

Mexico Crisis Jolts World Capital Markets

Lurching Toward Economic Crash?

Mexico has become the weak link of American imperialism. A rebellion of Mayan peasants in the impoverished southern state of Chiapas causes tremors on Wall Street. A 50 percent devaluation of the Mexican peso plunges the dollar to new lows against the German mark and Japanese yen. The Mexican financial crash brings down the rest of Latin America in its wake. And the reverberations go far beyond the Western Hemisphere. European bankers are asking themselves: will Italy or Spain be the next Mexico as the lira and peseta are battered in world currency markets. Japanese investors worry that it will be Thailand or Indonesia.

Clinton's \$50 billion international "rescue plan," imposed over the objections of the Republican-dominated Congress and reluctance of West European governments, has in no way resolved the Mexican crisis. The peso continues to fall as capital flees the country. Facing American-dictated austerity and economic depression, the pressures for a social explosion in Mexico are greater than ever before. At the same time, the Mexican financial crisis has been imported, so to speak, onto the terrain of American partisan politics and inter-imperialist rivalries.

Just a few weeks after the Mexico crash came the spectacular bankruptcy of Barings—Britain's oldest merchant bank—when a 28-year-old trader working out of Singapore lost a billion dollars of the bank's money playing the futures game in Japan's Nikkei stock exchange. In the immediate aftermath, Japanese stock prices fell sharply while the British pound plummeted to a near-record low against the German mark. And the bankruptcy of California's Orange County, too, was linked to speculation in the futures market of "derivatives."

An estimated *two trillion dollars* of "hot money"—volatile speculative funds—are sloshing around global financial markets. Hence even tiny shifts in relative interest rates or currency exchange rates can produce sudden, massive movements of money across national borders, wreaking havoc not only with stock and bond prices but with government economic policies as well. In 1992, currency speculators ripped apart the European Monetary System of fixed exchange rates anchored to the German D-mark. And any West European government other than Germany which today tried to stimulate its economy through a liberal Keynesian program of deficit spending and low interest rates would find its foreign exchange reserves wiped out in the space of months, if not weeks.

It has become almost a cliché among financial journalists that international speculators are now more powerful than central bankers or finance ministers. In a survey piece last fall on "World Economy & Finance," the *London Financial Times* (30 September 1994) wrote:

"The liberalisation of capital markets around the globe and the falling cost of telecommunications have greatly in-

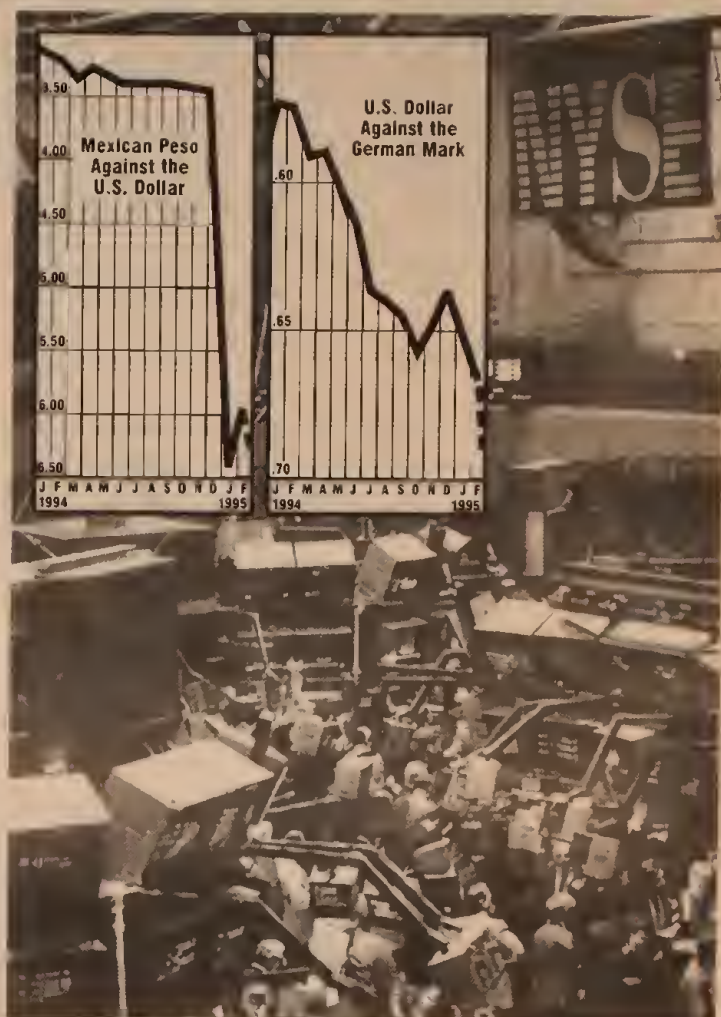


Photo: Sacha Lehfreund, WV graphs adapted from Der Spiegel

Mexican peso collapses, dollar plunges against the German mark—what's next? Wall Street speculators and international bankers dream of untrammelled capitalism. But the "roaring '20s" ended in the Crash of 1929.

creased their turnover and volatility and their capacity to sway events.

"A few years ago, an article such as this would have focused almost immediately on the role of government and economic policymakers as initiators of change. Today, policymakers are lucky if they can avoid being overwhelmed by events. Technological and geopolitical changes have turned many of them into bit players on the world economic stage."

There is another major factor accounting for the increased "volatility" of global capital markets. The world's most powerful capitalist country—the United States—has for the past 15 years been a major *destabilizer* of the interna-

tional financial system, or rather the lack thereof. The Reaganomics of the early 1980s transformed the U.S. from the world's largest creditor nation to the world's largest debtor nation. The national (U.S. government) debt went from \$900 billion in 1980 to *\$4.6 trillion* at the present time. And the total government, corporate and household debt was almost \$13 trillion in 1994, or 1.9 times the U.S. gross domestic product.

During the 1980s, a large part of these huge deficits were financed by foreign money. At some Treasury auctions, Japanese investors picked up as much as two-thirds of new long-term U.S. government bonds. One liberal economist jocularly remarked at the time: Now we know what "supply-side economics" means. It means foreigners supply the capital. But not for long. Japanese investors pulled out of the U.S. in the late '80s as they lost hundreds of billions due to the dollar's depreciation, in part the result of a deliberate policy by the Reagan/Bush administrations to devalue the U.S. debt. The pullout of Japanese capital was a major contributor to the October 1987 stock market crash and the U.S. recession of 1989-91.

Since 1985, the dollar has lost 55 percent of its value against the German mark and over 60 percent against the Japanese yen. The *London Economist* (25 February)—the house organ of international bankers—explained the factors

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Death Penalty:
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Labor Protests at Gingrich Office

ATLANTA—The Cobb County, Georgia office of Republican House speaker Newt Gingrich was occupied and shut down on March 15 by an integrated group of unionists. The workers brushed passed a Gingrich aide who tried to block their way and filled every room, chanting, "Boot Newt." Workers also sat down outside the entrance. Teamsters, IBEW electricians, communications workers, government workers and nurses were protesting Gingrich's proposals to wipe out any minimum wage and eliminate even the ineffective OSHA safety standards. A melee provoked by the cops resulted in the arrest of two unionists on

charges of "inciting a riot" and obstructing a police officer.

The protest sent Gingrich into a frenzy, as he labeled the protesters "union thugs" engaged in "terrorizing constituents." Later Gingrich announced he is considering filing criminal and civil charges against the Atlanta Labor Council, which organized the demonstration. He alleges that "federal property" was destroyed: a picture of the Newt! The "terrorists" are the twin parties of capitalism that are waging war on labor and minorities. And workers across the country are fed up.

At the protest, Labor Council chief



Trade unionists blockade Republican House speaker Newt Gingrich's office in Cobb County, Georgia, protesting his anti-labor legislation.



TROTSKY

Capitalist Crisis and the Fight for International Socialism

In an introduction to a compilation drawn from Karl Marx's Capital, Leon Trotsky outlined the basic contradictions of the capitalist economy in the imperialist epoch. Writing shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe, Trotsky describes how advances in industry and international commerce constantly clash with the confines of the bourgeois nation-state, leading eventually to the outbreak of imperialist war. Capitalism's cycles of economic depressions, fueling trade wars and world wars for

redivision of markets and colonies, will only be overcome through socialist revolution, under the leadership of an internationalist proletarian vanguard party.

Capitalism achieved the twin historical merit of having placed technique on a high level and having bound all parts of the world with economic ties. Thus it pledged the material prerequisites for the systematic utilization of all of our planet's resources. However, capitalism is in no position to fulfill this urgent task. The nidus (breeding ground) of its expansion continues to consist of circumscribed nationalist states with their customs houses and armies. Yet the productive forces have long outgrown the boundaries of the national state, thereby transforming what was once a progressive historical factor into an unendurable restraint. Imperialist wars are nothing else than the detonations of productive forces against the state orders, which have come to be too confining for them. The program of so-called autarchy has nothing to do with going back to a self-sufficient circumscribed economy. It only seems that the national base is being made ready for a new war....

Partial reforms and patchwork will do no good. Historical development has come to one of those decisive stages when only the direct intervention of the masses is able to sweep away the reactionary obstructions and lay the foundations of a new régime. Abolition of private ownership in the means of production is the first prerequisite to planned economy, i.e., the introduction of reason into the sphere of human relations, first on a national and eventually on a world scale. Once it begins, the socialist revolution will spread from country to country, with immeasurably greater force than fascism spreads today. By the example and with the aid of the advanced nations, the backward nations will also be carried away into the main stream of socialism. The thoroughly rotted customs toll-gates will fall. The contradictions which rend Europe and the entire world asunder will find their natural and peaceful solution within the framework of a Socialist United States in Europe as well as in other parts of the world. Liberated humanity will draw itself up to its full height.

—Leon Trotsky, "Marxism in Our Time" (1939)



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Women and Revolution

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San Francisco Attorney Acquitted

Witchhunt Against Patrick Hallinan Spiked

The repressive apparatus of the U.S. government's "war on drugs" was dealt a stunning setback on March 7 when a federal jury in Reno, Nevada acquitted prominent San Francisco defense attorney Patrick Hallinan of charges of drug conspiracy, witness-tampering and money-laundering. During the grueling and dramatic six-week trial, which capped a 20-month ordeal for Hallinan, the government's case proved so flimsy that the judge successively dismissed racketeering and most other charges. The jury deliberated for less than four hours before finding Hallinan innocent on the remaining six counts. "It was so simple," said one of the jurors, "they didn't prove anything at all."

It wasn't for lack of a massive frame-up effort, spearheaded by the federal Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force. The government went after one of the most effective and able criminal defense attorneys on the West Coast with a vengeance. The entire case was based on the testimony of convicted drug smugglers who had been Hallinan's clients and who agreed to provide lies in exchange for leniency. It was an all-out effort to destroy the man and his legal practice in order to intimidate lawyers willing to take on drug and other politically controversial cases. It was also part of a vendetta against the Hallinan family for its leftist connections that goes back decades.

In August 1993, then 59-year-old Patrick Hallinan was arrested in an Untouchables-style raid on his home, held spread-eagled on the floor at gunpoint. The arrest was vindictively timed for Friday evening when no magistrate could hear a bail request; Hallinan had to spend the entire weekend in jail before posting a whopping \$300,000 bond. With the indictment by a federal grand jury on drug conspiracy charges came the threat to seize not only Hallinan's Marin County home, but his law practice as well—an obvious move to intimidate his partners. The vindictive federal prosecutors even tried to use Hallinan's avocation as an amateur archaeologist against him. They turned over pre-Columbian artifacts seized from Hallinan's home to the Bureau of Land Management, which launched a specious "investigation"—complete with raids on the offices of archaeologist friends of Hallinan—claiming that the objects had been illegally collected.

In July 1994, a few months before the trial had been scheduled to begin, the feds slapped Hallinan with 20 additional counts of participating in a criminal conspiracy under the notorious RICO act. He went into the trial facing the possibility of life behind bars. The feds' intimidation tactics were so effective that as the trial opened Hallinan's codefendant, Reno lawyer Jack Grellman, pleaded guilty and turned state's evidence.

Why a Hallinan?

Putting a big chill on aggressive criminal defense lawyers was only part of the government's motivation in going after Patrick Hallinan. The feds were also pursuing a long-standing vendetta against the Hallinan family and the liberal "progressive" San Francisco politics it has come to represent. The attempted frame-up of Patrick is reminiscent of nothing so much as the decades-long government campaign of persecution of

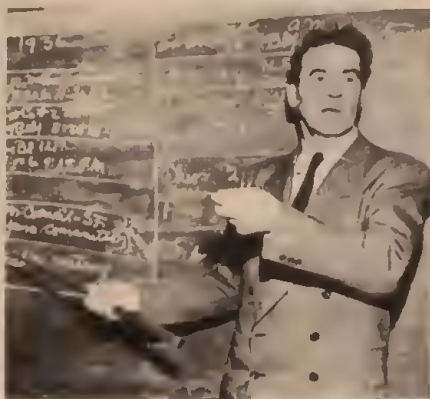
his father, Vincent Hallinan, also a famed criminal lawyer and the Progressive Party's 1952 presidential candidate.

Vincent Hallinan was the son of a strong union man and Irish nationalist who fled Ireland for the United States. Vincent first made a name for himself in San Francisco legal circles in the early 1920s by taking on the corrupt officials who stacked the San Francisco jury rolls in favor of the Market Street Railway Company and other big transportation and insurance companies. He went on to become one of the city's most successful and flamboyant defense attorneys. But it was his 1949 defense of Communist Party supporter and International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) president Harry Bridges which put Vincent Hallinan squarely in the sights of the capitalist state. In this case, too, the ruling class was trying to serve notice that aggressive legal defense of those it targeted would no longer be tolerated.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) had been trying to deport Bridges, a native of Australia, ever since he led the 1934 West Coast longshoremen's strike. This key labor battle sparked a general strike in the city of San Francisco, laying the basis for a waterfront union bing hall as well as

tence for contempt only a few days into the proceedings. Despite the fact that the credibility of the parade of renegade ex-Communist "witnesses" called by the government was thoroughly demolished in the courtroom, Bridges was convicted. The decision was eventually thrown out because the statute of limitations on this "crime" had expired even before the charges were brought. It was the Bridges trial which opened Hallinan's eyes to the ephemeral nature of legal protections under bourgeois democracy, and as a result he undertook an intensive reading program in Marxism. After a few years, "I had become a complete socialist," he wrote later in his autobiography, *A Lion in Court* (1963).

But Hallinan's idea of socialism was shaped by the thoroughly reformist Stalinist Communist Party, which in the early 1950s was desperately and quixotically trying to keep alive its coalition with the liberal Democrats. In the mid- and late 1930s, under Stalin's direction, the CP fulsomely supported Roosevelt's Democrats. This proved very useful to the Democratic Party in containing the trade-union upsurge which hurt the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations). The bourgeoisie also found the CP's treachery very useful in marshaling support for the interimperialist slaughter in



ILWU president Harry Bridges (left), leader of 1934 SF dock strike, displays court record of McCarthyite deportation hearings against him. Vincent Hallinan (right), Bridges' lawyer, demolished government's lies in court.

establishing San Francisco as a solid union town. With the onset of the anti-Communist witchhunt, the INS believed they finally had Bridges when they indicted him in 1949. The feds claimed that Bridges and the fellow unionists who had signed his naturalization papers had entered into a conspiracy to commit fraud because Bridges denied being a member of the Communist Party.

