

For Class-Struggle Defense of the Clinics—No Reliance on the Capitalist State!

Heinous Abortion Clinic Bombing in Atlanta

JANUARY 20—Only days before the 24th anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion nationwide, two terror bombs rocked an office building housing the Atlanta Northside Family Planning Services, which provides abortion services. The first of the two explosions on January 16

sent flames and heavy smoke through the building; the second exploded an hour later in the parking lot, injuring six people. The same clinic had been firebombed in 1984. And in Tulsa, Oklahoma yesterday, an abortion clinic which had been firebombed on New Year's Day came under attack again, as

two bombs exploded, although no one was injured.

These latest terror attacks send a fiery message that abortion clinics are still under bloody assault by right-wing killers, and that the liberal feminist strategy of reliance on Clinton's White House and the cops and courts is a dismal fail-

ure and diversion. The very morning of the bombing, feminist groups held a press conference in Washington, D.C. to present statistics on recent violence against clinics. According to the Feminist Majority's annual survey, almost 30 percent of the clinics surveyed last year were targeted by "severe violence"—bombings, arson, death threats, blockades, chemical and other attacks. When gunfire, vandalism and harassment of doctors and clinic workers at their homes are included, the number of clinics attacked last year rises to over 45 percent. That these figures represent a "decline" is horrible in itself: in 1994, over half of all clinics reported severe

continued on page 9

For International Labor Solidarity Action!

Defend South Korean Trade Unions!

U.S. Troops Out of Korea!

JANUARY 19—The wave of nationwide strikes that has rocked South Korea for the past three weeks—provoked by a new anti-union law enacted in late December—reached a climax last week as 750,000 workers downed tools in the biggest strike in the country's history. At the same time, the government of President Kim Young Sam has gone on the offensive, arresting five strike leaders, issuing warrants for 16 others and unleashing an army of riot police to surround a Seoul cathedral where seven leaders of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) have sought refuge. At the huge Hyundai shipyard in Ulsan, a historic bastion of militant trade unionism in South Korea, several hundred workers broke ranks and scabbed on the strike, joining with riot police in attacking the strikers' barricades. By week's end, the KCTU had called off the national strike while vowing to stage one-day walkouts every week and to resume a full-fledged strike if the new legislation is not rescinded by mid-February.

The KCTU remains unbroken and intact, but the government is clearly out to bloody and break the militant South Korean workers movement. Kim and the monopolistic *chaebol* conglomerates he speaks for are intent on putting an end to a decade of working-class combativity, which began with the massive strike wave of 1987-88 and has led to a doubling of real wages. The new law would deny union recognition to the independent unions of the KCTU, which grew out of that strike wave, and

South Korean strikers battle cops in Seoul as police-state regime seeks to crack down on combative workers movement.



Reuters

sanction mass layoffs and the hiring of scabs. British ITN television news (17 January) reported: "President Kim Young Sam said that South Korea was facing the same labor problems as Britain in the early '80s, and it would crack down on the unions in the same way as Mrs. Thatcher did."

While the regime has tried to maintain a façade of bourgeois democracy, especially since Kim Young Sam's election four years ago, this is nothing but a thin veil on a brutal police state. In tandem

with the new labor law, a bill was passed beefing up the powers of the Agency for National Security Planning (NSP—formerly the Korean CIA). The draconian National Security Law has already been used to round up thousands of militant unionists and student leftists, who are routinely labeled agents of North Korea. The Seoul regime is now pushing the same line in its attempt to break the KCTU and arrest its leaders. We demand the release of all worker militants and leftist students languishing in South

Korea's jails! Abolish the National Security Law!

International class solidarity with the embattled South Korean labor movement is an urgent necessity, especially for workers in the U.S. and Japan. U.S. imperialism has had tens of thousands of troops stationed in South Korea since the end of World War II and the bloody Korean War of 1950-53. American workers must demand the withdrawal of the U.S. occupation forces, which prop up the bloodsoaked South Korean police state and constitute a direct threat to the bureaucratically deformed workers state in North Korea as well as to the oppressed masses throughout East Asia.

Particularly with the Kim Young Sam regime's arrest of trade-union leaders, sections of the International Communist League have mobilized in defense of the South Korean workers. In the past few days, our comrades have initiated or

continued on page 5

**How David North Embraces Karl Kautsky
The "Global Economy"
and Labor Reformism**

See Page 6



Drop the Charges!

City Overruled in Chicago Anti-Klan Three Case

Three anti-Klan protesters arrested at a June 29 demonstration initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee last year in Chicago's Daley Plaza won a significant legal victory on January 13. Judge Marvin Luckman of the Cook County Circuit Court overruled an attempt by the city authorities to deny defense

attorneys access to relevant documents from the mayor's office and the police department.

The latest ruling comes in the wake of a December 2 defense motion to dismiss trumped-up charges of assault and battery or obstruction of police officers. The motion states the charges "are

entirely false, are brought maliciously, without probable cause, and solely for the purpose of retaliating against these Defendants and others for exercising their First Amendment rights of free expression and protest by demonstrating against the Ku Klux Klan." As the defense motion makes clear, this vindictive prosecution was aimed both at covering up for the police rampage against the anti-Klan demonstrators and at stifling any social protest leading up to the Democratic National Convention that August. Now, city officials must produce previous complaint files on three cops involved in attacks on the anti-Klan demonstration and other documents.

The three anti-Klan defendants—PDC labor coordinator Gene Herson, Refuse & Resist supporter Jeffrey Lyons, and Dennis Glass, a young black worker—face sentences ranging from one to two years in jail. Anti-Klan protesters defended themselves against a violent provocation by the KKK. They were later repeatedly attacked by club-swinging cops, who particularly went after minority youth. Several protesters were pepper-gassed and nine were arrested, including trade unionists and a young organizer in the AFL-CIO's "Union Summer" program. Charges against six were subsequently dropped.

The city has now been ordered to release complaint files dating back to 1986 on, among others, First District

Police Commander Patrick McNulty, who on June 29 waged a potentially lethal pepper-spray attack on Herson and targeted Glass for arrest. The judge also ordered the mayor's office to produce documents regarding their directives to police on handling the Klan rally and anti-Klan protest. As the defense motion points out, the city tried to restrict public knowledge of the Klan provocation "in order to avoid anti-Klan protests and embarrassing publicity during the preparation for the Democratic Convention." The defendants have particularly noted an internal city memorandum which shows that Mayor Daley's chief of staff and liaison with the Democratic National Convention at the time, Roger Kiley, was involved in developing the city's plans for the Klan rally.

The PDC has called a united-front demonstration outside the courthouse at the next hearing on January 23 to demand, "Drop All Charges Against the Anti-Klan Three!" Statements from a range of unions and other organizations across the country and internationally have demanded that the charges against the Anti-Klan Three be dropped. In Chicago, statements have been received from Amalgamated Transit Union Local 308, Teamsters Local 743, and Katie Jordan, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, among many others.

* * *

Send protest statements demanding that the charges against the Anti-Klan Three be dropped to: Richard Devine, State's Attorney of Cook County, Richard J. Daley Center, 55 W. Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60602. Funds for legal defense are urgently needed! Send donations (earmarked "Anti-Klan Protesters") and copies of protest statements to the Partisan Defense Committee. Contact the PDC in Chicago at P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60602-2867, phone (312) 454-4931; or in New York at P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099, phone (212) 406-4252.



TROTSKY

Lenin on Imperialism

Numerous liberals and reformists today argue that a recent "globalization" of production, extending particularly to the semi-colonial countries of the "Third World," represents a profound change in the world capitalist economy. By and large, these arguments serve to amnesty the refusal of the labor bureaucracy in the advanced capitalist countries to fight layoffs and other attacks on the standard of living of the working class. In fact, the seminal Marxist

analysis of this development was presented by Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin as far back as 1916 in his pamphlet, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, which was written in the midst of World War I following the collapse of the Second International into social-chauvinism. As against the liberals and reformists of his day and now, for Lenin the development of imperialism underscored the urgent need for an international revolutionary party to lead the proletariat to power and root out the decaying capitalist system.

It is characteristic of capitalism in general that the ownership of capital is separated from the application of capital to production, that money capital is separated from industrial or productive capital, and that the rentier who lives entirely on income obtained from money capital, is separated from the entrepreneur and from all who are directly concerned in the management of capital. Imperialism, or the domination of finance capital, is that highest stage of capitalism in which this separation reaches vast proportions. The supremacy of finance capital over all other forms of capital means the predominance of the rentier and of the financial oligarchy; it means that a small number of financially "powerful" states stand out among all the rest....

Typical of the old capitalism, when free competition held undivided sway, was the export of goods. Typical of the latest stage of capitalism, when monopolies rule, is the export of capital....

On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type of monopoly: firstly, monopolist associations of capitalists in all capitalistically developed countries; secondly, the monopolist position of a few very rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital has reached gigantic proportions. An enormous "surplus of capital" has arisen in the advanced countries.

It goes without saying that if capitalism could develop agriculture, which today is everywhere lagging terribly behind industry, if it could raise the living standards of the masses, who in spite of the amazing technical progress are everywhere still half-starved and poverty-stricken, there could be no question of a surplus of capital. This "argument" is very often advanced by the petty-bourgeois critics of capitalism. But if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism; for both uneven development and a semi-starvation level of existence of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and constitute premises of this mode of production. As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilized not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists, but for the purpose of increasing profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries. In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap.

— V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916)



LENIN



Chicago Anti-Klan Three (from left): Jeffrey Lyons, Dennis Glass, Gene Herson.

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Mobilize Teamster Power to Smash Racism at UPS!

OAKLAND—Angry black Teamsters union members turned out for a meeting in East Oakland's Eastmont Mall last month to protest systematic racist discrimination at the United Parcel Service (UPS). Initiated by the local NAACP, the December 7 meeting drew some 300 people, about 90 percent black, including a dozen or so Teamster bureaucrats. The meeting was part of a recruitment campaign by the NAACP following revelations of vicious bigotry at Texaco and the passage last November of California's Proposition 209, a racist attack on affirmative action programs.

At the gathering, the NAACP liberals joined with labor officials in trying to keep a lid on an increasingly restive rank and file under attack by an arrogant, racist management which views its workers—especially but not only black workers—as expendable and beneath contempt. Newly elected Oakland NAACP president Shannon Reeves headed a panel consisting of NAACP members and labor tops as well as a representative from the government's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. While "unofficial" company agents looked on, grievance forms were passed out to UPS workers, who were limited to three minutes' speaking time. But the seething anger of the UPS workers came through loud and clear, nonetheless.

A number of black workers spoke to denounce the massive "tracking" and vicious racist abuse suffered at the hands of supervisors who call blacks "monkeys" and "n-----s." Many drivers testified how the company treats them like criminals. They are followed into the bathroom, threatened with firing if they bring packages back at the end of their shift, given fewer promotions than white workers. One driver who was robbed on the job was arrested and jailed by the Oakland police. It took him five months to prove his innocence and get his job back.

A common theme in the meeting was the company's callous disregard for the health and very lives of the workers. One man described how his son was dragged by a conveyor belt at work while it took management an hour and a half to find the safety switch! Meanwhile, he had to fight like hell to get into the building because UPS management didn't want him to see what had happened. The widow of a driver who was robbed and killed in 1995 told how UPS blamed her husband for the tragedy and is now offering an insultingly paltry sum to her and her children in an attempt to settle the matter. A black woman worker described her backbreaking nine-hour shifts, reporting that her supervisor told her flat out that as a single mother she could never make it at UPS.

