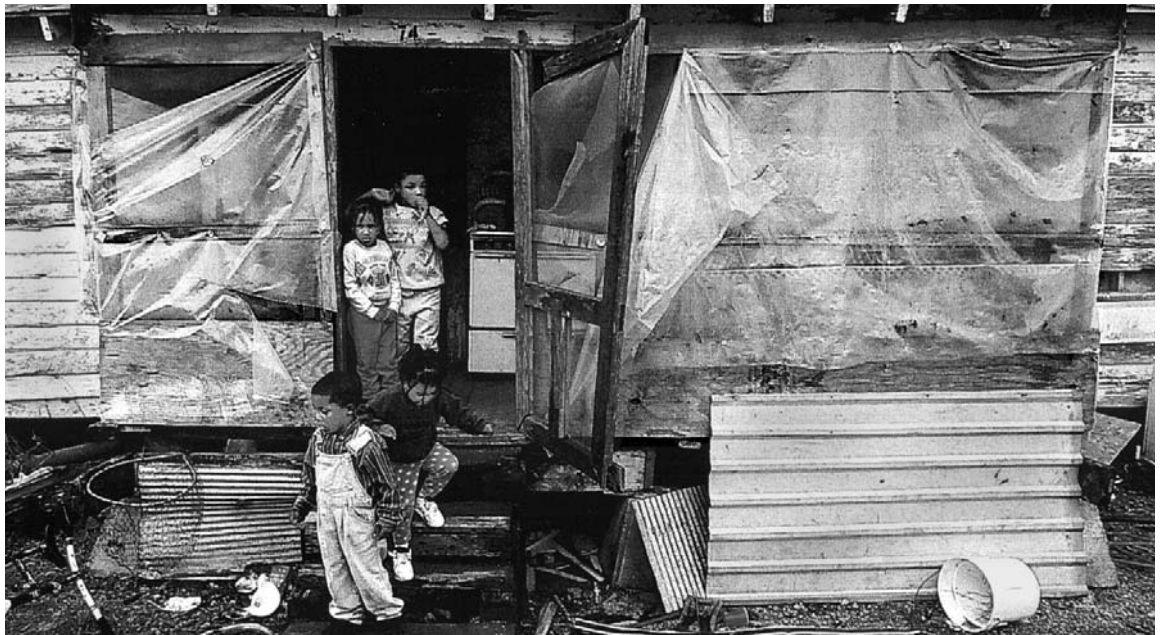


Black Democrats Rally 'Round Welfare-Slasher Clinton



Jesse Jackson joins Clinton on Wall Street to push project for "black capitalism" while black poor face deepening misery, as shown by children in Mississippi hovel.



Sherbell/SABA

Clinton Impeachment and Racist Reaction

Republican efforts to oust Democratic president Bill Clinton from office ground to a halt last week when the Senate predictably failed to convict on the two counts of impeachment. For the population as a whole, Clinton's impeachment for consensual sexual activity posed a threat to the fundamental democratic right to privacy. At the same time, as we noted in "Clinton Impeachment and U.S. Imperialism" (WV No. 704, 8 January), "the weakening of the constitutionally strong American presidency, which stands at the apex of the capitalist state apparatus, would not be a bad thing from the standpoint of the interests of the working class and the oppressed." Now, with Clinton's Senate acquittal, significant sectors of the bourgeoisie have breathed a sigh of relief that the sanctity of the imperial presidency was preserved, freeing Clinton to do what he was put in office for—to secure the profits of American capitalism by riding roughshod over the oppressed masses worldwide while ratcheting up the exploitation and brutal repression of workers and minorities across the U.S.

American ruling circles have been increasingly concerned that the illusion of "democracy" was being undermined by the recklessness of the Republicans in their impeachment of Clinton. Opinion polls consistently showed that a majority of the American people opposed the impeachment, reflecting in particular justifiable concern for the right of privacy. Faced with a population which in its majority does not vote—a crude reflection of a perception by working people and the poor that their interests are not represented by either of the dual parties of American capitalism—the bourgeoisie worried that the drive to remove Clinton from office could shatter the myth that "the people" choose their rulers.

Break with the Democrats!

For a Workers Party that Fights for All the Exploited and Oppressed!

Many commentators have opined that a good part of what fueled the Republicans' ire was that Clinton had stolen much of their program—elimination of welfare, racist "law and order," expansion of the death penalty, wholesale assaults on civil liberties and draconian attacks on immigrant rights. With Clinton carrying out the program of the "moderate" Republicans, the GOP has increasingly come under the influence of the reactionary Christian fundamentalist right. This is exemplified by Moral Majority founder Jerry Falwell, who raved that the anti-Christ—who "will be Jewish"—will appear in the next ten years and has now launched a crusade against a purple Teletubbie—a children's television character he claims is gay!

The impeachment crisis has also highlighted that the most solid base of support for the Democratic Party is in the black population. Recent opinion polls show approval for Clinton among blacks in the range of 90 percent compared to 50 percent for whites. To be sure, these polls—which exclude the opinions of the millions of blacks living in homeless shelters or on the streets, or just too poor to have a functioning telephone—cannot be taken

at face value. Furthermore, the fully one-eighth of the black male population imprisoned or convicted of felonies is denied even the right to vote. But while the soaring approval ratings for Clinton are weighted toward the views of middle-class blacks, Clinton also finds support among the mass of black workers, reflecting the false consciousness sown by black politicians and trade-union bureaucrats that the Democrats represent the interests of labor and blacks.

Yet if blacks rallied behind Clinton during the impeachment crisis, it was not because they now see him as "America's first black president," as black novelist Toni Morrison dubbed him. Rather, it is because they see the men who want to remove him from the White House as the present-day incarnations of the slaveholders of the Old South. Texas Republican Congressman Tom DeLay lashed out at Clinton when he meekly voiced "regret" for centuries of black slavery during a state visit to Africa last year. Senate Republican leader Trent Lott of Mississippi and Georgia Congressman Bob Barr have addressed gatherings of the Council of Conservative Citizens, a direct descendant of the KKK-infested

White Citizens Councils that terrorized civil rights marchers in the South. Speaking in the 1980s, Lott stated: "I think that a lot of the fundamental principles that [Confederate president] Jefferson Davis believed in are very important to people across the country, and they apply to the Republican Party." So it's scarcely surprising that most blacks view Clinton as good, or at least better than Lott and his ilk.

It is a measure of the racial divide in this country that Clinton's cynical courting of prominent black figures such as Rosa Parks, who was featured at the January State of the Union address, has struck a certain resonance in the black population. Even middle-class blacks understand that they, too, are targeted by the apparatus of racist state repression, in particular the cops. Thus comparisons have been made between Starr's vendetta against Clinton and the FBI's hounding of Martin Luther King. Yet it is the Clinton administration which has done more than even its Republican predecessors to strengthen these very forces of racist repression. Meanwhile, black Indiana Congresswoman Julia Carson venerated welfare-slasher Clinton for "uplifting the lives of people whose circumstances would not on their own propel them into a life of economic security!"

These politics of "lesser evilism" in reality perpetuate the racist hellhole that American society is for black people. According to government statistics, in 1998 over a quarter of the black population—nine million people—were defined as poor. To suppress the seething discontent bred by poverty and oppression, the bourgeoisie has greatly augmented its apparatus of brutal repression, placing tens of thousands of additional racist killer cops on the streets with ever more deadly high-tech weaponry. Over 1.7 million people—60 percent of them black or Hispanic—inhabit the nation's prisons, a threefold increase in the past 15 years. Mostly this is the product of the "war on drugs" pushed by both capitalist parties, among the most zealous

continued on page 7

Report from Russia: The Grim Face of Capitalist Counterrevolution

See Page 4



Workers World and the Democrats

21 January 1999

WV Editor,

A careful reading of *Workers World* (Jan. 14, 1999) newspaper proved most revealing to me as I am struggling to gain a lucid picture of the American left.

The editorial in the *Workers World* is titled "A Tale of Two Demonstrations." The editorial lambasts the CPUSA (Communist Party) for its obsession with defending Clinton in issue after issue of the paper, and advocating that people vote for Democrats in the recent election to supposedly combat the ultra-right.

Workers World accurately points out that Clinton has been the villain in pushing through much of the anti-poor "Contract on America" and has been waging a war against the Iraqi people.

Concerning labor and other oppressed groups, *WW* states:

"The mass progressive movements in this country—labor, civil rights, women, lesbian and gay—have for many, many years been allied with the Democratic Party. But this is no reason for those who call themselves communist or socialist to panic and fall in line. It merely shows that much work remains to be done to establish the political independence of the working class and all its allies."

Note well. No mention of the need for a revolutionary workers party to offer leadership to the "working class and all of its allies" if they should gain political independence.

WW continues: "Until the progressive movement breaks free of the bourgeois two-party system, the capitalist rulers will be able to divert the class struggle at home in imperialist war adventures abroad without any opposition from Congress..."

Opposition from Congress? Having just criticized the CPUSA for promoting Democrats, the *WW* now states that when the oppressed break with the Democrats these Democrats will put up opposition to imperialism.

Shouldn't the story read like this. When workers and their allies break with the bourgeois parties, build a revolutionary workers party that will fight to overturn capitalism and build an egalitarian socialist system, then and only then will imperialist wars end.

In another article in this issue titled "Clinton throws money at the Pentagon," the author concludes with the statement:

"It's time for the labor movement, workers and progressive people to demand

that those billions [money for Pentagon] of dollars be used for jobs, schools and people's needs—not war."

Sounds like CPUSA party line from here. Who are the people going to make this demand upon but the bourgeois government—which has been busy destroy-

ing reforms in recent years. A tad bit ideologically confused here.

In conclusion, after one reads through all the rhetoric in the *WW*, one gets a glimpse of the reformist orientation of *Workers World*.

New *Workers Vanguard* reader

The Cliffites and Police "Strikes"

15 January 1999
Boston

To the Editor:

The article "Government Hands Off District Council 37" in *WV* No. 703 (25 December 1998) exposes the International Socialist Organization's (ISO) kneeling before the capitalist state and its courts as "neutral" bodies that can be used to the benefit of the working class. But we don't even have to look to the ISO's cothinkers in Canada and Britain for examples. These "State Department socialists" have a long and sordid history of crossing the class line on this question that goes back to their predecessors, the International Socialists (I.S.). In 1971, the I.S. supported the New York City police strike, referring to the action as that of "militant workers" whose "union," the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA), was threatened by the Taylor Law:

"Last week New York City cops discovered what it's like *to be on the other side*. As soon as they stepped out of their

role and began to act like *militant workers* themselves, the power of the state came down on them even more heavily than it did on *other workers*.... If the police continue their fight against the city and the Taylor Law, the contradiction between their role as police and *their needs as employees will intensify*."