Vincent Hallinan's wife Vivian described the treatment meted out to lawyers who defended Communists during the McCarthyite witchhunt: "If the defense attorney gives more than a formal effort, if he does not truckle to the judge and prosecutors, in other words, if he does anything possibly calculated to win the case, he will be destroyed with his client. He will go to jail upon a charge of contempt of court and will probably be disbarred" (Vivian Hallinan, *My Wild Irish Rogues* [1952]).

Vincent Hallinan was threatened and hulled by the judge and universally condemned by what he aptly dubbed the "prostitute press" at every turn during the five-month Bridges trial. The judge slapped him with a six-month prison sen-

World War II. But after the war, as part of a renewed offensive against the Soviet Union, the Democrats and Republicans launched a witchhunt to shatter the Communist Party and its influence in the working class.

Even as the Democratic Party discarded them, the Stalinists remained committed to the bankrupt strategy of seeking an alliance with a mythical "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie. They formed a third bourgeois party, the "Progressive Party," which roped in a few dissident Democrats around the 1948 presidential campaign of FDR's former vice president, Henry Wallace. But soon after, Wallace broke with his Communist allies over the Korean War. When Vincent Hallinan accepted the Progressive Party's presidential nomination in 1952, the party didn't even have nominal bourgeois support. One week after Hallinan accepted the nomination, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Hallinan's two-year-old appeal of his contempt of court sentence in the Bridges trial. The candidate spent almost the entire period of the campaign in the federal pen.

But Vivian Hallinan and their two eld-



Patrick Hallinan

est sons campaigned for him. At the age of 17, before he had even finished high school, Patrick Hallinan spoke to a Progressive Party rally of some 15,000 at New York's Madison Square Garden. The party garnered a paltry vote and foundered soon after the elections. Nonetheless, the Hallinan family was persecuted throughout the 1950s for their Communist connections and sympathies. The government brought fraud charges against Vincent in a drug-related case, and when that failed, they railroaded him to the federal pen in 1953 for 18 months on income tax evasion charges. Both Vincent and Vivian were denied passports. But they remained committed to a pro-working-class outlook. Terence Hallinan, Patrick's brother and currently a Democratic Party member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, recalls, "The first thing I remember hearing from my mother and father was how I should never cross a picket line and how everyone should be treated equally under all circumstances."

When the civil rights movement shattered the anti-Communist Cold War consensus of the McCarthy period, the Hallinans and their six sons were at the center of liberal-radical politics in the Bay Area. In 1962, Vivian and four of the Hallinan boys spent 30 days in jail for their civil rights activities. Patrick led demonstrations in defense of the Cuban Revolution, and as a young lawyer he frequently defended New Left protesters arrested at UC Berkeley, as well as Black Panther Party members. The Hallinan family was pre-eminent among a layer of Communist Party supporters—trade-union bureaucrats, intellectuals and professionals—which interpenetrated with the San Francisco Democratic Party to an extent not seen in the rest of the country. When Vincent Hallinan died in 1992, the current Democratic mayor and two ex-mayors were the lead speakers at his memorial meeting.

The Hallinans exemplify the layer of ex-CP liberals which has given San Francisco politics its "progressive" cast and made the Bay Area a relative haven for gays and lesbians. At bottom, this rad-lib layer reflects the social weight shown by the working class in the 1934 general strike. The existence of this milieu also explains why the 1991 split to the right from the Communist Party which created the Committees of Correspondence was centered in Northern California.

Lately, Patrick Hallinan has defended certain prominent liberals targeted by right-wing forces in California. He was one of the lawyers defending reform-minded California's state superintendent of schools Bill Honig, who was railroaded out of office on corruption charges. Hallinan also defended U.S. District Appeals Court judge Robert P. Aguirre, one of the first Latinos appointed to the federal bench. Continuing a nine-year FBI vendetta to unseat him,

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The Death Penalty: Impulse to Genocide

Abolish Racist Legal Lynching!

The following is based on a presentation by Charles Brover, co-chairman of the Partisan Defense Committee, at the February 11 New York rally to "Save Mumia Abu-Jamal—Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" It has been edited and excerpted for publication in Workers Vanguard.

For the Partisan Defense Committee, I want to thank you for coming here today. Your presence is an important act of solidarity, as we try to figure out how to respond to this urgent situation.

The state is preparing the first clearly political execution in this country since the Rosenbergs in 1953. Mumia Abu-Jamal is now the most recognizable death row political prisoner. This puts his case squarely at the center of the fight to abolish the death penalty.

For years the Partisan Defense Committee has been saying that the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is what the death penalty is all about in the United States. The death penalty is racist. This is certainly evident in its legal application, as demonstrated by the disproportionate number of African Americans and Latinos on death row, now over 50 percent. The

Douglass's *Narrative*, and it is a central thesis of the abolition movement. Recall the sign carried by the striking Memphis sanitation workers at the time of Martin Luther King's assassination—"I am a man"—or the preamble of the demands of the Attica inmates in 1971: "We are men, we are not beasts."

The recognition of humanity in the face of death is a continuing theme in death penalty literature; for example, in Richard Wright's *Native Son* and Ernest J. Gaines' acclaimed 1993 novel, *A Lesson Before Dying*, in which an innocent young black man is executed in post-World War II Louisiana. It's a novel that has special meaning to me as a literacy teacher because his godmother instructs the local teacher to teach him to read and write before he dies: "I want the teacher make him know he's not a hog, he's a man," she says.

And as in Douglass's *Narrative*, we see the deadly horror of racism against the developing humanity of this man condemned as an animal, and we read it in his journal. Like Douglass, he asserts his humanity in his written voice. It is as if reading and writing—withheld from the slave by law and denied still in less

And, even locked up tight, it's his writing which keeps him connected to the wider struggles of the oppressed. It also keeps him connected to us.

The Politics of Death

So we do hear Mumia's voice above the clamor for death coming from the White House and state houses, from the Congress, courts, press, hate-talk radio. (Bob Grant in New York City talks about "savages" and, in the language of the ASPCA, he suggests: "put 'em to sleep.") The infamous and oxymoronic slogan of the bloody fascist Spanish Falange—"Long live death!"—seems to have found a place here.

We are now living amid a comprehensive politics of death and punishment—part of a broad and dangerous assault on democratic rights and on the means of survival for many—with the death penalty as the most visible symbol and ritual.

The death penalty is first of all the cutting edge of an all-sided "law and order" campaign, the centerpiece of an extension of state coercion and control. More cops, more prisons, a prison network that stretches out over the American countryside like a black gulag, anchoring local economies in what Mike Davis (writing in the *Nation*) called the "prison-industrial complex." The state of California now has more prisoners than any country except the U.S. as a whole and China.

Even as prisons fill beyond overflowing—creating the most inhumane, violent and degrading conditions—the Democrats and Republicans compete with each other to write even more "get tough" laws. They've put more capital offenses in the crime bill, more mandatory sentences, less parole. They've knocked down "good time" and extended sentences. Now it's "three strikes and you're out." I read (or dreamed) that a guy hought his third by stealing a piece of pepperoni pizza. [On March 3, a California man was sentenced to 25 years to life for swiping a slice of pizza; under the state's "three strikes" law, he is not eligible for parole for 20 years.]

And they're putting more police power on the streets. Just this week, the House Republicans with a whole passel of Democrats—a group I am inclined to call the American Newtzie Party—passed a bill to encourage warrantless searches. What about the search and seizure protections of the Fourth Amendment? "What's your problem, huddy? You got somethin' in your house you want to hide from the cops?"

Men grow old behind the prison walls. At Angola Prison in Louisiana (where the most famous prison newspaper, the *Angolite*, is written), they got an early start on this stuff and they now have a gathering of grey, dark, old men with all the attendant gerontological conditions. In California's infamous Pelican Bay they had a policy of breaking up fist fights among inmates by shooting them.

The politics of death demand a rush to the lethal guynes and electric chairs. Faster kills mean less prosecutorial embarrassment when innocent men and women prove their innocence. Since 1973, nearly a third of all death sentences have been reversed or commuted—54 have been vacated because the defen-



Der Spiegel
Lethal injection chambers: machinery of legal state murder.

dant proved his innocence. Jesse Dewayne Jacobs was executed in Texas last month after the prosecution admitted he was not the killer. The courts decided he got a fair trial, so it was okay. It comes close to "kill 'em first, try 'em later."

The politicians say, put more in prison, but don't spend money. With more than a million in prison, and the number climbing, the death penalty has an attraction for these politicians as a "final solution." But they complain it takes too long, leading to considerable pressure against a judiciary perceived as too squeamish about Constitutional niceties. So even though the Supreme Court undercut *habeas* appeals in the Herrera decision, it's not enough for the Newtzie. They want federal *habeas corpus* appeals limited even further. Now we hear echoes of Clinton's "two years and off welfare" for an overall two-year time limit on death row. They've put out a "Contract On America." Thomas Paine, he sleeps with the fishes.

But the death penalty is not only about direct coercion. For all the talk about crime, it is clear that the death penalty is not a crime-fighting measure, and it is barely argued as such. Rather this theater of cruel and unusual punishment serves another purpose in the wider politics of death. It is the ultimate spectacle of punishment around which spins



Young Socialist
Black Memphis sanitation workers in 1968 strike, facing National Guard repression, defiantly declare, "I Am a Man."

statistics are well known: a case is most likely to be prosecuted as a capital offense if the victim is white and the accused is black. The statistical proof was brought to the Supreme Court in the McCleskey case, and the Supreme Court acknowledged the racism with its blessing for the entire criminal law enterprise.

But it's not only about statistics. The death penalty is embedded in the racist history of this country going back to slavery. Special laws for death were prescribed in the early Slave Codes, which defined the black slave as chattel, the private property of the slaveowner, to be slaughtered with about the same "safeguards" as might befit a recalcitrant mule. The idea that the black slave was not truly human has always been an essential component of racist ideology in more or less sophisticated forms.

That is why the simple declaration of black humanity continues to resonate. What does it mean to be human? This is the question at the heart of Frederick

obvious ways—can somehow prove he's human. It is a literacy of resistance and a social gesture that helps to give strength to his community and particularly to his teacher. His is not the final act of moral contrition expected of the condemned: "Tell them I'm strong.... Tell them I'm a man."

This is what Mumia tells us through his continued prison writing. In November, he wrote about that "face of 'corrections'" which outlaws education amongst those who have an estimated 60 percent illiteracy rate... the mind-numbing, soul-killing savage sameness... with neither thought nor hope of growth, makes prison the abode of spirit death.... What societal interest is served by prisoners who remain illiterate?

Writing is not incidental to Mumia. Just as Douglass said it was his path to liberation, it is essential to Mumia's identity. Mumia is a writer. It's his writing that got him into trouble with the law. It's his writing that keeps him going.

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the entire system of criminal law. The class that rules organizes power in the state. With the death penalty the state determines who will live and who will die. In this society that means overwhelmingly the poor and the black.

A view has been carefully crafted, widely disseminated and held by ideologues of both parties, that there is no sense spending scarce social and economic resources on a new "pauper class," labeled with all the old stereotypes of laziness and immorality: "Their children do not want to learn. Why spend money on public education? As patients they cannot really be treated because they are on drugs or have AIDS. Why spend money on medical care?" Urban black people are being defined as a criminal, semi-criminal and pariah class on a scale which has no historical analogy, except perhaps the redefinition of Southern blacks after the Civil War to set up the intricate system of convict labor and debt-peonage.

A recrudescence of Social Darwinism, with the usual pseudoscientific eugenics, is upon us and getting lots of attention and respect. Politicians are reeling in the results of decades of American "social science," which has largely conspired in silence about the real causes of poverty while maintaining a moralizing focus on individual behavior and an ethnographic fascination for what it calls culture and "cultural" values.

And guess what? It turns out, they tell us, that the successful cultural values are the ones you can read about in Horatio Alger novels: hard work, thrift, "moral" personal decisions, "family values." Flying the banner of "personal responsibility," the focus of public policy then is on how to change the presumed bad behavior of individual poor people and their crystalized, "pathological" culture—their "work ethic," their "skills," their well-known "resistance to chastity." Of course, not admitting the class and racial basis of inequality in society, everything reduces to individual decisions. It is as natural, as obvious, as morally right, as eternal as...private property.

Rather than recognize an economy without sufficient decent jobs, we are presented with workers who allegedly do not want to work. That was the ideological purpose of the poorhouse: to show through the example of punishment that every truly moral worker can find a job.

Capitalism and the Death Penalty

So maybe we haven't come very far—check this morning's news—and we're not likely to if we cannot imagine another way to organize social-economic arrangements. It is capitalism which has created the ever-widening economic inequality, growth of joblessness, decline of real wages, the massive poverty and devastating dislocation which rips up social life for the most vulnerable and sends increasingly desperate youth onto the streets. Embracing the social system which causes this dislocation, mainstream public debate has gone through the ideological looking glass: beating up on the most defenseless—children, for instance—is called "courage" to make hard decisions. The poor are portrayed as snug and happy while the wealthy, we are told, are in need of relief. Prisoners are supposed to be enjoying an easy life of TV and fitness centers. Increasing the coercive power of the state is called "getting government off our backs." Returning to 19th-century Poor Laws is called "reinventing government." Even PBS is condemned as a hoibed of left-wing radicalism.

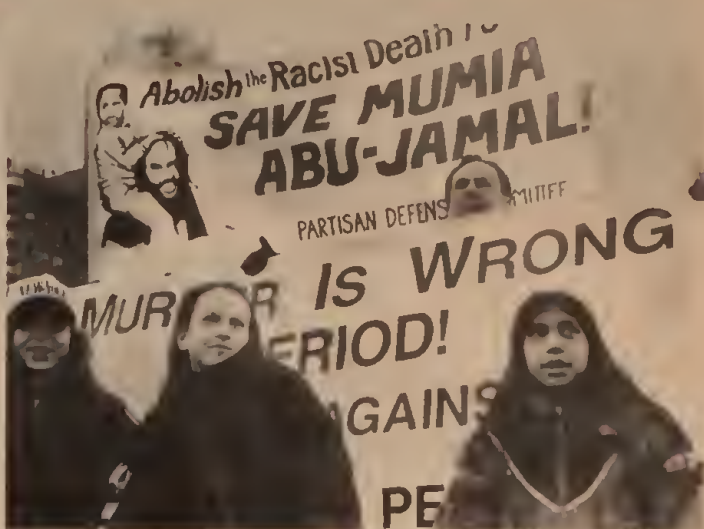
The meager government programs initiated in response to the civil rights movement are cited as the cause of poverty and racism. In fact, everything *but* capitalist social relations is blamed for the failures of capitalism: out-of-wedlock births, drugs, "immorality,"



COC Productions

lack of skills, teenage sexuality. And particularly, immigrants make handy scapegoats.

Now both political parties have coalesced around the idea that welfare—which used to be called poor relief, historically provided in response to protest and insurgency, and to regu-



Jose Rosario/El Diario-La Prensa

Mumia Abu-Jamal has become symbol of fight against racist death penalty. Above: January 29 NYC rally against reinstitution of death penalty in New York State.

by the schools. But he does not go far enough in understanding what has happened in contemporary America.