Seniority is regularly violated and black drivers are kept from delivering to the well-off areas in the Oakland Hills and Montclair and told they can work only in the ghetto, as a worker with 14 years on the job pointed out. Describing

the company as worse than a plantation, he brought the crowd to its feet when he exclaimed that blacks didn't ask to be brought here on the Mayflower, and don't like the ship that they are on now. Yet his solution to the racism at UPS was to call for more black managers. If implemented, such a proposal would only apply a bit of cosmetic to the racist oppression endemic to the capitalist profit system.

Many black workers have illusions that the NAACP will lead the fight against racism at UPS. But the NAACP historically represents only a thin layer of privileged "middle class" blacks, pushing a program of accommodation to the racist



Teamsters picket line in Atlanta during 1994 UPS strike.

rulers. While the Spartacist League and Labor Black Leagues initiated militant protests coast to coast in 1993 against racist discrimination at the Denny's restaurant chain, the NAACP struck a deal with the company's CEO to chill out "negative publicity" in exchange for putting a token black on the previously all-white board of directors.

Shannon Reeves made his mark as a "new blood" leader of the NAACP by coming out for smashing last year's Oakland teachers strike, declaring that it was "educational treason to tell students not to come to school" (see "Victory to Oakland Teachers Strike!" *ILW* No. 640, 1 March 1996). This strike could have sparked a mobilization of integrated union power in defense of the embattled black, Latino and Asian population and for free, quality, integrated education for all. But the teachers were stabbed in the back by the local labor officialdom, including Alameda County Central Labor Council head Owen Marron, who was on the December 7 panel. Marron played a major part in that betrayal by refusing to give official sanction to the strike, providing an alibi for wholesale scabbing by other school workers unions.

The union misleaders also demonstrated their role in policing the labor movement on behalf of the bosses at the December meeting. While reporting that 2,550 union grievances had been filed at

UPS in three years, Teamsters Local 70 secretary-treasurer Chuck Mack carefully avoided any acknowledgment of discrimination there. This provoked audible grumbling from the workers, who have witnessed the union's failure to fight against UPS' racist policies. One worker called out: "Stop the sugar-coating!"

Another worker got loud applause when he said that this meeting wouldn't have been necessary if the union had been doing its job. But the union bureaucrats—historically based on the white, skilled-trades labor aristocracy and acting as the agents of the capitalist rulers inside the labor movement—are hostile to any struggle that might threaten their cozy

relationship with the employers. This is true of both wings of the Teamster bureaucracy, the newly re-elected Ron Carey "reformers" and the venal "old guard" united behind Jimmy Hoffa Jr., which is backed by Chuck Mack.

Carey rode to power on the coattails of the federal government, which controlled the election and has virtually taken over the Teamsters in the name of fighting "corruption." Carey's backers in the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, hailed by many self-described "socialists," have for years called for the intervention of the capitalist state—the agency of the racist, union-busting bosses—into the union. The Justice Department and the courts could care less about corruption or racism, but are out simply to cripple the power of this union, which is the only protection black workers at UPS have against the company.

The "old guard" around Hoffa is no better. They are at one with Carey & Co.

in opposing any mobilization of the kind of militant struggle that built the Teamsters as a powerful industrial union in the 1930s and earned the fear and hatred of the trucking bosses. When a strike broke out at UPS in February 1994 after the company more than doubled the weight limit on packages, Carey called off the walkout after 10 hours, while regional bureaucrats tied to the "old guard" bowed to a federal court injunction and organized massive scabbing. One month later, the Teamster tops sold out a three-week national strike by 70,000 drivers and dock workers—a key battle for all of labor—without even demanding amnesty for victimized strikers. Latino Teamster Jesse Acuna is today serving five years in prison for defending his picket line in Los Angeles.

It is no accident that petty-bourgeois strikebreakers like Reeves join with union bureaucrats like Mack and Marron, whose aim is to prevent workers' just anger against company racism from finding expression in effective class-struggle action. Both NAACP liberals and the reformist labor bureaucrats are wedded to upholding the capitalist system of production for the profit of a small minority, who perpetuate racism—as well as immigrant-bashing—to keep themselves in power by keeping the working class divided. The racism that permeates and poisons this society rests on the forcible segregation of black people at the bottom, and cannot be eradicated short of a socialist revolution to put the capitalist rulers out of business.

The fight for black rights is a matter of life and death for the whole working class. The vicious racist attacks carried out by UPS are typical of what black workers face everywhere. Any effective fight against racial discrimination must begin by mobilizing the power of the unions independently of the capitalist state, unifying all workers and oppressed in struggle at the expense of the ruling class.

Defending the union means defending minority workers, and vice versa. The enormous potential power of the Teamsters must be brought to bear against the racist UPS bosses in a fight against racist discrimination on the job! There needs to be a political struggle to oust the pro-capitalist union misleaders and to break labor and blacks from the partner parties of racist capitalism, Democrats and Republicans. To mobilize the integrated labor movement to win requires forging a multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights for a workers government. ■

JUST OUT!

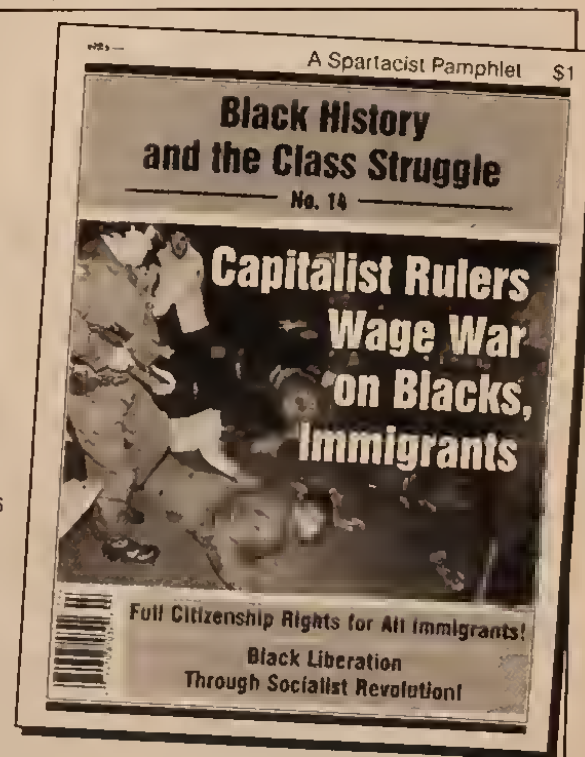
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- Black Churches Torched Across the South Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Smash Racist Terror!
- Courageous Fighter Against Racist Terror Robert F. Williams, 1925-1996
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Trotskyist League/Spartacus Youth Club Events

TORONTO

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum
Saturday, January 25, 7:30 p.m.

The Fight for a Socialist Future
St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. West

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Alternate Thursdays, 7 p.m. Next classes, January 30: **The State**; February 13: **The Bolshevik Revolution**; International Student Centre, 33 St. George Street
Call for information and readings: (416) 593-4138

VANCOUVER

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum
Friday, February 7, 7:30 p.m.

The Fight for a Socialist Future
Britannia Community Centre
1661 Napier, Room L3

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Next classes, January 29: **The Marxist Program**; February 12: **Marx's View of Economics**; UBC, Student Union Building, Room 213
Call for information and readings: (604) 687-0353

California Labor: Defend Immigrant Rights!

Racist INS Roundup at San Leandro Factory

OAKLAND—It was about 7:30 a.m. on January 7 when workers at Mediacopy Inc., a videotape copying factory in the San Francisco Bay Area city of San Leandro, saw one, two, then three government agents appear. Suddenly, the whole warehouse floor was swarming with some 55 Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) cops—the hated *la migra*—who singled out workers from a list provided by the company. Chasing down anyone who ran and repeatedly accosting anyone who looked Latino, they demanded to know workers' birthplaces and social security numbers. Earlier, *migra* goons had lurked outside the factory to catch workers on the graveyard shift going home. In all, 99 immigrant workers—one-tenth of the workforce—were dragged off.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* (13 January) called this "the largest workplace bust of its kind in Northern California history." Mediacopy workers described the Gestapo-like raid to *Workers Vanguard*. One worker hid under pallets while INS agents clambered over him; another was wrestled to the ground by four of the cops. Workers reported evidence of apparent collusion between the company and the INS: a week before the raid, management had revoked security passes providing access to the second floor of the facility, where administrative offices are located, for 16 workers. On the morning of the raid, the doors to the truck dock were closed, trapping the mostly Latino workers in the warehouse production area.

The arrested workers—immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, Colombia and elsewhere—were loaded onto three buses and taken to the San Lorenzo National Guard armory. Some 30 were shipped off to a detention center in Las Vegas. Almost all the others were put directly on a plane for "voluntary" deportation to Mexico, where many of those from Central and South America were left stranded with no way to get back to their countries. Many had worked at Mediacopy for years. Needless to say, none will receive paychecks or anything else owed them by the company, while in some cases workers were unable to make provisions for their children before being hauled off.

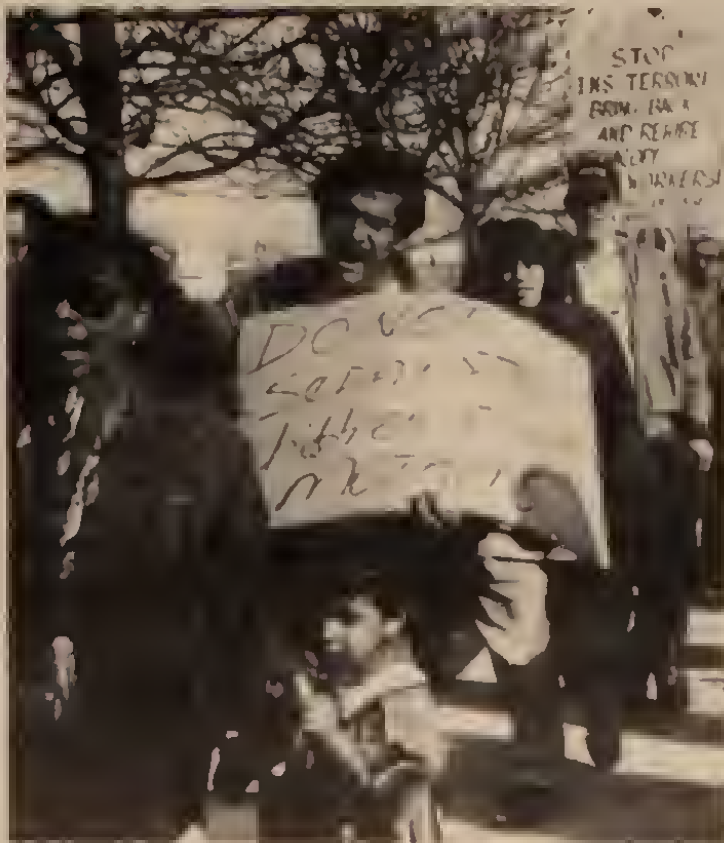
Shaken and infuriated by the raid, some Mediacopy workers were talking strike the next day, while organizers for ILWU Warehouseman's Local 6 showed up with union representation cards for workers to sign. The INS raid was a calculated act of terror directed against the entire working class and its ability to organize in its own defense. The integrated ranks of labor—black, white, Latino, Asian—must be mobilized in defense of the rights of immigrants and all the oppressed.

On January 17, some 70 people demonstrated outside the plant in a protest initiated by several local immigrant-rights organizations. The Spartacist League par-

ticipated with signs reading, "Full Citizenship Rights for All Foreign-Born Workers!" and "Stop INS Terror! Bring Back and Rehire Mediacopy Workers!" The same day, the Partisan Defense Committee sent a protest letter to the INS district director in San Francisco demanding "freedom for those workers currently

storm-ridden mountain terrain in a desperate attempt to avoid the beefed-up San Diego border area.

