

Pogroms Drive Out Serbs, Gypsies Imperialist Murderers Occupy Kosovo



AP

All U.S./UN/NATO Troops Out of the Balkans Now!

JULY 5—From the moment U.S./NATO troops began rolling into Kosovo last month, the Serb and Gypsy (Roma) populations have been subjected to violent pogromist attacks aimed at driving them out of the province. In village after village, imperialist “peacekeepers” stood by as armed units of the Albanian nationalist Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) went house to house threatening to kill Serbs if they did not get out, while revenge-seeking mobs looted and torched Serb and Roma shops and homes. Numerous Serbs, from elderly villagers to prominent academics in Pristina, have been abducted and shot or beaten to death. In one week, some 80,000 Serb and Roma residents were forced to flee their homes. Yet not once has *this* forced population transfer been described as “ethnic cleansing” by the Western capitalist media which acted as the U.S./NATO ministry of war propaganda in endlessly retailing

the plight of the Kosovo Albanians under Slobodan Milosevic’s Serbian regime.

In denouncing the predatory imperialist “peace” dictated by the world’s bloodiest mass murderers, we warned last month: “It will place the Kosovars—Serbs, Gypsies and Albanians alike—under the direct thumb of the imperialists, exacerbating national hatreds in the region” (WV No. 715, 11 June). This is now amply confirmed in every respect. Three days ago, British troops shot dead two Albanian revelers after one fired his rifle in the air. While the UCK hopes to be a local gendarmerie under the NATO occupation, the imperialists have made it clear that they will be calling the shots in Kosovo. Western spokesmen have begun to take their distance from their wartime pawns, suddenly discovering, for example, that UCK leader Hashim Thaci has been carrying out a “campaign of assassinations” against



AFP

As NATO forces moved into Kosovo, tens of thousands of Serbs were forced to flee as a result of pogromist attacks.

political rivals (*New York Times*, 25 June). Washington is also viscerally hostile to the UCK’s demand for Kosovo independence, fearing it could destabilize the region. Clinton Balkans envoy Christopher Hill declaims, “We spent the 1990’s worrying about a Greater Serbia. That’s

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Kurdish Leader Sentenced to Death in Turkey Free Abdullah Öcalan!

Four months after his abduction and arrest in Kenya by Turkish security forces, Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), was sentenced to death by a kangaroo court in Turkey on June 29. The sentence was a foregone conclusion. Held in strict isolation on a tiny island since his arrest, Öcalan was denied any real legal defense.

His lawyers were repeatedly threatened and physically attacked, including in the courtroom. As we did during the wave of international protests which followed Öcalan’s arrest in February, contingents of the International Communist League joined in protests against the verdict which have been held in various countries.

The arrest and sentencing of the PKK leader has fueled the forces of right-wing reaction in the Turkish police state, underscoring how anti-Kurdish chauvinism is wielded as a weapon not only against the long-suffering Kurdish masses but against the whole of the working class in Turkey. Öcalan’s arrest helped catapult the fascistic Nationalist

Action Party—whose paramilitary Grey Wolves have murdered thousands of leftists, working-class militants and Kurdish nationalists—into the coalition government of “Democratic Left” prime minister Bülent Ecevit following elections in April. Öcalan’s sentence met with an outpouring of Turkish chauvinism and

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Indonesia: Bloody Assault on PRD Demonstrators

SYDNEY, July 3—On July 1, police and military forces launched a brutal attack on a hundreds-strong protest by the People's Democratic Party (PRD) outside the National Election Commission in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta. The PRD was demanding that the ruling Golkar party headed by B. J. Habibie be disqualified from the June 7 elections for vote-rigging and intimidation. When protesters tried to enter the building, police immediately opened fire. Protesters could not escape as hundreds of riot cops and military personnel fired indiscriminately, using trucks to block side streets. Many were shot in the back. Of the estimated 100 injured, 35 suffered gunshot wounds, some very serious. A young woman PRD leader, Dhyta Caturani, was pulled behind the police lines, shot in the back and beaten savagely. Two were taken to military hospitals, their fate unknown, while 50 were reportedly arrested and remain in custody. Some 160 are missing. Today, the PRD office in Jogjakarta was smashed up by a group of armed thugs, leaving one militant in critical condition. These savage assaults on leftist political protesters must be condemned by the international working class.

The June 7 elections, overseen by some 500 "international monitors" from



Reuters

**Jakarta, July 1:
Riot cops attack
People's
Democratic Party
demonstration.**

various imperialist agencies, have been trumpeted as some kind of democratic awakening. That this is a lie and a fraud is underscored by the bloody attack on the PRD and the fact that many PRD and trade-union leaders still rot in the regime's prisons. As we warned last year when the despised Suharto was replaced by Habibie: "*A 'reformed' Indonesian capitalist regime will be just as repressive and bloody as its predecessor and just as determined to force the country's toiling masses to pay for the capitalist crisis*" (WV No. 691, 22 May 1998). Free all PRD militants, trade-

unionists and East Timorese independence fighters!

The imperialists' talk of democracy in Indonesia is a cover for maintaining a system of brutal exploitation enforced through vicious military repression. There can be no genuine democracy under capitalism in backward, dependent countries such as Indonesia, saddled by imperialist exploitation and grinding poverty. As Leon Trotsky, a leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 workers revolution in Russia, explained in *Marxism in Our Time* (1939): "In its expanded manifestation bourgeois democracy became, and continues to remain, a form of government accessible only to the most aristocratic and the most exploitive nations. Ancient democracy was based on slavery, imperialist democracy—on the spoliation of colonies."

The toilers of Indonesia have already experienced the horrendous consequences of looking toward self-proclaimed "democratic" and "progressive" bourgeois forces. Suharto came to power in 1965 through an anti-Communist massacre of over 500,000 carried out by the military and reactionary Islamic gangs with the direct involvement of the American, Australian and other imperialists. This was the bitter fruit of the Maoist Indonesian Communist Party's Menshevik/Stalinist strategy of "two-stage revolution," which repudiated the struggle for workers rule while chaining the proletariat to the national bourgeoisie—represented in this case by the nationalist Sukarno—in the name of a "democratic revolution."

Today it is urgently necessary for the Indonesian working class to emerge as an independent revolutionary factor. This requires the forging of an internationalist vanguard party committed to leading the proletariat to the seizure of state power. The proletariat must take its place at the head of the unemployed poor, the rural masses, women, the brutally oppressed ethnic and national minorities in a struggle for socialist revolution against all wings of the capitalist class. This is the only way to satisfy the aspirations of the masses and break the stranglehold of imperialist exploitation and domination.

In spite of mass arrests and cop violence, recent months have seen a wave of worker protests as the capitalist economic crisis continues to drive tens of millions into destitution. On June 17, 500 workers from the Mayora Indah biscuit factory were arrested for protesting the firing of 1,000 workers. On the outskirts of Jakarta, 600 garment workers on June 21 occupied the Arista Latinindo factory demanding that nine co-workers fired for union activity be rehired. In East Java, 2,000 cigarette workers protested to demand wage increases. Ominously, just days before the attack on the PRD, armed forces Commander in Chief General Wiranto warned there will be "no gatherings of the masses!"

With its militant reputation, the PRD has grown in this volatile situation. Yet despite the great courage of its activists in the face of heavy state repression, the PRD's program of petty-bourgeois nationalism is an obstacle to the needed struggle to mobilize the proletariat in

its own class interests. During the elections, the PRD sought to build a "united front" against Golkar through pressuring Megawati Sukarnoputri's bourgeois Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle and the parties of Islamic reaction—Amien Rais' National Mandate Party and Abdurrahman Wahid's National Awakening Party—to fight for "democracy." Far from opposing the capitalists and their state, the PRD accepted election funding of 150 million rupiah (\$21,000) from the very government whose cops and military were to bloody their militants.

Consistent with its illusions in the "democratic" credentials of a wing of the Indonesian bourgeoisie, the PRD also pushes illusions in the good offices of the imperialists, calling for a "UN-sponsored referendum" on East Timor. This is a direct appeal for imperialist intervention. Indeed, on July 2 in Darwin the Australian imperialists paraded their largest display of armoured military power since the Vietnam War, a demonstration of their readiness to mount a large-scale military operation to "keep peace" not only in East Timor but in Indonesia, too. Revolutionary Marxists say: UN, all imperialists: Hands off! Independence now for East Timor!

In response to the bloody repression of PRD militants, a class-struggle labor leadership in imperialist countries such as the U.S., Australia, Japan and Germany would organize trade-union boycotts of arms shipments to the blood-drenched Indonesian military and demand freedom for the many leftist and trade-union activists now languishing in jail. But that requires a struggle against the union misleaders and the likes of the Australian Labor Party who embrace the aims of their imperialist masters. The pro-imperialist Australian union bureaucrats are demanding a military force of 5,000 Australian troops to "protect" the East Timorese. The American AFL-CIO tops bleat about "multinational" low-wage sweatshops in Indonesia, but they do so only in order to push protectionist chauvinism and otherwise further the interests of U.S. imperialism. The U.S. labor bureaucracy is notorious for supporting anti-labor regimes from Southeast Asia to Latin America in the name of anti-communism.

Emancipation from the yoke of imperialism and the achievement of national and social justice for all the peoples in what is today Indonesia requires the *proletarian* seizure of power. But to consolidate proletarian rule in the face of hostile imperialism and lay the foundation for socialist economic development in backward Indonesia means a struggle for socialist revolution internationally, in imperialist U.S., Japan and Australia, and throughout the Asian region. That is the perspective of the International Communist League. For workers revolution in Indonesia! ■



TROTSKY

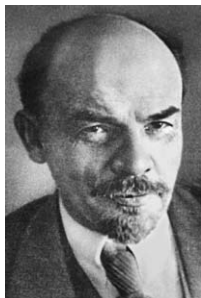
Vanguard Party, Key to Workers Revolution

Reporting on the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in 1922, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky stressed the key role of the proletarian vanguard party demonstrated by the October Revolution of 1917. Despite numerous revolutionary opportunities—particularly in Germany in 1918-19 and 1923—the young Communist parties of the West proved themselves too weak and inexperienced to lead the proletariat to state

power. With the failure of the October Revolution to extend to Europe, the subsequent bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state and the Communist International ushered in decades of Stalinist betrayals, culminating in capitalist counterrevolution and a deep retrogression in proletarian consciousness internationally. This underscores all the more the need to forge Leninist vanguard parties to win the working class to the fight for new October Revolutions around the world.

The working class must be ready for the overturn and capable of accomplishing it. The working class not only must be sufficiently powerful for it, but must be conscious of its power and must be able to apply this power. Today we can and must resolve into its elements and render more precise this subjective factor. During the postwar years, we have observed in the political life of Europe that the working class is ready for the overturn, ready in the sense of striving subjectively toward it, ready in terms of its will, moods, self-sacrifices, but still lacking the necessary organizational leadership. Consequently the mood of the class and its organizational consciousness need not always coincide. Our revolution, thanks to an exceptional combination of historical factors, afforded our backward country the opportunity to effect the transfer of power into the hands of the working class, in a direct alliance with the peasant masses. The role of the party is all too clear to us and, fortunately, it is today already clear to the West European Communist parties. Not to take the role of the party into account is to fall into pseudo-Marxist objectivism which presupposes some sort of purely objective and automatic preparation of the revolution, and thereby postpones the revolution to an indefinite future. Such automatism is alien to us. It is a Menshevik, a Social-Democratic world outlook. We know, we have learned in practice and we are teaching others to comprehend the enormous role of the subjective, the conscious factor that the revolutionary party of the working class represents.

—Leon Trotsky, "Report on the Fourth World Congress" (December 1922)



LENIN

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“Workers Rearguard”?

We reprint the following letter as we received it via the Internet.

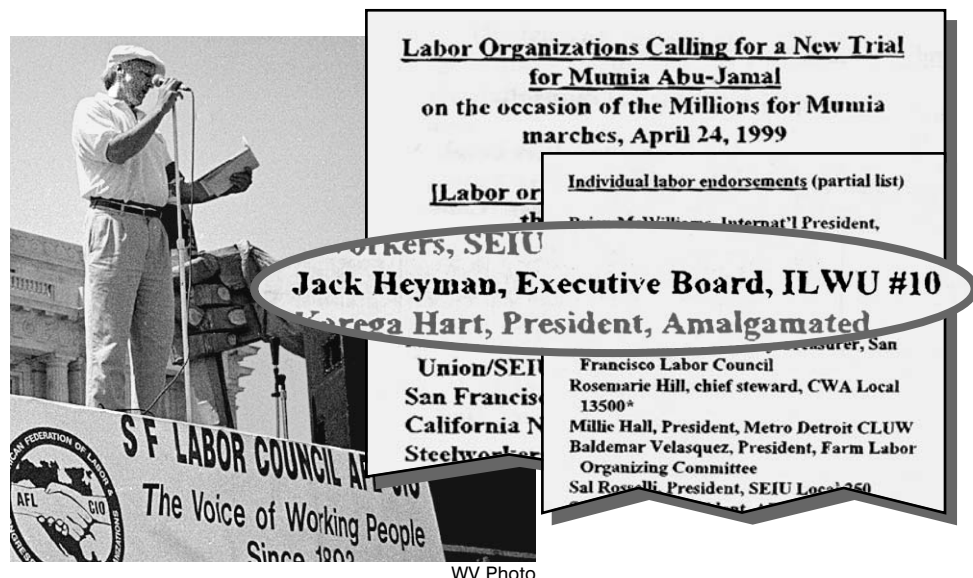
June 14, 1999

Dear Editor:

Your reply (28 May 1999) to my letter re: ILWU's April 24 West Coast shutdown for Mumia (as the ILWU newspaper, The Dispatcher called it) is riveted with distortions and inaccuracies. If intentional, this reflects a deeply-imbedded political cynicism. If unintentional, it indicates just how alienated you are from longshore workers. I'll address only a few of the more egregious distortions.

longshore workers showed solidarity with locked out stevedores in Australia when, in the face of maritime employers railing against “illegal dock actions,” longshore workers honored a picket line of labor activists for two weeks against the ship Columbus Canada, refusing to work its scab Aussie cargo.