—*Workers Power*, 29 January 1971 (emphasis added), quoted in *Young Communist Bulletin* No. 2, "International Socialists: Left Wing of Social Democracy"

As we stated, the cops, courts and the prison system are the core of the capitalist state, which is an instrument of class repression against the working class. The state cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the working class but must be *smashed* through a socialist revolution and replaced by a workers state. This will take the construction of a Leninist vanguard party built in opposition to those groups like the ISO whose politics are reduced to being the "socialist" mouthpieces for the capitalist class.

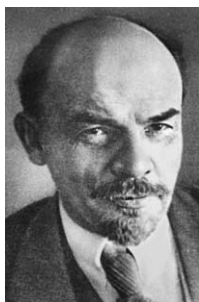
Comradely,
Mark M.



TROTSKY

Oliver Cromwell: Bourgeois Revolutionary

Last month marked the 350th anniversary of the execution of the English king, Charles I, by Oliver Cromwell and his New Model Army. This act was the dramatic high point of the first of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions which led to the social and economic modernization of West Europe and North America. While Cromwell's Commonwealth of the 1650s effected the progressive trans-



LENIN

formation of English society, his consolidation of the colonial subjugation of Ireland ultimately led to a strengthening of reactionary forces in the British Isles. As Trotsky recognized, Cromwell was, within the limits of his class and historical era, a great revolutionary.

Cromwell's task was to inflict as many crushing blows as possible on the absolute monarchy, the court dignitaries, and the half-Catholic Church, which had been reduced to serve the needs of the monarch and the dignitaries. For such a blow Cromwell, the true representative of the new class, was in need of the strength and passion of the masses of the people. Under his leadership, the revolution acquires all the scope it needs. Whenever it exceeds—for instance, among the Levellers—the limits of the demands of the renovation of bourgeois society, Cromwell mercilessly berates the "madmen"....

The revolutionary realist Cromwell was building a new society. Parliament was not an end in itself; law is not an end in itself; Cromwell himself and his "holy" troops considered the realization of divine commands to be the true end, but in reality the latter were merely the ideological conditions for the construction of bourgeois society. Dispersing Parliament after Parliament, Cromwell thus revealed as little reverence for the fetish of "national" representation as he revealed an insufficient respect for the monarchy by the grace of God in his execution of Charles I.

Nevertheless, it was Cromwell who paved the way for the parliamentary and democratic methods of the two succeeding centuries. In revenge for Cromwell's execution of Charles I, Charles II had Cromwell's body suspended on a gibbet. But no Restoration could reestablish the pre-Cromwellian society. The work of Cromwell could not be liquidated by the predatory legislation of the Restoration. For the pen can never eradicate that which has been written by the sword. This reversal of the popular proverb is much more correct, particularly when we speak of the axe of revolution.

—Leon Trotsky, *Where Is Britain Going?* (1925)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.



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The closing date for news in this issue is February 16.

No. 707

19 February 1999

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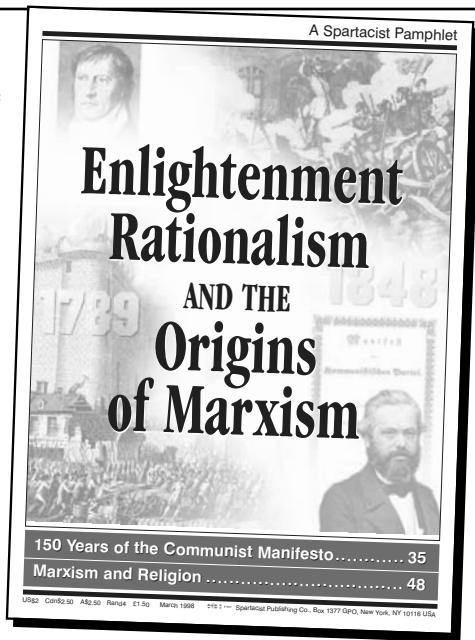
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16 Years After Cop Frame-Up Chicago: Death Row Prisoner Freed

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

After more than 16 years on death row, an exultant Anthony Porter, who had been framed up for a double homicide, walked out of an Illinois prison a free man on February 5. Speaking outside prison, Porter said the Chicago cops “railroaded me straight up. They framed me.” He went on, “I don’t know how I’m going to get those years back. I’m just thankful to be alive.” Had a college class not investigated the case, uncovering a prime example of racist capitalist injustice, Porter could be dead today.

While this case may be chilling, it is hardly exceptional. Nationally, for every seven prisoners executed since the death penalty was reinstituted in 1976, one death row prisoner has proven his innocence and won release. Porter is the tenth such prisoner to have been released from Illinois’ death row. As in all of those cases, his escape from the death machine required overcoming enormous obstacles. We say: Abolish the racist death penalty!

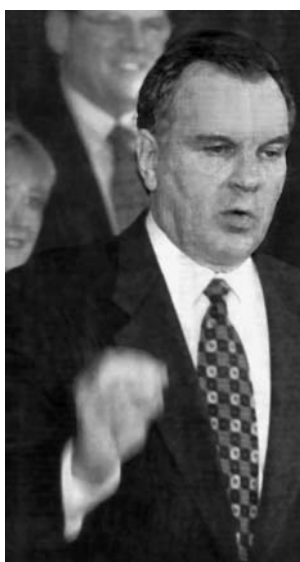
Anthony Porter was convicted in 1982 for the murder of a young couple on Chicago’s South Side and was to be the first inmate put to death in the new “super-maximum” facility in downstate Joliet Correctional Center. Two days before his scheduled execution last September, the Illinois Supreme Court granted Porter an emergency stay in order to allow a mental competency hearing. The Northwestern University journalism class of professor David Protess then decided to take on Porter’s case as a project. In 1996, his class gained wide recognition when their investigation uncovered evidence clearing the “Ford Heights 4”—young black men wrongfully convicted of abducting and killing a white couple in suburban Chicago. The four were released after languishing in prison for 18 years.

These cases highlight the workings of a system of racist injustice where frame-ups and police violence are everyday occurrences. In the Porter case, the journalism class, with a private eye working *pro bono*, took only *four months* to exonerate him. Among the clues the class uncovered was the fact that the state’s star witness testified that the killer fired with his left hand while Porter is right-handed. Another man has since confessed to the murder and turned himself in.

As Marxists we oppose the death penalty on principle. We do not accord the state the right to say who lives and who dies. The death penalty—the historic

civil rights movement and mass Vietnam antiwar protests were long over, the same court that had ruled the death penalty was “wanton and freakish” gave a green light to reinstate it. With the assembly line of death continuing to accelerate, the number of executions since 1977 reached 500 last December. Today, more than 3,500 prisoners—the majority black and Hispanic—are on death row.

Since 1982, Porter has maintained that he walked into the police station to clear his name after the murder, but was then handcuffed to a wall and beaten with a telephone book in order to force a false confession. While Porter never confessed,



Prisching/Chicago Tribune

Mayor Richard Daley Jr. oversees Chicago cops’ racist war on black ghettos.

norm in racist America—is at the apex of the capitalist state’s bloody arsenal of repression. Only as a result of deepgoing social struggle was the American ruling class compelled to overturn the death penalty in 1972. But in 1976, after the



Contreras/Chicago Tribune

they managed to frame him up anyway. Chicago ranks second in the nation in the number of homicide convictions overturned because of a prosecutor concealing or entering false evidence.

A recent series of articles in the



White/Chicago Sun-Times

Anthony Porter embraces his mother after his release from prison.

Chicago Tribune has documented a pattern of racist abuse perpetrated by the Cook County Prosecutor’s office when Richard M. Daley Jr., now Chicago’s Democratic mayor, was State’s Attorney. During Daley’s tenure, which included the time of Porter’s frame-up conviction, dozens of other “suspects,” overwhelmingly black, were tortured—by electric shocks to the genitals, burning, smothering, Russian Roulette—to coerce false confessions. One notorious torturer, police commander Lt. Jon Burge, among whose victims is the group known as the “Death Row Ten,” was fired in 1993. But this does not alter one iota the nature of the police force in which racist brutality is standard operating procedure.

The Porter case has generated a flurry of proposals aimed at “reforming” the machinery of death so that it will run more smoothly. Among others, Jesse Jackson Sr. and his son, a Democratic Congressman, have come out for a “moratorium” on executions. While cloaked in the language of “safeguards” and “justice,” the call for a moratorium is being supported by both liberal death penalty abolitionists and those who want to prettify this barbaric punishment. With sections of the bourgeois establishment embarrassed by the raft of exonerations freeing ten men from Illinois’ death row, even Daley—the man who put many of them there—has now come out for a moratorium.

Another Chicago black Congressman, *continued on page 6*

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For more information: (213) 380-8239

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Report from Russia

The Grim Face of Capitalist Counterrevolution

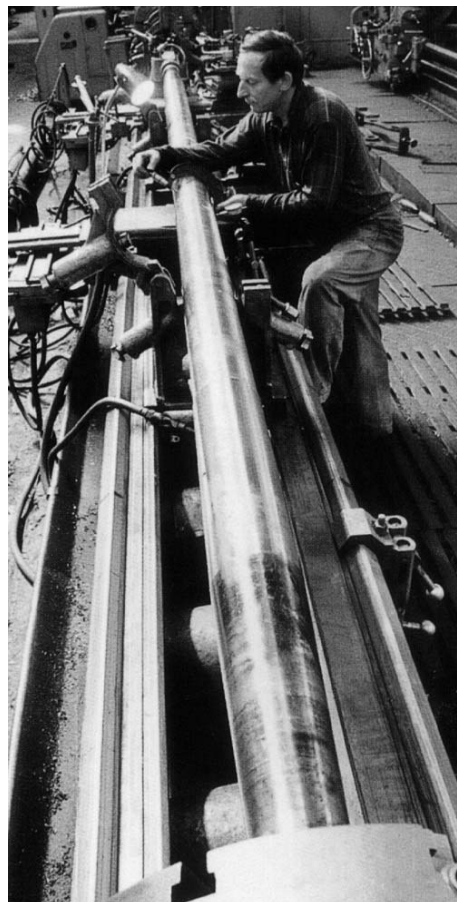
We print below excerpts from a 5 December 1998 report by a visitor to the Russian Far East (RFE), centering on the cities of Vladivostok and Khabarovsk. Part One appeared in WV No. 706 (5 February).