Defense of the rights of immigrants is increasingly a matter of life and death for the labor movement, and for black people as well. California's anti-immigrant Proposition 187, passed in 1994, fueled the



San Leandro, January 17: Protest outside Mediacopy Inc. against January 7 INS roundup of 99 immigrant workers.

imprisoned at the INS detention center in Las Vegas and in jails around the Bay Area, and that every single worker, including those who were deported, he returned to their jobs and families."

Racist Drive Against Immigrants and the Poor

The Mediacopy raid took place in the midst of a deepening ruling-class war against immigrants, welfare recipients and all minorities which is aimed at driving down the wages and living standards of the entire working class. The same day as the San Leandro raid, Republican governor Pete Wilson announced a budget proposal to end welfare benefits for new applicants after one year, peppering his speech with vile racist abuse of welfare recipients. Two days later, Wilson followed up by demanding that unwed mothers give up their children for adoption, grotesquely pitching this in the name of "family values"! For the racist bourgeois politicians, "family values" means forcing poor black women to give up their babies while the children of immigrant women are left stranded as their parents are thrown out of the country.

As part of the anti-welfare law drafted by the Republican Congress and signed by Democratic president Clinton, vicious cuts in social services for immigrants, "legal" or "illegal," took effect on January 1, ensuring that the children of immigrant workers like those rounded up at Mediacopy are left with nothing at all. While the Democrats occasionally posture as less virulently anti-immigrant than the Republicans, it is the Clinton White House that has overseen a massive militarization of the border with Mexico. Not only are immigrants routinely brutalized and shot down at the border, but 13 have died since January 7 as they tried to enter the U.S. over freezing,

forces behind the victory last year of a measure attacking affirmative action, Proposition 209. Whereas blacks have historically been concentrated in the reserve army of labor as the "last hired and first fired," immigrants have been encouraged to enter the country when the capitalists need them to fill usually menial, backbreaking jobs at next to no pay, only to suffer deportations when they are no longer needed. Today, immigrant-bashing and racist attacks on blacks are being intensified by the capitalist rulers to keep workers divided along racial and ethnic lines, while workers' living standards are slashed across the board.

An integral part of the U.S. rulers' attempt to increase the exploitation of all workers is the strengthening of police measures across the board. Ominously, the FBI has now proposed to join forces with the San Francisco Police Department and INS in a new "Bay Area Counterterrorism Task Force," one of several such

bodies being established in cities from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C. The *San Francisco Examiner* (12 January) reports that as part of this effort, the FBI is trying to reverse the city's fig-leaf civilian "controls" on police surveillance, enacted in the mid-1980s. The proposed "task force" recalls the FBI's "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO) which helped destroy the Black Panther Party and other leftist and black activists a generation ago.

Unions Must Organize Immigrant Workers!

The backdrop to the INS raid on Mediacopy was the attempt by workers there to organize in their own defense. Some of those deported had sued the company for racist incidents and filed charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In the weeks before the raid, workers had voiced widespread dissatisfaction over a miserable 34-cent raise on their \$5-per-hour wages, while supervisors were getting thousands in bonuses. Then, to replace the arrested immigrants, the company brought in mostly black temporary workers paid \$7.00 or \$7.50 per hour in an attempt to further divide and demoralize the workforce.

The growing immigrant component of the working class in California cries out for union organizing. Many of these immigrants have fled vicious, U.S.-backed dictatorships, and bring with them a history of militant struggle. On November 13, some 140 overwhelmingly Mexican immigrant women workers at the Rubber Stampede plant in nearby Emeryville spontaneously walked off the job when the company imposed harsh speedup conditions, unilaterally converting their already low (\$5-\$6 per hour) wages into piecework rates. The company's action was a deliberate provocation. The previous spring, a union representation election for ILWU Local 6 narrowly failed following a campaign of company intimidation.

While the courageous Emeryville workers, many of them single mothers, have now held out for over two months, the factory has continued to operate with scabs—including some sent by the same outfit that supplied replacements for the seized Mediacopy workers. But while the Local 6 tops posture as the strikers' defenders, they have let scabs cross the picket lines while diverting the struggle into that graveyard of strikes, the "corporate campaign." Instead of pleading with the company's customers not to buy Rubber Stampede products, the ILWU and all Bay Area unions should be dispatching their members for mass pickets to *shut the plant down tight!*

The labor misleaders tie the workers to their class enemy, in part through pushing the protectionist poison that labels "foreign" workers as the enemy of "American" workers. Key to bringing labor's power to bear in defense of the rights of immigrants, blacks and all the oppressed is ousting the trade-union bureaucrats—the "labor lieutenants" of the capitalist exploiters—and forging a revolutionary workers party to fight for a socialist society in which workers from all countries will be known simply as comrades. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

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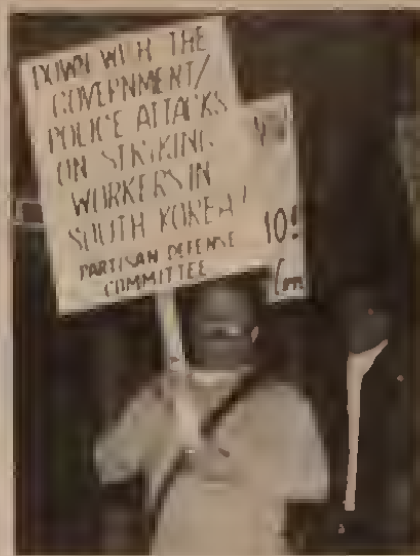
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International protests following January 15 arrest of South Korean union leaders (clockwise, from top left): San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Tokyo.



Spartacist Japan

WV Photos

Korea...

(continued from page 1)

participated in demonstrations in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago and Boston, as well as in London, Milano, Tokyo, Sydney and Mexico City. On January 17, the Partisan Defense Committee in San Francisco organized a united-front protest outside the Korean Air Lines office there around the call: "Smash Reactionary Anti-Labor Laws—Victory to the Striking South Korean Workers!" Among the 60 protesters were a dozen members of the Oakland Korean Youth Cultural Center.

Other slogans raised by ICL comrades in San Francisco and elsewhere included: Free the arrested union leaders now! U.S. troops—Out of Korea now! Defend North Korea against capitalist attack! Underscoring the key to a revolutionary perspective in Korea, ICL protesters called for the forging of an internationalist Trotskyist party and for revolutionary reunification of the peninsula through proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy in the North and socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist police state in the South.

For Proletarian Class Independence!

The recent strikes have been centered on the giant *chaebols*—the auto plants, steel mills and shipyards which are the heart of the South Korean economy. On January 15, downtown Seoul resembled a war zone as tens of thousands of striking workers fought back against 12,000 riot police, who tried to block the protesters from marching to the Myong-dong cathedral where union leaders had established their headquarters. Chanting "Down with Kim's government!" strikers hurled iron bars and chunks of pavement at the cops, while furniture rained down on the police from apartments overhead.

While the national strike has been called off for now, South Korea remains a cauldron of social tensions ready to boil over. The regime is widely despised, and sectors of the bourgeoisie itself were clearly discomfited by the workers' pow-

erful riposte to the government's attacks. By all accounts, the strikes provoked widespread sympathy among broad layers of the population fed up with police-state terror, compelling even the government-sponsored Korean Federation of Trade Unions (KFTU) to initially join the strikes.

South Korea's rapid economic growth over the past two decades has sharply exacerbated the contradictions in that society. The new labor law seeks to eliminate concessions granted in the original 1953 labor code, which sought to win the workers' loyalty following the U.S.-led war against North Korea and China. With North Korea increasingly isolated and crisis-ridden following the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, and with the South Korean *chaebol* bourgeoisie seeking to enhance its competitive edge in the world market, the regime has moved to crack down on the proletariat in order to increase the rate of exploitation. South Korean manufacturers have already been shifting production to low-wage countries like India, where Hyundai is currently building a \$1.1 billion auto plant, and even to Britain, where Daewoo Electronics and other major South Korean firms now have assembly plants.

The fact that the strike wave was directed against the government was widely understood. "It's not about money, it's politics," explained one striker. Particularly under this brittle police-state regime, any confrontation on this scale between labor and capital directly poses the question of power: which class shall rule? As we wrote two years ago:

"The recently formed independent South Korean trade unions have demonstrated unparalleled militancy under harrowing conditions. But such defensive organizations of the working class are inherently incapable of leading the proletariat to power. Indeed, under a leadership—however militant—which accepts the constraints of capitalism, they are incapable even of consistently defending the workers' interests against the onslaughts of the police-state regime."

— "For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!" WV No. 612 (9 December 1994)

While personally courageous, the KCTU leadership is limited to a perspective of economic demands and liberal

democracy. The *New York Times* (19 January) reports that the KCTU is seeking to "form a broad political alliance" with "opposition parties that opposed the Government's position on the labor law." This is a call for a bloc with bourgeois elements like Kim Dae Jung, leader of the loyal liberal opposition, who was earlier allied with the current president, himself once a liberal opponent of the military regime. Such class-collaborationist alliances—popular fronts—have been a formula for working-class defeat from Spain in the 1930s to Indonesia in the 1960s to Allende's Chile in the 1970s. Kim Dae Jung has explicitly rejected appeals by union leaders to support the strikes. This parliamentary huckster stands with the military on all fundamentals.

There can be no "democratic development" as long as South Korea remains capitalist. The existence of a deformed workers state on the northern half of the peninsula, the explosive growth of a powerful industrial proletariat and the presence of a U.S. occupation army combine to rule out any possibility of a stable bourgeois democracy. South Korea has been a highly militarized police state since its creation as a bastion for U.S. imperialism's Cold War designs—and it will remain so until it is smashed by socialist revolution. What is sorely needed is a Leninist vanguard party based on the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution and uncompromisingly committed to proletarian class independence from the bourgeoisie.

For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!

Significantly, trade-union leaders in the U.S. and other Western countries have declared their support for the South Korean strikers. Responding to an appeal by KCTU head Kwon Young Kil, the AFL-CIO organized nominal demonstrations on January 10 in Washington, D.C. and other cities. However, the labor bureaucrats steered clear of mobilizing the power of the working class in protest strikes or other class-struggle solidarity actions.

South Korean workers must have no illusions in the virulently anti-Communist AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which for years

worked hand in hand with the U.S. and South Korean CIAs in suppressing any move toward independent trade unions in South Korea. The "AFL-CIA" was instrumental in building up the government-sponsored KFTU, which fought strikers and mobilized scabs during mass strikes in 1946-47. The AFL-CIO's Asia American Free Labor Institute has served since 1971 as a conduit for U.S. government funding to the KFTU.

Echoing the anti-Communism of the pro-imperialist Western labor bureaucrats is the tendency led by Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain, represented by the International Socialist Organization in the U.S. Cliff and his supporters broke from the Trotskyist movement in 1950 by their public refusal to defend the North Korean workers state against U.S. imperialism. Today, their cothinkers in South Korea declare, "Neither North Korea nor South Korea, but International Socialism," refusing to take a stand against the Korean bourgeoisie's drive to foment capitalist counterrevolution in the North.

On the other hand, Sam Marcy's Workers World Party, which called the recent protest in New York City, slavishly hails the dynastic North Korean bureaucracy headed by Kim Jong Il—who automatically became leader following the death of his father, Kim Il Sung. The Pyongyang regime promotes an extreme variant of the nationalist-Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country" and fosters illusions in "peaceful reunification" with the capitalist South.

But the collectivized property forms in the North can only be defended through the fight for socialist revolution in the South and its extension throughout the region. As we wrote last issue:

"A fight for power by the South Korean proletariat could spike imperialism's drive to bring back the horrors of capitalist exploitation to China, North Korea and also Vietnam, and help spark political revolutions to sweep away the ossified Stalinist bureaucratic regimes there. But even to survive, a workers revolution in South Korea would immediately have to seek its extension to the imperialist centers, above all Japan. This perspective requires the forging of internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties throughout the region as part of a reborn Fourth International." ■



Business Week photos

"Multinationals" set up production in low-wage "Third World" countries: RCA factory in Mexican maquiladora (left), AT&T plant in Singapore.