Another “unofficial and illegal” solidarity action which you disparage, was the 1997 picket of the Neptune Jade in Oakland in support of the Liverpool dockers, considered by them to be one of the highlights of their militant 28 months’



Labor faker Jack Heyman spoke from platform of April 24 “Millions for Mumia” rally, endorsed call for “new trial” aimed at appealing to Democratic Party.

The Spartacist League, to its credit, was an early defender of Mumia Abu-Jamal having covered his case for some 12 years in the pages of Workers Vanguard. You claim to “have fought for a class-struggle defense strategy centered on mobilizing the social power of the integrated labor movement, requiring its political independence from the capitalist parties.” What class-struggle actions have SL supporters in transit unions in Chicago and New York called for? In the nearly four pages of the WV reply you never respond to this critical point of my letter. Why? Because SL trade union supporters don’t implement the political position published in WV? That’s for your readership. Yet, when the ILWU shuts down all West Coast ports in defense of Mumia, WV denies that it was a work stoppage! SL hypocrisy and hot air knows no limits!

What is the source of the SL slanders against the ILWU action? WV admits it came from “a spokesman for the bosses’ Pacific Maritime Association (PMA).” PMA boss Joseph Miniace in a letter to the editor of the SF Examiner on April 23, the day before the shutdown falsely claimed the ILWU just shifted its contractually-provided union meeting date, agreed to by PMA companies. Trying to minimize the impact, Miniace preposterously predicted “minimal” disruptions knowing all ports would be shut down for 10 hours! He then sneeringly referred to ILWU’s action in defense of “Mumia Abu-Jamal,....convicted of killing a police officer (and is on death row in Pennsylvania).” That a maritime boss would seek to distort and minimize an important labor action for Mumia is understandable, but why would an ostensibly Marxist organization echo him uncritically? The fact is that PMA in Los Angeles, the largest West Coast port with half the cargo, objected vehemently to longshoremen and clerks stopping work on April 24 because they’d already had their monthly stop-work meetings on April 1. Despite PMA objections, the longshore union prevailed and all ports on the West Coast were shut down to demand: 1) Stop the Execution and 2) Free Mumia! Last year, Los Angeles

struggle. Although PMA’s arbitrator on the second day ordered longshore workers to cross the picket line of labor activists, they refused, initiating an unprecedented solidarity action that followed the Neptune Jade to ports in three countries.

The ILWU shutdown the Coast with stop-work meetings in solidarity with the Liverpool dockers’ struggle two times in 1997. These actions were roundly applauded by nearly all in the workers movement internationally, including the SL. In an article cheering the ILWU eight-hour work stoppage, WV #660 24 January 1997, “West Coast Ports Shut Down in Solidarity With Liverpool Dockers” you stated “ILWU members on the day shift attended ‘stop-work’ meetings rather than loading and unloading some 50 ships at key ports....”

Yet, when on April 24, we took the same action for Mumia, a political prisoner facing state execution, WV refuses to call it a work stoppage. Do you think longshore workers have short memories? It is no wonder that longshore union activists refer to your newspaper as “Workers Rearguard”!

Before our April 24 union meeting, Local 10 stewards, including myself, had to restrain members—angry about WV’s distorted coverage of our union’s action—from chasing off your salespeople.

Furthermore, you continue to black-out any coverage of the teachers’ work stoppage in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, surely an important development in the defense of Mumia internationally. Why? Because this laudatory action was initiated by the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil (LQB), your political opponents.

The SL did not march to free Mumia in the April 24 mobilization. You could have carried your own banners criticizing the Democratic Party and the demand for a new trial. Others did. Abstaining from class struggle is surely a sign of political degeneration. I remember a Spartacist League that used to fight against being excluded from anti-Vietnam war demonstrations, even those with capitalist party politicians.

For labor action to free Mumia!
Jack Heyman

Labor Opportunist Squirms

WV Replies:

Jack Heyman totally dodges the central political point we made in replying to his earlier letter in “Labor Opportunism, the Democratic Party and the Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal” (WV No. 714, 28 May): that he worked to provide a labor façade for pro-Democratic Party class-collaborationist politics, centered on appealing to the capitalist state for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal. The motion introduced by Heyman in the ILWU called for the union to support the April 24 “Millions for Mumia” mobilization for a ‘new trial,’ while tacking on the slogan “Free Mumia” as a fig leaf aimed at deceiving the workers about the real purpose of this rally.

Heyman can’t deny that both the ILWU leadership and he personally endorsed the call for a new trial, sowing illusions in capitalist “justice.” He can’t deny that when he spoke from the platform on April 24 he uttered not one word of criticism of this call—the central demand of the rally—nor of the Democratic Party politicians with whom he shared the platform. He can’t deny that at a “Millions for Mumia” press conference the week before he hailed San Francisco Labor Council head Walter Johnson—a pillar of the Democratic Party in the city and a staunch supporter of Democratic mayor Willie Brown’s re-election bid—as “our secret weapon.” He can’t deny any of these facts documented in our reply. So, instead, he continues his attempt at deception of the WV readership and the ILWU Local 10 membership by throwing out a bunch of straw-man arguments and blowing a lot of smoke.

Like the labor bureaucrat he is, Heyman resorts to slimy insinuations about a PMA “source” to deflect our revolutionary criticism. The March issue of the Dispatcher itself reported that the stop-work meetings were called “to discuss the status of the upcoming negotiations, and to participate in the national actions for Abu-Jamal,” noting that “in effect no ships will be worked from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.” (all emphases added). So because the stop-work union meeting was shifted to Saturday, the day shift was killed. But Heyman’s attempt to create the illusion that it was a political strike to demand Mumia’s freedom is just one more deception. Not only was the ILWU action explicitly tied to the demonstration calling for a “new trial”—a slogan intended to appeal to liberal Democrats—but there was little attempt to politically mobilize the membership behind Jamal’s cause at all.

Heyman’s claim to the contrary, WV never denied that the ILWU action on

April 24 was a work stoppage. But, as we wrote:

“The tremendous potential impact of the longshore work stoppage was indeed minimized in every way. It was consciously organized to avoid violating the contract, under which the ILWU bureaucrats have for many years agreed to a no-strike clause for the life of the contract.... “More importantly, there was no real attempt either before or at the union meetings that day to politically mobilize the membership in Jamal’s behalf.”

As they emerged from the April 24 Local 10 stop-work meeting, several of the lower seniority “B-men”—who have no voice or vote in union meetings and met separately from the “A-men”—told WV salesmen that nothing had been said at the meeting about Jamal’s case. We don’t know about Heyman having to “restrain members angry about WV’s distorted coverage,” but with 150 or so longshoremen there at the peak of the April 24 stop-work meeting we sold 47 copies of our issue with the article “Mobilize the Power of Labor! Free Mumia Now!” (WV No. 711, 16 April), where we in fact motivated the need for class-struggle defense of Jamal.

That Heyman doesn’t even refer to the division of the union between “A-men” and “B-men” shows just how distant he is from a class-struggle perspective. Way back before he made his peace with capitalism, when he was still animated by the Trotskyist program, Heyman opposed the B-list category, which ghettoizes a large section of the ILWU membership, and fought for full union rights for all longshoremen. But, as we wrote in our exchange, “now his loyalties lie elsewhere.”

That seems to be clear to the Local 10 ranks as well. Here’s what one of our comrades reported after selling the WV with our exchange with Heyman to Local 10 members in May:

“Jack Heyman doesn’t have many friends in Local 10. We saw less than 100 longshoremen, and engaged only with those interested in talking to WV salesmen, maybe 40, overwhelmingly black. When we showed them the exchange with Jack Heyman, with one exception everybody said ‘I don’t like Jack Heyman.’ This was not a case of telling us what we wanted to hear; we got into his politics after. Mostly people think he’s a phoney and not to be trusted. One man said ‘I’ve known Jack Heyman for many years and I wouldn’t let that monkey near my wallet.’”

Unable to answer our political criticisms—because he has no defense—Heyman tries to shift the ground with his “recovered memory” of Spartacist League history during the Vietnam anti-war movement. We’ll refresh Heyman’s memory. In 1965, we walked out of the

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WV Photo

The heritage Heyman distorts: SL fought for revolutionary strategy in Vietnam antiwar movement, opposed popular-frontist coalitions with bourgeois liberals.

USWA Tops Choke Newport News Strike

Local 8888 in Peril

JULY 6—While news of the three-month-old strike by United Steelworkers (USWA) Local 8888 against Newport News Shipbuilding in the Virginia Tidewater area has been deep-sixed by the capitalist media and played down by the USWA International and AFL-CIO bureaucracy, this is the biggest labor battle in the U.S. today. Even as the U.S. was waging an imperialist war against Serbia, Newport News workers walked out against a shipyard which produces and repairs nuclear aircraft carriers and submarines. The outcome of this strike by an 8,000-strong integrated union local is crucial to the future of organized labor, especially in the racist “open shop” South.

Management is trying to sow divisions within the union by proposing separate pay scales for different job categories, a move aimed at undermining the strong industrial union structure in the yard. But while most strikers are holding firm, the USWA bureaucrats refuse to organize the mass picket lines needed to shut the yard down tight and win the strike. Instead they appeal to the enemies of labor—the capitalist politicians and, most recently, even the shipyard owners. On June 25, a thousand workers were bused to a stockholders meeting in Richmond as part of a “corporate campaign” strategy. Such ridiculous appeals to the capitalists who care only about profits and dividends are a diversion from class struggle.

Strikers are angry that the bureaucracy’s mishandling of the strike has led to hundreds of workers scabbing. A 23-year crane operator reported: “I made it known to people higher up in the union that there are three or four thousand people out there at New Market [a mall where workers collect strike assistance] and there aren’t any more than four or six people [picketing] at each gate.” With reports afoot that federal mediators are leaning on the union leadership to start up negotiations with the company again, this worker is concerned that the strike is

in peril: “Shortly after the 4th of July our membership is just going to drop. The only ones who’ll be out here are the ones who have been on strike before. We struck to get the union then.”

Local 8888 was forged as an integrated industrial union through a bitter three-month strike in 1979 that defied the state’s anti-union laws and an army of scabherding cops. Now the USWA bureaucracy is endangering that important victory and subsequent gains made

made in past contracts. Also posed here is a battle against Virginia’s “right-to-work” laws and against racist discrimination by the Newport News bosses. This strike should be a cause throughout the Tidewater area and for the entire U.S. working class. But the union misleaders—from the USWA International bureaucrats in Pittsburgh down to the local officers—have contained this labor action, limiting demands to economic issues and tailoring strike strategy strictly in accordance



Bitter strike in 1979 against Newport News Shipbuilding forged Local 8888 as integrated industrial union.

in recruiting Newport News workers—including many whites—to the union.

This strike is not only for higher wages, a livable pension and adequate benefits to make up for union concessions

with laws which were enacted to *defeat* strikes and *prevent* unions. As one rigger with 24 years in the yard told WV, “Because of these ‘right-to-work’ laws, what we need is a union where if you’re

not in the union *you don’t work!*”

Many Newport News strikers recognize that “the government is in cahoots with the company,” as Navy personnel go through the gates to work with scabs while local and state police have been deployed against the picket lines. But it is necessary for strikers to understand that the patriotic sloganeering pushed by the union tops—like “Our ships defend the country”—is no less deadly to labor’s cause. Waving the flag lines workers up behind the bosses’ government and leaves the union vulnerable to strikebreaking in the name of “national defense.” The U.S. military defends *capitalist profits and power*, enforcing brutal exploitation of working people in the “Third World” and protecting the investments and interests of the American bourgeoisie against its German, Japanese and other rivals.

Glorifying the traitorous policies of the pro-capitalist union officials are fake socialists like the Communist Party, whose *People’s Weekly World* (26 June) promoted the appeal to stockholders while exhorting workers to “call your congressional representative and senators.” The Socialist Workers Party cheers whatever the union bureaucrats are doing and has excused scabbing by “non-union contract workers, many of whom face immediate termination if they do not go into work” (*Militant*, 26 April).

In contrast, in *Workers Vanguard* the Spartacist League has advanced a class-struggle strategy and warned against the sellout policies of the labor bureaucrats, who collaborate with the class enemy because they uphold the capitalist profit system. We fight for the complete independence of the unions from the capitalist state and the capitalist political parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We fight to forge a workers party which will link the struggle to defend union rights and workers’ livelihoods to the fight for socialist revolution to smash the grinding, murderous capitalist system, the basis of racial and women’s oppression. ■

North Carolina Textile Mill Organized Big Win for Unions in “Open Shop” South

No Illusions in the NLRB!

In an area where the unions have failed to make headway for decades despite many bloody struggles, workers at Fieldcrest Cannon in Kannapolis, North Carolina voted in late June for the 5,200 workers at their six-plant textile complex—the largest in the country—to be organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). This is a significant victory for labor throughout the country. The fight to unionize Cannon began *93 years ago*. Kannapolis, located near Charlotte, exemplifies the racist “open shop” South. Built by Cannon Mills as a company town, Kannapolis still has tiny wooden houses originally constructed for its workers which stand adjacent to the huge plant rising out of former cotton fields. And Fieldcrest still runs it like a plantation, with workers getting \$100 a month pension after 30 years’ service.