On this trip to the Russian Far East, it appeared to me that throughout the country the former tendency toward retreat into personal survival has partly been displaced by anger at the social crisis which has wracked this country since the capitalist counterrevolution of 1991-92. This observation may stem from the fact it was my first opportunity to be outside Moscow and St. Petersburg in quite some time. In poorer, formerly more

Part Two

industrialized cities like Vladivostok and Khabarovsk one feels that the new capitalists are more isolated and hated. But the *bourgeois class* basis of these much-despised plunderers is obscured by the tremendous scale of their criminal greed. For instance, in September the banks smuggled all their remaining money abroad to avoid debt collectors. Meanwhile, Yeltsin's apparat is sitting on real estate holdings valued at 6 to 7 trillion dollars! This all nurtures the notion that "normal" capitalist exploitation, as many presume is practiced in the West, still offers a way out. This is not the only opinion, of course. Perhaps even more common is the notion that Russia is not ready for "western" capitalism and needs a despot to rule with an iron hand.

Vladivostok's center was alive when I arrived, but not crowded like Moscow or St. Petersburg. "It is cold, so most people stay home," commented my host and driver for the day. That day, "cold" meant minus 20 to minus 25 degrees Celsius (minus 4 to minus 13 Fahrenheit), but it was the winds coming in off the white-capped ocean that drove it way down.



Priamurskiye Vedomosti

Metal worker at shipbuilding facility of Soviet era, which transformed Khabarovsk into a center of industry.



WV Photo

Crumbling steam pipes and overgrown weeds framing the entrance of a closed factory in Khabarovsk symbolize devastation of industry following restoration of capitalist rule in former Soviet Union.

This winter, forecast to be the coldest in three decades, hit Vladivostok with a vengeance. I was amazed to see what is supposedly a common sight in the Far East: a driver lying under his car, thawing his gas tank with a gasoline blow torch! Overheating it is a mistake you can only make once. When I returned to Vladivostok after a few days away it was just as cold, but the wind had died down and the streets were as jammed with pedestrians as Moscow.

On the whole, indoor heating was steady during the prior winter. But this was not true for one neighborhood of 1,500 where the boiler officially belongs to the port, which cut off heat to the area. This year, that same neighborhood has been left without heat while the number of people affected has increased five times. On November 25, seven thousand freezing residents staged a protest chanting, "Give our children heat!" They blocked the bridge linking their southern neighborhood to the city center, almost overturned one TV station car and seized a well-off "new Russian" who tried to sic his German shepherd on them. The militia could maintain order only by taking the side of the protesters.

Power and water problems have been far more serious this winter. Electricity shortages have not been as bad as in the Kamchatka Peninsula where there is power only four hours a day, but the situation is still serious. The Primorsky Krai province which includes Vladivostok generates its own power—and more of it than any other part of the RFE (12 billion kilowatt-hours per year). The port waters are even heated in winter by a portside atomic power station to prevent freezing over. But in this still very corporatist part of the former Soviet Union, all municipal services, even basic ones like electricity, have been disrupted by the financial crisis, interruptions in rail deliveries of coal and oil to power stations and just plain embezzlement of power workers' salaries. The Vladivostok Thermal and Electrical Station No. 2 robbed its employees of \$12 million to build private "cottages" for its directors. There were complete blackouts, except for midnight to 6:30 a.m., for all residences and businesses this July.

In addition to the scheduled blackouts, there have been rare but disastrous un-

announced outages, one of which caused the death of an infant in a hospital incubator in July. In March 1997, a mother in the neighboring town of Pogranichny bled to death in the middle of a Caesarean section. In the Soviet period of relative abundance, hospital administrations never thought of backup generators, and now there is no money allocated for such things. Only two hospitals in Vladivostok have them. The family I stayed with has its own gas generator for backup. The problem with electricity is all the more acute because cooking stoves are electric in Vladivostok, which has never had any natural gas lines.

The situation with water there is even worse. This summer—a very dry one—saw the city reservoir dry up, refilled by rainfall, later closed to remove mold and cut off again by power outages in pumping stations. As a result, for three months there was a severe water shortage throughout the city. Five neighborhood water filling stations, guarded around the clock by soldiers, supplied the only available tap water. When the water came back on, often only the hot water worked.

The water is very contaminated with heavy metals. The family I stayed with uses a magnetic purifier and drinks bottled water. The harbor waters and tributaries are quite polluted. An estimated 50 sunken ships are wasting away in the harbor depths and a two-meter-thick layer of oil by-products coats the harbor floor. The junk and oil is so thick that a planned 15-year salvage/cleaning operation expects to finance itself by processing and selling the muck!

The stress and strain of the social counterrevolution, the harsh environment and the sudden breakdown of modern hygiene have all combined to create serious health hazards in Vladivostok. The tuberculosis rate among teenagers has doubled in the last year; for the population as a whole, 96 out of 100,000 people are infected. This is a third higher than the rest of Russia, where from January to May 1998 three million new cases of TB had appeared. Syphilis cases in Vladivostok have jumped up 400 percent from the period of 1996-97. Compounding the problems, the state budget for health services has been axed. The Vladivostok Tuberculosis Hospital staff has not been paid for half a year. Lack of

medicines, supplies (and occasionally water and power) have led to some staff members becoming infected. Sanitary services in the city have also been cut out. Nothing has been paid for rat control since October 1997, while the infestation of disease-bearing pests has risen by 250 percent.

Ambulance paramedics struck on August 4, demanding pay that has been withheld for 16 months. Some were fainting from hunger. There are only 40 ambulances for a city of some 700,000. When I was in Khabarovsk, a similar and clearly very popular sit-down strike of emergency service workers took place after the city's final offer to pay 25 percent of their July salaries. This is all part of the drive to choke off the remnants of the extensive Soviet medical system. There are still 126 hospital beds for every 10,000 people in Russia as a whole, compared to 34 beds for every 10,000 Americans.

Meanwhile, for the wealthy, finding adequate medical care is a matter of sifting through the hundreds of private clinics that have sprung up. The two Vladivostok businessmen I sat next to on the way back to Moscow said that the key problem was finding competent specialists amid the mass of careerists. For those without money, but with connections, deals can be made. I heard of one instance where a maternity clinic was paid with a television set for the birth of a baby.

To go from the banal to the surreal: there is the slight problem of tigers. An Ussuri tiger, the largest variety in the world, padded through a picnic in a Vladivostok suburban neighborhood on



Voron Publishing

Severe deforestation has driven Ussuri tigers into suburban neighborhoods of Vladivostok.

WORKERS VANGUARD

August 15. The animal was known to people there, and had not attacked anyone. But her mate, after having been shot and wounded, understandably began attacking humans, and had to be killed. It was recent severe deforestation and rapacious poaching that created this problem. So life is a little rougher in the Far East than in Moscow.

Construction projects everywhere have frozen in their tracks, graphically illustrating the “boom gone bust” character of Vladivostok. Most of these are unfinished brick villas whose owners are either dead, on the run or broke. Many old, run-down buildings near the city center have been emptied for demolition to make way for major road projects, but they stand abandoned while the projects are ensnared in the turf war between the mayor and governor.

Standing out against the older, dilapidated buildings are beautifully restored homes of the new rich, hotels and, above all, the magnificent Vladivostok train station right in the center. I have never seen anything like the quality of external and internal renovations, which were done by an Italian firm when the city was booming. The other notable recent addition is the Hyundai Hotel. This glistening \$100 million Korean development currently stands almost empty, but is indicative of South Korean intentions to invest in the RFE. Meanwhile, American businessmen on Sakhalin island, like colonial masters, have created walled-off hamlets of modern housing with their own municipal facilities.

Khabarovsk: Military and Industrial Center

My two days in Khabarovsk were maximized by the fortunate circumstance of staying with a very interesting working-class family. They were unstopably political, literate and glad to find a sympathetic ear for their vivid descriptions of what the destruction of the Soviet Union had done to the local economy and the working class.

Khabarovsk is about 380 miles north of Vladivostok, at the same latitude as the U.S.-Canadian border, on the east bank of the Amur River, where it intersects the Ussuri River. Historically, this location made it key to control of Siberia. The city began as the Chinese town of Boli in the 12th century and was taken over by Russia in the mid-1600s. Khabarovsk and Vladivostok grew in importance for Russia after the Japanese won the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 and occupied Port Arthur on the other side of the Korean peninsula. The Trans-Siberian and Baikal-Amur rail lines intersect in Khabarovsk, and the city is the administrative center of a region with a population of 1.6 million (80 percent urban). Up until the time I got there, Khabarovsk had been having a relatively mild winter, though the strong wind off of the Amur River often makes it feel much colder.

In addition to the river port and rail junctions, the city has the RFE’s largest airports, both civilian (4 million passengers annually) and military, capable of handling the largest military craft in the world. The city is also the seat of the Far East Military District Headquarters, with an army academy in the center of town, making soldiers and cadets a common sight. The relative importance of Khabarovsk in the RFE was shown by the fact that it was there, not Vladivostok, that a major conference was held to discuss the economic and social crisis in the RFE and the neighboring Trans-Baikal regions. And in contrast to how interference from Moscow has hobbled Vladivostok, Khabarovsk has defied the central government by withholding federal taxes.

When Nikita Khrushchev, Soviet leader from the mid-1950s to early ’60s, reduced the military and promoted industrialization, Khabarovsk began a steady growth that eventually doubled its population to today’s 612,000. By the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, 124 industrial enterprises were concentrated here—30 percent of all RFE industrial production. All manner of machine tool

With city water supplies repeatedly shut off, residents of Vladivostok use buckets to obtain potable water.



Vyacheslav Voyakin



Yury Maltsev

November 1998: As temperatures plunged far below zero, Vladivostok residents blocked bridge in protest demanding heat for their homes.



Vladivostok News

factories—ship building, turbines for power stations, diesel engines, cables, prefabricated housing units—were set up here, more than the rest of the RFE put together.

Even before the August 1998 banking crisis, civilian and military production was already down 50 percent from 1991. Economic life in the Khabarovsk region can be summed up bluntly: even with the regional gross product rising slightly, industry has been devastated and whole assembly lines are being looted, taken to China and beyond. The city is losing population for the first time in 20 years, including Volga Germans who were settled here in the 1930s. However, transport, communications and extractive industries are working, and infrastructure construction (roadways) also continues. Most impressive is the recent upgrade of the two-tier rail and auto bridge over the Amur that links the Khabarovsk region with the Jewish Autonomous Republic of Birobidjan and with China.

However important military industry was for Khabarovsk, about 170 miles north on the Amur River are the towns of Amursk and Komsomolsk-on-Amur, where the greatest military industrial production of the region is concentrated. There they still produce whole defense industry assembly lines for China.