The "Global Economy" and Labor Reformism

Over the past couple of years, a flood of books and articles have announced or analyzed what a column in the *Washington Post* (16 February 1996) called "this structurally new and still imperfectly understood creature known as the global economy." Whether they hail it or condemn it, mainstream bourgeois economists and leftist ideologues alike argue that the transfer of production operations by "multinational" corporations from North America, West Europe and Japan to the so-called "Third World" in recent years represents a profound, structural change in the world capitalist system. The liberal *Nation* devoted a special

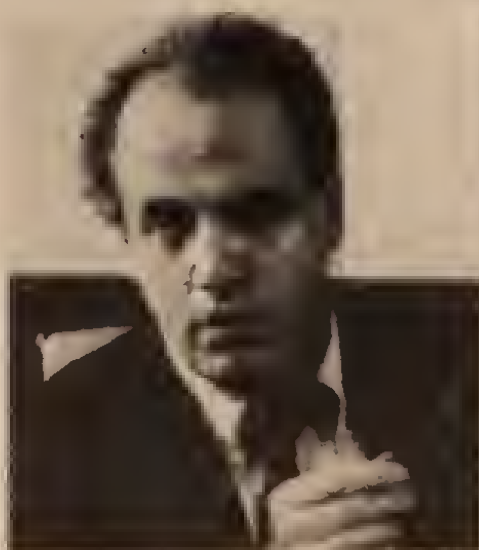
Part One

issue to "globalization" last July. The labor reformists who publish *Workers' World News* (January-February 1996) speak of "a fundamental change as deep as the industrial revolution of the last century." An essay on the "global economy" by sociologist Ulrich Beck in the principal German news weekly, *Der Spiegel* (13 May 1996), which reflects the skepticism of a section of the German bourgeoisie toward European "economic integration," warns that "we are racing toward a capitalism without labor," claiming, "What is at issue is political freedom and democracy in Europe."

Though not all of the more cataclysmic predictions associated with "globalization" are universally accepted, a common theme in this literature is that the possibility of successful defensive struggles by the working class against the attacks of a particular capitalist government or employer is becoming a thing of the past. In a remarkable intellectual convergence, spokesmen for Wall Street, liberal and radical ideologues, labor bureaucrats in the U.S. and Europe and a group which claims to be a revolutionary Marxist (i.e., Trotskyist) international organization have all joined together to proclaim that "globalization" has rendered trade unions around the world powerless to affect wages, benefits and working conditions.

"Unions Threatened by Global Economy," crowns the *Wall Street Journal* (25 March 1996). The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* also maintain that present-day capitalism has resolved the problem of the trade cycle. Meanwhile, union leaders have seized on "globalization" as the latest alibi for selling out or avoiding struggles that can, in fact, be won. From

How David North Embraces Karl Kautsky



Bulletin



Verlag Kurt Desch

Political bandit David North (left) pushes latter-day version of Karl Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism."

the American Midwest to the German Ruhr, labor officials are telling their workers: "If you don't accept a freeze or even a cut in wages and benefits, the hosses will close down your plant and shift production to India or Mexico." Joining in this defeatist refrain is the so-called International Committee of the Fourth International (IC) led by one David North, which not only denies any possibility of successful trade-union struggle but rejects trade unions altogether—except nonexistent unions to be run by North & Co.—as workers organizations of any kind.

The idea that the capitalist market economy is "global," that banks and corporations seek out those (low wage) countries where they can get the highest return on their investments, that, indeed, the internationalization of finance capital is a dominant feature of the contemporary profit system, is hardly new. Writing just over 80 years ago, Russian Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin noted in his 1916 work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, that "the twentieth century marks the turning-point from the old capitalism to the new, from the domination of capital in general to the domination of finance capital." In a summary definition, he explained:

"Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital

has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed."

Lenin not only analyzed the economic workings of the imperialist system, he exposed the bourgeois economists who served as its apologists and the reformist and centrist pretenders to Marxism who sought to downplay the significance of this new stage of capitalist development in order to deny the urgent need for socialist revolution. Lenin took particular aim at the German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, whose hypothesis of a unitary world "ultra-imperialism" sought to mask the growing contradictions of the capitalist system and Kautsky's own role as lawyer for the "social-chauvinist" and "social-imperialist" lieutenants of the German bourgeoisie.

For Lenin, imperialism signified the epoch of "wars and revolutions." Indeed, the pamphlet was written in the midst of the first interimperialist world war, as the major capitalist powers sent millions of young men to die in a bloody scramble to redivide markets, spheres of influence and colonial possessions. And little more than a year after his pamphlet was completed, Lenin's Bolsheviks led the workers of Russia to power in the first victorious proletarian revolution in history, smashing the capitalist state, sweeping

out the bankers, bosses and landlords and setting an example to workers around the world.

What is striking in surveying the current literature on "globalization" is the extent to which all the liberal and reformist apologetics and nostrums currently being put forward were already taken up, exposed and demolished by Lenin eight decades ago. While certain quantitative changes have taken place in the world capitalist economy in the last decade or so, much of the current hoopla about "globalization" is a reflection not of any profound new economic transformation but rather of a profound political defeat, the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet bureaucratically degenerated workers state. In its wake, the reformist and centrist left has bought into imperialist triumphalism over the supposed "death of communism."

The late Michael Harrington, a leading ideologue of American social democracy, defined his political program as "the left wing of the possible." With the collapse of the Soviet Union and intensifying interimperialist rivalries, the American, West European and Japanese bourgeoisies are engaging in an all-sided offensive against the working class and ethnic minorities. Consequently, the labor bureaucracies in these countries now maintain that the left wing of the possible has moved far to the right. This reformist outlook has been taken to its logical conclusion by the Northites: categorical defeatism toward all working-class struggles in this period.

Not coincidentally, North's obituary on the trade unions came in the same speech in which he proclaimed "The End of the USSR" (*Bulletin*, 10 January 1992). Though wont to denounce all its political opponents as "petty-bourgeois radicals," North's IC marches in ideological lock-step not only with the petty-bourgeois left and the labor bureaucracies but with bourgeois liberals and worse. Having for years joined with the "AFL-CIA" tops in promoting every counterrevolutionary force aimed at destroying the Soviet workers state, North's tendency seized on the death of the Soviet Union as a justification to apologize for outright scabbing. At the same time, they have embraced a latter-day variant of Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism," using this as an excuse to spit on the struggles of oppressed nations and the colonial and semicolonial peoples enslaved by the imperialist bourgeoisies. Pointing to "vast changes in world economic and political relations," the IC

today openly rejects the right of national self-determination.

“Globalization” and Northite Defeatism

“Globalization” is but a new variation on an old theme. In the 1950s and early ‘60s, the term “automation” was invested with the same apocalyptic, earth-shaking consequences. Liberal intellectuals predicted that the industrial working class would in large part be replaced by robots and other machinery. One conclusion was that trade unions were becoming or would become obsolete. After all, you can’t unionize industrial robots. At the same time, labor bureaucrats told their ranks that if they pushed the level of wages and benefits too high, they would lose their jobs through automation.

Today, it is intellectually fashionable to explain the sharp deterioration in the living standards of American working people over the past generation as a result of “globalization,” especially the transfer of production by major U.S. corporations (“multinationals” or “transnationals”) to low-wage countries in East Asia and Latin America. Speaking in Rome a few years ago, the dean of liberal American economists, Paul Samuelson, predicted: “As the billions of people who live in East Asia and Latin America qualify for good, modern jobs, the half billion Europeans and North Americans who used to tower over the rest of the world will find their upward progress in living standards encountering tough resistance.” In his 1991 *The Work of Nations*, former Clinton labor secretary Robert Reich wrote that “Americans are becoming part of an international labor market, encompassing Asia, Africa, Latin America, and, increasingly, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.” “Top U.S. Exports Continue to Be Jobs,” moans the *AFL-CIO News* (5 August 1996), official organ of the American labor bureaucracy.

“Runaway shops,” “outsourcing” and the transfer of production to low-wage areas like the U.S. South and Mexico and other semicolonial countries have indeed led to a sharp decline in unionized manufacturing jobs, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. But instead of seeking to organize international class struggle against attacks on jobs and unions, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy polices the labor movement on behalf of the U.S. capitalist rulers while trying to shift the blame for layoffs here on workers abroad.

The views expressed above by Samuelson, Reich and the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO tops have become the central ideological theme of the Northite tendency. In a speech in Detroit in 1992, North stated:

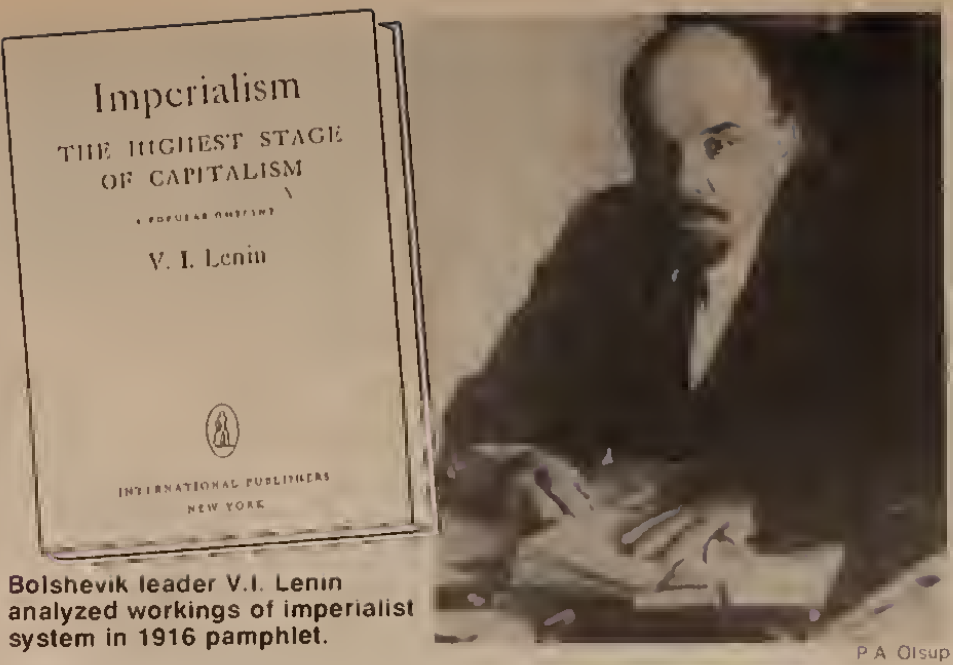
“The collapse of the old organizations of the working class is, fundamentally, the product of specific historic and economic conditions. Understanding these conditions does not mean that we absolve the leaders of these organizations of responsibility for what has happened. Rather, it enables us to recognize that the rottenness of the leaders is itself only a subjective manifestation of an objective process....

“The global integration of capitalist production under the aegis of massive transnational corporations and the terminal crisis of the nation-state system have shattered the basic geo-economic foundation upon which the activities of the old organizations of the working class have been based. Nationally-based labor organizations are simply incapable of seriously challenging internationally-organized corporations.” [our emphasis]

— *Capital, Labor and the Nation-State* (1992)

Despite North’s disclaimer, his notion of “globalization” and its effects does absolve the labor bureaucracy of responsibility for the decline of the trade-union movement and the degradation of the working class. It is no accident that North’s views are also expressed, in almost identical language, by spokesmen for the union bureaucracy. Thus, the general secretary of the International Union of Food and Allied Workers’ Associations, Dan Gallin, argues:

“Nation states are becoming irrelevant.... National governments no longer control the flow of financial capital. So they can no longer control their own economies. This in turn weakens the power of na-



Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin analyzed workings of imperialist system in 1916 pamphlet.

tional democratic pressures from labour parties and trade unions.”

