to save time. Now, in the wake of the *Times* revelations, USAir executives promise that pilots will get a "verbal fuel check." Anyone feel safer? For the cynical pirates in the airlines executive suites, if that means losing a plane or two...well, insurance covers the equipment and the lawsuits of the relatives.

Death and Union-Busting

USAir is a product of the 1980s "deregulation" gold rush. Initiated during the Democratic Carter administration and carried forward in the Reagan years, deregulation opened up the airways to

cuthroat price wars and profit gouging. USAir was the epitome of the merger mania which ran rampant in that period, as it swallowed Pacific Southwest and Piedmont Airlines in the late '80s and emerged with the enormous debt that has dragged it down ever since.

Deregulation meant war on the unions, as the "restructuring" airlines took aim at "labor costs." The opening salvo was the firing of all 12,000 members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization by then-president Ronald Reagan in 1981. As we wrote in "Reagan's Deadly Skies" (WV No. 383, 12 July 1985):

"In order to make the skies safe for free enterprise, Reagan has made them deadly dangerous for airline workers and passengers. The government's destruction of PATCO combined with 'deregulation' of the airlines was the green light for private carriers to attempt to destroy their unions."

And that is just what they did. Using bankruptcy, injunctions and above all the backstabbing of the union tops, the airlines defeated unions at Continental, United, Pan Am and TWA. Then came Eastern Airlines in 1989, where workers held out on strike for 686 days until they were finally bludgeoned by the courts and knifed by the labor misleaders.

This year, according to *Aviation Week* (20 June), "USAir is seeking \$500 million in annual wage and work-rule con-

cessions from its labor unions as part of a plan to slash \$1 billion from yearly operating costs by 1997." To date, no agreement has been reached. But the sell-out union tops—who allowed PATCO to be destroyed, refusing to shut down the airports in solidarity—have been all too willing to offer hundreds of millions of dollars in givebacks to boost company profits in the name of "saving jobs."

USAir is only the tip of the iceberg. The *Wall Street Journal* (7 November) complains, in an article subtitled "Jurassic Jets," that more than 25 percent of aircraft in the U.S. are over 20 years old. USAir and Northwest Airlines (which is carrying \$5 billion in debt) plan to keep flying 30-year-old planes. Throughout the industry, contracting-out of critical maintenance work to non-union shops has become commonplace. While unionized Machinists get up to \$23 per hour, such outfits pay only \$12, while pressuring their workers to speed up to get the job done fast, a setup for potentially fatal "mistakes." And while the airlines gut safety standards by attacking wages, work rules and working conditions, the air traffic control system run by the FAA is falling apart.

In U.S. control towers, things are so bad that even the scab "replacement" workforce who ran the system during the 1981 PATCO strike have formed a new union. Air traffic control equipment,

vital to air safety, is hopelessly antiquated. LAX, for instance, sometimes has to rely on 1940s-vintage radar employing vacuum tubes (*Aviation Week*, 2 May)! Many control screens share computers with as little as 256 kilobytes of total memory—a tiny fraction of modern home PCs! As *Scientific American* (May 1994) put it, such equipment "could not run Flight Simulator," a popular computer game.

The Clinton administration's answer to all this is to push for "privatization" of the air traffic control system. A proposed government-backed corporation would run the control towers, promote a "business-like environment" and "free the system from onerous regulations" (*New York Times*, 7 March). This "solution" reflects the "needs" of private airlines, and it's bad news for air travelers. What's next, piecework rates based on the number of takeoffs and landings?

The precipitous decline of air safety in U.S. skies has already spelled sudden death for many, even as it helps to make a handful of people very rich. It was all predictable. As we wrote in "Reagan's Deadly Skies":

"The dramatic nose dive of air safety under Reagan underlines a key point: union rights and passenger safety go hand in hand.... In a concentrated form, the life-and-death question of air safety demonstrates the need for international planning in a socialist society." ■

Smoking...

(continued from page 12)

on social tolerance. Though watered down to allow some smoking in some restaurants, the bill being pushed by the Democrat-controlled City Council and Republican mayor Rudolph Giuliani will make smoking *verboten* in all business establishments, convention centers and work locations (except executives' "private offices"!). Outdoor cafés would have to cordon off smokers, doubtless to keep health-conscious tourists from having their bracing intake of noxious traffic fumes contaminated by a whiff of their neighbors' sidestream smoke. Even Shea and Yankee stadiums would be no-smoking zones, as 20 major league ball parks already are.