In extraction and processing of natural resources, the Khabarovsk Krai is in several respects more important than the Pri-

morsky Krai. It extracts more timber, has the RFE’s only iron and steel production and both of the region’s oil refineries. As a result, the Khabarovsk region traded more than the Primorsky Krai, exporting ferrous metals, oil and timber. Major partners were Japan (54 percent) and South Korea (12 percent). The Amur River Steamship Company still carries 20 percent of Russia’s trade with Japan (30 million tons annually). But rail still carries twice as much as any other means and employs about 80,000 workers in the region. Since military orders plummeted, timber exports have provided 40 to 60 percent of revenues. Other mineral resources include gold, tin, manganese and tungsten. Geographically, the Khabarovsk Krai has not only the advantage of a longer border with China, but also ports that are even better suited than Vladivostok to service the oil- and gas-rich island of Sakhalin.

Everyday Life in Khabarovsk

The atmosphere of Khabarovsk is notably more serene than Vladivostok. It reminded me of the Ukrainian academic city of Kharkov. There are fewer garish signs of the criminal rich: the wealthy and the poor shop in the same main *gastro-nome*. The city’s theaters and film houses are few but they seem to be for everyone, and pensioners even get free passes on certain days. There does not seem to be a separate world of casinos, nightclubs

and restaurants for “new Russians” as in Vladivostok. It is possible for ordinary people to sit down in a sidewalk cafe on the main street, something unheard of in Moscow.

This is not to say that there is less social polarization, just the opposite. While I saw fewer gangster types in downtown Khabarovsk than in Vladivostok, there seems to be a more developed and deepgoing social differentiation here and wealthy “new Russians” actually seem more ensconced. If in Vladivostok only individual mansions are newly renovated, in Khabarovsk whole fancy, Moscow-style apartment complexes are going up amid quaint turn-of-the-century cottages and Soviet-era apartment buildings—and their construction has not been stopped by the banking crisis. Alongside the noticeably large layer of wealthy people in Khabarovsk, there also seem to be many more desperately poor. Quite often during my two days in town I saw pensioners picking through the garbage—not for bottles as they would in Moscow, but for food! Just a few bus stops from the city center one can see two-story wooden World War II-era barracks, built as civilian housing with outhouses and no hot water. In Moscow, such miserable places can be found only on the outskirts.

But while there were ghastly signs of poverty among pensioners, I did not see any signs of skinheads or “rockers,” and a 20-year-old acquaintance described rock concerts as free from such types. When he and his school buddy drove me to the train station, they said that they are lucky to be in Khabarovsk where they feel there is a future. Even though he is from a poor working-class family, he is about to graduate from the former Higher Party School, now the prestigious Public Service Academy. I don’t know how his family manages it; no education is free. There are three times more students in Khabarovsk than in Vladivostok.

In Khabarovsk, unlike Vladivostok, there is no dog fight between the governor and the mayor. Governor Ishayev is a popular autocrat, somewhat akin to Moscow mayor Luzhkov. Ishayev has channeled a percentage of kickbacks and bribes into restoring many historic landmark buildings to their original charm. For instance, one of the most beautiful downtown prerevolutionary mansions, which served as the Palace of Pioneers in Soviet days, is now occupied by a private business. But it is obliged to provide a small club for children.

The city in general has retained more Soviet atmosphere and terminology than any other city I have seen. None of the monuments for Lenin or the Russian Civil War have been touched. Even when the main street was given back its pre-revolutionary name—Muravyov-Amur Street—at the time of the city’s 140th anniversary, only the historic, downtown part reverted to this. The rest, built in Soviet times, remains Karl Marx Prospect and the main square is Lenin Square. It makes some sense since these areas were only built after the October Revolution of 1917.

Spontaneous labor protests occur throughout the Khabarovsk Krai just as often as the rest of the RFE. It was notable that a national day of protest

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Бюллетень Спартаковцев

SPARTACIST

Приложение № 15

ноябрь 1998 г.

Декларация принципов и некоторые элементы программы

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brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.



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Chicago...

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Bobby Rush, cynically claims to oppose the death penalty. However, Rush supported Clinton's 1994 crime bill, which greatly *expanded* the use of the death penalty for federal offenses. While Rush touts his credentials as an ex-Black Panther in his bid for mayor, like many of his generation of young black militants he was co-opted long ago into the fold of the capitalist Democratic Party which ran "Segregation City" in 1969 when his Panther comrades Mark Clark and Fred Hampton were murdered by the cops on Chicago's West Side.

As liberals try to streamline the death penalty, reformists like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) are climbing all over the moratorium bandwagon. At a February 10 press conference at City Hall to "demand accountability from Daley for Burge death row cases," speaker after speaker called for the abolition of the

death penalty. But ISO supporter Joan Parkin, speaking for the Campaign to End the Death Penalty, focused solely on pressuring Daley to investigate the cases of the Death Row Ten and to "urge" the Illinois governor to impose a moratorium, making not a peep about abolishing the death penalty. That day, five protesters were arrested at a City Council meeting where the ISO's death penalty group was again pleading for Daley to pressure the governor. Drop the charges against the anti-death penalty protesters!

The ISO's reformist pressure politics have recently been re-energized by Bobby Rush's mayoral campaign. Harking back to the class-collaborationist alliance of union bureaucrats, black nationalists and fake leftists which brought black Democrat Harold Washington into City Hall in 1983, an ISO leaflet gushes, "Congressman Bobby Rush has positioned himself as a force that can re-build the kind of movement that brought people together in the early eighties." Abetted by the reformist left,

November 1998 united-front rally in Chicago initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee represented potential to mobilize labor in fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

WV Photo



the Washington campaign fostered the illusion that a black face atop the Democratic Party machine would change life for blacks and other minorities. In contrast, our article "Harold Washington Will Betray Black Chicago" (WV No. 328, 22 April 1983) warned:

"He's going to break strikes. He's going to slash social services. He's going to lay off city workers. And he's going to have the racist cops break up protests by trade unionists, blacks and others who can't take it any longer. That's Harold Washington's job."

And Washington did his job to the best of his ability. By sowing illusions in the capitalist Democrats and the "reformability" of the bourgeois state, reformists like the ISO serve to undermine the class consciousness of the proletariat and maintain its political subordination to the ruling class.

The fight to abolish the racist death penalty must be waged as part of a broader program of integrated class struggle against the Republican and Democratic parties of capital and the

entire system of capitalist repression. This means that cops and prison guards, the agencies of capitalist state repression, have no place in the labor movement. The Spartacist League seeks to mobilize the multiracial proletariat which has the interest and social power to bring down the capitalist death machine through socialist revolution.

Last November, the Partisan Defense Committee initiated a united-front labor/black mobilization in downtown Chicago calling for the freedom of another innocent man the state is bent on executing, Mumia Abu-Jamal, the most prominent death row prisoner in America today. As the PDC stated in its call for the demonstration (see WV No. 701, 20 November 1998):

"In taking up the fight for Mumia's freedom, the working class will be striking a blow against an entire system predicated on the brutal exploitation of labor and rooted in the racist oppression of the black population. The fight for black freedom is central to the emancipation of labor itself. Those who labor must rule!" ■

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Impeachment...

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being the black Democrats. During the Senate trial of Clinton, four white New York City cops fired 41 bullets to kill a young West African immigrant who was simply standing in the lobby of his own apartment house. This is the reality of “justice” for blacks in the America of Bill Clinton and Trent Lott. And it’s a reality which immigrants are thrown right into when they arrive in this country, where their prospects for advancement are largely determined by the color of their skin.

The forcible subjugation and segregation of the black population at the bottom of this society is an essential foundation stone of American capitalism. The capitalist rulers have fomented racial hatred and made the color bar a fundamental dividing line in the working class in order to obscure the irreconcilable class divide between labor and capital. Once supplying a “reserve army of labor” to be employed when the bosses needed them, the ghetto poor have been discarded by a ruling class that no longer needs their labor power. But black workers remain a significant component of organized labor, integrated into strategic



Young Socialist

National Guard mobilized against striking black sanitation workers in Memphis, 1968.

sections of the proletariat in whose hands lies the power to break the chains of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression. The road to black freedom lies in the smashing of the capitalist system on which black oppression is founded. As opposed to the dead end of support to “lesser evil” Democrats and the reactionary black capitalist nationalism of Louis Farrakhan, we stand on the perspective of revolutionary integrationism, fighting against every instance of discrimination and for the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. For black liberation through socialist revolution!

The Trap of the Capitalist Two-Party System

With labor bureaucrats and black pols like Jesse Jackson delivering the labor and black vote while squelching any sort of struggle that might jeopardize the party’s electoral prospects, the Democrats have been able to gain public acceptance for imperialist adventures abroad while at home they savage social programs like welfare which were a lifeline particularly for the black and Hispanic poor. In rallying around the welfare-slashing president, Jackson made a point of speaking out in support of Clinton’s terror bombing of Iraq in December.

Jackson and the other black elected officials claim to represent all black people but in reality represent the interests of a layer of black yuppies who were the main beneficiaries of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and ’60s. In particular, they benefitted from the government’s “War on Poverty” programs which were designed to co-opt a layer of young black activists. There is today a greater disparity in income among blacks than among whites, with 20 percent of black families earning half of all black income. This layer owes its social and economic status to government programs and policies, which are reversible. The black middle class is, to a much larger extent than



Republican Senate leader Trent Lott addressing “Council of Conservative Citizens,” successor to KKK-infested White Citizens Councils.

its white counterpart, made up of bureaucrats in the various federal, state and local government agencies. Furthermore, many black small businessmen (e.g., in construction) are financially dependent on government contracts awarded on the basis of affirmative action.

It is the black Democratic Party political leaders, based on the middle class, who tie the mass of black workers and poor to the capitalist system of exploitation, impoverishment and racist oppression. Yet the entire network of government programs upon which the black middle class is largely based have been steadily under bipartisan attack. This is a

oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black man, Rickey Ray Rector. He lectured blacks that they had to take “personal responsibility” for improving their economic condition and told parishioners in a black church in Memphis, Tennessee that the high homicide rate among blacks would shame Martin Luther King.

Blacks recognized that Clinton was appealing to the white racist vote to a far greater degree than the Democratic presidential candidates of the 1980s and they reacted accordingly. While overall voter turnout was up in 1992, there was a sharp falling off among blacks. Many blacks figured it wasn’t worth going to the polls to choose between the “moderate” Republican George Bush and “New” Democrat Clinton.