The levels of joblessness go beyond a structurally useful industrial reserve and intersect historical patterns of racism. After all, plenty of white workers are already enlisted in the reserve

punitive racist politics we see all around us today. And its twisted logic leads to death—not only to control or abandon the poor but to get rid of them. What more spectacular example of the punishment of the individual than the electric chair and lethal injection?

Thus, in its racism and class hatred, the death penalty reveals the impulse to genocide.

So we are here to rally our forces to save Mumia, abolish the death penalty, and oppose the wider politics of death and punishment. But we are not going to win with words alone, with arguments about deterrence and retributive justice. We are going to fight like hell in the courts, but not only in the courts.

We need to mobilize social protest and do it in a hurry. New Yorkers cannot wait until the death penalty comes here. Pennsylvania will likely be the first state in the Northeast to try to execute. This is where we will need to make our stand, with Mumia. We are going to need to do some old-fashioned stuff—some marching, for instance. It is not just an accident of history that the Supreme Court found capital punishment freakish in 1972, in the wake of the civil rights and antiwar movements. We need to exercise some of the power represented here on this platform—labor, black organizations, community groups, the left, death penalty abolitionists and civil libertarians.

We've all read the polls, but politics on this issue belongs to those who get out and fight. If we can build an effective protest, it will affect the entire constellation of the politics of death and punishment.

We must try to save Mumia's life. As Ossie Davis said at the New York speakout in June: We need him. He is our brother. ■



AP

1932 demonstration in defense of the Scottsboro Boys and other class-war prisoners, Union Square, New York City. International campaign of protest saved framed-up black youths from execution.

late, humiliate and control the poor, cheapen all labor and exalt work at any wage and under any conditions—is itself the cause of poverty. Democrats and Republicans hlab on about "welfare dependency," as if taking lood out of the mouths of children will redress massive poverty.

Writing about welfare in a recent column in the *New York Times* (17 January), Russell Baker said the unsayable:

"Attacking the problem at its root would mean admitting it is rooted in the structure of American capitalism. Nobody in public life wants to concede any shortcoming in that structure. Capitalism has just triumphed over its great enemy."

Thus, in a few sentences, Baker connects the root of the problem to the "end of history" ideology which mystifies the political failures of Stalinism and exalts capitalism as the final product of historical experience. In the absence of social struggle (and political opposition), a social system other than capitalism becomes harder to imagine, and the consequences are a breathtaking political illiteracy.

Right in the *New York Times*, Baker offers a version of the classical Marxist analysis of capitalism's inherent need to maintain a reserve army of the unemployed to drive down wages and worker demands. "A marginal class of people," he notes, "highly qualified" for unemployment and prepared for that career

army of the unemployed. An elite consensus holds, sometimes silently, that urban black people who live in the older cities and are variously called the "underclass" and "hard-core unemployed" are simply worthless—a drain on resources and a danger—because the capitalist economy cannot and will not absorb them.

This is the scary material basis of the

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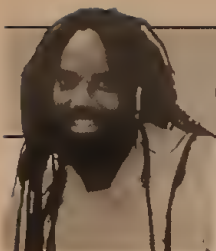
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Join the Campaign to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Rubin "Hurricane" Carter Speaks Out for Jamal

Rallies in Canada for U.S. Death Row Political Prisoner

TORONTO—More than 170 people packed the auditorium at St. Paul's Centre here on March 11 for a rally to save the life of U.S. death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty. Black community activists, prison rights advocates, socialists, trade unionists, students and anti-racist youth came out for the rally, one in a series held in cities around the world under the sponsorship of the Partisan Defense Committee and its fraternal defense organizations.

The same evening, the PDC hosted a rally in Vancouver, which was addressed by postal and public employee unionists whose locals have endorsed the campaign to save Jamal. On March 18, about 70 supporters of Jamal demonstrated outside the U.S. consulate in Montreal in a protest organized in collaboration with the PDC by local left organizations including Mobilisation, Action Socialiste, Démarche and others. More than \$1,800 was raised for Jamal's legal defense at the rallies in Toronto and Vancouver.

The urgency of the international campaign to save Jamal was underlined last week when Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge signed a law ordering a 90-day time limit for signing death warrants after the state Supreme Court upholds the sentences and mandating execution 30 days thereafter. Ridge campaigned for office vowing to get the machinery of state murder rolling at top speed.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an award-winning black journalist who became known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his passionate defense of black, poor and working people. Jamal is a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization and was a founding member of the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party. Long a target of the notoriously racist Philly police for his exposure of their brutality, in 1982 Jamal was framed for the killing of a Philadelphia policeman. Railroaded through the courts, Jamal was sentenced to die explicitly for

his political beliefs.

The featured speaker at the Toronto rally was Rubin "Hurricane" Carter. A former middleweight boxing contender, Carter was the victim of a racist frame-up in New Jersey nearly 30 years ago for a triple murder he did not commit. In the aftermath of the 1964 police riot in Harlem, Rubin Carter spoke out for the right of black self-defense. Two years later, he and John Artis were framed up on phony murder charges. Thanks to the racist "justice" system, Carter had nearly two decades of his life stolen from him in prison, and only finally won his freedom in the 1980s. Today, he is executive director of the Association in Defense of the Wrongly Convicted.

Among the other rally speakers were Partisan Defense Committee representative Peter Stevens, Marc Lamarre of the Haitian Resistance Movement in Toronto and Norman Richmond of the African Liberation Month Coalition. Zoltan Lugosi of Prison News Service, which has long publicized Jamal's case, addressed the meeting and read greetings from German prisoners. Two spokesmen for Toronto's Black Action Defense Committee (BADC), Lennox Farrell and Dudley Laws, also spoke out in defense of Jamal. Leaders of BADC including Dudley Laws have themselves been targets of a racist vendetta by the local cops and media because of their active, longstanding opposition to racist police terror.

David Bleakney, a chief shop steward with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers Toronto Local, underlined the need to mobilize the power of organized labor in defense of Jamal. "We've got a duty to defend these prisoners," he told the rally, "whether they be the [Geronimo] Pratts, the Hurricanes, the Scottsboro Boys, whether it be black youth shot down in the streets of Toronto with a bullet in the back, or whether it be members of my own union who've gone to jail for defending their rights on a picket line."

We print below excerpts from the

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!



Rubin Carter, imprisoned for nearly 20 years before court reversed frame-up murder conviction.

remarks by Rubin "Hurricane" Carter to the Toronto PDC rally.

I often begin speaking by telling people how pleased I am to be anywhere, given my history, a history that is not unlike Jamal's history. But I won't say that tonight. I'm gonna be rude. I'm not pleased to have to be here tonight. There's a man on death row facing execution for something that he didn't do, and there's nothing pleasing about that. In fact, it is absolutely obscene.

On the other hand, this gathering here tonight is absolutely vital and necessary. I can't tell you how much it means, when you are wrongly imprisoned, to know that there are people out here like you attending events like this. It gives us hope. And in a place as hopeless and as desperate as prison, there's nothing more precious than hope. Hope that something can happen, that wrongs can be righted. And wrongs can be righted. My presence here tonight is living proof of that.

In 1966, I narrowly escaped the electric chair for a crime I did not commit. I was sentenced instead to three life terms, and spent almost 20 years in prison before being exonerated. And I would still be in prison today had it not been for the care, efforts and concern of

a few people, of a few people who gave meaning to the words, "True justice will never be achieved until those who have not been injured become as outraged as those who have."

When I was first asked to speak out on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal, I have to admit that I was not familiar with his case. So I requested written materials from Peter, which soon arrived, and I proceeded to immediately review them. And it wasn't long in my review that I detected a foul but familiar odor emanating from the documents. And the more I read, the stronger the odor got. It was a stench that at one time I had hoped was limited to New Jersey, but which I soon discovered is associated with cases of wrongful conviction everywhere.

The classic legal presumption is that the accused is presumed to be innocent until proven guilty. Well, as the lifers in the halls of Trenton State Prison are wont to say, "poppycock." The reality is that when the state is the accuser, the presumption of innocence is not accorded to the accused, but to the accuser: "You must have done something to get arrested." "Where there's smoke, there's fire." Right? It is presumed that police officers are scrupulously above-board. They don't plant or falsify or

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Mexico City Meeting to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal

An urgent call to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty was made at a press conference held on March 11 at Mexico City's Leon Trotsky Museum-Institute for the Right of Asylum and Political Freedoms (IDALP). The event, initiated by the Grupo Espartaquista de México, included the participation of Esteban Volkov, Leon Trotsky's grandson; Max Rojas, director of the Trotsky Museum and IDALP; representatives of the Union of Workers at *La Jornada* newspaper; the Grupo Homosexual de Acción Revolucionaria; students from the National University and others.

At the meeting, Esteban Volkov (photo, far right) called the death sentence against Jamal "a demonstration of the ritual sacrifices the U.S. regime carries out against all kinds of revolutionaries, social fighters, racial and ethnic

minorities and dispossessed classes." Referring to the assassinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, he said that in Jamal's case "they just want to give it a bit more of a legal façade" and stressed that "the international fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal is of extraordinary importance" for all defenders of freedom of expression and the rights of the workers and oppressed. Trotsky Museum director Max Rojas called Jamal "the very prototype and paradigm of the victim of political persecution."

In Mexico, the defense of Jamal has received support from many individuals and organizations, including Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Section 10 of the National Union of Education Workers and the University Students Council. Articles defending Jamal have recently appeared in the Mexico City dailies *El Día* and *El Financiero*.



Espartaco

Young Spartacus

Contract with Democrats—An Old Trap

NYC "Fight the Right" Rally: Hot Issues and Hot Air

In New York City on March 4, nearly 2,500 people turned out for a "fight the right" rally called by the "National Peoples Campaign" at Cooper Union. Hundreds of students and young people came—one busload was from Oberlin, Ohio—and they were obviously angry about the vicious right-wing attack on themselves, their families and the poor. The rally came on the heels of a 5,000-strong anti-cutbacks demo in Albany five days earlier, and a 30,000-strong New York City hospital union demonstration only days before. This rally and another held March 18 in San Francisco are opening shots in the latest campaign to create a "movement" under the slogan, "Defeat the Contract on America." The ultimate, big exciting conclusion of these rallies is supposed to be "mass action in the streets" in New York and San Francisco on May 6. But don't buy it—this is Democratic Party pressure politics.

In fact, this latest lash-up of radical liberal forces and fashionable causes (the Green Party, ecology and PBS were big this year) was created by Sam Marcy's Workers World Party (WWP) as a potential electoral vehicle for some refurbished liberal, whether a slicker version of the disgraced Clinton, a more attractive Democratic ticket or even—gasp, how radical!—perhaps some "third party" vehicle. Outside the Cooper



Workers World Party shills for the Democratic Party: WWP "fight for socialism" banner side by side with campaign for liberal Democrat Jerry Brown, New York City, March 4.

ric: "You wouldn't be here today if you believed that elections will change anything! You wouldn't be here today if you thought that Newt Gingrich or the Republicans or Democrats cared about education, health care.... You wouldn't be here today if you had any faith in that system." Speakers like radical lawyer William Kunstler spoke harsh words about the "white power structure," while that perpetual fixture of WWP events,

gated to the back halls. Today it's cheap to kick the Democrats while they're down. The *Workers World* newspaper (9 March) stated, "the masses abandoned the Democrats in November" and now there's massive disillusionment in Clinton (who helped spread illusions in him in the first place?), so now "it's time for struggle. Time for revolution." But that's just newspaper talk—the purpose of the front groups they build is to refurbish capitalist liberalism and reformism.

Any "movement" that doesn't explicitly declare its hostility to the Democratic Party is simply waiting to become a vehicle for it. Larry Holmes, the "National Peoples Campaign" main spokesman, explicitly sounded the true theme from the platform: "There are some who say, let's wait for the presidential elections in '96. I think that will be too late.... If you are concerned about influencing the elections, then the best strategy, the best course of action, is for us to get the thousands out there on the streets! If you do that, we will define what the elections are about!"

On the Cooper Union speakers platform, the banners were limited to how together we can defeat "Gingrich-Giuliani-Pataki." That of course is the program of the New York State Democratic Party, whose vice chairman, Dennis Rivera, was one of the featured speakers. Naturally, his party affiliation was kept under cover and his capacity as president of the Local 1199 hospital workers union was instead spotlighted. And while both trade-union speakers and CUNY students spoke about the need to "fight back," no program for independent working-class action was presented.

We in the Spartacist League, in our paper *Workers Vanguard* (No. 618, 10 March), said, "Rip Up Giuliani's Budget of Doom!" and raised the perspective of fighting for a one-day, citywide strike. That would serve notice on the city

administration, support the CUNY students' struggles and unleash the power of NYC's integrated labor movement to fight in its own interests and for all the oppressed. Key to labor using its power is breaking from the phony "friend of labor" Democratic Party of war and racism. That's the fighting program socialists stand for, but that's not the program of the "National Peoples Campaign"—because that kind of class-independent program gets in the way of making deals with liberal politicians and the Democratic Party.

WWP: You Can't Fool All-Peoples All of the Time

Sam Marcy's Workers World Party has for decades presented itself as the would-be broker between various "movements" and the Democratic Party, creating pressure groups to "make the Democrats fight." During the Reagan years, they ran an outfit called the "All-Peoples Congress" (still lingering alongside today's new, if not improved, "National Peoples Campaign"), which called dozens of rallies and demonstrations to "Fight Reagan." A typical ploy was the call by Larry Holmes (yes, the same guy) back in 1981 to "surround Congress" until the Democratic House majority voted down the Reagan cutbacks. Of course, the Democrats didn't vote them down. The Spartacist League raised the slogan "Break with the Democrats—For Labor Action to Bring Down Reagan!"

During 1990-91, when Iraq was being carpathombed by the U.S., we in the Spartacus Youth Clubs took a side, seeking to build united-front antiwar rallies under the slogan "Defeat U.S. Imperialism—Defend Iraq!" Meanwhile, the WWP's "Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East" simply appealed to pacifist liberal sentiment with their "Bring the Troops Home" slogan.

The Marcyites' first big attempt at creating an anti-Reagan popular front with the liberal bourgeoisie took place a decade earlier, when on 3 May 1981 they marched on the Pentagon, where, with Democrats Bella Abzug and Paul O'Dwyer on the platform, they appealed for a "political solution" to the raging civil war in El Salvador with Reagan's blood-drenched junta. The SL built an Anti-Imperialist Contingent, calling for military victory to the Salvadoran rebels, while the Marcyites' "People's Anti-War Mobilization" formed a goon squad with linked arms to keep people from our rally and make their march "safe" for respectable bourgeois politicians.

The next year, on 27 March 1982, at another El Salvador protest in Washington, D.C., the Marcyites provoked the cops to exclude the Spartacists from their march. We marched independently with our working-class revolutionary

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Militant youth outside Cooper Union were attracted to Spartacist banner, Trotskyist literature, campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Union event, the WWP had a banner, "Fight the Capitalist System, Fight for Socialism." But it's no accident that right next to it was a gigantic red "Jerry Brown '96" presidential banner, as the iconoclastic liberal Brown forces served a potential voting bloc in formation.