But this victory remains fragile and reversible. Workers face a major battle to win a contract from the company, which has already challenged the union recognition vote with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). This is the same government agency that the UNITE leadership has relied on in organizing the Kannapolis complex. Looking to the NLRB—whose very purpose is to bind the unions to the capitalist state—has led

to a long, drawn-out organizing effort and will now give the company time to chip away at the workers’ hard-won gain. Workers at Fieldcrest Cannon must be vigilant that the UNITE tops do not snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

What distinguished this latest vote from four previous union representation

elections was the role played by the growing number of Hispanic immigrant workers. In the 1970s, coming off the turbulent struggles of the civil rights movement, the company started hiring blacks in what had formerly been a lily-white plant. When the black workers demonstrated a militant, pro-union stance, the company started hiring immigrants—who management believed would be more docile because of their vulnerable legal status. This too backfired, as the His-

panic workers turned out to be no less pro-union.

The struggle for union recognition at Kannapolis underlines the need for all of labor to combat anti-immigrant racism and to demand full citizenship rights for anyone who has come to this country. Instead, the chauvinist AFL-CIO bureaucracy has appealed to the racist capitalist government to *attack* immigrant workers, which helps fuel attacks on blacks and all minorities. The seizure of thousands of foreign-born workers in the South by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the 1995 “Operation South PAW” (“Protect American Workers”) came after the union tops in Atlanta called for raids against undocumented workers there.

Speaking of a drive by the United Auto Workers to organize a Mercedes plant in Alabama, a Detroit labor academic recently commented: “In a right-to-work state, you have to have a lot of courage to be a union supporter.” This was dramatically driven home by a KKK-style cross-burning outside an Alabama processing plant on the eve of a union recognition vote in June 1995.

With their legalistic, pro-Democratic Party policies, the AFL-CIO misleaders are incapable of undertaking the kind of militant, mass organizing drive needed to unionize workers throughout the South, where the racist cops and KKK lynchers have been instrumental in keeping unions out. It is necessary to unleash the social power of the working class, beginning with existing beachheads of integrated union power in the South—from mainly black longshoremen in the Southeastern and Gulf ports to shipyard workers and Teamsters truckers. ■

Spartacist League banner at March 1977 protest outside J.P. Stevens headquarters in NYC. For militant, mass organizing drive throughout the South!



Steel Workers: Reject Protectionist Pact with Steel Bosses!

For the past year, the United Steelworkers (USWA) leadership has run point for the steel corporations in a chauvinist "Stand Up for Steel" campaign against foreign competition. Negotiations on the union contract expiring July 31, which covers 60,000 workers at five major steel producers, were delayed as the companies and the USWA tops waited to see if the Clinton White House and the Congress would act to curtail steel imports. But after imposing a series of punitive tariffs earlier this year, on June 21 Clinton got the Senate to kill a measure for protectionist quotas passed by the House.

Now, after mobilizing the union's resources behind a class-collaborationist campaign to fatten the profits of American steel bosses, the USWA misleaders are trying to sell steel workers another bill of goods: a rotten contract deal with USX (formerly United States Steel) and Bethlehem which was announced more than a month before the old six-year contract expires and is aimed at setting the pattern for workers at the other three big steel companies. The proposed offer, which is to be voted on by mail ballot later this month, includes a measly \$2 an hour raise over five years and weakens the existing no-layoff clause.

Reflecting pressure from union members, the USWA district director for the Chicago area had vowed before the settlement to recommend a strike to keep the no-layoff clause. USWA members at another steel giant, LTV, are bristling over its 50 percent stake in the non-union Trico mill in Decatur, Alabama, and Ispat Inland's new owner is notorious as a corporate "cost cutter." A USX worker in Gary, Indiana told *WV* that most workers in his unit intend to vote against the new offer.

Steel workers should rip up the proposed sellout! But to *fight* the attacks of the steel barons through a solid nationwide strike, the USWA has to be *independent* from the corporations, not working in collusion with them. As one economic analyst remarked of the company-union protectionist campaign, "The last thing you wanted was a strike at a time you are trying to get quotas on imports" (*Wall Street Journal*, 28 June).

The labor bureaucracy's protectionist appeals promote the lie that workers in the U.S. share common interests with their "own" exploiters against the American capitalists' foreign rivals—and against workers in other countries. Yet while railing about jobs going overseas, the USWA officialdom has allowed a proliferation of non-union mills in the U.S. The USWA once represented over 90 per-

cent of all steel workers. Today fewer than half of the country's 170,000 steel workers are unionized. Since 1987, the USWA has lost 100,000 jobs. In the last five years, over 15 million tons of steel-making capacity has come on line, all of it in non-union mini-mills. Even in unionized mills, the companies are literally extracting profits out of steel workers' blood: 52 USWA members have been killed on the job since January 1996. That's more than one industrial murder per month!

But the USWA still has enormous potential power. Steel is at the core of

of anti-union laws.

A class-struggle fight to defend jobs and organize the unorganized is counterposed to the flag-waving class collaboration and legalism of the union bureaucracy. An April 27 statement of the USWA's Basic Steel Industry Conference complains, "All of the large integrated steel companies have to one degree or another used the extended period of labor peace associated with the most recent contracts to build or buy into non-union operations." But it is the union misleaders themselves who enforced that extended period of "labor peace." Refusing to take

anti-union terror—are deadly dangerous. A serious campaign to organize plants in the South means mobilizing union power not only to win economic demands but to actively defend black rights and stop the KKK nightriders who are murderous enemies of integrated labor struggle.

The AFL-CIO bureaucracy's chauvinist protectionism not only poisons the needed international solidarity between workers in the U.S. and their class brothers and sisters abroad but also fuels racism against black and immigrant workers here. The USWA tops refuse to wield the union's power to fight rampant discrimination against young and minority workers. Despite company pledges to end discrimination in skilled jobs following a court-ordered "consent decree" in the 1970s, those who work the coke ovens and other dangerous and back-breaking unskilled jobs at USX in Gary remain heavily black and Hispanic. These workers—who are cut off from most of the extra "incentive" pay that other workers get for tonnage produced—continue to be all but frozen out of skilled trades training, while the company hires skilled workers off the street as helpers at less than top pay. Against such racist discrimination, the USWA must demand union-run recruitment and training programs especially reaching out to minority workers.

The "Stand Up for Steel" campaign is a quintessential expression of the lie preached by the entire AFL-CIO bureaucracy that there is a "partnership" between labor and capital. This class collaboration finds political expression in the labor bureaucracy's support to the capitalist Democratic Party. The fundamental starting point for mobilizing the integrated labor movement in defense of its own class interests and those of blacks, immigrants and other oppressed minorities is the understanding that this society is divided between two classes whose interests are irreconcilably counterposed: workers who are forced to sell their labor power in order to survive and the property-owning capitalist class to whom their labor power is sold.

There must be a fight inside the unions to oust the pro-capitalist misleaders and replace them with a new, class-struggle leadership, one committed to the class independence of the proletariat from the capitalists, their government and their political parties. To put an end to unemployment and racism requires seizing industry from the capitalist class and the creation of a planned, socialist economy. Those who labor must rule! For a workers party to fight for a workers government! ■



McCloskey/Wheeling Intelligencer

USWA tops run point for steel bosses in chauvinist "Stand Up for Steel" campaign, as in recent West Virginia rally.

the country's industrial economy—from military hardware to construction and cars. And the capitalists are doubly fearful of a steel strike right now, as the September 1 expiration of the United Auto Workers contract poses the possibility of a shutdown in that strategic industry.

Straining to avoid a strike, the USWA leadership offered to engage in early negotiations with any company that accepted two conditions: a common expiration date for all contracts and a new contractual clause holding the major steel outfits to "neutrality" in organizing drives at non-union plants partly owned by them. The way to get a common expiration date is by mobilizing all USWA steel workers to walk out together on the picket lines. That's also what's needed to organize non-union shops: such bold action asserting the power of the union would demonstrate to the tens of thousands of unorganized steel workers what the union can do to fight for their interests. But that would mean stopping scabs through mass, militant pickets and defying the cops and the government's battery

on the major steel corporations, the USWA tops have all the more readily abandoned a series of local strikes, turning them into desperate, drawn-out and isolated battles—from the ten-month Wheeling-Pitt walkout in 1996-97 to the strike against Oregon Steel in Pueblo, Colorado, which has dragged on since 1997.

The very notion of company "neutrality" is belied by the history of hard, sometimes bloody class battles it took to build the unions. The 1937 Little Steel strike against Bethlehem and other companies, which laid the basis for the USWA, is a case in point: 18 strikers were killed, scores wounded and hundreds jailed as company thugs, police and the National Guard were mobilized to crush the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. Many if not most of the new steel jobs are in the "open shop" South, where pervasive racist terror and "right-to-work" laws have kept wages down and unions out. Here in particular, illusions in the "neutrality" of the capitalist state—whose cops and courts enforce

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Capitalist Russia in the “New World Order”

Last month’s stand-off at the Pristina airport in Kosovo between 200 Russian paratroopers and a British contingent of the NATO occupation forces provided a snapshot of current relations between Boris Yeltsin’s capitalist Russia and the Western imperialist powers, chiefly the U.S. One British soldier said, “They had

PART ONE

been telling us for weeks about the Serbs and Albanians, but nobody explained we had to fight Russia.”

In the end, the confrontation was defused through a deal to incorporate Russian troops into the U.S./NATO-led Kosovo occupation force. To drive home who’s in charge, the U.S. would only allow further Russian troops into Kosovo after an overall NATO command structure was fully worked out. The Kosovo arrangement is similar to the one which has been in place in Bosnia since 1995. Indeed, the image of Russian troops jointly policing the region alongside and effectively under the command of NATO forces—like that of Yeltsin envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin jetting between Belgrade and Western capitals in an attempt to push through NATO’s “peace” diktat—provide yet other, very different, snapshots of Russia’s current relations with the imperialist powers.

For years, Yeltsin’s Russia has been playing a cynical double game in the Balkans. On the one hand, the Russians have postured as the “great power” protectors of their “little Serb brothers,” occasionally denouncing American bellicosity and “superpower” arrogance. At the same time, the Yeltsin regime has acted as a “soft cop” vis-à-vis the Serbs on behalf of the Americans and Germans. As in Bosnia four years ago, Moscow was instrumental in brokering a deal between the NATO powers and Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic over Kosovo. Only a few days before publishing alarmed reports on the Russian military move in Pristina, the *New York Times* (9 June) had lauded Moscow’s diplomatic efforts, headlining “Moscow Envoy’s Peace Efforts, Praised in West, Are Panned at Home.”

Yeltsin/Chernomyrdin’s efforts on behalf of the U.S. and NATO were indeed widely reviled in Russia. Nor is Russian hostility to the U.S. limited to traditional anti-Western nationalists like the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and its fascistic bloc partners in the “red-brown coalition.” In the past, the Russian populace was generally indifferent to the wars precipitated by the counterrevolutionary breakup of Yugoslavia and Moscow’s maneuvering in the Balkans. But the terror bombing of Serbia produced a sea change in the political climate in Russia, generating an intense and widespread fear of and hostility toward America. The *New York Times* (12 April) quoted an unemployed truck driver in Moscow: “Now Yugoslavia, next us; that’s what I think.” Such views were in no way unusual. A supporter of the International Communist League who was in Moscow during the first week of the war reported:

“There is a great deal of just rage in Russia at NATO bombing. If the 17 August 1998 financial crisis put the final nail in the illusions of many Russians in market capitalism, the Balkan War has convinced them that the U.S. is a truly evil and rapacious power. The problem is that the answer being offered is not Lenin and Trotsky’s communism but pan-Slavic militarism.”

When Yeltsin, having taken over the Kremlin with U.S. backing, announced

the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the American ruling class triumphantly proclaimed victory in the Cold War and the “death of communism.” Washington politicians of both the Republican and Democratic parties even promised a “peace dividend”: a big reduction in military spending to free up money for other government programs and to allow for tax cuts. In a joint statement with U.S. president George Bush in February 1992, Yeltsin declared: “Russia and the United States do not regard each other as potential adversaries. From now on, the relationship will be characterized by friendship and partnership founded on mutual

peasants and soldiers, the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin and L.D. Trotsky took the Marxist doctrine of proletarian revolution out of the realm of theory and gave it reality, creating the dictatorship of the proletariat—a society where those who labored ruled. From the outset, the capitalists around the world, aided by their reformist lieutenants within the labor movement, sought to strangle the Soviet workers state, beginning with the bloody 1918-21 Civil War pitting the Red Army against imperialist intervention forces and Russian counterrevolutionaries.

The devastation of the most conscious layer of the proletariat in the Civil War,



Crowley/NY Times



Reuters

Russian troops confront NATO forces outside Pristina in June, after Yeltsin regime helped impose NATO diktat on Serbia. Russian envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin (far left) with German defense minister Rudolf Scharping.

trust and respect and a common commitment to democracy and economic freedom.”

Seven years later, the same Yeltsin thundered: “I told NATO, the Americans, the Germans, don’t push us toward military action. Otherwise, there will be a European war for sure, and possibly a world war.” At the height of the air war against Serbia—particularly after Washington pushed through a call for a naval blockade of oil shipments, including from Russia—the possibility of a military confrontation between Russia and NATO was being talked about not only by politicians and generals in Moscow and Western capitals but also among the public at large. Tensions between the U.S. and Russia had been ratcheted up to a point that the cover of the London *Economist* (17 April), house organ of Anglo-American financiers, bluntly poses the question: “A New Cold War?” Why is this happening?