Giuliani bleats that a smoking ban is necessary "since it affects the health of others." But other people's health is hardly at the top of Rudy the Slasher's concerns. In the name of cutting the budget, he just ordered the elimination of all sidewalk fire alarms, ensuring that there will be plenty of smoke in the air as ghetto firetraps are allowed to burn to the ground. This comes on top of axing another 3,000 health workers' jobs and moves to shut down Harlem's one remaining public hospital. And as health and welfare funding is cut to the bone, malnutrition and exposure kill off untold numbers of homeless people, long-suppressed diseases like TB spread uncontrolled, and AIDS continues to ravage gays and minorities.

Pseudo-Scientific Smoke and Mirrors

Despite absurd denials by the tobacco industry, it's never been a big secret that "coffin nails" or "cancer sticks," as cigarettes used to be called, aren't healthy. But most Americans somehow believe they're supposed to have the right to choose their own poison—whether it's cigarettes, cholesterol-rich steaks or martini lunches. The latter-day prohibitionists justify their totalitarian appetites to legislate "clean living" by claiming that non-smokers are also endangered. That's where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study on the effects of "secondary smoking" came in. Released after numerous redrafts in January 1993, just as Bill and Hillary Clinton were declaring the White House a "smoke-free environment," the EPA study labeled secondary smoke a "Class A carcinogen" and claimed that it killed some 3,000 Americans through

lung cancer every year.

Countless Congressmen, town councilors and newspaper columnists have seized on the EPA report as undeniable scientific proof for ever more stringent smoking restrictions, including outright prohibition. NYC's liberal Democratic Public Advocate Mark Green hailed the EPA findings as "the booster rocket launching the antismoking movement into orbit" (*Time*, 18 April). Despite the brouhaha over the EPA study, the supposed scientific arguments on secondary smoke are hardly new (see "Warning: Anti-Smoking Crusade Dangerous to Your Rights," WV No. 453, 20 May 1988). In any case, what the latest EPA report proves—and just how much science is involved—is questionable.

An editorial in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (10 June 1993), while endorsing the claim that secondary smoke exacerbates the severity of asthma in young children, whose lungs are much smaller than those of adults, also noted that the EPA study had "low statistical power." The editorial pointed to "shortcomings in most of the published studies of environmental tobacco smoke and lung cancer." Even a panel of experts convened by the EPA in 1992 drily concluded that the agency's dictates were generally seen "as lacking a strong scientific foundation" (quoted in *Forbes MediaCritic*, Summer 1994). And an EPA scientist involved in compiling the report admitted that to get the desired results "she and her colleagues engaged in some fancy statistical footwork" (*Science*, 31 July 1992). Little wonder the EPA didn't submit its findings to a peer review by experts in the field.

In fact, the EPA report (*Respiratory Effects of Passive Smoking*, December 1992) does not prove that secondary smoke causes anything. Rather it claims to deduce a correlation—based on 31 existing studies—between exposure to smoke and a "19 percent" higher risk of lung cancer, particularly in the case of non-smoking wives of smokers. Yet almost none of the results can be considered "statistically significant." In fact, nine out of the 31 studies show a *negative* correlation between secondary smoke and lung cancer. As for the 19 percent figure, a number this low in such an epidemiological study could be explained by anything from pure chance to previous family history. For smokers, by comparison, where a connection is clear, the increased incidence of lung cancer is on the order of 2,000 percent.

Based on this pretty crude statistical

footwork, the EPA then estimated 800 lung cancer deaths to be caused by exposure to smoking at home and another 2,200 from secondary smoke at the workplace and elsewhere. Yet the EPA study specifically excluded data on workplace exposure. Why? EPA project manager Steven Bayard explained, "Some workplaces are sources of exposure to other various hazardous chemicals, which could make the results more difficult to interpret." In plain English, industrial workers regularly breathe air so toxic that any added risk caused by secondary smoke can't be measured. To take but one example, OSHA regulations allow workers to be exposed to 55 mg of carbon monoxide per cubic meter. That's about four times the concentration produced by 50 people puffing away jammed into a small (9x12 foot) office.