Sure, some speakers, like rally co-chairman John Jones of the Jersey City All-Peoples Congress, sought to whip up the crowd with radical-sounding rhetoric:

Ramsey Clark, famous as Lyndon Johnson's former attorney general and the radical left's folksy answer to Ross Perot, called for all sorts of good things, like cutting military spending and canceling Mexico's debt.

But how is that going to happen? What system should we be for? Workers World Party claims to be a socialist, indeed, even Marxist, party—but the need to "fight for socialism" was carefully re-

Angela Davis Witchhunted, Again

Twenty-three years after Angela Davis was exonerated of all charges stemming from the 1970 Marin County courthouse raid demanding freedom for the "Soledad Brothers," vengeful right-wing forces are again trying to witchhunt her out of the University of California system. When Davis, a UC Santa Cruz philosophy professor, was appointed in February to the Presidential Chair by the UC Regents—an honor which brings a \$75,000 stipend—senior Republican state senator William Leonard threw a fit, smearing Davis with a supposed "reputation for racism, violence and communism" (*Oakland Tribune*, 11 February) and launching a campaign to rescind the appointment. The usually timid California Black Legislative Caucus "reaffirmed" their support for the appointment (*Oakland Post*, 26 February) in the face of a mounting slander campaign which intersects the racist bipartisan drive to abolish affirmative action.

Davis' many years of loyalty to the pro-Soviet Communist Party USA (CP) is no secret—she ran on the CP's national tickets in 1980 and 1984—nor is her defense of black political prisoners such as the Soledad Brothers and more recently Mumia Abu-Jamal. It is such left-wing politics which sticks in the craw of the latter-day McCarthyites, who are using all the smear tactics of their 1950s mentor.

A particularly vicious op-ed piece by one Peter Collier of *Heterodoxy* magazine re-indicts her for the 1970 Marin County courthouse shootings and equates her with Nazis, suggesting she should not be teaching at all. He retails a classic list of witchhunters' "thought crimes" which holl down to the fact that she expressed "praise for the Soviet Union" (*San Jose Mercury News*, 22 February). To nail it down, he quotes one sentence from her writings in which she noted that the "socialist countries" have made the "only significant steps taken toward ending [women's] domestic slavery"—an undeniable fact when one looks at the terrible devastation suffered by women since capitalism



Angela Davis, speaking at September 1994 conference on black politics.

returned to the former Soviet bloc. While Davis' worldview was distorted and limited by the prism of the now-defunct Stalinist bureaucracy which sold out the Soviet Union, she nevertheless symbolizes two things which the ruling class really hates: black people and "communism."

Since her "thought crime" is not enough for these legislators to suspend her appointment, she is also accused of "violence" simply for her past association with the Black Panthers and her defense of the Soledad Brothers. But it was the violent police departments and the terrorist "COINTELPRO" arm of the FBI that smeared and destroyed the Black Panther Party through street executions, infiltration, frame-ups and imprisonment. Currently, the state wants to silence one of the last living voices of the Panthers' revolutionary will by legally lynching former Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is living on Pennsylvania's death row under the threat of impending execution.

So far, the UC Regents have stood firm in their decision to appoint Davis, claiming the right to academic freedom. But we won't forget that in 1969 it was the UC Regents, led by then-governor Ronald Reagan, who fired Davis from her job teaching at UCLA, after an FBI infiltrator publicized Davis' CP membership. She went to court and won, only to have the Regents not rehire her because of "unbefitting" behavior. More to the point, she was targeted for her activities as a prominent organizer of the Soledad Brothers Defense Committee, an organization formed to free George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo and John Clutchette, three radical activist prisoners in Soledad Prison who were framed for the murder of a prison guard in 1970. Their case exposed the sadistic brutality directed against black prisoners, including a long series of murders of militant black prisoners. Jackson's prison letters were compiled and published as *Soledad Brother*.

On 7 August 1970, George Jackson's 17-year-old brother, Jonathan, set up by police provocateurs, led a raid at the Marin County courthouse in which Jonathan Jackson, two prisoners and a judge died. The state of California charged the sole surviving prisoner, Russell Magee, and Angela Davis—who was in Los Angeles at the time of the shootout—with conspiracy, kidnapping and murder. The FBI put Davis on their "Most Wanted" list, and the photograph of her being captured, in chains, became an international symbol of racist U.S. capitalist "justice." While the CP criminally abandoned defense of Russell Magee, Angela Davis was completely exonerated by the jury of all charges in 1972. This public defeat of the prosecuting team was an international humiliation for which the ruling class has never forgiven Davis. She has since gone on to become a well-known spokesman on the reformist left. Speaking March 14 at New College in San Francisco as part of International Women's Day events, while calling for a "third party," she lamented having voted for Bill Clinton

but said she continues to back the Democrats in some ways.

The liberals and the CP tried to trumpet the acquittal of college professor Davis as a triumph of "American democracy," forgetting about the more typical working-class black prisoners like Russell Magee languishing in prison or simply gunned down by the cops before they could get to trial. As we wrote at the time (WV No. 10, July-August 1972):

"The acquittal of Angela Davis and other militants are a victory for the working class—of an extremely temporary and reversible character. Bourgeois democracy, i.e., 'fair' trials for the rich and prominent, cop brutality and frame-ups for the rest—is one form of bourgeois rule. The other is fascism, which only workers revolution can prevent."

Hands off Angela Davis! ■



Angela Davis, then a leader of the Communist Party, was targeted by FBI frame-up, arrested in 1970 but released after international outcry.

"Fight the Right" Rally...

(continued from page 7)

program of "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists!" So there's a long history here of Marcyite collaboration with capitalist politicians, including even calling the cops on us communists when we sharply expose their reformist

pretensions.

It will undoubtedly come as a shock to many of the young students that came to Cooper Union to know that the Workers World Party supported the crushing of the Tiananmen Square uprising in China in 1989. They did: *Workers World* (15 June 1989) cheered after the massacre that the "socialist government" in China had "asserted its authority...and withstood a violent counter-revolutionary rebellion." The hallmark of this tendency is in fact its

enthusiastic support for the crushing of workers uprisings against Stalinist rule—it was Marcy's support to the 1956 smashing of the Hungarian Revolution that ultimately led to his tendency's 1959 split from the Socialist Workers Party.

Under the rhetorical cover of Marcy's "global class war" hominid lies their true program of *global class collaboration*—the fatal policy which contributed to the collapse of the Stalinist regimes of the USSR and East Europe, and threatens those still surviving. In contrast, we always unconditionally defended the deformed/degenerated workers states against imperialist attack, while fighting for political revolution against the bureaucracies to restore the liberating goals of socialism.

Fight for Socialism—Join the SYC!

Youth are being pushed to the wall, as they see not only no future for themselves, but no present. The injustices of this brutal, racist society are felt deeply and people want to do something about it. But instead of a program to fight capitalism, all they got was hot air from the "National Peoples Campaign" organizers about "unity" and "getting in the streets."

For a lot of youth, this was their first political event off campus, and they had

plenty of questions. Hundreds were left stranded all afternoon outside the rally hall for lack of space, but luckily the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club were there to provide revolutionary answers, soapboxing and directing people to our banner "Unchain Labor-Black Power: Fight for a Workers Party!" and Trotskyist literature table, where dozens signed up to learn more about socialist politics. Nearly 50 pledge forms were collected for the international campaign to save death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and over 300 *Workers Vanguard*s were sold. No wonder that at the very end, the Marcyites got a little hysterical and a few started to rev up the old, sinister Stalinist CIA-baiting, chanting "CIA go away!" to try to scare people off. This lying garbage is deadly poison to the workers movement and it will not be tolerated.

At Cooper Union, class-struggle politics and the WWP's class collaboration once again clashed. As the rally came to a close, SYC comrades provided closing remarks outside. As one SYC'er pointed out:

"You can't fight Republicans with Democrats. Whenever you hear all this talk about 'fight the right' and there's no explicit mention of the treacherous role the Democrats play, you better check your wallet. Because it takes a workers party, centered on class-struggle politics, to bring down this racist capitalist system!" ■

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CUNY, SUNY...

(continued from page 16)

There are merely differences in tactics between the partner parties of capitalism. The Republicans certainly get off on being more brutal. At Hunter College on March 15, the New York Police Department's thugs in blue attacked student protesters. Students in Hunter's theater department staged a New Orleans-style funeral procession in the streets marking the "death of education" and of "social justice." The cops waded into the guerrilla theater performance with billy clubs, arresting eight students. The city's message to students: Protests will be countered with all the force the state can muster. The NYC says: No reprisals against student protesters! Drop all the charges!

The violence of the cops has been used as an excuse to urge students to avoid militancy and "remain peaceful." At a thousands-strong rally and march to the World Trade Center from Borough of Manhattan Community College March 16, speakers told students that "we've shown we can be militant and still remain peaceful." Months before the budget cuts were announced, allocations were already made to deal with CUNY "civil disobedience," with a special cop force given the Orwellian name SAFE. Any serious social struggle will quickly come up against the whole state apparatus the capitalist class uses to suppress working-class struggles—the cops, the courts and the military. The bosses' government is not "our" state but an instrument of terror on behalf of the capitalist exploiters.

Smash the Ruling Class War on the Poor!

The message of the racist rulers of American capitalism is clear: educating Hispanic and black youth in particular is no longer worth the money since their labor is no longer wanted. Working-class Asians who are recent immigrants are also under attack. The bipartisan drive to deny millions of poor people a semblance of a chance has little to do with a "budget crisis." The racist rulers have plenty of wealth for their priorities. Schools are falling apart—they build more prisons. AIDS and tuberculosis are spreading in the inner city—they slash health care programs and gut Harlem Hospital. There are no jobs for black youth, so they build boot camps to incarcerate them. With their system in shambles, the ruling class doesn't even give the pretense of worrying about the rest of us anymore. In so many ways, the "democratic" veneer is being ripped away, revealing this system as the dictatorship for the capitalist owners it is. The system can't be tinkered with or reformed to get what we want, we need to junk it and fight for a society where those who labor rule. We in the

Young Spartacus

SYCs fight for a socialist society with a rational planned economy, which will produce goods for social use instead of private profit, eliminate scarcity and racist inequality.

The Pataki/Giuliani cutbacks are in large part to pay for a mammoth increase in debt-service payments to Wall Street banks. It's the latest blast of the racist crusade to "end welfare as we know it" and shrink "big government," including through union-busting. From anti-

defeated." Our strength lies in links to the labor movement, which has the numbers, social weight and organization to take on the assaults by the capitalist class. The same people attacking our education are ripping up union contracts, slashing social services and trying to take back every gain workers have made.

What workers and youth need is *militant class struggle* against our common enemy. A union like Local 1199, for example, with 117,000 workers in New

workers and CUNY students, the organizers of the protest strictly confined it to a pep rally for voting for the Democratic Party to fight the cuts. Local 1199 president Dennis Rivera is vice chairman of the state Democratic Party and closely allied to the Catholic church hierarchy of anti-abortion bigot John Cardinal O'Connor. While he led chants of "Pataki must go!" from the rally platform, he's pushing dangerous illusions. Relying on Democrats in the state assem-

Jobs, Free Quality Education for All!



Young Spartacus

Plans for \$1,000 tuition hike amount to racist purge of CUNY students, sparking wave of protests. With NYC labor also facing vicious cuts, students should unite with workers to spark citywide strike action.

immigrant Proposition 187 to attacks on the right to abortion, everyone's on the government hit list formulated in Newt Gingrich's "Contract With America," which is simply a campaign against blacks and working people.

With nothing to offer the masses of black, poor and working people but ever-deeper degradation and immiseration, the capitalist class is intent on extinguishing any sign of protest with brute force. Investing in state repression is a viable "growth industry" in this sick capitalist economy, while cuts in education, social services and Medicaid are escalating. Complementing it all is the massive speedup on death row, as Pataki has brought back "legal" lynching in New York State. Notably, marchers against the death penalty were part of a January 27 rally of more than 5,000 students in the state capital against cutbacks in education. The Spartacus Youth Club has made the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a political prisoner on death row in Pennsylvania, a key focus of opposition to the barbaric death penalty. The international fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal can be a catalyst to struggles against the whole system of racist repression.

Budget cuts, attacks on unions, soaring numbers of people behind bars: that's what they've got for us. Under capitalism, there's no solution to the boom and bust cycles of employment, rampant homelessness and hunger. Young people who know they may have no future (and it's no great shakes at present either) are outraged at the right-wing onslaught sweeping the country and desperately want to fight back. How do we organize for victory, to get what we want?

Even the basic democratic right to an education requires a revolutionary fight for socialism. Campus marches by the thousands may snarl traffic, but won't stop New York City from running because students alone in society don't have a lot of social power. It's not true that "the students united will never be

York State, has a multiracial membership with deep roots in the community because of the services it delivers. The union can play a pivotal role in sparking a fight by all city workers and championing the poor and homeless. Transit workers, who actually transport the labor that makes Wall Street run, have real social power if they use it. That means playing hardball, ripping up the strikebreaking Taylor Law with the militant class-struggle tactics that built the unions. Militant labor action in transit can smash this "budget of doom" and bring Giuliani to his knees with strikes, backed by the rest of city labor. The unions represent the unity of the multiethnic working class (as well as many CUNY parents and students). The multiracial working class has the power to expropriate the bosses, seize the wealth and take power and run society in our own interests!

The labor movement has the power if it does not remain shackled by loyal "labor lieutenants of capital" who let the ranks blow off steam before herding people into the voting booth for the Democrats. At a March 1 rally of hospital

bly who overwhelmingly backed the death penalty is asking to be told to drop dead. The Spartacist League banner at the March 1 rally said what's necessary: "Unchain Labor-Black Power! Fight for a Workers Party!"

Everything we want and need—jobs for all, decent housing, free quality health care and the right to an education—can only be won with hard-fought *class struggle*, in the streets and in the factories, that not only tackles the budget "crisis" but the system of exploitation and profit itself. To win, students must be drawn into an alliance with the labor movement, which can bust up this rotting capitalist system and forge a new, egalitarian socialist society. It takes communist leadership, linking the struggles of thousands of workers, students and minorities, to win the war against the capitalists. We need a workers party to take back what's ours from the fat-cat bosses on Wall Street and their agents, the houngeous politicians who say we've got to vote to win anything. We in the NYC fight to sweep away the profit system of the racist rulers for good. Join us! ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

ATLANTA

Alternate Wednesdays, 6 p.m. April 5.
Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution, Georgia State University, University Center, Room 204
For more information: (404) 521-9338

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

Alternate Thursdays, 5 p.m. April 6
The Russian Revolution—How the Working Class Took Power, La Casa Cultural Latina, 510 E. Chalmers St.
For more information: (217) 352-3359

BOSTON

Alternate Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. April 6
The Russian Revolution of 1917, CLA Room 212, 725 Commonwealth Ave., Boston University
For more information: (617) 492-3928

CHICAGO

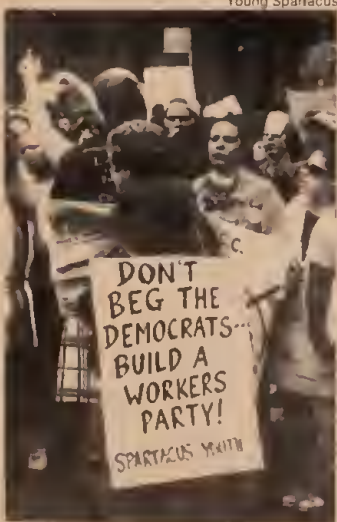
Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. April 6. How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled; Spartacist Public Office, 161 W. Harrison (at Wells), 10th floor
For more information: (312) 663-0715

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m. March 25: The State and Revolution, April 1: The Russian Revolution of 1917, Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers St., Room S-114
For more information: (212) 267-1025

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Marion Barry, Gingrich Gang Up On Workers and Poor

Congress Knives Black D.C.