By moving the Democratic Party more openly to the right, especially on the race question, Clinton legitimized the white-supremacist and religious-fundamentalist demagoguery of the Republican right. In 1994, the Republicans decisively won control of both houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years in part because of a low voter turnout among trade unionists and blacks. We wrote at the time:

“The Republican sweep puts a seal on years of bipartisan social reaction rolling back the minimal gains of the 1960s civil rights movement. With Clinton’s yuppie racist ‘New’ Democrats going out of their way to spit on the party’s traditional black and labor constituencies, the field was open for a rout by the more openly racist Republican right.”

—“Right-Wing, Racist Sweep in Elections,” WV No. 611, 25 November 1994

Clinton was now thrown into a position of confronting an aggressively right-wing Republican Congress which, moreover, was personally hostile to him. The recent impeachment by the House and trial in the Senate culminated a five-year-long Republican vendetta to remove Clinton from the White House using special prosecutor Kenneth Starr for this purpose. Once he realized he was fighting for his political life, Clinton cynically turned for support to the Democratic Party’s traditional constituencies of organized labor and blacks. Jesse Jackson, who in 1992 was told to go to the back of the Democratic Party bus—or better still, to hide under one of the seats—was brought into Clinton’s inner circle to help get out the black vote in last year’s Congressional elections.

The Civil Rights Movement and the Bankruptcy of Liberal Reformism

The fact that the overwhelming majority of the black population looks to the Democrats—the historic party of slavery

and Jim Crow segregation in the South—as a “lesser evil” dates to the 1930s. With their work relief and social programs and populist appeals, the Democrats under Franklin Roosevelt forged a “New Deal” coalition including the emerging industrial unions and blacks and joining them to the Southern Dixiecrats, who ruled the South through brutal police terror against blacks, labor and reds.

In reality, the New Deal was aimed at *suppressing* class struggle at a time of massive CIO organizing drives and militant strikes, in which black workers were beginning to play a prominent role. To ward off any spectre of red revolution, the government instituted a welter of reforms even though, out of deference to the Dixiecrats, these measures largely excluded the bulk of the black population, such as Southern sharecroppers and domestic servants. At the same time, a spate of measures was carried out aiming to chain the combative industrial unions to the mechanisms of the bourgeois state, such as the National Labor Relations Board.

The reformist left, particularly the Communist Party, worked to channel the turbulent class battles of the time into the New Deal coalition. In the process, a bureaucratic layer emerged at the top of the new, integrated unions which was directly beholden to the Democrats and the capitalist state. This layer was consolidated in the 1940s and early ’50s through the purge of some 25,000 union members, centrally Communists and other militants who had been key leaders in the CIO organizing drives. The ties of the labor tops to the Democratic Party are the central political expression of their class-collaborationist program, serving to block any development toward class consciousness and independent political organization by the multiracial working class. All this is reinforced by the racism of the trade-union tops.

The labor bureaucrats made a feeble attempt to organize the “open shop” South—obscenely called “Operation Dixie”—in 1946-47. But that was immediately shipwrecked on the shoals of the red purges, racism and the bureaucrats’ ties to the Democratic Party. In many cases, to get the “reds” the labor bureaucrats worked to destroy already existing Southern unions that were largely Communist-led and had a substantial black membership.

With the onset of the Cold War against the Soviet Union, the system of Jim Crow segregation in the South became an embarrassment for U.S. imperialism internationally. In the late 1940s, Democratic president Truman’s Committee on Civil Rights bluntly expressed its foremost motivation for recommending laws against lynching and voting discrimination:

“We cannot escape the fact that our civil rights record has been an issue in world politics.... Those with competing philosophies have stressed—and are shamelessly distorting—our shortcomings.... They have tried to prove our democracy an empty fraud, and our nation a consistent oppressor of underprivileged people.”

—quoted in Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States* (1980)

However, it was not the federal government that tore down the system of legally

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Impeachment...

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enforced segregation in the South but the struggles of the black masses. The fight for black equality which erupted in the 1950s and extended throughout the U.S. in the '60s broke apart the conservative Cold War consensus and profoundly shook the American bourgeois order. However, the liberal black leadership represented by Martin Luther King sought to contain the civil rights struggles within the framework of "respectable" bourgeois politics, in particular tying the movement to the Democratic Party Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

A major event of the civil rights movement was the 1963 March on Washington, which witnessed the growing tensions between the younger black militants and the King leadership and his sponsors in the white liberal establishment, especially the Walter Reuther wing of the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy. John Lewis, then the head of the militant Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), drafted a speech denouncing the Democratic Party, saying "the party of Kennedy is the party of Eastland," Mississippi's Dixiecrat Senator. He concluded: "We cannot depend on any political party for both Democrats and Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence." March leaders, particularly Walter Reuther and black social-democratic union leader A. Philip Randolph, pressured Lewis into deleting this section of the speech.

The Fight for Revolutionary Integrationism

With millions taking to the streets and battling the racist cops from Birmingham, Alabama to Los Angeles and Detroit, the fight for black equality intersected growing popular opposition to U.S. imperialism's dirty colonial war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. However, the ruling class was able to restabilize the society through a combination of murderous repression, particularly directed at the Black Panther Party and other radicals, and the co-optation of a layer of black leaders and activists. Today, the core of the black wing of the Democratic Party—from King's lieutenant Jesse Jackson to former SNCC leader John Lewis—derives from this period.

This was not a preordained outcome. In the early '60s, an entire generation of young radicals, black and white, began to confront the "white power structure" and became increasingly open to a revolutionary perspective. This was also the period when the Spartacist League originated as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) in the once-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). A central component of the RT's opposition to the SWP leadership was the struggle for a revolutionary integrationist perspective, linking the tumultuous battles for black equality to labor's fight against capital. In this, the RT based itself on Richard S. Fraser's pioneering struggle in the SWP of the 1950s for revolutionary integrationism.

Counterposed to liberal integrationism—the false view that blacks could achieve social equality within the confines of racist American capitalism—revolutionary integrationism is premised on the understanding that black freedom requires smashing the capitalist system and constructing an egalitarian socialist society. When the tremendous productive resources of this country are deployed for the benefit of those who labor to produce it, the foundations will be laid for the full integration of blacks and the eradication of all social inequalities.

The rightward-moving SWP refused to intervene directly into the civil rights struggles while simultaneously uncritically supporting the liberal reformism of King & Co. and advocating black nationalism. Expelled from the SWP, in 1966 the Spartacist tendency pointed to the



Earl Grant

Young civil rights militants like John Lewis (fourth from left), in Harlem in 1964, denounced Democrats as well as Republicans. Today Lewis is a Democratic Congressman and ardent Clinton supporter.



UPI

Martin Luther King (second from left) and UAW head Walter Reuther (far right), shown with John F. Kennedy in 1963. Liberals sought to divert struggle for black rights into reliance on capitalist government and Democratic Party.

limits and growing contradictions of the liberal-led civil rights movement:

"The goal was formal, legal, equality; civil rights; or the northernizing of the south. The beneficiaries of this campaign were to be that narrow segment of the black population which is middle class or close to it and is commonly called 'the black bourgeoisie.' The political strategy was to seek the support of, and to avoid antagonizing, the liberal establishment, and, logically enough, to seek to bring to bear the powers of the federal government which is controlled by this establishment. The tactics to be used were characterized by a heavy reliance on non-violence and moral confrontation....

"In contrast to the reform program of the civil rights movement, the demands of the black masses are necessarily and inherently class demands, and demands which the ruling class cannot meet. The call for jobs, for housing, and for emancipation from police brutalization (attacking the very basis of the state)—these cannot be answered by another civil rights bill from Washington. Their pursuit leads inevitably to a sharper and sharper confrontation with the ruling class."

—"Black Power—Class Power," reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5, "What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism"

These contradictions would explode in the ghetto upheavals which shook the Northern cities in the mid- to late-'60s. At this critical juncture, we put forward a concrete program, based on the perspective of revolutionary integrationism, against both the increasingly discredited liberal reformism of King and the emerging currents of radical black nationalism. Many black youth turned to radical black separatist currents in part because they saw in the organized labor movement only its racist, pro-imperialist leadership, personified by the treacherous Walter Reuther and outright bigots like George Meany.

The 1967 Spartacist League document "Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom" (reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9) stated:

"The struggle for black freedom demands the total break of the Negro people from the Democratic Party....

"Only by the development of a working-class program and by explicitly opening the door to support by white workers can real political independence be maintained, real gains won and the basis laid for eventual working-class political unity. This unity will come about when the exploited section of the white South is driven into opposition and is compelled to forego color prejudice in order to struggle along class lines against its real enemies—the owners of land and industry.

"The creation of a South-wide Freedom Labor Party would serve as a tremendous impetus for similar action by Northern workers. The struggle for such a party would necessitate a rank-and-file revolt within the organized labor movement to overthrow the present labor bureaucracy."

The civil rights struggles highlighted a fundamental truth about racist capitalist American society: that black rights and labor rights can only go forward by marching together. This understanding

Widely popular 1997 UPS Teamster strike demonstrated power of integrated labor movement.

Kuntz/Reuters



was expressed in a series of transitional demands advanced by the SL, such as the call for "a Southern organizing drive backed by organized labor," which would lay the material basis for a Freedom Labor Party in this historically non-union, low-wage area. We raised the demand for armed self-defense against racist attacks and supported the efforts of the Deacons for Defense and Justice toward this end. We also called for a "workers united front against federal intervention," addressing both the use of federal troops to put down militant black struggles and the imposition of government anti-labor measures such as wage controls and anti-strike bills.

Since that time, the further flight of industrial production from the North and Midwest to the South only underscores the critical need for labor to unionize the South. This struggle cannot and will not have a narrow trade-unionist character, nor will it likely come from the upper echelons of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. On the one side, the entire black community will tend to rally behind racially integrated workers fighting the local

racist power structure. On the other side, the Southern branch of the American ruling class will resort not only to the police, company goons and strikebreakers but also, if hard-pressed, to the Klan and its ilk while using racist demagoguery to turn backward white workers against the integrated labor movement. A union organizing drive will become a major arena of struggle between the oppressed black masses and the white ruling class.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

While dismantling formal Jim Crow segregation in the South, the liberal-led civil rights movement could not address the roots of black oppression in the capitalist system. By every measure—education, housing, job prospects, wages for those who can get work—the mass of the black population is materially worse off than before the struggles of the 1960s. The bipartisan effort led by Clinton to destroy welfare signifies that for the racist capitalist rulers the masses of the ghettos and barrios are a surplus population, to be left to starve and subjected to increasingly brutal repression. Even the affirmative action and other programs instituted in the '60s to buy off a section of middle-class blacks are under increasing attack.