Using the EPA report as a hattering ram, OSHA in March proposed new regulations banning smoking at six million workplaces, except in enclosed, specially ventilated areas. But as the *American Medical News* (3 October) points out: "Complying with those restrictions likely would prove too expensive and impractical for most businesses." The bottom line here is not health but...the bottom line: profits. Spokesmen for big business complain that some \$68 billion in lost productivity and increased health costs goes up in smoke annually.

Long before the EPA report came out, *Occupational Health & Safety* (September 1984) advised "decision-makers in business" to "recognize the potential bonanza in health insurance and life insurance savings by reducing and eliminating tobacco use," adding: "While you cannot terminate employees who use tobacco, you need not hire them." Numerous corporations, including the Lockheed plant in Marietta, Georgia, have done just that, not only banning smoking but refusing to hire workers who smoke at home. But when Admiral tried to impose a smoking ban at its Galesburg, Illinois plant three years ago, it was forced to back off after 1,800 members of Machinists Local 2063 threatened to strike over the issue. As one worker said, "The smoking is just a first step. They're not going to stop with the cigarettes" (*Chicago Defender*, 23 November 1991).

The smoking ban, like the imposition of random drug and alcohol tests on transport workers, is part and parcel of a broad-gauged government/employer campaign. Dangerous speed-up and productivity increases are justified in the

name of health and safety. Welfare mothers are blamed for an enormous budget deficit racked up to finance the anti-Soviet war drive of the 1980s. Now smokers are increasingly made scapegoats for a health system run amok by the greed of the insurance companies, with scare headlines like, "Medicare Imperiled By Rising Bill for Smoking and Drinking" (*New York Times*, 17 May). Meanwhile, punitive "sin" taxes overwhelmingly target black and working people, who make up a disproportionate share of the smoking population.

There is more than a whiff of hypocrisy attached to the anti-smoking "health" crusade. A perfect example is the anti-cigarette lobby's bitter opposition to a new charcoal cigarette which would significantly reduce tar content and eliminate secondary smoke. While the EPA crusades against cigarette smoke, it condones a level of industrial air pollution which is truly hazardous, because a serious effort to clean up urban air pollution would involve taking billions out of the coffers of big business. Likewise, when smoking was banned on domestic flights four years ago, the airlines began phasing in new models which recycled only half as much cabin air as before in order to cut fuel costs. And the older models had already been using only a small proportion of their ventilation capacity. The predictable result is that airplane ventilation systems are being turned into germ factories: in one case last year, 13 airline workers were infected with TB after working with one flight attendant who had the disease.

As we noted several years ago: "This creeping 'health fascism' has nothing to do with the public's welfare. Medical evidence on the effects of 'secondary smoke' is inconclusive, and the obvious solution is to provide adequate ventilation for everybody. But that isn't profitable, so of course it's not even seriously proposed" (WV No. 445, 29 January 1988). In the meantime, millions of people have been killed off through malnutrition, inadequate medical care and other effects of poverty, while billions of dollars are poured into building more prisons. In a rational, socialist society that money will be spent to find cures for cancer and other diseases, clean up the cities and provide decent housing, education and medical care for all.

As far as we're concerned, people ought to be able to read, eat, drink, smoke, and enjoy whatever consensual activities they want without cops, courts, employers and yuppie totalitarianists sticking their noses in. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Capitalism's Deadly Skies

On September 8, a USAir Boeing 737 crashed near Pittsburgh, killing everyone on board. Rescuers at the crash site found "only body parts, bits and pieces of 132 human beings scattered through the shattered trees" (*Newsweek*, 19 September). The plane itself disintegrated into thousands of unrecognizable pieces after dropping like a stone for 23 terrifying seconds. Flight 427 was the fifth aircraft lost by USAir in five years, and the worst American air disaster since 1987.

Then on October 31, an American Eagle commuter plane crashed in northern Indiana, spreading debris over hundreds of acres. Investigators suspect that the cause of the crash was ice that accumulated on the wings of the ATR-72 turboprop as it was forced to circle awaiting clearance to land at Chicago's O'Hare airport. Pointing to two previous crashes of other ATRs, the National Transportation Safety Board called for grounding the aircraft in icy conditions. Incredibly, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rejected the request.