Washington, D.C. Democratic mayor Barry and Republican Gingrich team up to cancel city union contracts, slash social programs.

As the nation's capital city teeters on the brink of financial ruin, you can almost hear Newt Gingrich and his Congressional cronies smacking their lips over the demise of "home rule" in Washington, D.C. Facing a \$722 million budget deficit and a credit rating lowered to junk-bond status, on February 22 Mayor Marion Barry made a hat-in-hand plea to the Congressional subcommittees that control the city, and was roundly rebuffed by both Democrats and Republicans. "You made your bed; now you have to lie in it," snarled Rep. James Walsh, who heads the subcommittee on appropriations for the District of Columbia.

Last fall, Marion Barry was re-elected mayor in a stunning rebuke by the city's black voters to the racist rulers who see this city as "their" plantation. In 1990, the feds mounted an FBI sting operation that sent Barry to prison on a *misdeemeanor* drug charge. We denounced this at the time as "blatant entrapment," noting the "imperialist arrogance of the Bush gang which figures it can get away with doing anything to anybody...all in the name of the phony 'war on drugs.'" But at the time of his re-election we warned, "As mayor, the 'reborn' Marion Barry, no less than the 'rogue,' will be pushing through vicious cutbacks and ordering cop assaults on black youth on behalf of the White House and Congress" (WV No. 607, 30 September 1994). And now right-wing kingpin Gingrich congratulates the mayor "for trying to surface all of the problems" of the District.

D.C., Barry blistered, can't survive "half-slave, half-free." Cynically harking back to Lincoln, he was referring to the fact that D.C. has to fund public services while under the direct control of Congress. And he opts for...complete

enslavement. Previously a vigorous advocate of "home rule," Barry is now urging the federal government to take over municipal welfare, medical, court and corrections operations. Gingrich, in league with Reagan's former Housing secretary, Jack Kemp, wants to make this overwhelmingly black city the laboratory for slashing services and busting unions, with Barry as its black overseer.

Upon taking office in January, Barry began his "100-day Agenda"—a round of vicious cutbacks which hit hardest at the poorest wards that have been his electoral base. These cuts have reduced D.C. General, the main public hospital serving the poor, to only 250 beds (it once had 1,000), with hundreds of health care workers laid off and over one-third of staff doctors threatened with firing by April 1. The same week that Barry announced these layoffs, Howard University Hospital dismissed 185 workers and announced ten-day unpaid "furloughs" for the rest, while Georgetown University Hospital laid off 230.

Cuts are planned in everything from garbage collection (two-man crews instead of three) to education (making students pay for GED classes) to drug treatment (addicts will have to pay for methadone). Barry is hammering at city unions to take a 12 percent pay cut in April; they have already conceded ten unpaid days off. This is on top of massive cutbacks ordered by the city council in December 1994, gutting benefits in 25 programs for the poor and disabled, from Medicaid to assistance for homeless families, and eliminating cost-of-living welfare increases. Barry has also announced plans to lay off 4,000 more city employees this year and to slash 25 percent from workers' pensions.

Even these brutal austerity measures aren't enough for Congress, which is drafting legislation to put the city into receivership to a financial oversight board modeled on New York's infamous union-busting Municipal Assistance Corporation of the 1970s. New York mayor Giuliani and Philadelphia mayor Rendell have been called to testify at Congressional hearings on D.C. about their own war plans against city unions and services. Meanwhile, Kemp has dreams of turning D.C. into a "radical enterprise zone," or as the *Washington Post* put it, "Hong Kong on the Potomac."

A city where gleaming monuments and government offices meet the impoverished black ghetto, Washington has long been a stark symbol of American racist inequality. Outside the Senate "millionaires' club" live hundreds of thousands of poor and working people who are treated like colonial subjects, with no representation in either house of Congress. Washington is a 70 percent black city—with a growing Hispanic immigrant population—and the racist U.S. ruling class is determined to keep them disenfranchised. At a meeting last month between Gingrich, Kemp and Barry, an idea was floated to make D.C. an outright colonial "territory," like Guam or Puerto Rico!

While the Washington area has the highest income levels of blacks in the country, the city itself is growing poorer every year. D.C. has no tax base to speak of. Government doesn't tax itself, and many private companies are also tax-exempt. D.C. is home to the largest financial institution in the U.S., the Federal National Mortgage Association, known as "Fannie Mae," which rakes in more than \$2 billion in profits every year without paying the city a dime of income tax.

The city's high cost of living is aggravated by low wages for workers in an economy that revolves around servicing the government and the tourist attractions. After the city exploded following the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968, whites left in droves, more recently, increasing numbers of black middle-income families have been moving out to the Maryland suburbs, leaving the poorest behind.

Over the last 25 years, Washington's population has dropped by almost 25 percent, to 570,000. One-third of its residents is on some form of government assistance; one in five D.C. families is on Medicaid, and one in six receives child welfare. To keep all the "have-nots" in line there are several overlapping police forces, giving Washington by far the highest proportion of police to residents of any U.S. city. City and federal police saturate the area from the Capitol to the State Department so the wheels of the capitalist government keep spinning. Last Christmas, the Park Police and Secret Service surrounded a homeless disabled man in front of the White House and shot him to death.

Congress has long lorded it over black

D.C., which it ruled directly for decades through its two subcommittees. During the days of Jim Crow segregation, the District was presided over by a succession of Dixiecrats like Mississippi Senator Bilbo. Only since 1961 have D.C. residents been able to vote for president. Ten years later, Washington got one, non-voting "delegate" in Congress. The current delegate was allowed to vote on the House floor when the Democrats were in control, but only if her vote would not change the outcome. Even this measly favor was taken back when the Republicans took charge last fall.

In 1973, the phony "Home Rule Act" was passed, allowing an elected mayor and city council, but making their every act, from legislation to the budget and taxation, subject to Congressional veto. In 1988, "right to life" bigots in Congress threatened to cut off the District's federal funding if it helped pay for abortions for poor women. In 1992, Congress forced a local referendum on the death penalty. The measure was voted down by a two-to-one margin—not surprising in a city where over 40 percent of black youth are trapped in the infernal machinery of racist "justice," either in jail, on parole or facing trial.

Marion Barry long ago put his credentials as a civil rights activist at the service of the racist ruling class. After his re-election, Barry leaned over backward to reassure his bourgeois masters, declaring, "I know best how to protect their investments, their homes, their businesses. I know best how to balance this budget. I know best how to save our city from financial collapse."

In contrast to his predecessor, Sharon Pratt Kelly, Barry has always been backed by the city unions. The labor leadership is still in his pocket, even as he targets city workers for massive "rifs" (reductions in force). Barry is using the federal government's threats as a club to scare the unions into compliance with his draconian cuts. Meanwhile, the media has been hollering about "highly paid" and "indolent" city workers. A 2 January *Washington Post* article, headlined "New York and Philadelphia Offer Labor Lessons for Barry," declared:

"Reforming city labor practices and restructuring municipal contracts has never been easier. Determined and forceful mayors are having their way with unions, and big city labor leaders—handicapped by a weak economy and ebbing public support—are today making concessions that a few years ago would have been unthinkable."

In early February, Barry told city workers that they had the "option" of massive firings or a drastic wage cut, and warned, "I expect everyone to make a sacrifice." At a time when the city unions face a fight for their very survival, their leadership is throwing in the towel. Janice Vanles, president of AFSCME Local 1033, said of the cuts: "To be quite frank about it, we might have to live with it" (*Washington Post*, 25 January). Although the government

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 - 4 Program for Black Proletarian Power
- **ANC/De Klerk Deal Is Betrayal of Black Freedom**
- **The "Bell Curve" and Genocide U.S.A.**
- **Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!**
- **L.A. Unionists Demand Freedom for Geronimo!**
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Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win!

L.A. Janitors Fight for "One Union, One Industry, One Contract"

LOS ANGELES, March 8—Chanting "Que viva la mujer obrera!" (Long live working women) and "No contract, no peace!" over 1,500 unionists from "Justice for Janitors" were joined by hotel and other city workers on International Women's Day. Massing near West L.A.'s glitzy Century City office complex, they sat down at the busy intersection of Wilshire and Westwood Boulevards, blocking traffic for over an hour. Forty women custodial workers and supporters were arrested and hauled away by the LAPD.

"Justice for Janitors" gained nationwide attention during the 1990 strike of 500 janitors at Century City,



Leanne Santa Monica Outlook

LAPD menaces 1,500-strong Justice for Janitors demonstration, March 8. Chanting "Long live working women" and "No contract, no peace," 40 women unionists were arrested.

when striking workers faced brutal attacks by the LAPD in their fight to win a union. At the March 8 rally, there was a heavy police presence including over 70 cops in riot gear and dozens of mounted police. The hatred on the faces of the LAPD was hardly disguised as they escorted the women janitors chanting "La unión está presente!" (The union is here) to waiting buses.

The mostly Latino janitors, over half of whom are women, are fighting for a countywide contract under the slogan "One industry, one union, one contract." Their union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 399, is now negotiating with 13 janitorial service companies to extend a single contract for janitors throughout the greater L.A. metro area. Currently, building service workers downtown and in Century City earn a base wage of \$6.80 an hour plus health benefits. Although this has been won through hard battles, it is still below even the official poverty line. And thousands of unionized janitors work in the wealthy enclaves of Beverly Hills and the San Fernando Valley for much less and with no health benefits. Representing over 8,000 workers across the city, Local 399 has set a negotiating deadline for April 1 (contracts run out March 31).

The banks and real estate interests are itching for a chance to smash the militant janitors and reverse victories like the 1990 strike. The huge police presence on March 8 was organized from the top: plenty of brass, and their labor squad was out in force. They have been emboldened by the passage of the anti-immigrant Proposition 187, which was in large part aimed at combative workers like the L.A. janitors, many of whom experienced sharp class struggle firsthand in Mexico and El Salvador. Local 399 organized a demonstration at the D.A.'s office last August that brought out black hospital workers together with Latino janitors to demand freedom for imprisoned former Black Panther Geronimo ji-Jaga (Pratt), and recently hosted a Partisan Defense Committee forum at their union hall to save death row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Following the multiracial Los Angeles upheaval sparked by the Rodney King verdict, the bourgeoisie started whipping up the current racist anti-immigrant frenzy, attempting to blame the economic downturn on "illegal aliens." With their current drive to get an anti-affirmative action proposition on the California ballot in 1996, the rulers are aiming the second barrel of this same reactionary shotgun directly at blacks and women.

As part of "Justice for Janitors" Campaign '95 to extend the union into shopping malls and public buildings, Local 399 is attempting to organize building security guards. This is dead wrong! Security guards are private auxiliaries to the racist cops, and often the bosses' first line of defense in strikebreaking, union-busting and defending their sacred "private property."

During and after the 1990 strike, janitors have confronted these "rent-a-cop" thugs at every turn. Cops, public and private, have no place in the labor movement!

The potential for integrated class struggle in L.A. is real, but the labor misleaders are working overtime to keep a lid on and divert labor militancy into the trap of the Democratic Party. Organizing drives like that of the janitors need the muscle of other powerful L.A. unions in action: Teamsters, longshoremen, aerospace workers and hotel workers. But when 400 union janitors staged a defiant march under martial law to protest the Rodney King verdict and the mass INS roundups that followed it, local AFL-CIO tops stifled attempts to mobilize other key unions.

And when mass protests involving tens of thousands of immigrant workers broke out against Prop. 187 last fall, union tops went all out to divert the protests into "get out the vote" campaigns for the Democrats. They even joined hands with L.A.'s Sheriff Block and right-

wing Republican Ron Unz in opposing Prop. 187 as an "ineffective" way to persecute immigrants, while spending big bucks from union funds to support the "other" anti-immigrant candidate for governor, Democrat Kathleen Brown.

To organize the unorganized and smash the racist anti-immigrant frenzy, it's desperately necessary to replace the labor bureaucrats with militants who hold no illusions in the partner parties of racist American capitalism and to fight for a *workers party*. Victory to the L.A. janitors!

AFL-CIO Tops Stiff Decatur Strikers in Bal Harbour

CHICAGO—Seventy strikers and locked-out workers from labor's "war zone" in central Illinois traveled 27 hours by bus to crash the AFL-CIO's annual Florida retreat last month. The Caterpillar, Bridgestone Tire and Staley unionists plied the lobby and hallways of the luxurious Bal Harbour Sheraton, attempting to buttonhole members of the federation's executive board as the bureaucrats shuffled between closed-door meetings, poolside receptions for capitalist politicians and their own private suites—some going for as much as \$325 a night. "They were not very happy to see a bunch of rank and filers there raining on their parade," one unionist told *Workers Vanguard*.

The core of the Illinois contingent came from Decatur, where workers locked out by the Staley corn processing company along with strikers at Caterpillar and Bridgestone-Firestone are seeing their jobs worked by scabs. Shamefully, members of the Teamsters and other unions have also been crossing the picket lines every day, doing transport, maintenance and construction work for the struck companies. The most pressing demand which should have been raised, but wasn't, is for the unions to *put an immediate stop to all scabbing*, and that labor *mobilize mass pickets to shut these plants down* right.

But even the Illinois unionists' modest proposal for a "solidarity bank" to aid striking workers was too radical for AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland and his cronies. The Decatur workers are indeed in desperate financial straits: 21 months after they were forcibly removed from the Staley factory, members of United Paperworkers (UPIU) Local 7837 receive only \$60 a week; Bridgestone Rubber strikers from United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 713 are getting zilch. Only after considerable lobbying did the executive board allow the presidents of the three struggling Decatur locals into a meeting, but as soon as Local 7837 head Dave Watts opened his mouth

to speak, Kirkland slapped a gag on all three.

While Kirkland treated the Illinois unionists like embarrassing relatives cadging a handout, he laid out the red carpet for the numerous politicians who flew down to court labor's self-styled elite. Among these "friends of labor" were Illinois governor James Edgar and other Republicans, who now that they control the state legislature are ripping the guts out of education, welfare, health services and jobs. Meanwhile, they're strengthening the repressive apparatus used to control working people and minorities who fight back. Among the victims of this right-wing drive are hundreds of AFSCME workers (and their clients) in Decatur who will lose their jobs under a plan to convert the Adolf Meyer Mental Health Center into a prison.

Leading the Democratic delegation were Vice President Al Gore and Secretary of Labor Robert Reich. Their presence was part of a campaign to refurbish Clinton's tarnished "friend of labor" image. They used the occasion to announce a White House executive order that would supposedly deny federal contracts to companies that hire "permanent" replacement workers during strikes. But you could drive a tramload of scabs through the loopholes in Clinton's transparent fraud, which underscores the futility of the AFL-CIO's traitorous alliance with the Democratic Party. One Staley worker told *Workers Vanguard* that he asked Reich during a meeting with the Decatur labor delegation, "How long is 'temporary'?" At least 21 months because that's how long I've been out." The worker said he didn't look forward to waiting for federal action while some "temporary" scab retired on his job!