— *Workers’ World News* (January-February 1996)

Gallin, who is at least more intellectually honest than North, openly argues for a popular-frontist perspective of “building a broad-based people’s movement” to counter the effects of “globalization.”

But neither does North denounce the union misleaders for not mobilizing the economic power of the workers movement and popular political support against the capitalist offensive. Instead he asserts that the trade unions as such have been made impotent by objective changes in the world economy. This position is stated even more clearly and categorically by Nick Beams, head of the Australian section of North’s International Committee: “To the extent that the extraction of surplus value from the working class still took place within the confines of a given state, it was possible to apply pressure to capital via the national state for reforms and concessions to the working class. This was the program of the trade union and labor bureaucracies. That is no longer possible” (*International Workers Bulletin [IWB]*, 15 July 1996). In other words, the Northites maintain it is no longer possible for the working class to defend itself against the predations of capital through strikes or other actions, regardless of the

tactics and policies pursued.

This position is radically false and, if accepted, can only foster demoralization and defeatism within the working class. In none of the major strikes which marked the decline and defeat of the American labor movement in the 1980s—the PATCO air traffic controllers, Greyhound bus drivers, Phelps-Dodge copper miners, Eastern Airlines machinists, Hormel meatpackers—did foreign competition or the operations of multinationals abroad play any significant role. Greyhound, Eastern Airlines and Hormel extract almost all of their surplus value from labor within the confines of the American state.

To be sure, there have also been major labor struggles recently against large corporations which are critically dependent on international trade and foreign outsourcing, notably the two-month-long strike at Boeing aircraft in late 1995. In this case, the strike was actually starting to hurt Boeing when the leaders of the Machinists union called it off for minimal gains while, at the same time, fomenting anti-Asian chauvinism and protectionism.

For a Class-Struggle Perspective!

The decline of the American labor movement is not fundamentally caused by the objective effects of “globalization” but by the defeatist and treacherous

policies of the AFL-CIO misleaders. As we wrote right after the defeat of the Greyhound strike:

“No decisive gain of labor was ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress. Everything the workers movement has won of value has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks of labor in hard-fought struggle, on the picket lines, in plant occupations. What counts is power. The strength of the unions lies in their numbers, their militancy, their organization and discipline and their relation to the decisive means of production in modern capitalist society. The bosses are winning because the power of labor, its strength to decisively cripple the enemy, has not been brought to bear.”

— “Labor’s Gotta Play Hardball to Win,” *IWW* supplement (March 1984)

The AFL-CIO bureaucracy plays by the bosses’ rules in all strikes, including in the service sector where foreign competition is nonexistent. Consider the strike by janitors and other building workers in New York City last winter. As usual the union tops insisted on porous picket lines. As a consequence an estimated 15,000 scabs replaced the striking workers and office buildings operated more or less as usual. But let us imagine what would have happened if the organized labor movement had sought to mobilize New York City’s working people and appealed to the dispossessed population of the ghettos and barrios to actively support the heavily minority and immigrant building workers.

Dozens and hundreds of strikers and other workers—union and non-union—along with black and Hispanic youth could have surrounded every major office building in the city and prevented anyone from entering. David North to the contrary, the CEOs of American multinationals would not have responded by closing their New York headquarters and running their operations out of New Delhi or Mexico City. Rather the cops would have attacked and tried to break the picket lines, arresting militant workers and their supporters. The outcome would then have been determined by the ability of the New York City labor movement to organize effective actions backed by popular support especially in the black and Hispanic communities. A one-day transit strike, for example, might have convinced the powers that be in the world’s financial capital to impose a deal on the real estate barons favorable to the building workers.

To take an international example, the defeat of the 1984-85 British miners strike by the Conservative government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher opened the way to a crippling assault on all trade unions in Britain. The year-long miners’ struggle was far and away the most significant class battle in West Europe in the 1980s. While the importation of foreign coal did play a role in that strike, the key factor in its defeat was the refusal of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress tops to countenance joint strike action by other sectors of the British working class, even as workers from France to South Africa expressed their solidarity with the British miners by halting seah coal shipments and raising financial support.

Seeking to limit union struggle to what is acceptable to the capitalist rulers, the reformist labor misleaders generally eschew any possibility of real international proletarian solidarity. Typical of this is the leadership of the United Auto Workers (UAW), potentially still one of the most powerful industrial unions in the U.S. Instead of promoting organizing efforts in the American South and in the Mexican *maquiladora* industrial belt south of the U.S. border, the UAW tops respond to “outsourcing” and “runaway shops” by shoving one concession after another down their members’ throats while appealing to Washington for protectionist measures. Far from seeking coordinated strike action with Canadian and Mexican workers during last fall’s contract negotiations with the Big Three, whose operations throughout North America are now fully integrated, the UAW bureaucracy openly denounced

continued on page 11



AFL-CIO tops (from left) John Sweeney, Linda Chavez-Thompson and Richard Trumka. Northites echo liberal Nation and labor reformists on “globalization,” amnestying bureaucracy’s betrayals.

Ebonics...

(continued from page 12)

—hospitals, community centers, parks, schools—eroded long ago. Often the only encounter that ghetto residents have with whites is with the welfare worker and, more often, the racist cop. The Oakland resolution tries to invent "Ebonics" as a separate language rooted in West Africa. But the issue here is not one of determining the various historical roots and influences which shape "black English."

"Ebonics" as spoken by the current generation of ghetto youth is the language of despair and defiance. Against a society they know doesn't give a damn about them, they have developed a way of speaking that is increasingly incomprehensible to outsiders. Why speak otherwise? There are no jobs. Their parents are being cut off welfare. The most likely "future" is jail, or an early death at the hands of one's peers or perhaps of a racist cop, or from AIDS or the various diseases of poverty which have made a resurgence in recent years. While slashing funds for education to the bone, billions are poured into the prison system. Nationally, almost 1.7 million people are behind bars while in California some 40 percent of black men in their twenties are in the clutches of the criminal "justice" system. The desperate fatalism, and reactive glorification of lumpenism, of this generation is captured in the name of a top rap recording company—"Death Row Records."

In order to change the systematic denigration and degradation of black kids trapped in ever more hellish conditions, their labor power and their thinking power has to be truly valued. To achieve

During World War II, blacks were drawn into strategic industries and trained as skilled workers.



for the worst in the U.S.

Much of the black population of Oakland migrated from the rural South during World War II, finding work in the ports, the shipyards and a growing base of food manufacturing and distribution in the Bay Area. Faced with a labor shortage in the booming war industries, shipyard owners recruited often semiliterate and untrained black youth. In little more than three months, they were taught to read and write, and became skilled apprentices.

But the capitalist rulers invest only as much as they can realize back in profit

with Dependent Children.

Our article "Victory to the Oakland Teachers Strike!" (WV No. 640, 1 March 1996) spoke to the "quality" of education in this predominantly black city:

"With not enough money for supplies, Oakland teachers routinely spend hundreds of dollars of their own money to buy books and other vital teaching material. Classrooms are grossly overcrowded. An English teacher told *Workers Vanguard* of having 51 students in her high school freshman class. School buildings are falling apart. Last year parents at Lazear Elementary School, who are overwhelmingly Latino, kept their kids out for three weeks in protest over the 40-year-old 'portable' classrooms with no windows, poor ventilation, leaking roof and rats."

It was in this context that the demands of striking Oakland teachers found wide resonance among parents, students and the community at large. The potential impact of this strike was not lost on the Oakland school board, which went into high gear in trying to portray the strike as a mugging of the black community by an allegedly "white" union. While weeping crocodile tears for "the children" and trying to prey on the despair of the ghetto poor against the "greedy" teachers, the bloated Oakland schools administration didn't give a damn about smaller class sizes, funding for current textbooks or any other measures that would go in the direction of providing a decent education for children of the black poor. On the contrary, they saw any outlay for improving school conditions as a challenge to the administration's share at the public trough.

"Ebonics": School Board's Alibi for Failure

Today, this same venal school board is putting forward "Ebonics" as an alibi for the desperate conditions in the Oakland schools. In the face of the racist backlash against their resolution, school board members scrambled to deny that they were out to get a piece of the paltry federal funding that goes to bilingual education. Yet the resolution was un-

ambiguous on this score, noting that "general funds for bilingual education" were provided for "Asian-American, Latino-American, Native American" and other language groups and arguing that "African-American pupils are equally entitled" to such funds.

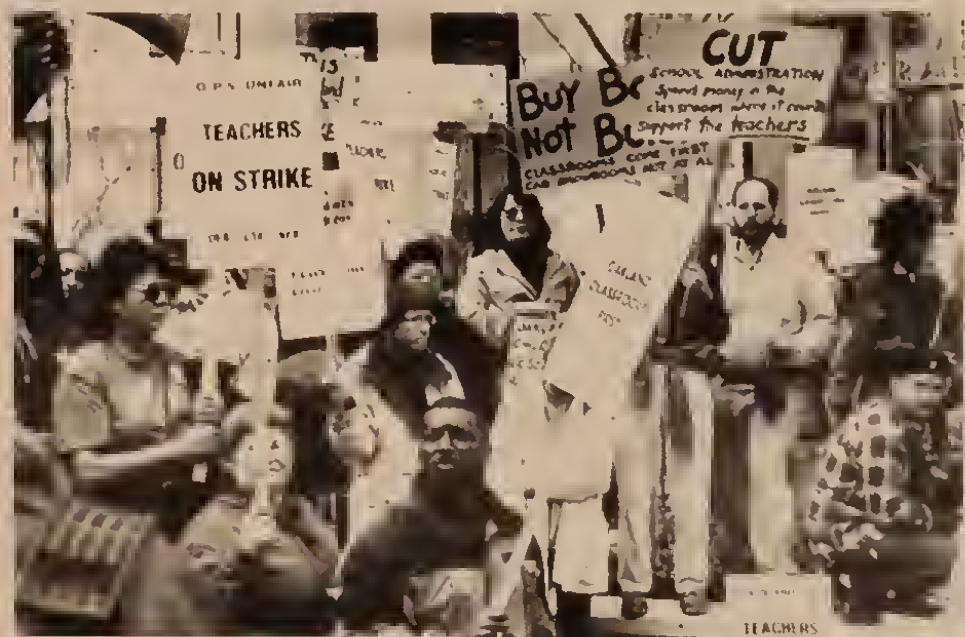
Such a scramble for money speaks to the grotesque, built-in inequality in the way public schools are funded in this country, which is primarily through local property taxes. Indeed, even the term "public education" is an oxymoron where there are two "publics"—those who've got property and those who don't. Per capita spending for education in better-off white suburbs is many times that in the black and Hispanic inner cities. It is necessary to call for full and vastly increased funding by the federal government for all schools. But even such a just and basic demand as quality, integrated education for all runs up against a capitalist class which controls the means of production, distribution and finance and which sees little reason for providing a decent education to most children.

The slashing of funds for public schools in the ghettos and barrios reinforces the enormous educational and cultural advantages inherited by white middle-class youth whose college-educated parents can help them with their homework and studies, supplementing their teachers in this regard. They can afford personal computers with CD-ROMs, along with encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc. Thus the massive racial inequalities in education are not simply a matter of recent government policies and budget cuts but are inherent in this class society.

The Oakland school board's appeal for "bilingual" funding for "Ebonics" is also a thinly veiled expression of their resentment against the pathetic amount of funds that go toward such programs for Latino kids. According to a longtime Oakland teacher, even in existing bilingual English-Spanish programs, teachers have had to fight to get the additional annual stipends due them. Moreover, what bilingual programs do exist have largely served not as a bridge to learning English but rather as a means of keeping children, especially Latinos, tracked into education ghettos. And the same racists who deride the way black children speak as "ignorant" are the driving force behind chauvinist "English only" resolutions which would deny immigrants any bilingual education, i.e., the opportunity to learn English.