Conditioning these attacks on blacks, as well as the racist anti-immigrant campaigns, has been the sharp decline in the strength of organized labor over the past quarter century. The deindustrialization of cities like Detroit has led to an erosion in the position of black workers who have been key components of the auto, steel and other industrial unions. Nevertheless, black workers continue to play a prominent role in the labor movement which in the 1997 UPS Teamsters strike and last year's UAW strike against GM in Flint has again shown strength and solidarity. Recognizing the double oppression of blacks—both race and class—the Spartacist League has advanced

the need for special organizations of black struggle. Through our Labor Black Leagues, we seek to provide such vehicles through advancing the Marxist program in struggles against racist oppression and reaction.

As we wrote in WV No. 696 (11 September 1998) following the Flint GM strike:

"The Spartacist League fights to build a workers party whose aim is to make the working class conscious of its historic interest in fighting to abolish this entire racist profit system. A workers party will be built not in *counterposition* to the trade unions, which are organizations for economic defense of the working class, but in the crucible of big class battles, which will result in the fight for a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions.... "The fight for labor's emancipation from capitalist wage slavery can only go forward if the multiracial proletariat takes up the struggle against racial oppression. At the same time, black workers are a strategic component of the working class. Combined with their double oppression as workers and blacks in racist American society, this will impel them to play a leading role in the socialist revolution in this country."■

Russia...

(continued from page 5)

called by the Federation of Independent Unions on 7 October 1998 drew 15,000 to a demonstration here as opposed to only 3,000 in Vladivostok. Driving through the city’s industrial suburbs was really a depressing sight: a rusting wasteland overgrown with weeds. In the entire industrial quarter which makes up one-third of Khabarovsk, the only working smokestacks were those of the power plants. Only the railroad repair depots were providing steady work. Some food processing plants were calling in shifts as work appeared. Tellingly, one of the few working plants we saw was a Canadian-equipped factory, producing aluminum kiosks for petty traders, which pays extremely low wages. The workforce of one of the biggest defense plants in Khabarovsk has been cut from 4,000 to 700, enough to produce a trickle of household implements.

After we left the empty industrial flats, we drove through a large adjacent working-class residential neighborhood. There was a scattering of people from Central Asia and the Caucasus in the workers’ quarters, perhaps due to the fact that Khabarovsk was always an “open city” for Soviets to travel to. That Vladivostok was a “closed city” probably had a chauvinist aspect. Today in Siberia, some towns prefer to remain closed to visitors, supposedly for “security reasons,” but actually to keep out refugees from Central Asia and the Caucasus.

During the one night I was in Khabarovsk, we went driving out to high bluffs overlooking the Amur. On the way, I saw the gas fires of an oil refinery that is still working, if only intermittently. When we got to the banks of the river, it was a dramatic sight: the golden sun going down over the dark blue river islands, and beyond them, China. As the night wind blew ever colder, we stood and listened to the eerie crunching sound of the slowly shifting ice floes jamming the river below.

I was startled to see a row of dilapidated shacks right along the banks. They were so ramshackle it was hard to believe that people could actually live in them. But there they were, with their wood stove chimneys billowing smoke. Later that night we heard on the news that burglars trying to make their way to the dachas on the far shores of the river that same night had perished falling between the ice floes into the freezing black water.

Social services and infrastructure in Khabarovsk do not seem to be in as bad a state as the Primorsky Krai. There generally seems to be electricity, water, heat and gas for cooking. One of the two mornings I was there, the truck bringing natural gas for the neighborhood tank was late, so breakfast was delayed. The city does not have centralized natural gas lines.

The Chinese of Khabarovsk

In contrast to Vladivostok, there is a small but notable minority population stemming from mixed marriages between ethnic Russians and various Asian peoples, including Chinese and diverse aboriginal peoples. As one person said, “It produces a beautiful result.” But she expressed distinctly different attitudes toward, on the one hand, Asiatic peoples of the former USSR and, on the other hand, Chinese nationals. She bluntly stated, “I don’t like Chinese. I lost a friend during the terrible times of the border conflict” of the 1960s and ’70s. Her husband bitterly complained about Chinese claims on some of the islands in the Amur River just off Khabarovsk. On a clear day, one can see these very islands from the bluffs overlooking the Amur, so the question looms large.

As a rising economic power, China seems to figure more in the popular consciousness in Khabarovsk than in Vladivostok, where racism is aimed principally at the petty traders with whom Russians directly compete. In Khabarovsk this

racism also exists, but it finds a counterweight in the presence of large-scale Chinese business interests. Harassment and arbitrary deportation of Chinese traders by local militia prompted the Chinese consul in Khabarovsk to submit an official protest at the beginning of November to the head of the Regional Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The daily *Priamursky Vedomosti* (18 November 1998) detailed anti-Chinese harassment including random arrests, fines, beatings, even torture with cigarette burns. After living amid the seamless chauvinism against Central Asians and Caucasians in Moscow, I was surprised to find an article here that exposed and condemned racist police harassment of Chinese. Initially I even took the article superhead—“It Is Shameful, Fellow Countrymen!”—to be a sarcastic, racist jibe, as would be typical in Moscow. But it turned out to be sincere!

An even more pleasant surprise was the fact that on the page facing this article was a column by a writer from Azerbaijan spewing acidic sarcasm on the self-serving, narrow protests by sectors of the Russian establishment against the anti-Semitism of General Makashov, leader of the KPRF, the so-called Communist Party of the Russian Federation. All of the parliamentary factions have been quietly complicit in the Chechen War, the regular “ethnic cleansings” of Moscow, or the pan-Slavic politics of Russian ambitions in Serbia, etc. The author pointed out that “racism in Russia has long been an offensive phenomenon.” He concluded with an old joke about a dying Armenian’s last request to his family: “Care for the Jews, protect them,” said the old man. “When they finish off the Jews, they’ll come for us.” The author wound up with a call along the lines of “an injury to one is an injury to all.” I found that to be a breath of fresh air, a sign that in Khabarovsk there is a current of opposition to the pervasive racist chauvinism.

The “Chinese Market” in Khabarovsk is about 600-strong, and as in Vladivostok the Russian section here is also growing. The prominence of Chinese business interests is evident in the modern office



Ki Ho Park/Kristone

South Korean Hyundai workers on strike during 1998 financial crisis. Workers of Russian Far East must be won to proletarian-internationalist perspective.

buildings and adjacent housing complexes they built. My host bitterly summarized the nature of these Chinese concerns as simply “buying up scrap metal, machine tools and whole factories stolen and embezzled for them by Russians themselves.” (Indeed, even bronze plaques from monuments in Vladivostok harbor have been stripped away!)

Stores in Vladivostok and Khabarovsk are obliged to display the country of origin for all goods, encouraging the already pervasive chauvinist protectionism. This actually may be true for all of Russia as well. A young man I met in Vladivostok drove considerably out of his way to buy Russian gasoline rather than the widely available South Korean brands. He was indignant that Russia, once the world’s largest producer of crude oil, has to import refined fuels! But he conceded that Russian oil refineries work with such an irregular flow that it might well be that they could not keep up with the huge



Kadel & Herbert

1920 Bolshevik demonstration at Vladivostok train station during Civil War. Middle banner reads: “Long Live the Third International!”

demand for gasoline in Vladivostok. Continuing from Soviet times, North Korean logging camps operate deep in the forests of the Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krai. Both the Russian local authorities and the North Korean camp administrations strive to keep the Korean loggers isolated from the population.

There are absolutely no foreigners on the streets of Khabarovsk in the winter. This allowed me to see the bare social contours of the city, unobstructed by the foliage of the tourists that I am told come in great numbers in the fall. Lots of German and Japanese and even wealthy Chinese tourists visit both Khabarovsk and Vladivostok. For many elderly Japanese and even some Germans, it is a chance to visit the place of their youth: Stalin’s postwar prisoner-of-war camps. Other Japanese come from their cramped island quarters simply to experience the vast open expanses of

that the port is a gigantic hub of international black market trade, and nobody in power is interested in casting too much light on the movement of goods.

Vladivostok papers are full of ads for bus excursions to the Chinese town of Suifenhe—one of five such trading towns about four hours away—on the border of the Primorsky Krai. This town grew to today’s population of 180,000 from 10,000 in 1991 solely on the basis of Russian tourism. When there are no Russian tourists, city transport and electricity is shut off! In 1996, Russian shoppers and traders bought an estimated \$1.5 billion worth of goods in China. Travel sharply dropped when the August financial crisis hit and the ruble lost two-thirds of its value. By September, when the ruble became relatively stabilized and the further collapse of Russian economic life made petty trade all the more vital to the survival of many, the number of Russians coming through the Suifenhe customs point climbed back up to 28,000 per month. By October, it reached 37,000. As well, before the crisis hit in Russia, 140,000 Russian tourists were visiting South Korea annually. Half of them were from the Russian Far East.

Back in Moscow, I found that infighting among the oligarchic clans was again at full boil, stirred by the crisis of succession to ailing “Tsar Boris” Yeltsin. KPRF leader Makashov was calling for the roundup and extermination of Jews, while competing gangs were demanding a state of emergency and the banning of the KPRF and “all extremists.” Such are the vile results of the capitalist counterrevolution which was prepared by decades of misrule by the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy.

Moscow is the vortex of the capitalists’ whirlpool of plunder, draining and dragging down the regions. Today, the scant seven million inhabitants of the vast RFE are condemned to serve as the starving border guards of capitalist Russia’s regional ambitions, which are sinking under the weight of the economic crisis. In the days of Lenin and Trotsky’s Soviet Republic and Communist International, Vladivostok and Khabarovsk were transformed from outposts of tsarist conquest into crossroads linking Russia’s successful workers revolution to the class struggles of China, Japan and Korea. The very survival of the RFE’s working masses depends on their escaping poisonous nationalism and reaching across the borders to make common cause with all the toilers of the East, from capitalist South Korea and Japan to the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states. This means raising again the banner of the October Revolution through the forging of Trotskyist parties throughout the region. This is the task to which the International Communist League is dedicated.■

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Police Invade NYC Conference for Mumia

NEW YORK CITY, 14 February—In a chilling display of the police vendetta against death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, dozens of city cops burst into a “Justice for Mumia” conference yesterday at City College (CCNY) in Harlem. Police arrested four participants in the conference, which was mainly built by the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and its liberal Campaign to End the Death Penalty.

Young Spartacus

Those arrested included supporters of the ISO and League for the Revolutionary Party.