Shocked by the Republicans' electoral victory in the last elections and increasing rank-and-file discontent, some members of the executive board in Bal Harbour even began muttering about forming a "labor party" and retraining "Lane" Kirkland before the usual graveside transfer of power. "Labor party" talk coming from these sellout artists is just a way of pressuring the Democratic Party, trying to revive the dead-and-buried New Deal alliance. And Decatur strikers in Bal Harbour only got lip service from capitalism's top labor lieutenants who have their eyes on Kirkland's swivel chair. Teamsters president Ron Carey, a darling of the reformist left and the Justice Department's hand-picked agent, won't lift a finger to stop the Teamster scabbing that's stabbing Decatur strikers in the back.

In Decatur, two unionists, Local 7837 president Dave Watts and IBEW business agent Mike Carrigan, recently won primary slots and are running for the city council in the upcoming April 4 election. Dave Watts and his supporters from the "Friends of Labor" coalition have called for an independent "labor party." However, while the elections are formally "non-partisan," in a statement the day after the primary, Friends of Labor chairman Dan Kasheska said that "when we unite with the more labor-friendly candidate" for mayor, a Democrat, "we will win this battle also!" One of the reasons for the interest in running labor candidates in Decatur was attacks by strikebreaking cops, particularly the brutal tear gassing of strike supporters at the gates of the Staley plant last summer. Yet Watt's handout, "Are You Satisfied with City Gov't?" begins with the call for "more police to deter crime!"

The working class badly needs its own party to fight against the Democratic and Republican parties of capital. But a phantom "labor party" which does not explicitly reject the Democratic Party and the bosses' racist guardians-in-blue cannot fight for the cause of labor and minorities. What kind of party do we need? In Decatur, where more than one-sixth of industrial workers are on strike or locked out, where the AFL-CIO misleaders' policies have turned strike city into "scab city," what's needed is a *class-struggle workers party*, to mobilize labor's muscle to win this key battle.

In central Illinois, where the racist terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan have organized provocations against blacks and labor, what's needed is a party that champions all the oppressed and brings out the forces to crush the fascists. We need an *internationalist party*, one that opposes NAFTA by lighting in solidarity with Mexican workers; a party that appeals to Japanese workers for support in the struggle against Bridgestone-Firestone, and rejects the rampant protectionist poison which paints Japanese workers as the enemy.

Clinton has made it perfectly clear that the Democrats are no "lesser evil." And the labor bureaucrats, represented by the gang that gathers each year in Bal Harbour, have bogged the unions and are presiding over their destruction. It's by fighting to oust these misleaders and save the unions, by linking up with the ghettos and barrios, that a workers party will be built in the hard struggles that are necessary to sweep away this system of production for profit and to ensure that those who labor shall rule. ■

Economic Crash...

(continued from page 1)

underlying this seismic shift in world currency markets:

"Traditionally, the issuer of the main currency has been a net international creditor, giving it a keen interest in low inflation and financial stability. America was the world's biggest creditor until the 1980s. But it is now the world's biggest debtor and so likelier to succumb to the temptation to let inflation nibble away at the real value of its debt, or to devalue in order to narrow its trade deficit."

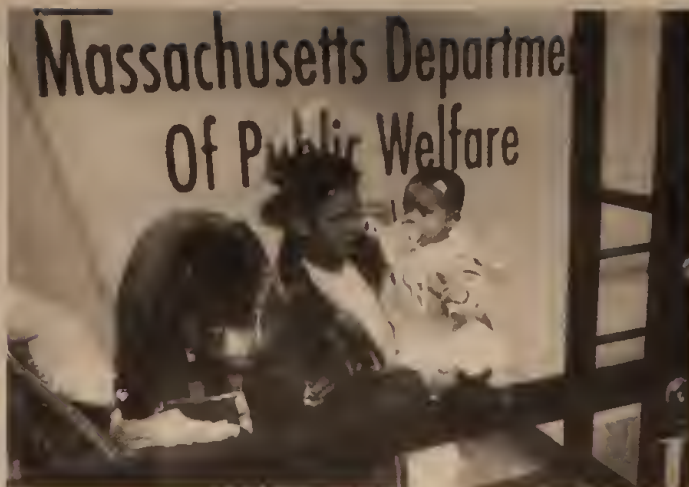
The *Economist* thus foresees a continuing movement out of the dollar and into the D-mark and yen, since even with its massive currency devaluation the U.S. is still running large balance of trade deficits.

Recognizing that "the dollar is a structurally weak currency," Wall Street financier Robert Hormats, formerly a trade official in the Reagan/Bush administrations, predicts it will "require higher and higher risk premiums" to get foreign moneymen to hold U.S. government and corporate securities, in other words maintaining higher real interest rates than in Japan and West Europe. And this means risking a financial crash and major depression, as the international financiers and capitalist governments are vividly aware.

The extreme volatility of international capital and currency markets is the financial manifestation of the "New World Disorder" following the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the destruction of the Soviet Union. From the U.S. to West Europe, from Latin America to East Asia, the "neoliberal" economic model of unhindered capitalism is the order of the day. With the onset of Cold War II against the Soviet Union in the early 1980s, Reagan's America and Thatcher's Britain launched a one-sided class war at home, aiming to gut the labor movement and slash social programs. The West European bourgeoisies are now following the same course, seeking to dismantle the social-democratic "welfare state."

Meanwhile, the Third World has been opened up to unrestricted exploitation by Western and Japanese imperialism. The Japanese are carving out a new version of the pre-World War II "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" extending from South Korea to Indonesia. The entire region from Mexico to Argentina has become a captive market and subcontractor of corporate America. Thus the collapse of the Soviet Union has posed ever more starkly the basic postulates of Trotsky's theory and program of permanent revolution: that genuine national independence in backward countries is possible only through a proletarian revolution leading the peasant masses, and the extension of that revolution to the advanced capitalist, i.e., imperialist, countries.

As Trotsky wrote in *The Third International After Lenin* (1928), his fundamental critique of the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country": "The productive forces of capitalist countries have long since broken through the national boundaries. Socialist society,



Worldwide capitalist assault on "welfare state"—in the U.S., Clinton vows to "end welfare as we know it," Gingrich and Republican-controlled Congress ax social programs.



Kraft/Sygma

Gibson/AP

however, can be built only on the most advanced productive forces." This underlined, he stressed, the need for an international revolutionary party based on a program of world socialist revolution. "It is quite apparent that the sharp turns in the political situation in the course of one, two, or three years are not brought about by any changes in the basic economic factors, but by causes and impulses of a purely superstructural character, thereby indicating the extreme instability of the entire system.... Thence also flows the new significance of the party and the party leadership."

Neoliberalism Comes to Neocolonial Latin America

The 1974-75 world slump marked a watershed in the postwar U.S. economy. American manufacturers suffered a sharp

above the level in U.S. manufacturing, while in Japan it was 20 percent higher.

At the same time, downsizing, retooling, longer working hours, speedup and the scrapping of union work rules has substantially increased output per worker. In order to translate their "leaner and meaner" manufacturing operations into higher profits, U.S. capitalists required expanded and stable access to world markets beginning with their Latin American "backyard."

The weak and dependent Latin American bourgeoisies, seeking to prevent their total domination at the hands of Yankee imperialism, have since the 1930s had recourse to nationalist-corporatist economic policies. Strategic sectors of the economy were state-owned. Domestic industry was protected by high tariffs and import licenses as

decade" the entire region was deliberately depressed as Wall Street banks extracted tens of billions from Latin America's workers and peasants. At the same time, the retreat of Soviet power under Mikhail Gorbachev removed the one available counterweight to Yankee imperialism. Bourgeois-nationalist politicians in Mexico City or Lima, Peru were no longer able to strengthen their bargaining position vis-à-vis Washington and Wall Street by adopting a friendlier posture toward Moscow and Havana. The downfall of the radical nationalist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua in 1990 signaled the onset of the "New World Order" in Latin America.

At the economic level, a key role was played by the 1989 Brady plan, named after the then U.S. secretary of the treasury. Under this scheme, much of the region's short-term bank debt was restructured as long-term bonds guaranteed by the U.S. government. In this way Washington was able to impose neoliberal economics on the entire region from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn. Most of the state-owned sector was auctioned off and/or had their labor force cut to the bone. The work force in Argentina's state railroads, for example, has been cut from 100,000 to 10,000 since 1991! Tariffs were slashed and import licenses no longer required for most products. Controls on foreign exchange dealings and capital movements were eliminated or greatly relaxed, as were restrictions on foreign-owned businesses.

Mexico and Argentina—formerly the two prime examples of nationalist corporatism in Latin America—now became the favored targets for takeovers by foreign multinationals. Between 1988 and 1992, direct foreign investment totaled \$18 billion in Mexico (the third-largest amount in any Third World country) and \$11 billion in Argentina. Such investment also created a captive market for American exports as U.S. multinationals in Latin America imported capital equipment, parts and goods-in-process from home. Capital goods and industrial materials and supplies account for over 60 percent of U.S. global exports.

Another factor contributing to the large and growing U.S. trade surplus with Latin America was the change in exchange-rate policy. Historically, the region has experienced a chronic cycle of inflation leading to currency devaluation, generating more inflation requiring further devaluations. With the declared aim of establishing strong monetary discipline, the neoliberal policymakers now tied the Mexican and Argentine peso, the Brazilian real, etc. to the dollar. Yet despite harsh austerity measures throughout the region, inflation rates remained far higher than in the U.S. Thus with their currencies fixed in terms of dollars, Mexican or Chilean goods became increasingly expensive in the North American market and U.S. goods ever cheaper in Latin America. And

Zapatista peasant uprising in Chiapas against North American Free Trade Agreement shook U.S. imperialists. Washington and Wall Street demand suppression of revolt as part of Mexico bailout.

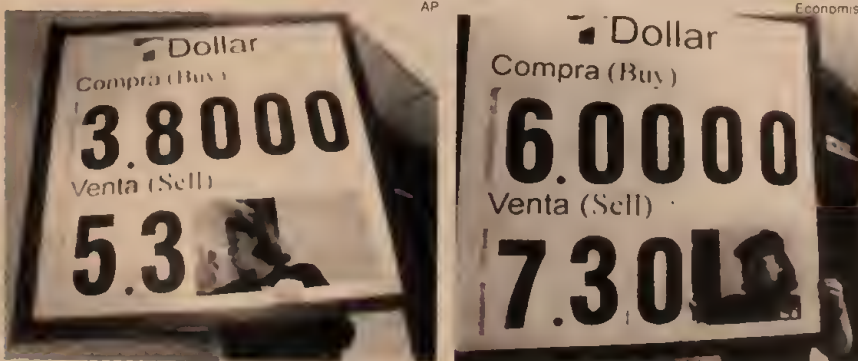


El Norte

fall in profits indicating their weakened competitive position vis-à-vis their Japanese and German rivals. In response, American industrialists shifted operations to low-wage Third World countries while seeking to intensify the rate of exploitation at home through giveback union contracts, two-tier wage systems, runaway shops and outright union-busting. Real weekly earnings for production workers in this country peaked in 1973, and by 1993 had fallen to 81 percent of their level two decades earlier. Hourly compensation (wages and benefits) in Germany last year was 70 percent

part of an entire development strategy of import substitution. Foreign exchange transactions and short-term capital movements were subject to a wide array of controls, while various restrictions were placed on foreign-owned businesses. And this was true throughout the region, not just in countries with a tradition of national populism like Mexico, Argentina and Brazil.

The Latin American debt crisis of the early and mid-1980s gave American imperialism the leverage to open up and then demolish these nationalist-corporatist structures. During this "lost



Cold statistics of peso's plummet translate into mass misery in Mexico. Since mid-December, Mexican currency has been devalued by 50 percent.

in Mexico, at least, this was a deliberate policy to win support for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by artificially fostering a U.S. export boom.

So it's scarcely surprising that last year Mexico and Argentina ran balance of trade deficits equal to almost 8 percent and 4 percent of their respective national outputs, while over 20 percent of all U.S. sales abroad went to Latin America. Just before the deluge last December, Clinton's commerce secretary, Ron Brown, exulted: "Latin America is booming, and we can't wait." But the U.S. export boom in Latin America was being subsidized by short-term speculative capital from New York and to a lesser extent London, Frankfurt and Tokyo. This kind of financial scam could not last forever or even for very long. It ended with a crash in late December.

While Washington officials and Wall Street bankers may prattle about the emergence of "democracy" and "free markets" in Latin America, they know that continuing to dominate and exploit this region is a harsh, dirty and hazardous business. In the working-class neighborhoods and slums of Mexico City, São Paulo and Buenos Aires, there exists a deep and abiding hatred for American imperialism. Even with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the men who run Wall Street remain nervous about popular unrest, militant anti-Yankee nationalism and social revolution in Latin America. That's why, at the slightest sign of trouble anywhere in the region, money is pulled back to the "safe havens" of New York, London, Frankfurt and Tokyo.

However, over the past half decade, U.S. capitalism has involved itself in the Mexican economy on a scale far too big to be written off. As *Business Week* (16 January) stated after the crash:

"[T]here can be no turning away from the U.S. embrace of Mexico. The interests of U.S. government and business are at stake as never before. U.S. exports to Mexico are still an important part of American growth hopes. U.S. banks, retailers, manufacturers, investors, and oil companies all see Mexico as a crucial part of their international strategies... 'Mexico's troubles are American troubles in a way that few could have foreseen a year ago.'"

And the troubles that Mexico can cause the American bourgeois order go far beyond the economic factors outlined by *Business Week*.

The long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico, in power for more than six and a half decades, shows clear signs of being a decadent, tottering *ancien régime*. Witness the assassinations last year of the party's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, and its secretary general, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, quite likely by rival factions and cliques. These are but the dramatic, surface manifestations of the PRI's disintegration under the crushing embrace of American imperialism.

The PRI's corporate state originated in the 1930s as the consolidation of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-17, which began as a bourgeois-democratic revolt and was embarking on the road of social revolution when its radical plebeian sectors were beheaded. Under the nationalist populist regime of General Lázaro Cárdenas, the economy was heavily statified and the working class and peasantry regimented by a huge, well-organized government bureaucracy. However, the massive inroads of American capital—at all levels—since the 1982 debt crisis have fatally undermined the nationalist-corporatist structure on which the PRI's political hegemony rests.

First NAFTA and now the conditions of Clinton's "rescue plan" strip away the last remnants of Mexican economic independence. The hard-currency revenues of the state-owned oil company, Pemex—which last year accounted for a quarter of Mexico's export income—will be placed in the Federal Reserve

Bank of New York as collateral for the imperialist loans. This is a huge first step toward reversing Cárdenas' nationalization of the British and American oil companies in 1938. Newly elected PRI president Ernesto Zedillo stands more clearly exposed than his predecessors as nothing but the local political agent for Washington and Wall Street. Even right-wing *New York Times* columnist A. M. Rosenthal pointed out, "most Mexicans detest becoming wards of the U.S. or surrendering their oil as collateral. Maybe they will just go and have a revolution."