From Cold War to Counterrevolution

The origins of the Cold War lay in the October Revolution of 1917. In leading the working class of Russia to the seizure of state power and the consolidation of its own class rule through workers councils (soviets), supported by soviets of poor

the pressure of imperialist encirclement on the isolated and economically backward workers state and the failure of the young Communist parties of the West to seize on manifold revolutionary opportunities—particularly in Germany in 1918-19 and 1923—set the stage for a *political* counterrevolution in 1924, as a conservative, nationalist bureaucratic caste headed by Stalin usurped political power. The Stalinist bureaucracy’s false dogma of building “socialism in one country” meant in practice an accommodation to imperialism and a betrayal of the proletarian, revolutionary, internationalist program of Bolshevism. That program was carried forward by the International Left Opposition, and later the Fourth International, organized by Trotsky.

Nonetheless, the social foundations of the workers state—embodied in the planned, collectivized economy and the monopoly on foreign trade—remained intact, mandating the need for unconditional military defense of the Soviet workers state, despite its bureaucratic degeneration, against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. This is what the ICL fought for right through to the final undoing of the October Revolution in 1991-92. In contrast, every

pseudo-revolutionary tendency on the face of the planet capitulated to the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive of the 1980s.

Trotsky warned in his 1936 book, *The Revolution Betrayed*, that the Stalinist bureaucracy would ultimately devour the workers state if it was not ousted through a proletarian political revolution. From East Germany to the USSR, the ICL sought to mobilize the proletariat against capitalist restoration, stressing the need for political revolution to oust the treacherous nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. Having systematically destroyed the revolutionary-internationalist consciousness of the Soviet proletariat, the Stalinist bureaucracies did finally devour the workers states.

In 1991-92, the American capitalist class and Russia’s would-be capitalists, largely drawn from the decomposing Kremlin bureaucracy and the intelligentsia, shared a common interest: the destruction of the Soviet Union and its collectivized economy. However, their subsequent goals and expectations were fundamentally different. Russia’s new rulers expected to be showered with money by their new “partners” in Wall Street and Frankfurt. They also expected Washington’s support in establishing Russia as a regional imperialist power exercising political-military hegemony in the territory of the former USSR. In 1993, Yeltsin demanded: “The time has come for the relevant international organisations, including the UN, to grant Russia special powers as a guarantor of peace and stability in the former Soviet Union” (quoted in Bruce Clark, *An Empire’s New Clothes: The End of Russia’s Liberal Dream* [1996]). While the Clinton administration supported Yeltsin’s war of suppression against Chechen separatists in the Caucasus, by and large American imperialism not only rejected Russian imperialist ambitions in the region but has actively opposed them.

With the demise of the USSR, the American ruling class saw itself as supreme master of a “one superpower world.” Washington disdainfully treated Yeltsin’s Russia as if it were an impoverished Third World country. At one point the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF) cited as a precedent for loan conditions to the Russian government the terms it had recently imposed on a loan to Guatemala!

But American ruling circles know perfectly well that Russia is not Guatemala. They expect and fear the re-establishment of a strong Russian state, moreover, one vengeful over its recent humiliation at the hands of the West. In 1994, leading Cold War strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski denounced the policies of the Yeltsin regime as “proto-imperial.” To make sure Moscow’s imperial aspirations remain “proto,” he advocated extending NATO into East Europe, as has recently been done. The U.S./NATO war against Serbia was in part intended to forestall Russia’s re-emergence as a major European power with its own client states in the Balkans.

Post-Soviet Russia and the New “Cold War” Propaganda

The increasing tensions between the U.S. and Russia have resulted in a reinterpretation and rewriting of the Cold War by the ideological spokesmen for American imperialism. They used to describe this global conflict as one between “democracy” and “communist totalitarianism,” or between “free market” capitalism and a Marxist “command economy.” Now, however, the Cold War is

increasingly presented in *national* terms as a conflict between two “great powers”: America as “leader” of the Western world and a Russia eternally striving to dominate the Eurasian land mass from eastern Europe to eastern Siberia.

Henry Kissinger, for example, asserts that the ideological doctrines professed by the Kremlin’s rulers—whether Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Slavophile nationalism or Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism—were merely legitimation for Russian imperial expansionism. In his 1994 opus, *Diplomacy*, Kissinger quotes the 19th-century Russian Slavophile writer Mikhail Katkov:

“The Russian tsar is more than the heir of his ancestors; he is the successor of the caesars of Eastern Rome, of the organizers of the church and its councils which established the very creed of the Christian faith. With the fall of Byzantium, Moscow arose and the greatness of Russia began.”

Immediately following this quote, Kissinger writes: “After the Revolution, the passionate sense of mission was transferred to the Communist International.” So according to this self-styled master of global *realpolitik*, the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky was but a secular version of the Eastern Orthodox church!

A variation on the same theme was composed by another prominent American Cold War ideologue, Samuel P. Huntington. According to Huntington, despite the demise of the Soviet Union, Western civilization still confronts a world of potential enemies—the Islamic states of the Near East, “Confucian” China, Eastern Orthodox Russia—based on unalterable and unbridgeable differences in national cultures:

“The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”

—“The Clash of Civilizations?”
Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993

In Europe, Huntington maintains, that fault line is the “eastern boundary of Western Christianity.”

Huntington’s views—though not, of course, his loyalties—are identical to those of anti-Western Russian Slavophile nationalists who see the U.S./NATO war against Serbia as militant Protestant expansionism. “This is a clash of civilizations,” exclaimed Alexei Podberezkin, an influential member of the Russian Duma (parliament). “They offer us an aggressive and virtually Protestant model of democracy—no, they impose it on us. What is happening in Yugoslavia and what is happening in Bosnia and Croatia is an attempt to impose the Western understanding of values” (*New York Times*, 2 May).

The identity of views, and indeed of language, between well-known spokesmen for American imperialism and for nascent Russian imperialism, while ironic, is perfectly understandable. Both oppose, as they must, the universalism and rational humanism of the Enlight-



enment which underlies the Marxist principles of the Bolshevik-led workers revolution. And, in fact, the present tendency of both American bourgeois and Russian nationalist intellectuals is to deny that Marxist principles had anything to do with the Bolshevik Revolution and instead claim Red October for Great Russian nationalism and imperialism. In the past few years, American and British journalists and academics have been churning out books asserting an essential continuity of the Russian state—tsarist, Communist and post-Soviet—and its antagonism to the West: Bruce Clark’s *An Empire’s New Clothes: The End of Russia’s Liberal Dream*, Jonathan Steele’s *Eternal Russia: Yeltsin, Gorbachev, and the Mirage of Democracy*, Robert Donaldson and Joseph Noguee’s *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*.

Jonathan Steele, veteran Moscow correspondent for the London *Guardian*, presents a somewhat different argument for an essential continuity between the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, claiming that the same old Communists are still running the show, only now they’ve become capitalists:

“By comparison with 1917, the Yeltsin ‘revolution’ was less of a change. Many of his political team, including Yeltsin himself, as well as many of the new entrepreneurs who emerged in the transition to a market economy, were members of the old élite. There was no great redistribution of wealth and power.”

The above passage contains an important element of truth, but it obscures an even more important truth. To be sure, many, perhaps even a majority, of Russia’s big-time capitalist operators and top government officials were *apparatchiks* during the regime of Leonid Brezhnev in the 1970s. Viktor Chernomyrdin epitomizes the transition from Stalinist bureaucrat to capitalist mogul. When the economy was denationalized following capitalist counterrevolution, Chernomyrdin parlayed his position as minister of gas production to become CEO of Gazprom, one of the largest corporations in the world, and make himself one of the wealthiest individuals in the world. Such developments were anticipated by



Soviet cartoon after Bolshevik Revolution shows Lenin sweeping away kings, priests, capitalists. Boris Yeltsin hosts Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II after capitalist counterrevolution.

Trotsky in *The Revolution Betrayed*. Speaking of the corruption of the Stalinist regime and the appetite of the bureaucrats to ensure their privileged status through legal ownership of the means of production, Trotsky noted that “a bourgeois restoration would probably have to clean out fewer people [in the state apparatus] than a revolutionary party.”

But Steele’s use of the vague, generic term “elite” to describe both bureaucrats in the former Soviet Union and capitalist entrepreneurs in Russia today serves the same ideological purpose as when right-wing demagogues in the U.S. denounce trade-union officials as labor “bosses,” thereby identifying them with capitalist exploiters. In the case of Russia, it serves



Moscow street market. Restoration of capitalism has brought terrible immiseration to the working people.

to minimize the monumental historical fact that a *capitalist counterrevolution* occurred.

Steele’s argument is paralleled by a host of fake-leftist groups who likewise seek to downplay or deny the significance of capitalist restoration—in order to amnesty their own support to counterrevolution. An example is the British centrist Workers Power group, which cheered on the pro-imperialist “democrats” on Yeltsin’s barricades in 1991 and had earlier supported an array of anti-Communist forces from Polish Solidarność to the fascist-infested Lithuanian Sajudis. To this day, Workers Power continues to deny that capitalist counterrevolution has triumphed in the Soviet Union, ludicrously labeling it a “moribund workers state.” In any case, this centrist gobbledygook has no programmatic import: Workers Power likewise called Milosevic’s Serbia a “moribund workers state” while embracing the U.S./NATO imperialist war cry over “poor little Kosovo.”

The reformist tendency headed by Tony Cliff’s Socialist Workers Party in Britain, represented in the U.S. by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), explicitly denies that there has been a capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe. The Cliffites described the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states

of East Europe (and Cuba, China, North Korea and Vietnam) as “state capitalist” in order to justify their refusal to defend those states against imperialism. Writing of the capitalist counterrevolutions which swept East Europe and the Soviet Union—and which it “celebrated”—the ISO declares: “The revolutions in Eastern Europe were a step sideways—from one form of capitalism to another” (*Socialist Worker*, 23 April). Any worker in the former USSR who was told that he had simply taken a “step sideways” in the last ten years would simply spit in the ISOer’s face, or worse.

One-third of the urban labor force in Russia today is effectively unemployed; 75 percent of the population lives below or barely above the subsistence level and 15 million are actually starving. Malnutrition has become the norm among schoolchildren. Some two million children have been abandoned by families who can no longer support them. Life expectancy, especially for men, has fallen sharply, while the overall population has actually declined by two million since 1990.

In the chaotic condition of post-Soviet Russia, the laws of capitalism have resulted in total economic collapse: gross domestic product has fallen at least 50 percent since 1991, capital investment by 90 percent. Statistics alone cannot convey the scale and intensity of immiseration in Russia today. The infrastructures of production, technology, science, transportation, heating and sewage have disintegrated. Once-eradicated diseases are again becoming epidemics.

“State capitalism” is an ignorant, anti-Marxist notion intended only as a flimsy “theoretical” justification for the

Cliffites’ embrace of social-democratic anti-Communism. An industrial manager in the USSR obeyed fundamentally different economic imperatives than a Russian capitalist today even if they happen to be the same individual. The goal of a capitalist is to maximize profits, i.e., the difference between labor costs and market price. The main goal of a Soviet factory director, on which his future career depended, was maximizing the planned output of goods although often to the detriment of quality and variety. The system thus generated full employment. In fact, Soviet enterprises were typically overmanned. And despite bureaucratic mismanagement and corruption, the planned, collectivized economy provided for universal medical care, housing, education and child care. The working masses of Russia now look back on the Brezhnevite era—for all its inequalities, shortages and drabness—as a “golden age.”

Russian Tsarist Reaction and Western Imperialism

The currently fashionable notion of a centuries-old, deeply rooted antagonism between Russia and the West is a historical falsification. In the mid-19th century many Western liberals, among them Abraham Lincoln, detested tsarist Russia as the embodiment of an oppressive tyranny under the sway of medieval

continued on page 14

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The Fight for Kurdish Liberation

Trotskyism vs. PKK Nationalism

We reprint below a 24 June supplement to Spartakist, newspaper of our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD).

The hair-raising image of the chained and humiliated Abdullah Öcalan following his capture by the murderous Turkish state in February highlights the continuing national oppression of the Kurdish people. Hounded from country to country and refused asylum by the

SPARTAKIST 4

social-democratic governments of Britain, France, Italy and Germany, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) was seized by Turkish elite commandos in Kenya. Incarcerated in the notorious prison island Imrali in the Marmara Sea, Öcalan has now been put on trial by the bloody Turkish regime, which threatens him with the death penalty. We demand: Freedom for Öcalan!

For decades, the Western imperialists have propped up the Turkish state, giving it military and political assistance to suppress the Kurds. The U.S. connived with its Turkish clients to get Öcalan, providing intelligence that led to his abduction. For its part, German imperialism delivers weapons to Turkey and trains Turkish elite troops at the Bundeswehr leadership academy. Fearing instability in the Near East, where they hope to reap fabulous profits from oil and natural gas pipelines, the German capitalists support their Turkish ally's every move against the PKK and the Kurds. And by whipping up a racist anti-immigrant campaign against Kurdish workers, the German bourgeoisie works to divide and weaken the multinational working class at home.

Just weeks after the Turkish regime kidnapped Öcalan, NATO forces, spearheaded by the U.S. and including German warplanes, launched a massive bombing campaign against Serbia in the phony guise of providing "humanitarian" support to the Kosovo Albanians against "ethnic cleansing" by Slobodan Milosevic's Serb forces. Justifying terror bombing in the Balkans in the name of "human rights" is the height of imperialist hypocrisy. Milosevic's despicable nationalism toward the Kosovo Albanians pales in comparison with the barbaric and murderous treatment dished out every day to

For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!

the Kurds by the Turkish rulers—who are unswervingly backed by German and U.S. imperialism!