Pilots and flight attendants at O'Hare have protested the continued use of the ATRs by American Eagle, the commuter wing of American Airlines. Last week, more than a dozen flights were delayed after pilots demanded more information on weather conditions before flying. A leaflet by the pilots warns passengers, "The majority of us will refuse to fly these aircraft until the icing problems are fixed. Even with the threats of management hanging over our heads, we will exercise our rights as the 'ultimate authority' of the flight and protect your safety." In a bizarre attempt to claim the problem is in the pilots' heads, management sent some of those who refused to fly the ATRs to counseling!

The flight attendants union at American Eagle has formally requested the ATRs be grounded. In a protest last



Remains of USAir Flight 427, outside Pittsburgh. Capitalist profit-gougers sacrifice safety for greed.

week over the lack of a union contract, a spokesman for the flight attendants pointed out that at American Eagle, "starting flight attendants risk their lives for \$735 a month"—the lowest pay in the industry. The commuter outfits, which save the big airlines millions by using cheaper, turboprop aircraft and paying low wages, have a much worse safety record.

USAir: Low on Fuel, High on Debt

Outrageously, the official investigation into the USAir crash in Pittsburgh

had barely begun before "senior Government transportation officials...endorsed the view put forth by the airline, whose president asserted that there was no common thread tying this accident to the earlier ones" (*New York Times*, 10 September). But even some sections of the ruling class don't believe this hogwash. They may fly first-class, but they die like the rest of us in a crash.

The ruling class' semi-official mouthpiece, the *New York Times* (13 November) published an exposé on USAir's "safety standards" which makes one contemplate walking instead. The *Times*

investigation found:

- At least *nine* incidents of USAir planes leaving the gate without enough fuel to get to their destination "since the airline eliminated two pre-flight refueling checks 16 months ago" in order to "save time." On February 22, one of these flights, bound from Washington to Boston, had to make an emergency landing at New York's La Guardia airport.

- Evidence of pilots being pressured to fly in unsafe conditions in order to meet schedules. On 22 March 1992, a USAir Fokker F-28 crashed in New York, killing 27 people. Ice buildup on the wings—an especially lethal condition for small commuter aircraft like the F-28—had made the plane unflyable after over half an hour waiting for take-off. Aircraft deicing fluid is effective for only about 20 minutes, but "the pilots had not returned to the gate for another de-icing because they had not wanted to lose their place in line."

- Evidence that maintenance supervisors are deliberately disobeying FAA safety regulations by allowing planes to fly with dangerous problems unrepaired, such as a broken stall-warning system (which warns the pilots if the plane is about to lose lift) and cracked control surfaces. Such calculated negligence is practiced in order "to avoid canceling the next flight and costing the company money."

The *New York Times* article is replete with statistics and bar graphs which paint a revealing picture. USAir is the largest short-hop airline, with many more high-risk takeoffs and landings than its competitors, but its awful death toll is not a result of statistical probability, much less "a real string of bad luck" (to cite the alibi offered by an FAA official). The airline, the nation's sixth-largest, "emerged as the riskiest" by many

continued on page 11

Bourgeois Hypocrisy and "Health Fascism"

Anti-Smoking Tyranny

The New York City Council is currently considering a bill which would outlaw smoking in virtually all facilities used by the public. If it passes, New York will join an ever-growing number of cities and towns where you—or anyone else—can't have a cigarette after a meal in a restaurant, during a coffee break at work or with a beer at the hall game. In Davis, California, you can't even light up on a sidewalk within 20 feet of an office entrance. In the Los Angeles suburb of Rolling Hills, having a cigarette in your own car or backyard is enough

to get you thrown in jail. And in March the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed new regulations to effectively ban all smoking in the workplace nationwide.

In the last few years, the heansprout totalitarianism and "health fascism" nurtured among California La La Land yuppies has musbroomed into a nationwide big-business crusade aimed at turning the country's 50 million smokers into pariahs and criminals. Former Carter administration Health, Education and Welfare secretary Joseph Califano rails



Out in the cold: Anti-smoking prohibitionists seek to make smokers pariahs and criminals.

against the demon cigarette as the "drug of entry into the world of hard drugs." In California, Georgia and Ohio, courts have ruled that blowing smoke at somebody is grounds for a criminal charge of battery. Last year, the courts took an

eight-year-old girl in Sacramento away from her mother, a registered nurse, because the woman smoked at home.

The NYC bill is a sign of the times. The Big Apple has traditionally prided itself

continued on page 11