The police invasion had all the markings of a planned provocation, which was especially ominous in the context of widespread outrage over the gruesome NYPD killing of West African immigrant Amadou Diallo two weeks ago. The threadbare pretext occurred when a conference organizer accidentally dropped some chairs he was moving. Campus security guards immediately moved to eject him from the building and called in the NYPD. Within minutes, some 30 to 40 thugs in blue poured into the building, throwing one youth to the ground and arresting him on the spot. At least eight squad cars and two police vans appeared. One of

the cops scurrying into the building was heard to say, “Are we going to shoot?” Police with their hands on their guns stormed up the down escalator, pushing people out of their way.

A Partisan Defense Committee representative, responding to a request from conference organizers for legal assistance, interceded on behalf of those arrested. Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club supporters called on conference participants to join in demanding that charges against all those arrested be dropped immediately. While the four were released from custody, they were issued summonses and face charges of disorderly conduct. We demand: **Drop all charges now!**

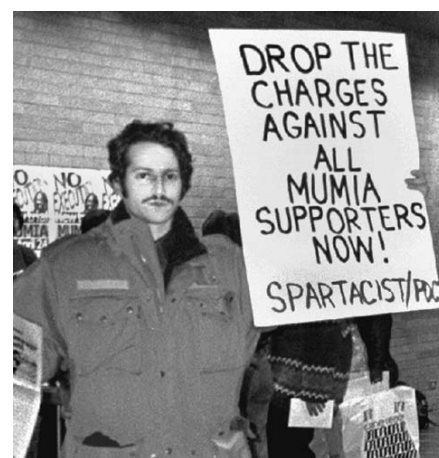
The cop provocation is but the latest in a nationwide police campaign to intimidate Mumia’s supporters into silence in order to push through the legal lynching of this courageous spokesman for the oppressed. It comes on the heels of the failed effort by police and politicians to shut down a benefit concert at New Jersey’s Meadowlands arena for Jamal last month (see “Thousands Defy Cop Campaign Against Jamal Benefit,” WV No. 706, 5 February).

Even before the NYPD stormtroopers arrived on the scene, CCNY campus cops had been harassing conference participants for hours. In an attempt

to obstruct distribution of any literature publicizing Mumia’s cause, security guards banned organizations from accepting money inside the building and went around tearing down posters from the walls. The CCNY administration has a long history of repression and harassment of student activists. Last year, CCNY spokesmen admitted that secret cameras had been installed in smoke detectors outside rooms where student activists met to organize protests against cuts in remedial education and other programs.

The frenzied cop assault on the Mumia conference was an object lesson in the nature of the bourgeois state—the cops, courts, prisons—as enforcers of racist capitalist rule. It is precisely this understanding which the ISO’s reformist outlook obscures. The strategy pursued by the ISO and other reformists to build liberal coalitions to demand a new trial to free Mumia feeds the illusion that Jamal can somehow get justice from the courts and cops who have used every frame-up method at their disposal to see his execution through. In counterposition, SL/SYC speakers intervened in conference sessions to put forward our perspective of united-front mobilizations drawing on the power of the integrated labor movement to demand freedom for Jamal.

Of a piece with the ISO’s faith in the



Young Spartacus
Spartacist at CCNY conference protests NYPD attack on Mumia supporters.

capitalist “justice” system is their view that the racist cops can cease to be “agents of the state” if only they “rebel collectively” (see “ISO: Looking for a Few Good Cops,” WV No. 664, 21 March 1997). The NYPD’s “collective” action at CCNY only underscores the danger of such illusions. As a Spartacist speaker pointed out in one of the conference workshops:

“The cops are in fact part of the apparatus of repression. There is no winning the cops over. The ultimate solution is a working-class revolution and building a working-class party. That’s what the Spartacist League stands for.”

NYPD Death Squad...

(continued from page 12)

private property whose job is to suppress workers and minorities through organized terror.

* * *

In a hail of 41 bullets, four NYPD cops blew away Guinean immigrant Amadou Diallo as he stood unarmed in the foyer of his Bronx apartment building on February 4. The sadistic undercover cops didn’t stop shooting until their 9mm handguns ran out of bullets. Glorifying in the knowledge that the cops act with impunity, the elite “Street Crime Unit” that gunned down Diallo sports the unofficial motto “We Own the Night.” This sinister plainclothes outfit roams the ghettos and barrios in unmarked cars, under the cover of searching out “illegal” weapons, stopping youth at will, harassing and even shooting them.

In 1997-98 alone, Street Crime cops reportedly stopped and frisked 45,000 people, killing three. Last month, prominent rap artist Ol’ Dirty Bastard was shot at by Street Crime cops in Brooklyn after a high-speed chase and thrown in jail for a week on charges of attempted murder of a police officer and criminal possession of a weapon—which turned out to be a cell phone! So nonexistent was the evidence against him that the grand jury had to drop the charges. The Street Crime Unit is walking proof that gun control kills blacks! We say: Defend the right to bear arms!

Such brutal, sadistic cop terror is not an “aberration.” The cops, courts and prison system are at the core of the *capitalist state*, the repressive apparatus which protects the rule, the property and the profits of the tiny minority which owns the wealth of this country. While the capitalist class drives to increase profits, squeezing the working class and starving the ghettos, the gap between rich and poor grows ever wider. To enforce its rule, the capitalists must strengthen their appara-

tus of murderous repression.

Yet today, from all sides illusions are being pushed that a different department of this same capitalist state should come in and “clean things up.” With people all over the city outraged by the Diallo killing, liberals like Al Sharpton and the NAACP have called for the federal government to run an investigation. But the Feds have blood on their hands just like the NYPD! It was the FBI that carried out a deadly terror operation against the Black Panthers and leftist militants in the 1960s through the notorious COINTELPRO program. And it was top cop Janet Reno who took pride in directing the incineration of more than 80 men, women and children of the Branch Davidian religious group near Waco, Texas in 1993. The Clinton administration—with the backing of both parties of capital, the Democrats and Republicans—has beefed up police forces and massively augmented the prison system throughout the country. Meanwhile, social services and education budgets have been slashed, with minorities and immigrants particularly targeted. Amadou Diallo was caught in the cross hairs of this murderous campaign.

Democratic Party politician Al Sharpton postures as the champion of those victimized by cop violence. Yet this charlatan, who today poses as an opponent of Giuliani and his reign of cop terror, literally worked as an FBI fink for Giuliani when the latter was a federal prosecutor in the 1980s. Sharpton calls for putting “teeth” into the Civilian Complaint Review Board. Such sham boards give the illusion that the problem is a few “bad apples,” with the aim of making the apparatus of police repression appear more credible. The notion that “the people” can have any control over the capitalists’ guard dogs is a deadly myth. Likewise, calls for more black and Hispanic cops, neighborhood patrols and “sensitivity training” will not change the racist, repressive nature of the police force.

New York City is a heavily union city with blacks, Hispanics and other minor-

ities playing a key role in the labor movement. Transit workers, city and hospital workers have the social power that can bring the financial capital of U.S. imperialism to a screeching halt. But the bureaucratic union leaders and “reformers” alike sabotage the ability of labor to fight with their appeals for government intervention, such as the call to “clean out corruption” in AFSCME District Council 37. The government’s aim is not to “clean up” but to *destroy* any power the unions have by putting them under the thumb of their class enemy, the capitalist state. We say: Government hands off the unions! Labor must clean its own house! Similarly, we oppose bringing the police—the armed thugs of the capitalist state—into the unions. Cops and prison guards out of the unions!

The power of the multiracial labor movement must be brought out in force to protest racist atrocities like the killing of Amadou Diallo. But as long as labor is tied to the class enemy through the Democratic Party, the unions cannot and will not be mobilized to actively champion the cause of black liberation and the rights of immigrants and all the oppressed. There must be a political struggle inside the unions against the labor bureaucracy whose overt and fundamental loyalty to the capitalist class and its dual parties, the Democrats and Republicans, makes the union tops bitter enemies of any struggle that challenges the capitalist exploiters and their state.

Whether City Hall is run by Democrats or Republicans, racist terror is standard operating procedure for the NYPD. While the cops have felt even more emboldened under Republican Giuliani, who was elected as the “cop’s mayor,” it was black Democratic former mayor David Dinkins who hired thousands more cops even as he slashed city workers’ jobs.

Some groups that claim to be socialist share with liberals like Sharpton the notion that the capitalist state can be “cleaned up” and made to serve the interests of minorities and the working class. After the cop torture of Haitian immigrant Abner Louima in 1997, a

Workers World Party leaflet called for “disarming the cops, conducting an independent investigation of the racist brutality inside of the 70th Precinct and giving the power to the people to establish community control of the police.” This sows the worst illusions in the reformability of the capitalist state.

Another reformist left group, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), actually maintains that cops would cease to be “agents of the state” if only they “rebel collectively” (see “ISO: Looking for a Few Good Cops,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 664, 21 March 1997). How about the NYC cops’ “collective” demand to be issued more deadly hollow-tipped bullets? Or look at the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police, which amply illustrates the role of a cop “union” in its bloodthirsty drive for the legal lynching of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Last month, in a sinister escalation of the drive to execute this innocent man, New Jersey state and police forces tried unsuccessfully to shut down a benefit concert for Jamal at the Meadowlands. The death penalty is the pinnacle of the state’s apparatus of repression. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!

In 1986, NYC transit worker James Grimes faced a gun rap for defending himself on the job against an assault by three muggers. After a vigorous defense campaign joined by transit workers city-wide, all charges against Grimes were dismissed. In the wake of this victory, the Spartacist League initiated the NY Labor Black League for Social Defense. Together with the LBLSD, the Spartacist League seeks to build a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government which will sweep away murderous police terror and the whole system of capitalist exploitation through socialist revolution. When those who labor rule, the tremendous wealth of this society will be used to provide a decent life for the working people, the poor, the blacks, immigrants, young and aged. Join us!

8 February 1999

New York Spartacist League

Court Slams American Airlines Pilots

FEBRUARY 15—In a case study of the role of the capitalist state, a Dallas federal court last week ordered American Airlines pilots back to work and levied massive fines on their union to put an end to their week-long sickout. The Allied Pilots Association (APA) was demanding that pilots at recently acquired Reno Air, whose salaries are about half those at American, be quickly granted the same pay scale as American pilots. With the airline forced to cancel almost half of its scheduled flights, Judge Joe Kendall charged the union with contempt of court, charging it with defying his back-to-work order. Provocatively accusing the union of “extortion,” he ordered the APA to set aside \$10 million toward a much larger fine. If the pilots continued their work action, he threatened, “all the assets of the union, including their strike war chest, will be capable of being safely stored in the overhead bin of a Piper Cub.”