After Öcalan's kidnapping, mass arrests of Kurds began in the cities of western Turkey. His arrest sparked street fighting in Diyarbakir [in Kurdish-populated eastern Turkey] and the Gazi Mahallesi slums of Istanbul, where Kurdish demonstrators defended themselves against cop attacks. Across Europe and



PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan sentenced to death in Turkish court, June 29. Funeral procession in Berlin in February for four Kurdish protesters killed during demonstrations against Öcalan's arrest.

around the world, tens of thousands of Kurds demonstrated and occupied embassies to protest Öcalan's abduction. In Hamburg, the SPD [Social Democratic Party] headquarters was occupied. In Berlin on February 17, Ahmet Acar, Sema Alp and Mustafa Kurt were gunned down by Israeli security guards who opened fire on Kurdish protesters at the Israeli consulate. Sixteen other demonstrators were injured; one of them, Sinan Karakus, died ten days later.

In cracking down on the Kurds, the SPD/CDU [Christian Democratic Union]

Berlin city parliament decreed an emergency situation and banned all demonstrations having to do with the "Kurdish problem." The cops arrested more than a thousand Kurds, while hundreds more were beaten. Hoping to intimidate the Kurdish minority into silence, SPD chancellor Gerhard Schröder and his interior minister, Otto Schily, threatened to use the "full force of the law" to deport Kurds to the Turkish torture chambers. Since



Reuters photos

1993, the SPD has backed to the hilt the ban on the PKK, labeling it and other Kurdish organizations as "terrorist."

From Britain and France to Canada and Australia, the International Communist League joined Kurdish demonstrators in demanding Öcalan's freedom. The Spartakist Workers Party protested alongside Kurdish demonstrators in Germany, distributing a declaration in Turkish, German, Italian, French and English that stressed: "German imperialism, along with U.S. imperialism, is the godfather of the Turkish campaign of extermination of

the Kurds, arming and training the death squadrons" (see WV No. 708, 5 March). It demanded: "Drop the Charges! Free the Kurdish Prisoners! No Deportations! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Down With the Ban on the PKK and the Kurdish Associations!"

NATO Ally Turkey: Prison House of Peoples

The explosiveness of nationalist enmities in the Near and Middle East is the direct result of imperialist machinations. When the British and French imperialists carved up the Ottoman Empire after World War I, they divided the Kurdish homeland among four bourgeois states: Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. Even

the highly truncated Kurdish state mandated by the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres was gutted three years later by the Lausanne Treaty, which created modern Turkey and stipulated that all persons in the country were Turkish except those who belonged to one of the landless religious minorities (Armenians, Greeks or Sephardic Jews).

Soon after its inception, the Turkish state founded by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) sought to destroy the Kurds' national identity. In March 1924, speaking and publishing in the Kurdish language were banned, and the constitution codified the Kemalist doctrine that Turkey was strictly Turkish. Eventually Kurds were forcibly renamed "Mountain Turks." In the early 1960s, the Turkish rulers enacted a law to change Kurdish place names into Turkish ones and proclaimed that no Kurdish nation existed. When major demonstrations broke out in May 1961 in Mardin, Diyarbakir and other cities to protest the wholesale assault on Kurdish rights, the government shot down more than 300 demonstrators.

This policy continued unabated in the 1980s and 1990s. In December 1982, the education minister decreed that since folk songs in east and southeast Anatolia could serve subversive purposes, they could be sung only in Turkish. In October 1983, Law 2932 prohibited the very use of the Kurdish language. David McDowall notes in his book *A Modern History of the Kurds* (1997), "Already



Spartakist



WV Map

Berlin: Spartakists call "For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!" at February demonstration for Öcalan's freedom.

the term ‘Kurdish’ was such a bogey that the law found a form of words to make its prohibition explicit without mentioning the offending word.” Kurdish names that contradicted the “national culture, morality and traditions” and “insulted the public” were outlawed. By the mid-1980s, almost 3,000 villages in Adiyaman, Gaziantep, Urfa, Mardin, Siirt and Diyarbakir had been renamed.

State repression skyrocketed. Between September 1980 and September 1982, at least 81,000 Kurds were locked away in Turkish prison hellholes. Meanwhile, the army deployed two-thirds of its troops in Kurdistan, increasing the number to 200,000 by the early 1990s. Dead set on destroying the Kurdish nation, the Turkish military destroyed thousands of Kurdish villages, prompting huge forced population transfers and killing tens of thousands. Numbering 25 to 30 million throughout the region, the Kurds are one of the world’s largest people without a state of their own. Consisting overwhelmingly of hideously downtrodden peasants and landless sharecroppers, the Kurdish masses in southeastern Turkey have historically been under the heel of the *aghas* (the Kurdish landed gentry), the Sunni clergy and the bloodthirsty Turkish military. Kurdish society itself is highly class-stratified—in the early 1990s, 8 percent of farming families owned over 50 percent of the land, and 38 percent were landless.

Reinforcing economic inequalities between Turks and Kurds is one reason for the Turkish regime’s reign of terror in eastern Anatolia. Per capita income in the southeastern Kurdish regions in the early 1990s was 42 percent of the national average and a quarter of that in the Aegean/Marmara region. Literacy in many Kurdish provinces was less than 50 percent compared to the national average of 77 percent because education was conducted in Turkish, a foreign language to most rural Kurds.

Behind the unrelenting national oppression suffered by the Kurds is the drive of the bourgeois rulers in the Near East to create nationally homogeneous states by depriving the Kurds of their own nationhood. The very acknowledgment of Kurdish identity threatens the stability of the bourgeois regimes in the region. For this reason, it is unthinkable that the Kurdish people can achieve national self-determination in the framework of the capitalist nation-state system.

As Marxists who forthrightly defend the equality of nations and combat all manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism, we emphasize that the rights of the Kurdish people can only be guaranteed by proletarian socialist revolutions to smash the capitalist states which oppress them—Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. To achieve this, it is necessary to build Leninist-Trotskyist parties which unite the working people of different national and ethnic backgrounds. Such parties will inscribe on their banner the call for a *Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan*, part of a *socialist federation of the Near East*.

This perspective is a concrete expression of Leon Trotsky’s program of permanent revolution, the only road to the emancipation of the masses in the semi-colonial world from pre-capitalist slavery and capitalist exploitation. In countries of belated capitalist development, the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution accomplished long ago in the West cannot be solved by the local bourgeoisies, which are entirely dependent on imperialism and fearful that any move toward social progress will encourage the workers to overthrow them. In these countries, the unsolved tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution—such as agrarian revolution, women’s rights and national liberation—can only be achieved through the dictatorship of the proletariat at the head of the peasant masses. In order to survive and flourish, socialist revolutions in the backward countries must be extended to the advanced capitalist states of the West and Japan, whose economic, technological, and scientific technique is



AP
In its war of extermination against PKK, Turkish regime has razed over 3,500 Kurdish villages and driven over three million from Kurdish area of south-eastern Turkey. Below: Kurds protest police repression in Istanbul, March 21.

Winter/NY Times



essential to raise the “Third World” to the economic level of the “First.”

PKK Nationalism: Dead End for Kurds

Defense of the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people is a crucial obligation for would-be communists in Turkey. The Turkish working class must be won to a perspective of upholding the national rights of the Kurds, defending the PKK and other Kurdish organizations against state terror, and championing full and equal rights for the Kurdish language. Only by fighting all manifestations of Turkish chauvinism and national oppression can the road be opened for joint struggle by the Turkish and Kurdish workers against their common capitalist oppressors.

As Lenin stressed, communists in an oppressor country must emphasize opposition to the chauvinism of their “own” bourgeoisie, while communists in the oppressed country must in particular combat petty-bourgeois nationalism, fighting for the unity in struggle of the workers of both nations:

“People who have not gone into the question thoroughly think that it is ‘contradictory’ for the Social-Democrats of oppressor nations to insist on the ‘freedom to *secede*,’ while Social-Democrats of oppressed nations insist on the ‘freedom to *integrate*.’ However, a little reflection will show that there is not, and cannot be, any *other* road to internationalism and the amalgamation of nations, any other road *from the given* situation to this goal.”

—“The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up” (July 1916)

Thus, while defending the right of self-determination of the Kurds, communists strongly oppose the petty-bourgeois nationalist program of the PKK. Arising in response to the all-sided oppression of the Kurds, the PKK was formed by Öcalan (nicknamed Apo, or “uncle”) in the mid-1970s. The movement that would adopt the name PKK in 1978 claimed to be “Marxist-Leninist,” reflecting Öcalan’s urbanized roots as a student in Ankara, where he had been a sup-

porter of the leftist youth group Devrimci Genc at a time when Maoism was popular among radicalized youth.

Its “Marxist-Leninist” rhetoric notwithstanding, the PKK never had anything to do with genuine Marxism. Rejecting the struggle for a revolutionary Leninist party based on the growing Turkish and Kurdish proletariat, Öcalan, like many Turkish and Kurdish leftists of the late 1960s and early 1970s, embraced Third World guerrillaism. Alienated by the Turkish left’s rotten, chauvinist refusal to champion the cause of Kurdish liberation, Öcalan and his supporters retreated to the countryside, abjuring the workers of Istanbul, Ankara, Sivas and Adana. This was doubly criminal, for unlike other Kurdish groups the PKK drew its support from proletarian elements who hated the class domination of the Kurdish *aghas* and merchants.

Although its supporters hate the landlord and feudal hierarchy of the Kurdish village, the PKK itself has engaged in crass clan-based politics, playing one family or village off another in the Anatolian backwater. McDowall writes:

Öcalan...

(continued from page 1)

anti-Kurdish provocations, including an ominous march by some 1,000 Turkish men through the main Kurdish city of Diyarbakir.

Backed by the U.S. and Germany, the Turkish bourgeoisie has waged a war of extermination against the PKK and the oppressed Kurdish national minority (see “The Fight for Kurdish Liberation: Trotskyism vs. PKK Nationalism,” page 8). Yet it is to Turkey’s imperialist sponsors that the petty-bourgeois nationalist PKK appeals for support. At a June 29 Vancouver protest against the sentencing of Öcalan called by the PKK and joined by the Trotskyist League of Canada and the Worker-communist Party—Iraq, a

“Rather than assaulting the agha class as a whole, the PKK operated with fine calculation, exploiting blood feuds where these existed, helping to create them where they did not.” One close associate of Öcalan remarked that whenever the PKK won one person from a family or tribe, “the whole family or tribe came to our side.”

To be sure, the petty-bourgeois nationalist PKK has waged a heroic military struggle against the far better equipped Turkish army, winning mass support among the Kurdish people in Turkish Kurdistan, the urban centers of western Turkey and the diaspora in West Europe and elsewhere. Nevertheless, the PKK uses guerrilla war only to fight its way to the bargaining table, where it hopes to compel the Turkish bourgeoisie to grant concessions. At the same time, it seeks to put pressure on the Western imperialists to then pressure their Turkish NATO allies.

The PKK’s strategy is in line with that of other petty-bourgeois nationalist movements like the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and African National Congress (ANC). Since the nationalist perspective of these movements is emphatically not linked to a fight for proletarian revolution in the developed capitalist countries, they necessarily look to the good graces of Western imperialism—with disastrous consequences for the oppressed masses. Today, following U.S.-brokered “peace” accords, Yasir Arafat’s PLO has sold itself as police auxiliaries to the racist Zionists in Israel. In South Africa, the now-bourgeois nationalist ANC presides over a neo-apartheid system where the black masses are just as exploited and oppressed by the Randlords as they were under white racist rule. If the PKK were to cut a deal with the Turkish henchmen, it would strive to use its newly found position to exploit its own people and would serve as Kurdish gendarmes for the Turkish state. In his speech before the Turkish court, Öcalan laid out such a perspective, which was endorsed by the PKK.

During the Cold War, when the Soviet Union faced hostile encirclement by the imperialist countries, petty-bourgeois nationalist forces like the PLO and ANC were often politically and militarily backed by Moscow, giving them some room to maneuver. The PKK, for its part, enjoyed a modicum of military support from Soviet-friendly Syria, where Öcalan found a safe haven and established PKK guerrilla bases. After the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, however, the petty-bourgeois nationalists were left suspended in mid-air. The PLO responded by looking ever more openly to Washington to broker a “peace” deal, which has not relieved the suffering of the Palestinian masses one iota. Without Soviet backing, Syria succumbed to pressure from Turkey, which threatened to invade its Arab neighbor if it continued to harbor the PKK leader and his guerrilla units. Last year, Syria knuckled under to this provocation and Öcalan was forced to leave the country.

continued on page 10

PKK banner read: “NATO Fights Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo. NATO Supports Ethnic Cleansing in Kurdistan. How Long Do You Accept This Double Standard?” Addressing such illusions in the “humanitarian” pretensions of the NATO imperialists, a TLC speaker declared:

“The fact that the Western imperialists unswervingly back the Turkish rulers illustrates that there is no such thing as ‘humanitarian’ imperialism. They may click their tongues hypocritically against the death penalty for Öcalan, but they carry out deportations, political repression and racist state terror against immigrants at home. As Marxists who forthrightly defend the equality of nations and combat all manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism, we emphasize that the rights of the Kurdish people can only be guaranteed by proletarian revolutions to smash the capitalist states which oppress them. For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan! Free Öcalan!”■

PKK...

(continued from page 9)

All this has impelled the PKK to intensify its overtures to the archenemies of Kurdish freedom: the Western imperialists and the Turkish state. Wooing the European bourgeoisies, the PKK declared last year: “The PKK can solve the Kurdish question either by continued fighting in the mountains or with an appeal to Europe” (*Kurdistan-Rundbrief*, 2 December 1998). It has also offered up the Kurds as pawns in the rivalry between the European Union (EU) and U.S. imperialism: “The lack of a political approach to the Kurdish question on the part of the countries in the EU...just like the passivity on the Yugoslavia problem, means once again giving the USA the occasion to get the upper hand” (*Kurdistan-Rundbrief*, 10 February).