The Indian peasant rebels in the southern state of Chiapas look back to the heroes of the Mexican Revolution, taking as their banner the name Zapatista. Even in the days of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, the U.S. militarily intervened and was prepared to invade to crush the most radical elements of the revolution. A social revolution in Mexico today must necessarily base itself on the millions-strong proletariat. And even more than in Zapata's time, it would immediately face being crushed by Yankee imperialism through economic warfare and, if necessary, direct military intervention. In fact, the Clinton government is presently collaborating closely with the PRI regime in its attempts to suppress the Chiapas revolt.

At the same time, the prospects for extending revolutionary struggle in Mexico into the imperialist colossus to its north are greater than ever before. While all of Latin America was bled white by Wall Street banks during the 1980s, desperate, impoverished Mexican workers and peasants flooded into the U.S. looking for jobs. The Reagan/Bush administrations encouraged large-scale immigration—legal and illegal—to provide a pool of cheap labor. The Mexican proletariat has in a sense extended itself into the territorial boundaries of the United States, mainly in Texas and California.

These immigrant workers have brought with them the class-struggle traditions of Latin America. For the past several years, the Los Angeles area, with its large Mexican and Central American communities, has been the one consistent center of labor militancy in the U.S.

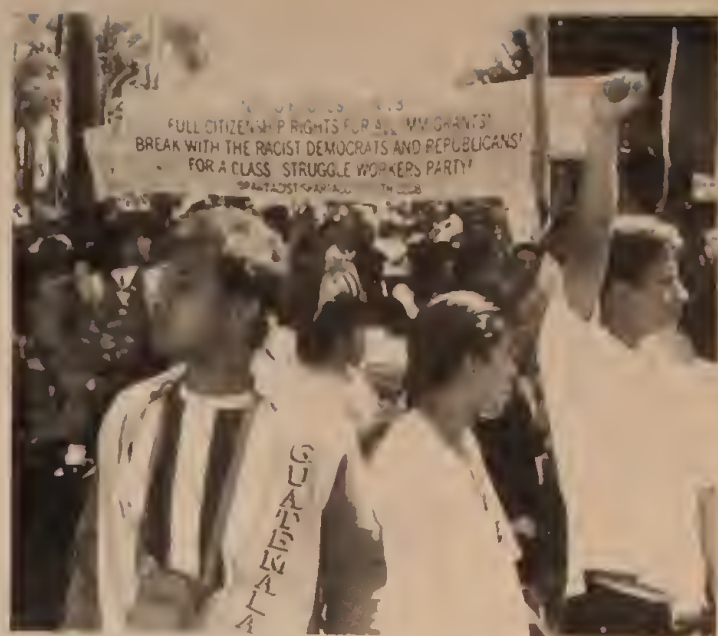


Mexico City demonstration against government repression in Chiapas, February 18. Dissident telephone workers' banner reads, "For Trade-Union Democracy Against the Bosses' Pact."

A popular upheaval in Mexico, toppling the neocolonial PRI regime, would have a powerfully radicalizing effect on the millions of Hispanic workers in the U.S., many of whom retain strong family ties to Mexico. To release this potential requires an international revolutionary party capable of liberating the Mexican working class from the shackles of nationalist corporatism and of breaking the stranglehold of the racist, pro-imperialist AFL-CIO bureaucracy over the American working class.

Wall Street's Contract On America

The Mexican crisis comes at a time when the American ruling class has



80,000 march in Los Angeles against anti-immigrant Prop. 187, October 1994. Latin American immigrants have brought militant traditions to workers' struggles in U.S., particularly Southern California.

launched a new, all-out offensive against the working class, the poor and the black and Hispanic communities. The declared aim of the Federal Reserve (the U.S. central bank) is to prevent the unemployment rate from falling in order to keep wages down. Deficit spending, which used to be held up as the accepted liberal Keynesian program to iron out the business cycle, is now viewed as the economic version of original sin. Literally so in the case of Christian fundamentalist powerbroker Pat Robertson. Social welfare programs are branded as morally degenerate in Washington's corridors of power.

The ballyhooed Republican "Contract With America" envisions a return to the unrestrained capitalism of the 1920s—trade unions decimated, no social safety nets, no regulatory agencies. Liberals and social democrats complain bitterly that since November's Congressional

reshape Washington."

An old-fashioned, decent liberal like *New York Times* humorist Russell Baker sees the new GOP leaders motivated by naive ideological fervor, a kind of political madness. In an 11 March column entitled "Dreamers, Axes in Hand," he writes:

"For the past 60 years, Republicans have been saying the welfare state was destroying us, or would destroy us, and we'd better destroy it first, or else."

"When their chances came, though, Republicans as formidable as Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan always decided it was wiser to go on living with it."

"Now the Newtites are at last doing their best to bring it down."

Derisively, Baker describes the Newtites as "sentimental romantics" who "seem to believe that once the welfare state is in ruins the good old days will resume."

Baker is posing a valid and important question but one for which he offers no rational and realistic answer. Why are the Republicans, who have been denouncing the "welfare state" ever since Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s, now actually intent on destroying it? And why are Democrats, though Baker doesn't mention this, moving in the same direction? The answer is to be found both at the level of international politics and at the level of international economics.

The "welfare state," such as it exists in the U.S., was established in the 1930s and augmented in the 1960s. These were the two periods of mass, militant struggles by workers and the oppressed against the existing American bourgeois order. When the Social Security Act was signed into law, tens of thousands of auto workers, electrical products workers, meatpackers, longshoremen, seamen, etc., looked to the Communist Party for leadership. When the 1960s "poverty programs" were launched, the Black Panther Party—which saw itself as the black American version of the Viet Cong—were running armed patrols in inner-city ghettos across the U.S.

With the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the destruction of the Soviet Union, the men who run Wall Street and the Fortune 500 corporations believe they can now do anything to the workers, the poor, the elderly, the black and Hispanic communities without the slightest danger of serious social turmoil, not to speak of revolution. Having witnessed its decades-long goal in the destruction of the Soviet Union, and having hattered the trade unions at home for more than a decade, the American

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Economic Crash...

(continued from page 13)

capitalist class believes the time has arrived to destroy Social Security and unemployment insurance, too. That is the political factor behind the *Imperialist* attack on the "welfare state."

The economic factor is that the U.S. government now has a \$4.6 trillion debt. As Wall Street investment banker Peter G. Peterson, formerly secretary of commerce under Nixon, argues: "The horrifying that Washington must do to cover our huge deficits... threatens our future because it siphons off our already shallow pool of national savings into present government consumption instead of long-term private investment" (*Facing Up: How to Rescue the Economy from Crushing Debt and Restore the American Dream* [1993]). So the American capitalist class has a compelling economic reason to radically slash social programs, a reason it did not have prior to 1980.

That year Reagan was elected president promising to cut taxes by 30 percent, achieve strategic military superiority over the Soviet Union, not touch Social Security and balance the budget. This fantastical program was called "supply-side economics." Cutting taxes was supposed to stimulate an explosion of entrepreneurial energy and work effort, thereby vastly increasing national output. This, in turn, would restore total tax revenue to its former level.

Needless to say, things worked out rather differently. Reagan, as promised, did cut taxes, but only for the rich. He also kept his promise to the Pentagon, whose budget close to doubled between 1980 and 1985. The net result was that the federal budget deficit tripled in just five years, from \$73 billion in 1980 to \$221 billion in 1985. And the deficit would have been even greater except that the Social Security trust fund, which has always run a surplus, was looted to pay for everything from Star Wars to the burgeoning interest on the debt. Over the past decade and a half, by far the fastest growing component of the federal budget has been interest on the debt, which last year was 14 percent of all federal expenditures.

Wall Street financier Peterson expresses the concerns of the American imperialist bourgeoisie about the increasing financial and potential political leverage of the Japanese and Germans, who are now their creditors.

"Great nations also do not remain great nations by putting their economic destinies into the hands of other countries whose own priorities may change—and in any case are different from theirs. Inevitably, the domestic economic policy of debtor nations comes to be dictated in the halls of foreign parliaments and

the boardrooms of foreign central banks. Inevitably, the foreign policy of debtor nations... is also held hostage to the political agendas of creditor nations."

There is now a consensus among the U.S. ruling class that something radical must be done to cut government expenditure. American imperialism needs a strong military to police the world and, of course, interest on the debt is sacrosanct. So what's left? By West European standards, the so-called "welfare state" in the U.S. is a paltry affair. The only economically significant programs are Social Security pensions and Medicare benefits for the elderly, which together make up about a third of federal government expenditure.

In this sense racist demagoguery about "promiscuous pregnancy" by black welfare mothers serves to disguise the budget cutters' main target. To begin with, almost 40 percent of families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are white. So white

can be going to "rethink Medicare from the ground up" (*New York Times*, 3 February). Whatever form this "rethinking" takes, it will mean cutting medical benefits for the elderly.

Tens of millions of people depend on these programs and have paid for them all their working lives. And slashing Social Security and Medicare affects not only the old. Who is going to let their parents and grandparents eat dog food, freeze in winter or be evicted from their homes if they can possibly help it? Taking an ax to Social Security and Medicare would cause many if not most working people to cut their own living standards to help elderly parents and other relatives survive.

For an Internationally Planned Socialist Economy

The U.S. ruling class wants to return to the "good old days" of the 1920s, with unregulated capital markets and low taxes. But the roaring '20s ended in

such as the prohibitive 1931 Smoot-Hawley tariff in the U.S. and comparable measures in other capitalist countries. Such national protectionist trade barriers developed into full-scale trade wars, especially by the U.S. and Britain against Japan. As Japanese imperialism sought to carve out its own economic sphere, invading China and seeking to gain control of raw materials in Southeast Asia, the Western imperialists imposed an embargo on trade of scrap iron and later oil. Facing economic strangulation, Japan countered by attacking the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor in 1941, thereby precipitating U.S. entry into World War II.

Today, Clinton and the other imperialist leaders are promoting the virtues of "free trade" through extending the GATT tariff reductions. But underneath the rhetoric, Washington has allowed the dollar to be drastically devalued in comparison to the German D-mark and the Japanese yen. This competitive devaluation has a similar effect to outright protectionist measures. Moreover, Washington is still pushing "managed trade" with Japan—a polite term for quotas. The reality is one of growing trade blocs, with a U.S.-dominated Western Hemisphere and a German-dominated Europe, while in East Asia Japanese and American imperialism are vying for predominance.

The international financial chaos both reflects and intensifies these growing inter-imperialist rivalries. The present conditions of untrammelled global capital and currency markets, far from regulating themselves through what Ronald Reagan called the "magic of the marketplace" or Adam Smith referred to as the "hidden hand" of competition, in fact give free rein to financial speculators moving around \$2 trillion in "hot money." Sooner or later, this will lead to a mammoth crash. Yet various governments' attempts to control these huge flows of money capital will necessarily express the conflicting imperialist interests. Witness the Europeans' clear displeasure at Clinton's strong-arming the International Monetary Fund to cough up \$20 billion to "rescue" Mexico (in reality, U.S. banks and investors). Ultimately this points to a Fortress Europe, a Fortress North America and sharpening conflict over East Asia. It is a recipe for war.

Despite four years of economic "recovery" in the U.S. and in the midst of an upturn in West Europe, there are 40 million unemployed in the advanced capitalist countries. And from the favelas of Rio de Janeiro to the slums of Bombay, hundreds of millions live in squalid conditions. Imagine the impact of a worldwide financial crash, and/or all-out trade war among the major imperialist powers! For all the bourgeoisie's triumphalism about the supposed "death of communism," the situation cries out for an internationally planned socialist economy. But to achieve this requires workers revolutions, from industrialized Third World countries like South Africa, South Korea, Brazil and Mexico to the imperialist centers of Europe, North America and Japan.

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, by expropriating the bourgeoisie and laying the basis for a planned economy, despite its subsequent bureaucratic degeneration under Stalin, enabled the Soviet Union to become a major industrial and military power. The Stalinist regimes of East Europe and the former Soviet Union, falsely labeled communist, collapsed precisely because their nationally limited program of building "socialism in one country" could not withstand the economic pressures of capitalist imperialism. What is needed is an authentically communist international party—a reformed Fourth International based on Lenin and Trotsky's program of world socialist revolution—that is capable of breaking the stranglehold of the reformists and bourgeois-nationalists who bind the exploited and oppressed to the hoodlums of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo. ■



Boom-bust cycle of capitalism led to 1929 stock market crash, followed by the Great Depression. Above, bread line during the 1930s.

racists who call for doing away with welfare are also condemning millions of poor white women and their children to starve, freeze and live in the streets. At the level of government finance, even eliminating welfare entirely would scarcely make a dent in the budget deficit. Last year, benefits under the AFDC program amounted to \$12 billion out of total federal government outlays of \$1.5 trillion.

The attack on welfare is a prelude to slashing Social Security and Medicare. The balanced-budget amendment recently failed in the Senate when North Dakota Democrats voted against it expressly because the Republicans refused to exempt Social Security. Just as Clinton promised "to end welfare as we know it," so Gingrich states that the Republi-

October 1929 when the Wall Street stock market crash led to the worldwide Great Depression. This provoked political turmoil throughout the capitalist world. In Europe, the capitalists responded to the spectre of red revolution with the rise of fascism. In the wealthier and more stable United States, the leftward radicalization of the American working class was contained by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal reforms. But it wasn't the New Deal that ended the Depression; it was the "War Deal"—beginning with massive armaments production and culminating in the imperialist slaughter of World War II.

During 1928-29, capital from the U.S. and around the world flowed into New York's call-money market. These were funds that bankers lent to stockbrokers, who in turn lent them to their clients, thereby fueling the stock market boom. Soon the explosion of paper wealth lost all connection to the real economy. When the bubble burst, speculators could not repay the brokers, and the brokers could not repay their bankers. The liberal economist Charles Kindleberger describes the chain reaction leading from the stock market to the Great Depression:

"The foreign capitalists and U.S. out-of-town banks and corporations who withdrew call money from the New York market caused large losses to individual investors, who in turn cut their spending. Firms that had counted on ready access to the New York stock and bond markets joined in the race for liquidity and cut their spending. Production fell sharply, and inventories were run off."

—*The World in Depression, 1929-1939* (1986)

Similar mechanisms extended the depression worldwide. The volume of world trade collapsed, falling from \$3 billion at the time of the Wall Street crash to \$900 million in early 1933. The workings of the market were exacerbated by "beggar thy neighbor" trade policies

Black D.C....

(continued from page 10)

has historically treated D.C.'s working-class population with contempt, the reality is that black labor is needed to keep the capital running. And to help ensure "labor peace" there are plenty of laws forbidding public employee strikes... and a pliant labor bureaucracy beholden to the Democrats.

While union leaders are accepting the cuts with barely a whimper, raucous protests have been coming from city cops. On March 7, hundreds of cops waving signs and handcuffs disrupted a city council meeting, dispersing only when a Fraternal Order of Police official gave the signal. This ominous display of police bonapartism, with the cops demanding no cent in pay for their "work" of terrorizing the black masses and clamping down on unions, shows dramatically that the police have no business in the labor

movement—they are the racist hired thugs of the capitalists.

Washington, D.C. was created by the Southern slavocracy to remove "their" capital from the influence of the urban masses. To the imperialist rulers, the fact that D.C. is today overwhelmingly black is a big problem. They get around this by denying the city's population the most elementary democratic rights, while appointing black front men to enforce their rule. Now the Southern yuppie racists running the White House and the Capitol want to "make an example" of black D.C. To sweep out the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties which arrogantly trample on the subjugated black population requires building a multiracial workers party. Such a revolutionary leadership would link the dispossessed and disenfranchised with the social power of the international working class, in the fight to *finish the Civil War*—through socialist revolution! ■

Hallinan...