Although blacks, Latinos and Asians are all oppressed in various ways, the controversy over "Ebonics" demonstrates again that the reformist refrain that "the people united will never be defeated" is hardly a preordained outcome. On the contrary, under the conditions of decaying American capitalism each is pitted against all in the struggle for an ever-shrinking piece of the pie. Symptomatic of this is the squalid scramble that has been going on in Dallas—where the overwhelming bulk of the student population is pretty evenly divided between blacks and Hispanics—as Hispanic school board members line up with white racists against black members of the board.

Hispanic, Asian and other immigrants



Oakland teachers strike demanded smaller class size, improved school conditions, won widespread community support.

that requires shattering the entire system of racist American capitalism, in which is rooted the forcible subjugation and segregation of the black population as an oppressed race-color caste, overwhelmingly concentrated at the bottom of this society. As communists, our views on the "Ebonics" controversy derive from the standpoint of the fight for an egalitarian socialist society which will eradicate the material basis for all discrimination based on race, class and sex.

Oakland Schools—Flunking Out in the Former "Education State"

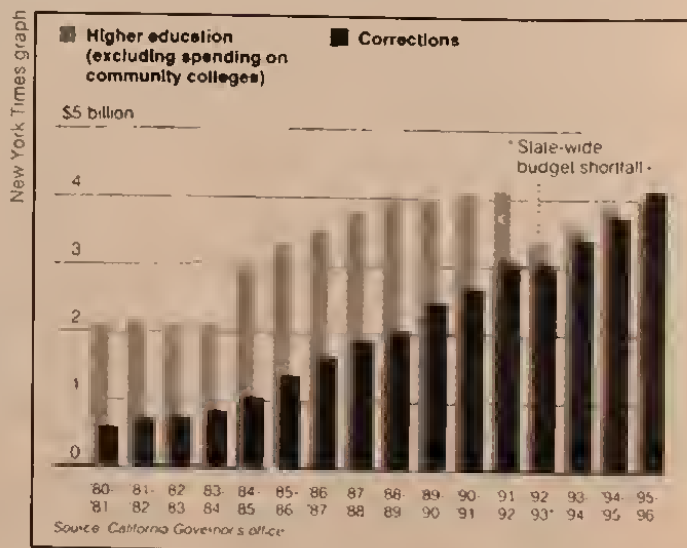
A recently released study of the state of education in America gave a grade of C to the country as a whole. But California was rated as among the worst of the worst with a score of D minus. The study points to California's Proposition 13 as the "weapon of destruction." Passed in 1978, Prop. 13 was a tax revolt spearheaded by older white middle-class property owners who didn't want their "tax dollars" going to fund government programs seen as benefiting the ghetto and barrio poor. Today, the Oakland school district, the only majority black district in the state, is in a dead heat with Washington, D.C.

when it comes to the education of those they exploit. As we wrote in "Education U.S.A.—Separate and Unequal" (WV No. 544, 7 February 1992):

"Having taken the wrecking ball to the auto factories, gutted the steel mills and closed many of the mines, there are few jobs left for which to train the children of the working class and poor. And if educating the sons and daughters of white workers has increasingly become an expendable overhead for decaying American capitalism, the children of black workers and poor are deemed an expendable population. Once a reserve army of labor to be maintained, albeit minimally, today for the racist rulers the black ghetto poor are not worth 'wasting' money on even to keep alive, much less educate."

In Oakland, the modernized container freight port employs a fraction of the workers it did in the past, shipbuilding is a forgotten memory, and miles of factories have been replaced by vacant lots. Downtown Oakland has the feel of a ghost town. New office buildings stand mostly empty next to boarded-up storefronts. Rampant unemployment is matched by public schools that are in an advanced state of decay. Nearly half of all kids in the Oakland public schools have parents who get Aid to Families

California: Funding for prisons skyrockets as education expenditures are slashed.



Abortion Clinic Bombing...

(continued from page 1)

violence; in 1995, almost 39 percent.

A report by Planned Parenthood also documented terror attacks—including shootings, arson and firebombings—on Planned Parenthood centers in Spokane, Washington, eastern Oklahoma and western Arkansas. Most recently, on December 18, Dr. Calvin Jackson of the Women's Clinic in New Orleans was repeatedly stabbed at the clinic's entrance. A month earlier, butyric acid was dumped into the air vents of a clinic in Edmonton, Canada operated by the courageous Holocaust survivor, Dr. Henry Morgentaler.

In a statement responding to the latest bombing, Kate Michelman of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) made a point of praising Clinton, noting that the Atlanta attack took place "as America's pro-choice majority begins celebrating the Inauguration of a pro-choice President." Echoing this sentiment, the Feminist Majority Foundation's Eleanor Smeal praised federal laws like the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), declaring that "the more seriously law enforcement takes threats of violence, the less likely those threats are to turn into actual violence." The Feminist Majority has often called for federal marshals to guard abortion clinics.

But the solution is not more cops or reliance on the Clinton White House. FACE is a fake. The "right to life" creeps bent on terrorizing women will shrug off the law anyhow, while sympathetic

judges often let them off. The *New York Times* (19 January) reported that a federal judge acquitted two anti-abortion fanatics who had blockaded a Westchester County clinic on the grounds that they were "sincere" in their "religious" beliefs! Picketing and clinic blockades continue too, though they no longer draw national press attention. This past December in Hempstead, New York, Planned Parenthood offices were picketed by over 200 anti-abortion bigots. Rightist mobs like these should be dispersed through mass, militant clinic defense actions that can help turn the tide against today's reactionary social climate.

The bomb-by-night terrorists and killers are emboldened by the war on the poor, minorities, immigrants and other sectors of the oppressed carried out by both major capitalist parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, who mouth smirking pieties as women and children starve. Clinton's devastation of welfare and the continuing assault on Medicaid have made any sort of health care, including abortions, even more inaccessible to poor and working women. Already, Medicaid recipients (and federal employees) are covered for abortions only in instances of rape or life-threatening situations. We call for free abortion on demand and free, quality health care for all.

While Clinton's reluctant veto of Congressional legislation outlawing late-term abortions was applauded by "pro-choice" liberals, since the Democratic president's election in 1992 attacks on clinics have escalated into a deadly war. Clinton proclaimed that abortion should be "safe, legal and rare." The terror bombers are set on making it rare, all right. Mean-



Defense of Washington, D.C. abortion clinic against "right to life" terrorists, January 1992. For class-struggle defense of the clinics!

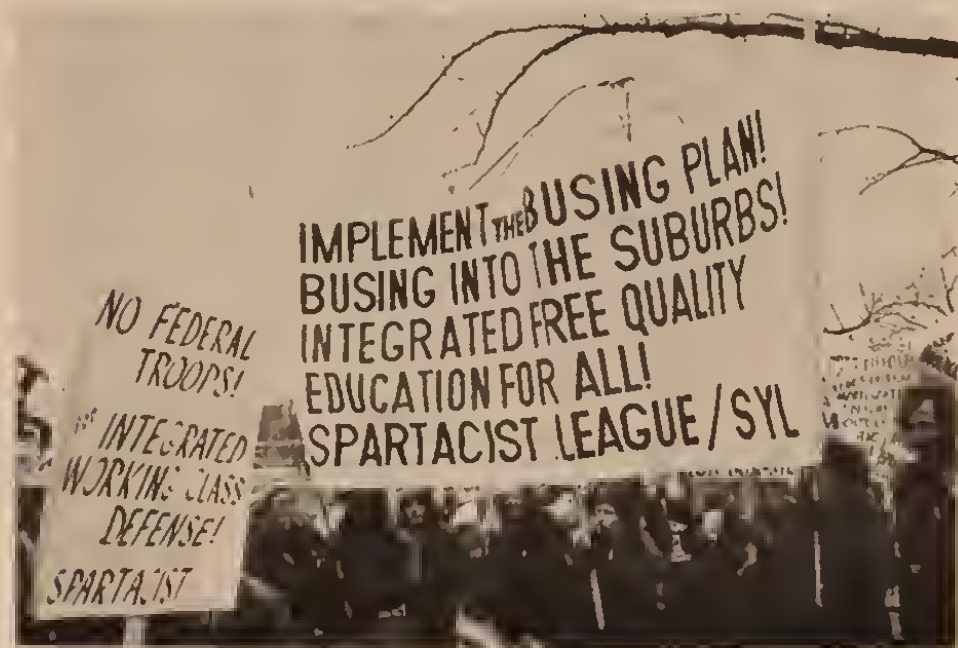
while, use of the promising and inexpensive RU 486 pill in the U.S., which would enable women to have safe and convenient non-surgical abortions, is still snarled in lawsuits. While the government maintains an ostentatious "hands off" policy on RU 486, the terror against clinics hurts poor and working women most, as they are the ones who must rely on public clinics. Rich and middle-class women can get the medical options they desire from private doctors.

Only two years ago, two young women were brutally murdered in Boston by an anti-abortion terrorist. In the wake of that horrible tragedy, the Spartacist League

put out a statement calling to avenge the murders of the clinic workers, Shannon Lowney and Lee Ann Nichols, by stopping anti-abortion terror (see WV No. 614, 13 January 1995). As we wrote then:

"It is necessary to drive off and disperse the rightist mobs and the Operation Rescue scum who lay siege to the clinics!... What is necessary is a massive outpouring of outrage, mobilizing working women and their allies backed up by the social power of the labor movement to defend the clinics, safeguard and expand a woman's right to all medical facilities and stop the murderous thugs cold."

For class-struggle defense of the clinics! Free abortion on demand! For women's liberation through socialist revolution! ■



Spartacist League fought for labor/black mobilization to stop racist attacks on busing for school integration, Boston 1974.

are taught to believe that blacks themselves are responsible for the horrendous conditions of life in the ghettos—supposedly reflecting a lack of sufficient value being placed on family, education and advancement. At the same time, ghetto blacks are led to believe that immigrants are "getting ahead" at blacks' expense. This sentiment was wielded by some black Democrats and nationalists to whip up support among the black population for California's Proposition 187, which denies all health, education and other social benefits to "illegal" immigrants.

Last year's strike by the Oakland Education Association (OEA) had the potential to mobilize the integrated unions in and around Oakland together with parents and students and all the black and Latino poor in a real struggle against the gutting of public education. But that potential was betrayed by the OEA leadership, which accepted the "there is no money" framework of the school board. An even more treacherous role was played by the Alameda Central Labor Council, which not only refused to sanction the strike but encouraged the members of their affiliated unions to *scab*.

The refusal of the misleaders of organ-

ized labor to wage any struggle on behalf of the ghetto and barrio poor has contributed not only to the increased destitution and despair in the inner cities but also to the decimation of the trade unions. The former "Motor City" is an object lesson. Once the engine of industrial America with a heavily black working class, Detroit is now overwhelmingly a ghetto wasteland populated by the families of those who were the first victims of the giveback contracts and other sellouts by the trade-union bureaucrats.

What was visited first on the black population is now becoming an increasing reality for most white workers in America. The situation cries out for a class-struggle fight for *all* workers and the poor, a fight that can link the power of labor to the anger of the ghettos. The key to realizing this perspective lies in a sharp political struggle against the labor misleaders, whose first loyalty is not to the multiracial working class but to the racist capitalist exploiters.