Öcalan has been no less shameless in his appeals to the U.S. In a report delivered on the Kurdish station Med-TV on 15 October 1998, he implored Washington: “Assume that all the power lay in your hands, would you then grant the Kurds any right to peace? Would you grant them a few democratic rights? Your partner is there, I give you my word. Make the preparations for a political solution, I will not make any pre-conditions.” In this craven kowtowing to the big powers, the PKK is following in the footsteps of the large, aristocratic Barzani and Talabani clans in Iraqi Kurdistan, which have always sold their services to a changing spectrum of regional powers

(Islamic Movement). More recently, Islamic representatives have been members of Öcalan’s exile parliament. The PKK pushes the reactionary lie that “the Islamic movements need us and they breathe through our struggles. We do not forget that the workers party aspires to genuine Islam” (*Junge Welt*, 20 November 1995). In his Med-TV report, Öcalan asked of the Virtue Party: “Where is your loyalty to Islam, how can you describe as Islamic your attitude of supporting the war under all circumstances? Where is the Islam in that?”

Religion serves to chain the oppressed to the old order by imbuing them with superstitions and conservative morality. Nowhere is this truer than in the Islamic world, where the Koran and the reactionary weight of the family keep hundreds of millions, particularly women, in a state of isolation, ignorance and hideous subjugation. In embracing Turkey’s reactionary Muslim parties, the PKK is signaling to the clerical establishment that it can be trusted to tighten the hold of Islam on the Kurdish masses, which is already very strong in the backward regions of Turkish Kurdistan.

Kurdish militants confronted with the bankruptcy of PKK guerrillaism and its blatantly reactionary politics must grapple with the fundamental difference between the PKK’s petty-bourgeois strategy and the Marxist perspective that only the working class—Turkish, Kurdish, Arab, Persian, and Hebrew-speaking—has the social power, numbers and organization to topple all the bourgeois states in the Near and Middle East through social-



AP

Anti-woman Islamic reactionaries march in Istanbul, December 1997.

and Western imperialists in exchange for military and political backing.

Implacably hostile to the perspective of uniting the Kurdish and Turkish workers against their common class enemies, the PKK has progressively tailored its politics to the reactionary climate of the post-Soviet world, replacing even its formal call for the independence of Turkish Kurdistan with the demand for “autonomy.” It has even offered to aid the murderous Turkish rulers in their expansionist drive to control the Turkic-speaking lands of Central Asia, declaring in *Kurdistan-Report* (January/February 1998):

“The solution in Turkey is a regional solution. That should not worry Turkey. It would mean a secure bridge to the Near East and Central Asia up to the Turkmanian countries. For the first time in its history Turkey could be, thanks to this Kurdish bridge, a very strong power.”

The more pronounced the PKK’s appeals to the imperialists and the Turkish state have become, the less use it has had for the “Marxist-Leninist” verbiage and secularism that animates many of its members. Although the PKK has criticized women’s oppression in its publications and is known for placing women under arms in its guerrilla groups, its petty-bourgeois outlook and contempt for Turkey’s proletarian masses have led it to turn to the most reactionary forces in the Turkish political landscape: elements of the Sunni clergy and Necmettin Erbakan’s Welfare Party (now called Virtue), a mass Islamic organization.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the PKK established a group led by a cleric in Bitlis and was associated with the Partiya Islami Kurdistan and Islami Harekat

ist revolution. Only this road is capable of freeing the oppressed Kurds from the chains of national oppression and guaranteeing their right to self-determination. The PKK’s nationalist program is a dead end—only the Trotskyist strategy of permanent revolution can liberate the Kurdish masses.

SPD: Bourgeois Workers Party of Racism and War

In Germany, tens of thousands of Kurdish workers belong to large trade unions together with their German and Turkish class brothers and sisters. The Turkish and Kurdish workers in Europe can be a living bridge linking the fight for Kurdish independence and socialist revolution in the Near East to workers rule in the industrialized West. German and ethnic Turkish workers must take a stand in defense of the rights of Kurdish organizations. This is particularly urgent today, as the racist German state will use its attacks on the PKK to go after all immigrants and the workers movement more generally. However, the social democracy and the trade-union bureaucracy are obstacles to mobilizing the power of the proletariat against racist deportations, fascist provocations and aggressive attacks on the working class.

Since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the absorption of the East German deformed workers state (DDR) into the Fourth Reich in the early 1990s, sharply intensified interimperialist rivalries have propelled the German bourgeoisie to intensify its attacks on the working class in order to better compete with its imperialist rivals. To do so, the ruling class has sought to cripple proletarian



Bernhard Rudolph

Cops unleashed on refugee home by SPD state government in Hamburg, March 1998. Fascist firebombing of Turkish home in Mölln in 1992 killed three people.



Der Spiegel

struggles by infecting the workers with the poison of chauvinism and racism. Screaming that “the boat is full”—the racist war cry that Germany has too many “foreigners”—the rulers have sought to create the ideological climate in which refugees and other immigrants can be driven out with impunity.

Fed up with almost 17 years of Christian Democratic governments headed by Helmut Kohl and the increasing anti-working-class onslaught, millions of workers voted for the SPD in the last national elections, bringing the Social Democrats to power for the first time since 1982. Doing the bourgeoisie’s bidding, the SPD took the reins of the capitalist state to shove the givebacks demanded by the rulers down the throats of the powerful trade unions, whose bureaucratic misleaders have prevented the workers from defending their livelihoods. In administering the bourgeois state, the SPD pursues no less reactionary, racist policies than the CDU. The unbridled repression meted out to Kurdish protesters in the streets of Berlin, Hamburg and Köln is but one example of what the SPD government of Gerhard Schröder is all about.

Having definitively gone over to the side of German imperialism in World War I by voting for the war credits that sent countless workers to die in the trenches, the Social Democrats have devoted themselves ever since to chaining the proletariat to its class enemy. In 1992, the SPD once again proved its fealty to the Frankfurt bankers by voting to abolish the right to asylum, which encouraged the Nazis to unleash a raging pogrom against immigrants in Rostock. In Hamburg and Schröder’s own state of Lower Saxony, SPD governments have orchestrated furious police sweeps against Africans and other immigrants. Now the SPD and their Green coalition partners have bombed the people of Serbia, in the largest military conflict in Europe since World War II. In last year’s elections, we refused to give an iota of support to the SPD or the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the former East German Stalinists who sold out the DDR to German imperialism in 1990 and transformed themselves into unabashedly pro-capitalist social democrats. We declared: “SPD/PDS: Racist Deporters and Imperialist Warmongers! No Vote for SPD, PDS!” (*Spartakist* No. 133, Fall 1998).

For its part, the PDS administers state terror against immigrants in Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, thereby paving the way for the Nazis. It also pushes crass anti-Americanism in the service of German imperialism. After proving its loyalty to the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz by leading the counterrevolution in the DDR, the PDS now rushes to advise the German imperialists on how best to outmaneuver their U.S. rivals. PDS foreign policy spokesman Wolfgang Gehrcke demands that the European-centered Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe play a broader

role in the Balkans as a counterweight to U.S.-dominated NATO and counsels German foreign minister Joschka Fischer to “crawl out from under Madame Albright’s skirts” (*Junge Welt*, 20/21 February). Advising German imperialism on how to carve out a place for itself in the oil-rich countries of the Near East with Turkey as a springboard, the PDS demands that a “European initiative” and German imperialism “solve” the Kurdish question. Thus the PDS seeks to subordinate the working class and its savagely persecuted Kurdish component to its class enemy.

Following V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian Revolution, we characterize the SPD and PDS as “bourgeois workers parties”—parties based on the trade unions, the mass organizations of the proletariat, *but with a leadership which has a thoroughly bourgeois program*. We fight to split the working-class base of these parties from the pro-capitalist lead-



ICL fights for class unity of Turkish and Kurdish workers. Spartacist 1984 statement “For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!” in Turkish and Kurdish.

ers as part of the struggle to forge a revolutionary party, a tribune of all the oppressed dedicated to the struggle for socialist revolution in the industrial powerhouse of Europe. *For a workers Germany in a Socialist United States of Europe!* Kurdish and Turkish workers—who have fewer illusions in the social democracy than the native-born proletariat because of the rampant, virulent racism they experience every day—can play a vital role in breaking the entire working class from the pro-capitalist SPD and PDS. They are key to the perspective of socialist revolution.

Fake Trotskyists: Enemies of Kurdish Freedom

Amid the unremitting national oppression of the Kurdish people in Turkey and bourgeois state repression in Germany, the test of any organization claiming to be revolutionary is its attitude toward international proletarian class struggle,

the treacherous nationalism of the PKK and, above all, the role of the imperialist bourgeoisie's social-democratic hand-maidens, who carry out the vilest racist attacks in the service of capital.

The pseudo-Trotskyist Revolutionärer Sozialistischer Bund (Revolutionary Socialist League—RSB), affiliated with the United Secretariat of the late Ernest Mandel, has long tailed the PKK and functioned as an ardent camp follower of Kurdish nationalism. In the wake of Öcalan's capture, the RSB continued to sing the praises of the PKK, uncritically eulogizing that “Öcalan's historic service is to have played a decisive role in the national liberation struggle of the Kurdish minority in Turkey” (*Avanti*, March 1999).

In a letter to *Spartakist* No. 119 (July/August 1995), an RSB spokesman went to great lengths to defend the PKK's every political move, claiming that it is a workers party which is “socialist and internationalist.” Defending the PKK's call for a “political and democratic solution” in Kurdistan, he justified “the use of international, also imperialist-dominated institutions such as the UN” while lamely warning against becoming subordinated to the “logic” of these imperialist agencies. But it was under UN auspices that such imperialist adventures as the Korean War in the early 1950s were waged, and under which over a million Iraqis, including hundreds of thousands of children, have perished since 1991 as a result of the UN-imposed embargo. *Down with the UN starvation embargo of Iraq!*

Rejecting a proletarian-centered program to unite the Turkish and Kurdish workers in the fight for socialist revolution, the RSB effuses over what it sees as the liberating power of the most bitter enemies of the Kurdish people: the West European imperialists. Outrageously, the RSB paints the EU in “progressive” colors, claiming that this imperialist economic bloc of racist state terror and growing fascist attacks has created “a kind of revolution from above” by constructing a European domestic market that will force oppressor states to make “concessions” to their oppressed national minorities: “The more Great Britain or the Spanish state become part of the EU, the more elbow room the Basques or Northern Irish will have” (*Avanti*, March 1999).

As for the Kurds, the RSB writes: “It is hardly to be assumed that Turkey with its military regime in occupied Kurdistan can join the EU without concessions to the oppressed Kurdish minority!” Ascribing a civilizing mission to racist “Fortress Europe” is not just the crassest reformism, it also flies in the face of the reality of the post-Soviet imperialist order which has intensified national oppression around the world, from Northern Ireland—where the Catholics remain under the heel of the British Army, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and Protestant paramilitary gangs—to Israel, where the Zionist state continues to subjugate, disenfranchise and slaughter the Palestinians.

Of a piece with the RSB's hope that the European imperialists will side with the Kurds is its faith in the progressive potential of the Bundeswehr. Wishing that the bourgeois army would establish better priorities, the RSB writes (*Avanti*, December 1997): “The Green ‘human rights’ types demand outright Bundeswehr intervention for *humanitarian* reasons—naturally not where it is a question only of freedom and humanity, as with the Kurds or against the genocide of the Tutsis, but rather where German power interests will thus be promoted, as in Bosnia.”

In stark contrast, Marxists understand that imperialism is not just a “bad policy” that can be modified by pressuring the state—the executive organ of the capitalist class—to act in the interests of “freedom” and “humanity.” Rather, the drive to maximize profits forces rival imperialist countries to seize new markets, squeeze out competitors, build rival trade blocs and ultimately seek to redivide the world. This is the source of imperialist world

wars, which twice this century have brought barbarism and ruin to large swaths of humanity. Only when the international proletariat wrenches state power from the bourgeoisie will imperialist war be uprooted forever.

Another fake-Trotskyist outfit claiming to stand with the Kurdish people and the PKK against bourgeois state repression is the Gruppe Arbeitermacht (GAM), German affiliate of the British Workers Power group. As Kurdish protesters were being rounded up by the SPD's cops in February, the GAM whined that “the behavior of the Red/Green federal government toward the violent clashes of the last days shows more than clearly how little their declarations about the integration of foreigners and humanity are worth” (“Freedom for Öcalan! Support the Freedom Struggle of the Kurds!”, undated leaflet).

What a hoax! These cynics “forget” to mention that they *supported* the election of these same social democrats, calling for a vote “to the SPD in the West and to the SPD and PDS in the East” in the last election (*Arbeitermacht*, May/June 1998). For its part, the RSB fully backed the PDS, which declared in turn that it was “unconditionally” for SPD chancellor Schröder. The support of both the RSB and the GAM for the social democrats is vivid testimony to how wedded they are to the institutions of bourgeois society. In



Berlin metal workers demonstrate in 1992 with banner reading: “German and Non-German Workers Strike Together for Their Future.”

the Cold War of the 1980s and early '90s, these groups promoted social-democratic anti-Communism by supporting counter-revolutionary, clerical-nationalist Solidarność in Poland and by hailing Yeltsin's capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. Today, the centrist fakers continue to back the social-democratic parties of racism and war.

For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

In the struggle to forge revolutionary Trotskyist parties in the Near and Middle East, it is imperative to unite the working classes across national lines. In Turkey, the brutal displacement of the Kurdish masses that has forced them to flee to the industrial centers of Istanbul, Ankara and beyond has explosively expanded the objective basis for the unity of the Turkish and Kurdish workers against the bourgeoisie and landowners.