(continued from page 3)

the Justice Department has just taken the case to the Supreme Court.

"Fort Reno"

Leslie Anthony White, the U.S. attorney who masterminded the conspiracy against Patrick Hallinan, is an ex-highway patrolman, an ex-FBI agent and ex-district attorney who likes to call his office "Fort Reno." He is living proof of what Vincent Hallinan wrote in his autobiography: "In dealing with many agents of the U.S. Government you must assume, until the contrary is completely established, that these representatives might commit felonies, suborn perjury, conceal evidence, bribe witnesses, intimidate jurors, convey information to judges, and otherwise engage in practices which would be the cause for disbarment or imprisonment for a private attorney."

In 1989, with the assistance of the Organized Drug Enforcement Task Force, White broke a West Coast marijuana smuggling ring headed by Hallinan client Ciro Mancuso. Mancuso had parlayed his drug wealth into considerable real estate holdings and social respectability in the Lake Tahoe area. After the feds indicted Mancuso's wife, Hallinan negotiated a plea bargain in which

Mancuso pleaded guilty to charges of criminal enterprise and tax evasion in return for cooperation with the government (and the dropping of charges against his wife). Facing a mandatory sentence of ten years to life, Mancuso fired Hallinan. Then he and his co-smugglers agreed to testify that Hallinan essentially acted as their *consigliere*, supposedly integral to their money-laundering operations. "With the jail terms these guys faced, they'd have sold out their own mothers if necessary," said the only ring member who managed to flee the country.

But it was a sweet deal for Hallinan's accusers, amounting to blatant (and legal) witness bribing. After only 15 months in the county jail, Mancuso was released and allowed to consort freely with the other convicted members of his smuggling ring, refining their stories of Hallinan's complicity. Contrary to their usual practice of arbitrarily seizing all assets of *accused* (not even convicted) drug offenders, in part to prevent them from obtaining adequate legal counsel, the cops allowed Mancuso to keep \$4 million of the \$6.3 million in assets they originally seized, and even to keep a handgun for self-defense! Shortly before Hallinan's arrest, they rewarded Mancuso with a windsurfing vacation in Hawaii.

On the eve of the trial, the feds sent Mancuso to Mexico where he was allowed to meet with a former drug crony

who miraculously produced a property transfer document allegedly implicating Hallinan in money laundering. Hallinan's lawyer, John Kekker, who won his reputation cross-examining Oliver North during the Contragate hearings, strenuously objected when the prosecution tried to introduce the document, which by standard Mexican banking practices should have been destroyed after ten years—i.e., two years before the start of the trial. The document was disallowed.

It all came down to the believability of Mancuso and his buddies. Even the judge said he found Mancuso's testimony "incredible." So did the jury drawn from the rolls of registered voters in conservative Nevada's Washoe County.

That Reno jury did us all a service by throwing out the government's fabricated charges against Patrick Hallinan. But to a certain extent the feds achieved their broader purpose: intimidation. Any defense attorney with a major drug client now has to worry that the government will use the ease to come after *him*. Fending off this frame-up took almost two years of Hallinan's life—during which his own legal practice came to a grinding halt. It was an enormous financial burden, to say nothing of the emotional strain on him and his family. And the real criminals here—the U.S. Justice Department, Drug Enforcement Agency and White's "Fort Reno"—are immune from charges of wrongful prosecution.

The seemingly demented social values that have caused the capitalist state to increase the money spent on drug control by 760 percent since 1981, more than tripling the prison population, find their logic in the politics of class rule. The racist "war on drugs" goes along with the transformation of the inner-city black population from a reserve pool of unskilled labor into a permanently unemployed "surplus" population—those not wasted by poverty and disease have to be terrorized into accepting their fate. The vastly augmented apparatus of state repression is aimed at regimenting the entire population in the face of declining living standards.

It's going to take some hard-fought working-class struggle, like the general strikes which rocked San Francisco, Minneapolis and Toledo in 1934, to change the social climate in this country. When that class upsurge comes, it had better not be channeled back into the dead end of a popular-front coalition with the Democrats or some new bourgeois third party, as the Stalinists did in the 1930s and '40s. That would simply stabilize bourgeois rule, laying the basis for later assaults on what was won. Through a future working-class upsurge, a revolutionary workers party must be forged which can lead the fight for socialist revolution. Otherwise the capitalist class is going to drag human civilization into oblivion. ■

Jamal...

(continued from page 6)

suppress evidence. They don't lie. And the same presumption applies to the prosecution. My case, among others like Jamal's, has shown that this blind trust in law enforcement is not always warranted.

In my case, the federal courts ruled that the county prosecutors had resorted to deception and appeals to racism to get their convictions, and that that was the only way they got their convictions. But it didn't matter what the federal court said. These guys are immune from the consequences of their actions. In fact, they've all been promoted! Hmmm. Crime *does* pay.

If we are interested in fighting crime, let's not overlook the obvious. There's a certain class of criminal that's going

undetected in our midst. I'm talking about those who are sworn to uphold the law, and who knowingly send innocent people to prison. What are they, if not criminal? Sending an innocent person to prison is what else if not kidnapping, forcible confinement and torture? And in capital cases such as Jamal's, conspiracy to commit murder.

In the past 20 years, according to a recent Congressional study, no less than 48 people have been released from prison after serving time on death row for crimes they did not commit. We don't know how many innocent people have been executed in North America. Because the United States, alone among Western industrialized nations, insists upon maintaining the anachronism of the death penalty. I mean, hell, they even kill children and retarded adults.

In 1966 I was at the peak of my career, a professional prizefighter about to fight

for the middleweight crown, for the championship of the world. And the next thing I knew, I was fighting for my very life, on trial in criminal court. I was accused of murdering three people in a New Jersey bar.

The state sought the death penalty. The odds of my being alive today were not exactly in my favor. There were three murder victims; all of them were white. The jury was all white. The judge, the police, the state's witnesses and the prosecutors were all white. I heard the jury

foreman pronounce me guilty. I thought to myself, "My god, the electric chair." But here I am, free and alive. Able to lend my voice to yours and demand justice for another.

So don't tell me that we can't do it. Don't tell me that juggernauts can't be stopped. Don't tell me Jamal won't be walking out that prison door, rather than being carried out. Don't tell me the truth can't set you free. I know better. I know better, and you better know better too. ■

No Room for Racism

The following letter from the Partisan Defense Committee was sent on March 20

National People's Democratic
Uhuru Movement
Chicago, IL 60609

Dear NPDUM:

The Partisan Defense Committee stands firmly for the principle that there is no room for racism in a rally against the racist death penalty. For this reason, the PDC refused to provide space for the NPDUM to set up a literature table at the March 4 Chicago rally to "Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" held inside the United Electrical Workers union hall. NPDUM literature for Fred Hampton Jr. defense activities is littered with anti-Asian bigotry and slurs about the "oppressive presence" of "parasite Korean merchants." Fred Hampton Jr. was charged with firebombing two Korean-owned shops, the NPDUM "defends" Fred Hampton Jr. by fulminating that "He didn't do it but he should'a." The NPDUM unfurled a banner with this vile slogan at an airing of Jamal audiotapes at the Northeastern Illinois University campus last September 16. Buying into the racism of the ruling class and their "divide and conquer" pitting of one oppressed minority against another has no place in any genuine freedom struggle. To do so would stain the banners of the *international* campaign on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal—which includes supporters in Asia and a recent rally in Tokyo. The PDC will not legitimize a program of *racism*.

NPDUM supporters passed out literature before and after the March 4 Chicago rally, attended the event, and spoke without any interference during the open mike period of the rally. Your speaker falsely charged that the NPDUM was

"denied the privilege" to distribute literature on Fred Hampton Jr. here at this event," saying this was "an attack identical to that of the oppressor." In fact it is the oppressor—the U.S. capitalist state—that is leading the charge today against Asian, African and Latino immigrants as part of its racist offensive against blacks and all working people. Asians have been on the brutal receiving end of some of the most heinous crimes of U.S. imperialism, from the atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the devastation of the Korean War, to the bloody war against the heroic Vietnamese people. When rally chairman Mark Kelly stated that "we do not stand for any racial slurs against any group," NPDUM supporters stood up and began to shout, preventing the next speaker from being heard. As the disrupters were escorted out of the building, one NPDUM supporter denounced Mumia's supporters with the disgusting anti-Asian slur, "rice eaters."

The Partisan Defense Committee believes in and carries out non-sectarian *united-front* defense work. We reject the school of "coalition politics" in which all dissenting views are suppressed—indeed our actions unite the broadest possible spectrum of people together for a common cause while encouraging full, open and spirited political debate. Thus this March 4 rally was co-sponsored by the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, and groups as diverse as the Friends of Irish Freedom, the Black Panther newspaper, Operation PUSH, and Refuse and Resist—to name but a few—actively participated. There was no place for the anti-Asian bigotry pushed by the NPDUM. Indeed, there is no place for it in any struggle for human progress, and it is deadly poison to the cause of black liberation. ■

Stand By for Emergency Demos!

THE CAMPAIGN IS AT A CRITICAL POINT—YOU CAN HELP! At any moment, Pennsylvania's pro-death penalty governor, Tom Ridge, could sign Mumia Abu-Jamal's death warrant. Ridge has already signed warrants dooming three prisoners to death, and the state's first execution in 30 years is set to take place next month. Jamal is in imminent danger—if a warrant is signed, emergency demonstrations will be held the next day in New York City and elsewhere. Get on the Partisan Defense Committee phone tree and help organize to make these urgent demonstrations the loudest possible outcry against the racist death penalty!

Worldwide rallies for Jamal in Europe, the United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan and Australia have brought out numerous death penalty opponents, including trade unionists, anti-racist activists and students. In Britain, 44 Members of Parliament have endorsed a motion, introduced on March 1, denouncing the death penalty as "barbaric" and calling on Ridge not to sign a warrant for Jamal's execution out of "concern that a serious miscarriage of justice took place in his conviction." But these are only the first steps to mobilizing the mass campaign of protest needed to save Jamal's life and abolish the death penalty.

Join the campaign! Take petitions, ask your friends, neighbors and co-workers

to sign and get involved. Organize a showing in your union, community group, church or school of the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*. Send letters and get Jamal's powerful columns into your local newspapers, school or union newsletters; raise motions in your union or at your school to send a letter to Governor Ridge demanding "Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!" For information on how you can join the campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, or call (212) 406-4252.

SEND \$\$\$ FOR JAMAL LEGAL DEFENSE NOW! Funds are urgently needed to wage the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal's life. All money being raised through these rallies and forums organized by the Partisan Defense Committee goes directly to Jamal's legal defense. Since February 9, over \$14,000 has been collected or pledged. More is needed now! Jamal's legal team initiated the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, co-chaired by actors Ossie Davis and Mike Farrell, to help raise funds. Make out your tax-deductible contribution for the defense to: Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense," and send it to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

New York: CUNY, SUNY Under the Gun

Students and Labor: Unite to Stop the Budget Ax!



Thousands-strong demonstration stepping off from Borough of Manhattan Community College, March 15. Spartacus Youth Club banner calls for class-struggle fight against cutbacks and layoffs.

Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party!

New York governor George Pataki and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani—agents of Wall Street rule—plan tuition hikes and cutbacks to consign a layer of working-class students and minorities to the scrap heap. Thousands of youth throughout New York are taking to the streets to tell the budget ax-wielders that *the bosses and politicians are the trash that needs taking out*.

On March 23, high-school and college students, faculty and workers will march through lower Manhattan with thousands of others opposed to these attacks as part of a citywide student strike. The New York Spartacus Youth Club is mobilizing a contingent of youth against the cuts and fighting for students to ally with labor to win. Even a *one-day citywide strike of students united with labor* would do more than any mass student demonstration on its own. Labor has the power to take on the bosses behind the budget ax by shutting down New York, the center of international finance capital. As one popular chant put it: "Turn up the heat! Shut down Wall Street!"

It's the Wall Street financiers and greedy corporate bosses who are steam-rolling the working class, minorities and students with cuts that threaten their very survival. The budget massacre in New York City will slash a staggering \$2.7 billion in vital social services, on top of a massive \$2 billion in cuts against welfare and Medicaid by the state government. Up to 80,000 health care workers

face layoffs. The Pataki plan calls for chopping 25.7 percent of state revenues to CUNY, 31.5 percent cut in revenues to SUNY and major cuts in the tuition assistance program. As many as eight campuses statewide would be merged or closed and hundreds of programs eliminated. A quarter of the full-time faculty would be laid off and students would be asked to ante up an additional \$1,000! Tuition at CUNY, which used to be free,

ready working full-time to attend school, the right to an education would clearly become a privilege for an elite few.

Across the country, amid a racist backlash against affirmative action, black people are fast becoming missing persons on college campuses. To open up education to working-class and minority youth, the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for open admissions, no tuition, and a living stipend for all students. The pri-

students at over a dozen campuses occupied buildings and marched by the thousands for three weeks, pushing it to the limit within the confines of student militancy. But they were isolated as the labor leaders made empty speeches about "solidarity" yet failed to back up the students with any concrete strike action in defense of jobs, social services or education. In the face of cop attacks, threats of expulsion and suspension, the students were forced to retreat. Yet yesterday's hudgei ax-wielder, Dinkins, was welcomed as a close ally of students at a City College rally on March 15. This is obscene! Lohhying bourgeois officials in or out of office is a strategy for defeat.

The Dinkins/Cuomo cutbacks paved the way for today's more vicious assault. Like Clinton's yuppie racist "New" Democrats, who went out of their way to spit on the party's traditional black and labor constituencies, Dinkins and Cuomo opened up the field for a rout by New York's more openly racist Republican right. There's a lesson missing from schoolbooks, *the Democrats, as well as the Republicans, are enemies of poor and working-class people*. From the Clinton White House on down, both capitalist parties share the program of gutting social services, busting up unions and rolling back any gains made for black rights. We need a new type of leadership, a class-struggle workers party that champions all the oppressed!

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Young Spartacus

would rise by more than 41 percent from \$2,450, the single largest jump in the university's history.

These attacks are a deliberate racist purge of CUNY (the City University of New York) and SUNY (the state university system). The majority of the CUNY system are black and Hispanic students. CUNY has historically been the place where working-class and immigrant youth got an education to get a leg up on the job market. The cuts would knife a score of programs meant to assist minority students horribly disadvantaged by the cruel miseducation in public schools. The dream of a college diploma is already out of reach for thousands of inner-city youth locked in crumbling, prison-like public schools. With more than 40 percent of CUNY students al-

vate bastions of race and class privilege, like Columbia and New York University, should be nationalized! Against illusions in the university administration, the SYCs say students, workers and faculty should control the universities. Abolish the board of trustees!

Don't Beg the Democrats! Build a Workers Party!

Right-wing Republicans Gutham and Pataki are the main targets of this latest round of student militancy. But activists should bitterly remember the 1990-91 struggles against tuition hikes at CUNY, when liberal Democratic mayor David Dinkins and Governor Mario Cuomo laid off city workers, closed clinics, schools and libraries and put thousands more cops on the streets. Under Dinkins,