Race, Class and Language

The "Ebonics" resolution passed by the Oakland school board posits that blacks in America "are not native speak-

ers of a black dialect or any other dialect of English" but rather speak an entirely separate language based on "a West and Niger-Congo African linguistic structure." There are dialects which developed in America that demonstrate very real West African influences. The Sea Islands off South Carolina and the Georgia coast are a case in point. Living in isolated communities of direct descendants of black African slaves who were brought to this country in chains over 200 years ago, they still speak a creole that is known as Gullah. Gullah is said to contain as many as 6,000 Africanisms, and is considered to be closer than any other variant of black English to the "pidgin" that was spoken on the slave ships. But the average Oakland ghetto kid would find Gullah just as incomprehensible as any other English speaker. And anyone who thinks that "Ebonics" is really an African language should try speaking it in West Africa!

To portray black ghetto English as a separate language is to alibi the racist status quo. Grotesquely, the Oakland school board resolution borrowed language more commonly associated with racist "theories" of the innate "inferiority" of blacks, like that laid out in *The Bell Curve*, arguing that black English is "genetically-based." The school board later backed off this characterization by

trying to redefine the word "genetic," but its attempt to declare "Ebonics" a separate language reflects an acceptance of the increasing segregation of black people in this society.

The problem is not that black kids are incapable of learning "standard American English." Children who move to a new country will learn even a radically different language easily and naturally, becoming completely bilingual in a relatively short period of time. Unlearning a first language or dialect to become fluent in a second is not necessary and can even be counterproductive, especially if children are told that their mother tongue is "wrong" or "bad."

Stigmas against different dialects of the English language are not simply a question of race but also of class. In Britain, one of the most self-consciously class-stratified of all the imperialist countries, those who do not speak the "Queen's English" are made to feel ignorant and of the "lower orders." This was captured in a 1979 *New York Times* Op-Ed piece by James Baldwin titled, "If Black English Isn't a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?":

"The range (and reign) of accents on that damp little island make England coherent for the English and totally incomprehensible for everyone else. To open your mouth in England is (if I may use black

continued on page 10

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Ebonics...

(continued from page 9)

English) to 'put your business in the street'. You have confessed your parents, your youth, your school, your salary, your self-esteem, and, alas, your future."

Baldwin argues that it is "patronizing" to call black English a dialect, but in fact, what's patronizing is to call it a separate language. To insist that the current black dialect is the direct linguistic continuator of languages spoken in West Africa implicitly (and in some cases explicitly) denies the brutal legacy of slavery—particularly in the American South. Unlike in the Caribbean, where the black slaves maintained a great deal of their culture, religion and language, the American slaveholders very consciously sought to wipe out any connection black Africans had with the societies they came from. This was a means to atomize the slave population and to quell any possibility of revolt on the plantations.

In contrast, there developed in the Caribbean more coherent language mixtures known as creoles. In Jamaica, for example, a creole is commonly spoken in the home and community, while children are taught English—which is the language of general commerce—at school, and switch fluidly between the two. A teacher of community college students in New York City noted that most of her black students from the Caribbean are better educated than either white or black American students. But engulfed by the profound and pervasive racism of American society—where you are permanently branded by the color of your skin—Caribbean students tend to regress after several years here.

The capitalist rulers of this country argue that blacks themselves are responsible for the desperate conditions of life in the ghettos. They hypocritically point to



Syama

Renowned author, James Baldwin.

the assimilation of previous generations of immigrants into the so-called American "melting pot" as supposed evidence of the ability of everyone to advance up the economic ladder in "the land of the free." But comparisons between blacks who migrated to the ghettos of New York, Philadelphia and Chicago in the 1950s-'60s and the Irish, Italians and East Europeans who migrated to these cities half a century earlier ignore the historically derived anti-black racism of American society and are meaningless since economic conditions and opportunities were totally different in the two periods. Meanwhile, the large numbers of immigrants who have come here from Latin America and Asia in the last two decades face a rising tide of anti-immigrant racism and, in many cases, a level of poverty comparable to or even worse than that of blacks.

For Revolutionary Integrationism!

The Oakland school board's position on "Ebonics" reflects the program of

black "cultural nationalism," a reactionary response in the absence of integrated social struggle to the all-sided racism permeating American society. The identification of ghetto English as a separate language dovetails with the utopian calls pushed by Louis Farrakhan and the like for "black capitalism." Both are predicated on the continued segregation of the black ghetto poor. But far from demonstrating that blacks are a nation, the dia-



E. P. Dutton

Bolsheviks conducted literacy campaign among oppressed Central Asian women following 1917 Russian Revolution.

lect spoken by black ghetto youth today testifies to the forcible and intensifying compaction of the majority of the black population at the bottom of this society as an oppressed *race-color caste*.

There is a symbiosis between black nationalism and white racism; both conjure up a black language and culture that is supposedly "alien" to America. Yet not only are blacks more "American" than most Americans, what is unique to American culture is largely an expression of black influences. In his seminal Marxist analysis of the black question, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution" (1954), Trotskyist Richard Fraser noted that the blacks enslaved on the Southern plantations "developed a powerful folk culture." Fraser continued:

"But this culture did not take the road of an independent national development. Because it was virtually the only real American folk culture, the slaves' music, 'accent,' folklore and religion filled a cultural need for the American people as a whole. First the slave culture inundated the original Anglo-Saxon culture of the South, virtually destroying it. From there it went on to fuse with the whole national culture until today those aspects of the national culture which are considered to be 'typically' American are largely the result of Negro influence."

Under the Southern slavocracy, teaching blacks to read or write (English) was a crime often punishable by death. The black troops who turned the tide in the Civil War against the slaveowners went into battle with their spelling primers strapped to their cartridge belts. Knowledge—and a good rifle—were recognized as the artillery needed to combat servitude and enforced illiteracy. Escape from slavery and integration into society on an egalitarian basis, not a return to their African roots, was the goal. The promise of black equality was betrayed by the Northern capitalists who, under the Compromise of 1877, withdrew the last Union Army troops from the South and brought to an end the tumultuous and radical bourgeois-democratic period of Reconstruction. A new form of white supremacy in the South—Jim Crow segregation—was ushered in.

Before World War II, the majority of blacks continued to live in the rural South as a deeply exploited American peasantry, overwhelmingly sharecroppers and tenant farmers. The black workers who flooded into the Northern cities during World War II formed the core of the Northern black communities and became a key component of the labor movement. Integrated into the workforce at the lower levels, blacks were also segregated in the inner-city ghettos. The black ghet-

to poor supplied for the American capitalists what Karl Marx called "a reserve army of labor" to be brought in during periods of rapid economic expansion. The color bar was and is a fundamental dividing line in American society, a key means for obscuring the class divide between labor and capital.

Today for American capitalism, the black poor have become, simply, a *surplus* population. The elimination of wel-

fare by the Clinton White House and the Republican Congress will bring about the deaths of untold thousands of poor people from hunger, untreated contagious diseases and homelessness. With the impulse to genocide currently driving American bourgeois politics, a considerable section of the ruling class could care less if blacks did develop their own language or creole.

Black Democrat Jesse Jackson originally denounced the Oakland "Ebonics" resolution as "garbage." Subsequently, he reversed his position and is plugging the program as an opportunity for poor blacks to find a bridge to "make it" in American society. Paying homage to the civil rights movement for supposedly bringing about a fundamental improvement in the conditions of blacks, Jackson preaches that black people can gain real equality in racist America if they "pull

themselves up by the hootstraps."

The civil rights movement originated as a mass struggle for school integration, access to public facilities and voting rights against legalized Jim Crow segregation in the South. However, by its very nature this movement based on a program of liberal-democratic reform did not confront the underlying oppression and exploitation of blacks. The social conditions imprisoning the impoverished black masses in the ghettos—with their mean streets, rat-infested housing, lousy schools and rampant police terror—could not be solved by legislative reforms. These conditions are materially rooted in the whole system of American capitalism.

Although racist segregation has intensified and hardened in recent years, blacks continue to have enormous potential economic and political power as a strategic component of the American working class. While many industrial unions have been gutted over the past couple of decades, black workers remain an important component in such basic services as health care, urban transit and longshore. These black proletarians can serve as a bridge between the ghetto poor and the organized labor movement.

For the power of black workers to be mobilized requires the leadership of a Marxist vanguard party committed to the perspective of revolutionary integrationism—the shattering of the chains of racist American capitalism by the multi-racial working class, which will lay the basis for the full integration of blacks in an egalitarian socialist society. As we wrote in the introduction to *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised), "What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism":

"Any organization which claims a revolutionary perspective for the United States must confront the *special oppression* of black people—the forced segregation of blacks at the bottom of capitalist society and the poisonous racism which divides the working class and cripples its struggles. There will be no social revolution in this country without the united struggle of black and white workers led by their multiracial vanguard party. Moreover, there is no other road to eliminating the special oppression of black people than the victorious conquest of power by the U.S. proletariat." ■

Port Shutdown...

(continued from page 12)

sacked workers. In their call for the "Day of Action," the Merseyside Port Shop Stewards appealed "to all dockers in all ports to join an international blockade of Liverpool cargo and of shipping lines using the scab port of Liverpool." At least 15 dockers unions and the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) declared their support for the day of solidarity.

However, with the exception of the West Coast longshore stoppage, much of the day's show of "solidarity" consisted of token protests. On the eastern seaboard, the International Longshoremen's Association held a demonstration at the British embassy in Washington, D.C. Similar small protests took place in Hamburg, Germany, at the port of Yokohama near Tokyo and other places. The ITF went out of its way to emphasize that "This is not an international strike or international boycott." Supporters of the International Communist League turned out to various protest actions around the world today, distributing literature in support of the Liverpool dockers and pointing to the need for a revolutionary internationalist leadership of the working class.

Already over a year ago, waterfront workers in Australia, Canada, the U.S. and elsewhere have carried out boycott actions against shipping companies which use the Merseyside harbor as Liverpool dockers set up picket lines at U.S.

and other ports (see "International Solidarity with Liverpool Dock Strike," *WV* No. 637, 19 January 1996). Because shipping companies and capitalist governments everywhere are attacking waterfront and maritime workers through privatization, union-busting and deregulation, the plight of Liverpool's sacked dockers has struck a chord with workers in dozens of countries.

But while the ILWU International's statement for today's action talked about the need for "global unionism" to combat "exploitation by global capitalism," they and their fellow labor bureaucrats have presided over massive layoffs in recent years, accepting the dictates of their respective capitalist rulers and the shipping companies. Indeed, today's West Coast stoppage cut against the grain of the ILWU tops' support to chauvinist calls by U.S. maritime unions for "American flag only" shipping.

Meanwhile, the "leaders" of the Liverpool dockers' union, the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), have not lifted a finger to win the workers back their jobs. Fearful of jeopardizing the election prospects of Tony Blair's Labour Party, the TGWU tops have written off the Liverpool dockers' struggle as a lost cause. In a special supplement to *Workers Hammer* (12 January 1996), our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain wrote:

"The splendid action of dockers around the world points the way forward. The Merseyside docks should be shut down tight by mass picket lines, which nothing and nobody can cross.... Only a complete shut-down of the port will stop the scab operation altogether!"

Victory to the Liverpool dockers! For international class-struggle solidarity! ■

Global...

(continued from page 7)

a strike by GM workers in Canada, seeing that as counterposed to its efforts to get Democrat Clinton re-elected.

The existence of "multinationals" simply underscores the historic need for an internationalist class-struggle perspective that transcends parochial, nationally limited trade unionism. Indeed, one of the reasons for the establishment of the First International founded by Karl Marx was to organize trade-union solidarity between workers in Britain and continental Europe.

There are, of course, limits to what can be gained through trade-union struggle, however militant. As their labor costs rise beyond a certain point, capitalists will respond by retrenching (i.e., shutting down less-profitable operations), introducing new labor-saving technology as well as shifting some operations to low-wage countries. The labor bureaucracy points to the ability of the capitalists to counter union gains by such means in order to argue that the workers must accept existing, or even worse, conditions without a fight, while laying the blame on workers in other countries for "stealing American jobs." As revolutionary Marxists, we point to the limitations of trade unionism to argue for the need to overthrow the capitalist system of exploitation. As Marx wrote over a century ago:

"Trade Unions work well as centers of resistance against the encroachments of capital.... They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerrilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system."