Although the Turkish rulers try to whip up nationalist passions in the Turkish population by demonizing Öcalan as a terrorist, not many years ago 48,000 Kurdish and Turkish coal miners struck together in the Black Sea city of Zonguldak at the very moment that the Turkish government was gearing up for the UN/NATO assault on Iraq. We noted at the time (*Spartakist* No. 82, January 1991; WV No. 517, 4 January 1991) that the strike went beyond economic issues by demanding “No to the war!”—a direct challenge to Turkey's role as a key NATO ally. The Zonguldak strike, we wrote, “has inspired the combative and restless working class, Kurdish and Turkish, throughout Turkey, fed up with the repressive Turgut Özal dictatorship.” Solidarity strikes occurred in Kurdish east-



Turkish and Kurdish coal miners joined in 1991 strike in Zonguldak. Strikers marched on Ankara carrying portrait of Kemal Atatürk.

ern Anatolia and among Turkish workers, and miners reportedly raised the demand for the right of Kurds to use their own language.

The potential for uniting the workers across national lines is demonstrated by the history of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP). Although Stalinist from the moment of its creation in 1934 and ever-faithful to the class-collaborationist strat-

egy of forming popular-front alliances with bourgeois “progressives,” the ICP was the most proletarian Communist Party in the Near East. It conducted systematic work in Kurdistan's oil and industrial centers such as Kirkuk and Mosul in the 1940s and published a Kurdish press. By the early 1950s, fully one-third of the party's central committee was Kurdish.

In the midst of the great social turmoil that ensued after the fall of the Iraqi monarchy in 1959, this powerful force for social revolution was betrayed by the Iraqi Stalinists and Moscow. Instead of mobilizing its working-class base to take state power in its own name, the ICP diverted the workers into supporting the bourgeois military officer Abd al-Karim Qassim, whom the ICP hailed as the “Sole Leader.” Fearing that a revolutionary upsurge in the Levant could inspire the Soviet workers to rise up against the Soviet bureaucracy, the Moscow Stalinists ordered the ICP to scuttle this vital revolutionary opportunity. They sacrificed a proletarian revolution in Iraq in pursuit of “détente” with the imperialists. In the name of supporting the first stage of a chimerical “two-stage revolution,” the ICP subsequently even supported the Ba'ath regime, which proceeded to jail, torture and kill Communists, workers and Kurds.

The world's first workers state served as a beacon of liberation to the oppressed masses in the former tsarist “prison house of peoples” and the world over. Because the Bolsheviks were determined to solve the many national questions by fighting resolutely for national and democratic rights, the Soviet proletariat was able to win to its side the myriad oppressed nationalities and peoples in the former Russian empire. This was a powerful factor in the workers' victory over the White counterrevolution in the Civil War. Lenin insisted that the Soviet Union be a free union of peoples. In the early years, many Soviet republics, autonomous republics, autonomous oblasts and nationality *okrugs* (regional administrations) were established—the living realization of the Bolshevik program of national self-determination. In 1923, the Autonomous Republic of Kurdistan was created.

The October Revolution opened the road for the national and social emancipation of oppressed peoples throughout the former tsarist empire by smashing capitalism and all forms of pre-capitalist oppression and degradation. In traditionally Islamic Central Asia, the Bolsheviks won especially powerful support among women, who suffered hideous oppression as the “slaves of slaves.” Like Kurdistan today, Central Asia at the time of the October Revolution lacked an indigenous proletariat. Thus the introduction of social-revolutionary measures was contingent on conquering proletarian power in the adjacent regions, in this case the

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Kosovo...

(continued from page 1)

finished. We are going to spend time well into the next century worrying about a Greater Albania.”

While virtually every pseudo-socialist group in the West placed itself at the service of the U.S./NATO rulers by pleading for “poor little Kosovo,” we forthrightly called for the proletariat to oppose this war in word and deed. We stressed the need for socialist revolution to defeat the imperialist bourgeoisies and called for military defense of Serbia—a small, dependent capitalist country—against the U.S./NATO attack. As we declared in an International Communist League statement: “This war is not about the Kosovo Albanians. It is a war of domination aimed at realizing longstanding American plans to insert a substantial U.S./NATO military presence in Serbia” (WV No. 712, 30 April). This, too, is amply clear.

While using Yeltsin’s Russia as a diplomatic cat’s paw to push through a diktat against Serbia, the U.S. has adamantly opposed any Russian military presence in Kosovo except under strict NATO command (see “Capitalist Russia in the ‘New World Order,’” page 6). And Washington openly declares that the tens of thousands of NATO troops pouring into Kosovo will be there *for many years*. Among them are



AP

General Michael Jackson, now NATO commander in Kosovo, led British troops in Northern Ireland who perpetrated 1972 Bloody Sunday Massacre in Derry.



Peress/Magnum

insisting that American contractors and suppliers get a fat share of the contracts. Dripping with bourgeois contempt for the proletariat, Clinton specifically vowed to allow not one penny for rebuilding bridges and factories to enable Serb workers to regain their livelihoods. The consequences of such an embargo—coming on top of widespread destruction—can be seen in Iraq, where well over a million people, mainly young children, have been killed since 1990 by the starvation blockade. Now, emboldened by its triumph in the Balkans, the U.S. has

save the Albanian Kosovars. Thus, these social democrats raised the slogan, “Money for refugees, not for war!”

The ISO’s British patrons, Tony Cliff’s Socialist Workers Party (SWP), promoted illusions in the “left wing” of the very Labour Party which prosecuted the war for British imperialism. The SWP joined in an “antiwar” coalition with Labour left Tony Benn, a “little England” nationalist who complained that the U.S./NATO bombing of Serbia hadn’t been authorized by the United Nations. At a June 6 conference in London, SWP honcho Alex Callinicos—who had himself earlier joined in a call for troops under the UN or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to occupy Kosovo instead of the U.S.-dominated NATO—devoted his speech to praise for the Labour “left,” even claiming that “there was massive opposition to the war on the Labour Party backbenches, but they were too demoralized to speak out”! Despite its occasional anti-Labour posture, the SWP has always lined up behind pro-imperialist Labourism, proclaiming itself “over the moon” when the execrable Tony Blair was elected two years ago.

The centrist British Workers Power (WP) showed themselves to be outright “NATO socialists,” marching in lockstep behind Blair’s Labour government. WP provided a platform for UCK spokesmen in London and joined in a “Workers Aid for Kosova” rally on April 10 which was shot through with slogans openly hailing the NATO bombing. Now that NATO has triumphed, WP proclaims in a June 5 statement, “No to NATO’s Occupation.” But as its own words reveal, WP in fact embraces the occupation of Kosovo, declaring: “The working class must welcome the ending of the attempted genocide against the Kosovar people and—if it fully materializes—the return of all the refugees to their homes.”

WP’s chief caveat about NATO’s “peace” diktat is that it will not lead to Kosovo’s independence, continuing: “But this progressive consequence is accompanied, *and in the end outweighed*, by longer term reactionary ones. The G8 [“Group of Eight” industrial countries] proposals neither make the Kosovars sovereign in their own country nor do they recognise their right to self-determination.” WP raises a “revolutionary programme for Kosova” which

includes demands for the expropriation of large landowners, for “the creation of an armed militia” by the refugees and for “the election of councils of workers and peasants deputies.” Having promoted the lie that the central issue in the war was Kosovo self-determination, Workers Power now conjures up the possibility of socialist revolution under NATO bayonets!

While *Workers Power* (May 1999) earlier gave lip service to the call “Nato Out of the Balkans” even as it embraced NATO’s UCK pawns, its latest statement conspicuously does *not* call for the withdrawal of NATO troops. Nor does it contain a single statement of opposition to British imperialism, much less of the need for workers revolution to smash British imperialism. WP revels in vicarious bloodthirstiness in promoting nationalist forces around the world, but when it comes to Britain, it is firmly tied to Blair’s wretched Labour Party. These centrists are a quintessential weather vane of imperialist “public opinion.” Having gone all the way with the UCK throughout the war, now that the Kosovo separatists are beginning to lose their “respectability” in Western capitals, WP finally acknowledges that the UCK “openly accepted Nato hegemony and subordinated its goals for immediate independence to the project of a Nato protectorate” and is “known to have committed some atrocities of its own.”

While giving no political support to the nationalist UCK, we have historically defended the right of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians against the Serb-chauvinist regime in Belgrade. But this question became subordinated to military defense of Serbia against the U.S./NATO imperialists when they geared up for war against Serbia earlier this year with the UCK as their pawns. With the end of the war, we wrote: “The question of military defense of the Kosovo separatists against U.S./NATO forces might well be posed in the event of armed clashes if the imperialist occupation troops move to disarm the UCK” (WV No. 715, 11 June).

For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

Obscenely belittling the horror of the Nazi Holocaust, imperialist spokesmen described Serb-chauvinist terror against Albanians as “genocide” and labeled Milosevic “another Hitler.” Chiming in, WP screamed of Milosevic: “Should we wait till he carries out the ‘final solution’ before we are allowed to draw historical parallels?” (*Workers Power*, May 1999). Again paralleling imperialist demands for Milosevic’s ouster, in its June 5 statement WP trumpeted an “embryonic anti-war, class opposition” to Milosevic in the form of protests organized by the “democratic opposition,” as the Western press describes these monarchists and other reactionaries. The WP statement gushes, “There is a real possibility for a mass popular, workers revolution in Serbia.”

In fact, Serbia’s defeat at the hands of the U.S./NATO imperialists has only served to weaken—and in many places devastate—the proletariat while encouraging the most reactionary forces in the country. Having rabidly promoted a



AP

Kosovo Liberation Army acted as NATO pawns in imperialist war against Serbia.

troops of the German state, the direct continuator of the Third Reich which murdered hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Roma and Jews during the Nazi occupation in World War II. Another face of “human rights” imperialism in Kosovo is that of the NATO commander, British General “Macho Jacko” Jackson, who as a battalion adjutant in Northern Ireland was directly involved in the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre of 13 Catholic civil rights demonstrators in Derry.

Beginning with the first NATO bombs and cruise missiles which rammed into Yugoslav cities on March 24, this was a *war of imperialist terror* targeting the civilian population of Serbia and Kosovo. As London *Independent* (21 June) correspondent Robert Fisk wrote, “NATO killed far more Serb civilians than soldiers during its 11-week bombardment of the country.” While thousands of Serbian tanks and other armored vehicles withdrew from Kosovo unscathed in recent weeks, factories, office buildings, homes and hospitals, transportation and communications facilities, water and electrical distribution systems had been bombed to smithereens—throwing the country back economically by decades.

Now, with the Serbian population facing the threat of massive unemployment, food shortages and a winter without heating fuel, the imperialists threaten to hold back funds for repairing the devastation they wreaked until Milosevic—who they had the gall to indict as a “war criminal”—is ousted from power. Meanwhile, Washington demands that its European partners pick up most of the tab for reconstruction elsewhere in the region, while

stepped up its bombing of Iraq. *Down with the starvation blockades of Iraq and Serbia! U.S. hands off Iraq! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans!*

“Socialist” Drummer Boys for Imperialist War

Among workers in the U.S., attitudes toward NATO’s war against Serbia ranged largely from passivity to skepticism. This was reflected in the relative silence of the rabidly pro-imperialist AFL-CIO tops. In Europe, especially Italy and Greece, there was also substantial active opposition to the war within the working class. The poor showing of almost all West European governing parties, overwhelmingly social democrats, in last month’s elections to the European parliament was another indication of how little success the bourgeoisie had in whipping up popular war fervor. Indeed, the most virulent expressions of chauvinist sentiment outside the ruling parties came from the self-styled “revolutionary left,” which took a vanguard position only in promoting imperialist war propaganda.

After the war, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) headlined an article in *Socialist Worker* (18 June) “NATO’s Bloody ‘Peace.’” But while NATO was perpetrating its bloody slaughter, the ISO refused even to raise the elementary call for all imperialist forces out of the Balkans, except for one passing reference toward the end of the war. While appealing to the imperialist rulers to “stop the bombing,” the ISO fed into the imperialists’ justification for the bombing—that the war was being waged to



Pinto/Reuters

Italian unionists protest against the war in front of NATO airbase at Aviano, April.



WV Photos

Spartacist League contingent counterposed proletarian internationalism to pro-imperialist pacifist appeals at June 5 antiwar protest in San Francisco. Reformist Solidarity group (right) echoed “human rights” war propaganda over Kosovo.



“Greater Serbia,” the Serb Orthodox hierarchy is now calling for Milosevic’s resignation in favor of a government which would be “acceptable” to the imperialists. Many of the same elements taking to the streets today organized pro-imperialist protests against Milosevic two years ago. Those were led by Serbian Renewal Party leader Vuk Draskovic, who later entered Milosevic’s government and has now gone into opposition again, and Democratic Party chief Zoran Djindjic. Draskovic is an open monarchist. Djindjic, the darling of the Western press, was closely linked to Serb paramilitary forces in Bosnia. The character of the current protests was evident in one organized in Cacak by the Djindjic-dominated Alliance for Change last week. As a speaker railed that Milosevic “go to Cuba and study Stalinism there,” the crowd yelled back: “Red bandits, red bandits!”

In reality, Milosevic and his counterparts in Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia led the capitalist counterrevolution—instigated by the imperialists in the early 1990s—which ripped apart the multinational albeit bureaucratically deformed Yugoslav workers state created by Tito’s Communist Partisans at the end of World War II. While counterrevolution has sapped the power of the working class and years of ethnic fratricide have poisoned workers’ consciousness, there has been and will continue to be workers’ resistance against the ravages of capitalist restoration. Most recently, the fascis-

tic regime of Franjo Tudjman in Croatia has been hit by a series of protests and strikes by state railway workers and employees of state-run hotels. On May 28, Croatian postal and telecommunications workers staged a one-day strike to protest government privatization plans.