The U.S. ruling class acted like the pilots staged an insurrection rather

than a job action which, after all, only affected a small fraction of passengers. Behind the outrageous fine, the threats, the comparison of the pilots union to the Mafia is a determination to uphold the authority of the *capitalists’ state*. This is intended as a message to all workers: don’t you dare defy the country’s harsh anti-labor laws. And in fact the AFL-CIO leadership and the entire trade-union bureaucracy hide behind such laws to justify their refusal to wage hard class struggle.

The APA union tops vainly hoped that the sickout would avoid challenging the 1926 Railway Labor Act, which severely restricts strikes in the transportation industry. It is hardly surprising that American Airlines was able to get a raving anti-union judge to go after the pilots in Dallas, where the company has its corporate headquarters and owns a piece of the city. But this only points to the nature of the capitalist state as an instrument of repression to defend the profits and rule of the ruling class.

Like the American Airlines bosses, Judge Kendall tried to whip up popular sentiment against the pilots, sarcastically quizzing them about their six-figure salaries in order to portray them as selfish and arrogant compared to the lower-paid flight attendants and baggage handlers. But the central issue in the job action, the two-tier wage scale, is a prime concern for all U.S. workers, as it has been a major factor in the dramatic decline in real wages over the past 25 years. American Airlines was one of the pioneers of two-tiered wages with its so-called “b-scale,” which was introduced in the early 1980s by former CEO Robert Crandall in order to compete with non-union upstarts like New York Air and People Express. Yet, as documented in Thomas Petzinger Jr.’s *Hard Landing* (1995), a key factor in the introduction of b-scales at American was their endorsement by the APA leadership.

And the APA leadership continues to accept a two-tier system. While de-

manding an equal pay scale for Reno Air pilots, the APA also wants to “staple” the roughly 300 Reno pilots at the bottom of seniority lists of American’s more than 9,000 pilots. This would mean a pay raise for most Reno pilots, but at the same time they would have to accept demotions, poorer choices of flights, etc. Not surprisingly, even though many pilots at Reno declared their support for the job action, they did not join it; a number even displayed “no stapler” signs on their luggage.

The APA, which is not affiliated with the AFL-CIO, received little support last week from other unions or from the Air Line Pilots Association, from which it split in 1963. Key to overcoming such divisions in the workforce is to form *a single industrial union* covering all airlines, embracing pilots, mechanics, flight attendants, baggage handlers, cleaners and other workers. Such an airline workers union would be able to carry out the basic labor principle: an injury to one is an injury to all.

Vietnamese...

(continued from page 12)

contract provision prohibiting “displays that create a public nuisance”! Complying with the order, Tran’s wife left the store holding the flag high in defiance of a crowd chanting “Down with the Communist!” After Tran and his lawyers challenged this ruling as a blatant attack on free speech, on February 10 the judge vacated the order. Fully 200 anti-Communists attended the court hearing and followed Tran back to his shop, where the latest assault occurred.

These mob scenes display the seething hatred of those who *lost* the Vietnam War. A column in the *Orange County Register* (21 January) commented, “It can hurt to look at the face of an old enemy. Especially if he won.” Among the right-wing “refugees” are no small number of CIA-trained torturers, war criminals and outright fascists who have the blood of countless revolutionary fighters on their hands. The same types who have besieged Tran and Kim staged reactionary protests last year against two Hanoi-based theater groups performing in Southern California. Most of those demonstrating were middle-aged and elderly, who seethe with bitterness over the victory of the Vietnamese Revolution. They have reason to worry that their fanatical hatred and anti-Communism is not being passed down to their children, who for one thing regularly face anti-Asian racism in the U.S.

More than two million Vietnamese were slaughtered and the countryside



Young Spartacus

Spartacist contingent at Oakland demonstration in 1975, the year Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) fell to North Vietnamese/National Liberation Front forces. Right: Ho Chi Minh.



Vietnam News Agency

devastated in U.S. imperialism’s dirty war against the heroic workers and peasants. The military victory of the NVA/NLF was a stunning humiliation for Washington, creating deep and lasting aversion among the American population toward any foreign military adventure that might result in the deaths of U.S. soldiers—the “Vietnam Syndrome.” While the reformist left cried “No more Vietnams”—echoing the title of imperialist war criminal Richard Nixon’s memoirs—the Spartacist League proclaimed that for the working class and oppressed the world over, “Vietnam was a victory! Two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!”

As revolutionaries in the “belly of the beast,” we call for the unconditional military defense of Vietnam against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. However, the social revolution which accompanied the defeat of the U.S./South Vietnamese forces and created a collectivized economy was deformed from its inception, with the workers and peasants ruled by a bureaucratic caste following the nationalist Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country.” From 1975 on, Vietnam has faced relentless economic and military pressure from U.S. imperialism and its partners in Southeast Asia. This has massively increased following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92.

Today, echoing the venal Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy, the Vietnamese regime has increasingly opened the economy to foreign capitalist investment, pushing for “normalization” of trade relations with the U.S. Through such penetration,

the imperialists seek to win back what they lost on the battlefield. In recent years, there have been significant social protests by peasants and unemployed workers economically displaced by the regime’s market-oriented “reforms” and the partial opening of Vietnam to foreign investment.

While defending Vietnam and the other deformed workers states—China, North Korea and Cuba—against imperialism, we fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist bureaucracies and stop the threat of capitalist counterrevolution. What is crucially needed is the forging of internationalist, Leninist-Trotskyist parties to link this struggle for political revolution to the

fight for socialist revolution in the capitalist countries from Southeast Asia and South Korea to the imperialist centers of Japan and the U.S.

As we declared in WV No. 374 (8 March 1985) in an article on the heinous assassination in Orange County of leftist American academic Edward Cooperman by Vietnamese reactionaries:

“Defend the Vietnamese Revolution! Forward to the American workers revolution, which will finally settle accounts with the Viet fascists together with their imperialist puppetmasters, and will liberate the technological resources of moribund capitalism on behalf of those who have long suffered under the yoke of hunger, disease, backwardness and war—the legacy of imperialist world domination.” ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

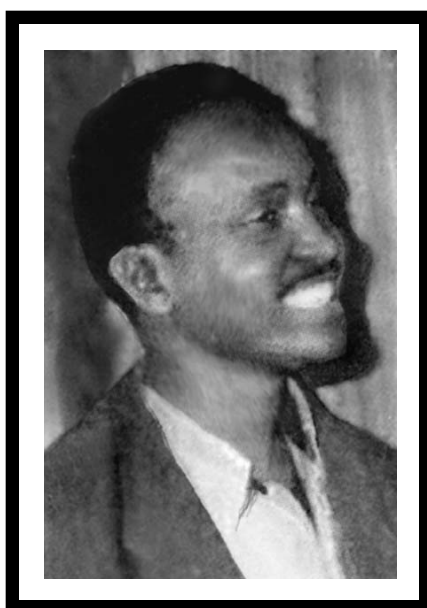
Unarmed Man Gunned Down in Hail of Bullets

NYPD Death Squad

No Illusions in Feds, Civilian Review Boards, Capitalist Courts!

Since the brutal cop killing of Guinean immigrant Amadou Diallo on February 4, thousands of outraged New Yorkers have come out on the streets to protest. Demonstrations were held on February 7 outside the Bronx apartment house where he was blown away and two days later at the Foley Square federal courthouse in Manhattan. On February 12, up to 2,000 attended Diallo's funeral at the Islamic Cultural Center of New York, where racist mayor Rudolph Giuliani was roundly jeered. Diallo's parents, who flew to New York to take their son's body back home for burial, refused to meet with Giuliani. The Spartacist League and Labor Black League for Social Defense participated in the protests, distributing the leaflet reprinted below.

While Wall Street stockbrokers and bankers crow about how the crackdown on "crime" has made *their* streets safer, in the ghettos and barrios this has meant a wave of police terror. The "Special Crimes Unit" which killed Diallo has become especially notorious. In 1998 alone, five out of six of the over 22,000 people stopped, thrown up against walls and beaten by this "elite" squad were not charged with *anything*. As 27-year-old Floyd Coleman told the *New York Times* (10 February), "Even when it's cold, I try not to wear my hood. Especially at night, because you're going to get



NY Daily News

Killing of West African immigrant Amadou Diallo sparked angry protests by thousands in NYC.

stopped." Now, NYC police commissioner Howard Safir, saying that the Special Crimes Unit cops kept shooting at Diallo because their bullets kept passing through his body, is rewarding his cold-blooded killers by equipping them with new ammunition—the even more lethal hollow-point bullets!



WV Photo

Democratic Party politician Al Sharpton has worked overtime to divert the explosive anger into impotent appeals to the racist capitalist government. Calling at the Foley Square protest for federal intervention to ensure "justice," Sharpton reassured the city's capitalist rulers, "We are not anti-police—we are anti-police

brutality." Tailing behind him is the reformist Workers World Party, whose leaflet on the Diallo killing calls for "community control of the police." Like calls for more "powerful" police review boards, such demands obscure the role of the cops as armed defenders of capitalist

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Vietnamese Shopkeeper Besieged Over Ho Chi Minh Portrait

LOS ANGELES, February 11—Vietnamese immigrant Truong Van Tran was set upon by a howling mob yesterday as he attempted to return to his electronics shop in the Orange County town of Westminster with a large poster of the late Communist leader Ho Chi Minh. As his wife, Kim Nguyen, and two children watched helplessly from their car, Tran was spat at, punched and beaten to the ground by the rabidly right-wing Vietnamese exiles. With the crowd screaming "Down with Communism!" and "Go back to Vietnam!" the 37-year-old Tran, who has already undergone two heart surgeries, began suffering chest pains and was taken from the scene by ambulance.

The strip mall with Tran's shop is in an area known as "Little Saigon," home to some 300,000 Vietnamese. The bulk of these are virulent anti-Communists who fled to Southern California as the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and South Vietnamese National Liberation

Front (NLF) defeated U.S. imperialism and its South Vietnamese puppets, overthrowing capitalist rule in the South and reunifying the country in 1975. The vendetta against Tran was launched last month after he had hung up the poster along with a Vietnamese flag in his shop to show his support for normalizing relations between the U.S. and his former homeland. For four days, hundreds of Vietnamese counterrevolutionaries besieged the shop. Reportedly, pages of signatures were collected on petitions to the Immigration and Naturalization Service demanding the deportation of Tran and his wife.

On January 20, Tran's landlord posted an eviction notice on his shop as a mob of some 200 screamed their approval. Backing up the right-wing mobilizations, an Orange County Superior Court judge ordered the portrait and flag removed from the store on the grounds that they violated a rental

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Truong Van Tran (above) was thrown to ground by anti-Communist mob and draped with South Vietnamese flag, banner of former U.S. puppet regime.



Almeida/NY Times photos