— *Value, Price and Profit* (1867)

The Northites now openly repudiate this basic Marxist position. They maintain that trade unions can no longer function as centers of resistance to the predations of capital, and they counterpose a socialist transformation to the defense of the workers' interests within capitalism. According to the wisdom of Nick Beams: "In order to defend even the most minimal conditions—the simple and most ordinary demands—the working class is confronted with the necessity of overthrowing the social relations based on capital and wage labor determined by the capitalist market through which the appropriation of surplus value takes place" (*IWB*, 1 July 1996).

At first glance, this may seem like a terribly revolutionary position. In fact, it indicates a defeatist and abstentionist attitude toward the actual struggles of the working class, without which all talk of overthrowing the social relations based on capital and wage labor is empty rhetoric. As Leon Trotsky wrote: "The triumph of the proletarian revolution on a world scale is the end-product of multiple movements, campaigns and battles, and not at all a ready-made precondition for solving all questions automatically" ("Independence of the Ukraine and Sectarian Muddleheads," July 1939).

The mass of workers can achieve socialist consciousness only through the intervention of a revolutionary party in the proletariat's day-to-day struggles. This is a central theme of the 1938 Tran-

THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS BULLETIN

18 December 1995

Who are the real scabs?

In the wake of the return to work, UAW officials have attempted to absolve themselves of blame for what has happened by diverting the anger of strikers towards the "scabs," i.e., those union members who decided to cross picket lines.

For bureaucrats who never missed a pay

Northite International Workers Bulletin (18 December 1995) openly apologizes for scabbing during Caterpillar strike.

sitional Program, the founding program of Trotsky's Fourth International:

"The Bolshevik-Leninist stands in the front-line trenches of all kinds of struggles, even when they involve only the most modest material interests or democratic rights of the working class. He takes active part in the mass trade unions for the purpose of strengthening them and raising their spirit of militancy.... Only on the basis of such work within the trade unions is successful struggle possible against the reformists.... Sectarian attempts to build or preserve small 'revolutionary' unions, as a second edition of the party, signify in actuality the renouncing of the struggle for the leadership of the working class."

The Latest Posture of Political Bandits

For years, North's Workers League agitated for the racist, pro-imperialist, rabidly anti-Communist Meany/Kirkland bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO to form a "labor party." Now the North gang not only denounces the AFL-CIO tops as reactionary but likens the unions to a "company union or a scab organization." Having recently rechristened themselves the Socialist Equality Party (SEP), the Northites now declare:

"Workers must face the fact that the AFL-CIO is a failed organization that will not respond to the workers' demands. Workers need democratically-controlled unions, committed to defending their interests without compromise. Such unions can only be established as the industrial arms of a mass political party of the working class, and this party can only be built in ruthless struggle against the trade union bureaucracy. This is the perspective fought for by the Socialist Equality Party."

— *IWB* (15 July 1996)

The nonexistent "industrial arms" of a nonexistent mass workers party are here supposed to replace the actual mass economic organizations of the U.S. working class.

If North, Beams & Co. were honest and courageous politicians, however misguided, they would call on American workers to leave the AFL-CIO en masse, Australian workers to leave the Australian Council of Trade Unions, British workers to leave the Trades Union Congress, etc. According to the Northites, not only have the unions become reactionary but also strikes: "Even when the bureaucracy calls a strike, it does so for the purpose of more effectively demoralizing and defeating the workers" (*The Globalization of Capitalist Production & the International Tasks of the Working Class* [September 1993]). If that is the case, then the Northites should tell the workers never to go out on strike and should give no support to strikes that do occur. Given its line, there is no reason for the Socialist Equality Party to oppose scabbing.

In fact, following the sellout of a 17-month-long UAW strike at Caterpillar in 1995 which saw widespread scabbing, North's *International Workers Bulletin* (18 December 1995) openly apologized for strikebreaking: putting the word "scabs" in quotation marks, sympathetically "explaining" that "the large majority of the 4,000 union members who returned to work were not right-wing or anti-union," and attacking the union tops from the right for "diverting the anger of strikers towards the 'scabs,' i.e., those union members who decided to cross picket lines." Around the same time, North's British acolytes made themselves



Sutton/Picture Group

notorious among striking Liverpool dockers by denouncing international labor solidarity with their struggle. A scurrilous article, "Dockers Must Reject Fake Internationalism" (*International Worker*, 2 December 1995), attacked as a "fraud" plans by international longshore unions, which were implemented that same month, to refuse to handle ships loaded by scabs in Liverpool (see "David North, 'Socialist' Apologist for Scabbing," *WV* No. 637, 19 January 1996).

Yet in their platform for a recent parliamentary by-election campaign, the British SEP had the gall to insist that "Workers in Britain must seek the support of workers overseas" (*International Worker*, 30 November 1996). These are political charlatans who always speak out of both sides of their mouths. On one side, they denounce the unions as "failed organizations," thereby seeking to appeal to workers fed up with the bureaucracy's endless sellouts and angry and frustrated over falling living standards. On the other side, they try to make themselves look good by posing as sympathetic to workers engaged in struggle.

Many years ago, we characterized the tendency led by the late Gerry Healy, North's mentor, as **political bandits** whose practices stood in flat contradiction to their professed principles, who say and do today the exact opposite of what they said and did yesterday and would say and do tomorrow. Having abjectly tailed the pro-capitalist union misleaders until a few short years ago, the Northites now turn around and repudiate the unions altogether. But the union bureaucracy was no less reactionary then than it is today—and the same can be said of David North & Co.

During Cold War II, the anti-Soviet war hysteria of the 1980s, the Northites

marched in ideological lockstep with the AFL-CIO tops in enthusiastically supporting every pro-imperialist, anti-Communist nationalist movement in and around the Soviet bloc—from the CIA-hacked Afghan *mujahedin* to counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność to the Baltic "captive nations" types. In Britain, Healy/North's IC parlayed its support for Solidarność into a provocative witchhunt, in league with the most right-wing forces inside and outside the labor movement, against the militant miners union and its leader, Arthur Scargill. In late 1983, the Healyites instigated an anti-Communist furor over Scargill's description of Solidarność as "anti-socialist," with the aim of isolating the miners from the rest of the British trade-union movement as they prepared for battle against Thatcher and the Coal Board. And in 1991, North & Co. even condemned the Bush administration for not more aggressively backing the fascist-infested Lithuanian Sajudis, which called for secession from the Soviet Union as part of a drive for capitalist restoration.

When the demand for self-determination served as a "democratic" fig leaf for attacks on the Soviet degenerated workers state, the Northites waxed eloquent about their support to "national rights." Now they denounce the call for self-determination and claim that national independence has become impossible, indeed reactionary, in a "globalized" economy. Having supported the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union—the greatest defeat for the international proletariat in decades—the Northites have adopted a position of defeatism toward all struggles by the working class and oppressed peoples in the post-Soviet world.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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Racist Rulers Declare Open Season on Black People

Desperation, Segregation and the "Ebonics" Controversy

The Oakland Board of Education resolution passed last month to make "Ebonics"—otherwise called "black English"—a second language in the city's classrooms has given vent to a storm of racist reaction. California talk shows were flooded with derisive imitations of "black speech" parroting every vile racist stereotype from Amos and Andy to "Little Black Sambo." An article in *Time* magazine filled with this racist crap featured the grotesque headline, "Ebonics According to Buckwheat." And the liberal *Village Voice* (14 January) joined in with a blatantly racist "Ebonics for Travelers" parody.

The Clinton White House, which has slashed welfare and is whipping up raw racial hatred against blacks and immigrants in order to ax any and every social program, rushed to announce that no money would be forthcoming for bilingual "Ebonics" programs. California governor Pete Wilson—having pushed through a referendum last November to abolish affirmative action programs, which provide some minimal access for blacks and minorities to higher education and government jobs—declared that he would not fund what his press secretary called a "ridiculous theory."

The Oakland school board cried that the resolution had been misunderstood, that they weren't looking for money but simply for a means to improve the education of the children in the overwhelmingly black Oakland school district. The school board's avowed concern for improving education is pure cynicism. Last year this same school board worked overtime to bust a teachers strike which had widespread community support, particularly for its demands aimed at reducing the desperate overcrowding of classrooms where children are simply warehoused, not taught.

Free, Quality, Integrated Education for All! Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!



Run-down inner-city high school in Chicago. Capitalist rulers have slashed funding for education of ghetto youth.

The controversial resolution opens with a perfectly supportable call to "improve the English language acquisition and application skills of African-American students." In racist America,

black children are faced with an all-sided contradiction which is a measure of the depth of the racial divide: They are stigmatized as "stupid" because they don't talk "white," while those blacks who do

speaking what is called "proper" English are seen by racists as "not staying in their place" and by their peers as putting on airs. Though not a separate language, "black English" is a very real dialect described by

one linguist as "a standardized variant of English with distinctive grammatical rules." There *should* be programs that can provide a bridge in teaching these kids what is called "standard American English," without disparaging or demeaning their home dialect, for the simple reason that to get anywhere in this society you need to speak the language of the political economy. But there's the rub.

The real problem is not the lack of recognition of black English as a distinct dialect, but the cruel and bitter reality that black ghetto youth are not wanted or needed by America's capitalist rulers. By the same token, the widespread and growing alienation among black youth is the product of more than two decades of hardening segregation in this country. The liberal-led civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s was incapable of addressing the desperate conditions of the black inner cities of America. The "war on poverty" programs that were aimed at quelling the ghetto rebellions of the 1960s provided no amelioration, serving primarily as a ticket out of the ghettos for a thin layer of the black population. The divide between the ghetto masses and the black "middle class" deepened with the deindustrialization of the 1980s, as virtually anyone who still had a job tried to move out of the inner cities.

Left behind was an increasingly deprived and destitute mass of the black population. The racist rulers' "malign neglect" meant that any social infrastructure that existed in the inner cities

continued on page 8

West Coast Ports Shut Down in Solidarity With Liverpool Dockers

JANUARY 20—In the sort of international solidarity action not seen in the American labor movement in years, ports up and down the West Coast were shut down today in support of striking dock workers in Liverpool, England. As we reported last issue, 500 Liverpool dockers who have been engaged in a bitter 15-month struggle against the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MDHC) had called to organize an international "Day of Action" for today.

The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) responded to this appeal by sanctioning an eight-hour work stoppage.

ILWU members on the day shift attended "stop work" meetings rather than loading and unloading some 50 ships at key ports, including Long Beach, Los Angeles-San Pedro, Oakland, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle. But while the Merseyside Port Shop Stewards had called for 24-hour actions,

the ILWU brass ensured that the West Coast strike would be limited to eight hours. Moreover, in Seattle many "casuals" showed up for work without knowing anything about the work stoppage, and cranes were seen operating in the harbor. As it happened, in the U.S. the day of action coincided with Martin Luther King Day, a paid holiday. Nevertheless, many ILWU members sacrificed the overtime pay they would have received if they had worked today.

In Liverpool itself, about 500 dockers and their supporters, including a spirited contingent from "Women of the Waterfront," started assembling at the harbor before sunrise. Shortly after dawn, several dozen dockers made their way onto the docks and climbed atop three cranes. The strikers hope to occupy the cranes for at least three days, stopping the unloading of a ship carrying grain, while their comrades picket round the clock.

The Liverpool dockers were locked out by the MDHC in September 1995 for honoring a picket line set up by fellow union members. The dockers have repeatedly rejected insulting "offers" of a cash payoff and a handful of jobs, demanding reinstatement of all the

continued on page 10