We fight to forge Trotskyist parties in the Balkans to revive the proletarian internationalism which animated the revolutionary Serbian Social Democrats under the extremely difficult conditions of World War I. We fight for a socialist federation of the Balkans through proletarian revolutions to overthrow Milosevic, Tudjman and the other capitalist regimes of the region.

For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War!

NATO leaders celebrated the unity of the Western powers in the war against Serbia. But behind the façade of unity, the war brought to the surface and accentuated deepgoing tensions among the major capitalist powers which have been intensifying since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. The first deployment of German forces in combat since the end of World War II marked a significant shift in the European political situation. Now Germany and the other West European states are intent on building up a military force independent of the U.S. to match their increasing economic rivalry with American imperialism.

With the end of the bombing of Serbia can be seen the potential outlines of a future linkup against the U.S., perhaps bringing together Germany, Russia and China. It was surely not lost on Washington that when a Russian envoy returned from negotiating with Milosevic, his first stop was generally to report to German leaders. Meanwhile, in response to the U.S./NATO bombing of Serbia, capitalist Russia and the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state have forged closer ties than at any time since the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s. A headline in the *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* (9 June) declared, “Time Is Ripe for Russia, China to Join Forces.” In Russia, which has its own imperialist aspirations in the Balkans, hostility to the U.S. and NATO both within ruling circles and among the population as a whole has reached a level unseen since the end of the Cold War. And an article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (17 June) noted “China’s view of the Nato campaign as part of a U.S. plan for world domination,” while an accompanying piece reported that “China’s long-standing policy of not forming military alliances is being re-examined.”

Already chafing at growing American belligerence, China saw in NATO’s war against Serbia good reason to fear American military intervention in the Far East. Such fears were exacerbated after the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. Trotskyists stand for uncondi-

tional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. But the Beijing regime is today driving headlong to destroy the remaining gains of the 1949 Revolution through capitalist restoration. We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and usher in a regime based on soviet democracy and proletarian internationalism.

The fight against war is the fight for socialist revolution to overthrow the imperialist system which breeds war. It was the October Revolution of 1917, led by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, which took Russia out of World War I and created the world’s first workers state, a beacon of revolutionary internationalism for the proletariat everywhere. We seek to forge a revolutionary workers party in the U.S. which leads the struggles of the multiracial working class in defense of jobs and union organizations and against racist oppression and links them to the fight for proletarian state power. As we wrote in “Down With U.S. Cops of the World!” (WV No. 712, 30 April):

“If imperialist carnage is not to be the continuing fate of humanity, capitalism must be swept away through proletarian revolution. The International Communist League fights to reforge Trotsky’s Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, to lead the fight for new October Revolutions around the world.” ■

Letter...

(continued from page 3)

“Committee for Fifth Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade” because the liberal and reformist organizers demanded that all participants agree to the single slogan “Stop the War in Vietnam Now!” In “Spartacist Breaks with New York Parade Committee” (*Spartacist* No. 5, November-December 1965), we quoted the protest by our spokesman at that meeting:

“The slogan ‘Stop the War in Vietnam Now’ can mean many things to many people. But given the composition of this Committee, the fact that it is dominated by right-wing pacifists and ‘liberals,’ i.e., pro-capitalist and pro-LBJ [Democratic president Lyndon B. Johnson], it is clear that the slogan is deliberately ambiguous in order to avoid facing the duty to advance the *only* demand that has any meaning: ‘For the Immediate, Unconditional Withdrawal of All U.S. Troops from Vietnam!’... Further, we are not simply for stopping the war, but rather *for* the victory of the social revolution that is taking place in Vietnam. It is absurd, and against the interest of the revolution, to call simply for disengagement of forces, and implies a confidence

in the integrity of U.S. imperialism to keep such a bargain.”

Six years later, when we demanded that Democratic Senator Vance Hartke be excluded from a meeting of the National Peace Action Coalition, a 300-man goon squad savagely attacked the Spartacist League and members of Progressive Labor/SDS after we shouted down that representative of U.S. imperialism. This brutal attack was led by Nat Weinstein, then a member of the reformist Socialist Workers Party and now the principal leader of Socialist Action, the main mover behind the April 24 rally in San Francisco. Twenty-eight years after providing a platform for Hartke, Weinstein’s reformists were building another popular-frontist coalition with the racist Democrats using the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, even as Clinton rained bombs on defenseless Serbia.

Yes, we fought against being excluded from Vietnam antiwar protests, and continued to intervene in them with such calls as “Labor Strikes Against the War” and “All Indochina Must Go Communist!” But we never endorsed class-collaborationist politics, just as we refused to endorse confidence in the racist capitalist American “justice” system on April 24. This principled stance is what the opportunist Heyman calls “abstention.” In fact, our comrades sold some 1,700 pieces of literature at the San Francisco and Philadelphia rallies on April 24. We spoke to hundreds of people, arguing for a class-struggle fight to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty, exposing the class-collaborationist line of

the rally organizers, explaining the class nature of the capitalist state and the capitalist Democratic Party.

Heyman sneers at our consistent efforts to mobilize labor’s social power to free Jamal as a fraud perpetrated on the WV readership. For 12 years, we have publicized Jamal’s case within the labor movement—including the ILWU—and fought for mobilizations of labor’s power. When Mumia faced execution in the summer of 1995, the Partisan Defense Committee initiated emergency labor-centered, united-front protests to stop the execution and abolish the racist death penalty!” The ILWU not only endorsed such an action in the Bay Area, but its members played an active role as marshals at the protest. Likewise, transit workers and other black trade unionists served as marshals and composed the core of a similar mobilization in Chicago last November.

So Heyman has now helped build a bigger demonstration—around a strategy counterposed to the fight to free Mumia. Lifting a line from his mentor Harry Bridges, Heyman hauls out that old Stalinist canard, what do you Trotskyists ever do? Above all, we tell the truth: that there is no justice for workers and oppressed in this capitalist system.

Heyman’s efforts are aimed at deflecting and deceiving the many Local 10 members who want the union to take action in Jamal’s defense. As we wrote in our earlier reply to him:

“We are revolutionists, not reformists. We seek to *advance* the consciousness of the proletariat. Hitching the ILWU work stoppage to the April 24 demonstration, as Heyman openly admits he did, served

to reinforce backward consciousness—which is expressed chiefly through political subordination to the Democratic Party—on the most fundamental questions: the class independence of the proletariat and the class nature of the capitalist state.”

In endorsing the April 24 mobilization and the call for a new trial, Heyman seeks to tie labor to its class enemy. Our strategy is to mobilize labor *against* the capitalist class in order to put an end to the whole system of capitalist wage slavery. It’s as simple as that. ■

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NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August.

Our next issue will be dated August 6.

PKK...

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more developed parts of Russia. In the case of Kurdistan, the powerful component of Kurdish proletarians in western Anatolia and abroad in West Europe can be a powerful haven for the necessary internationalist revolutionary struggle.

Lenin fought his last battle precisely on the terrain of the national question against none other than J. V. Stalin, who tried to force the republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia into a Transcaucasian federation. Trampling on the democratic rights of the non-Russian peoples was one of the opening shots in the bureaucracy's usurping of political power, which culminated in a political counterrevolution in 1923-24, destroying Lenin's Bolshevik Party. In later years, the bureaucracy would roll back many gains of the socialist October Revolution of 1917, not least the Bolshevik program for ending national oppression. The Stalinists propagated Great Russian chauvinism and carried out forced population transfers of Crimean Tatars, Volga Germans and others. Bitterness at Moscow's heavy-handed chauvinism toward



Humbert-Dröz Archives

Turkish delegate addressed 1920 Soviet Baku Congress, raised communist program for liberation of women of the East.

the non-Russian peoples contributed to the social counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92.

Carrying on Lenin's struggle against the growing bureaucracy, Trotsky forged the Left Opposition, which sought to break the bureaucratic stranglehold and reestablish in the Soviet proletariat the consciousness of the Russian Revolution's liberating goals. The Trotskyists defended unconditionally the Soviet degen-

erated workers state against internal counterrevolution and imperialist attack, because the Soviet Union continued to embody the key economic gains of the October Revolution—centrally, collectivized property forms and the planned economy. At the same time, the Trotskyists fought to oust the bureaucracy through workers political revolution, which was ultimately the only way to prevent Stalinism from devouring the work-

Russia...

(continued from page 7)

obscurantism. However, with the beginning of the imperialist era in the late 19th century, the two leading "liberal democracies" in West Europe (France and Britain) entered into a strategic alliance with Russia against Germany, thereby laying the basis for the First World War.

In the 1890s, French loans financed the construction of the trans-Siberian railroad, greatly strengthening Russia militarily as well as politically. In the same period, foreign capital developed the Baku oil fields in the Russian Caucasus, then the largest in the world. By 1914, Western industrialists and financiers owned 40 percent of the stock of Russian firms and substantially more than that in the main branches of heavy industry. The financiers of the Paris bourse and the City of London provided much of the money for Russian generals and the top tsarist bureaucrats to buy and furnish their palatial homes and support their ballerina mistresses in luxurious style. British and French capitalists, including those who professed liberal democratic principles, had a strong interest in the preservation of the tsarist autocracy and its repression of the revolutionary Russian workers movement.

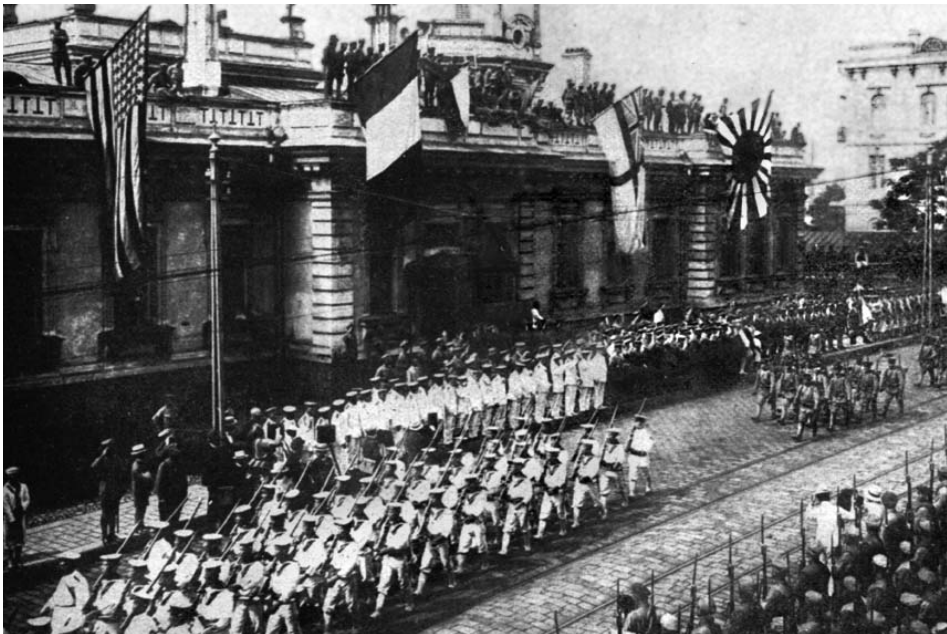
The massive investment in Russia by French and British capital was in part a subsidy to the tsarist regime for the military alliance against Germany. However, the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 was the death knell of the Russian Romanov dynasty. The Russian army suffered catastrophic losses at the hands of imperial Germany, the strongest industrial power in Europe. The proletarian upheaval which had been suppressed at the onset of the war came back with renewed vitality, now driven by war-weariness and economic desperation. In February 1917, an International Women's Day march in the capital of Petrograd (St. Petersburg) signaled the start of a workers' uprising which in turn triggered a mutiny in the city's military garrison, bringing down the monarchy. The insurgent workers re-established the soviets which had first arisen in the 1905 Revolution, opening a period of dual power between the soviets and the bourgeois, pro-war Provisional Government.

Eight months later came the Bolshevik Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, the first and to date only successful proletarian revolution in history. In their own way the political leaders and ideologists of Western imperialism recognized the Bolshevik Revolution for what it was: an uprising of the exploited masses against the world bourgeois order. Winston Churchill, the main



OGIZ

Above: French president Poincaré reviews Russian troops in St. Petersburg on eve of World War I. American, British, French and Japanese troops occupy Vladivostok in attempt to crush Bolshevik regime during Civil War of 1918-1921.



Boni and Liveright

organizer of imperialist military intervention against the Bolsheviks and later British prime minister, expressed the genuine horror of the Western propertied classes that communism had triumphed in the former empire of the tsars:

"Lenin was the Grand Repudiator. He repudiated everything. He repudiated God, King, Country, morals, treaties, debts, rents, interest, the laws and customs of centuries, all contracts written or implied, the whole structure—such as it is—of human society."

—*The World Crisis*, Volume V (1929)

During the Russian Civil War of 1918-21, anyone who had voiced the opinion that Bolshevism was akin to Eastern Orthodox Christianity would have been dismissed as a lunatic!

In order to overthrow the Bolshevik regime, the Western imperialist powers, including the United States, armed and financed White Russian armies led by former tsarist generals. The White com-

manders were politically divided between those who wanted a military dictatorship and those who favored restoring the monarchy. Prominent among the latter was Baron Wrangel, who in 1919 issued this manifesto:

"Hear, Russian people, for what we are fighting:

"For outraged faith and desecrated shrines. "For the liberation of the Russian people from the yoke of communists, tramps, and criminals who in the end would ruin Holy Russia....

"For circumstances in which the Russian people could choose its own MASTER."

—quoted in Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920* (1971)

Kenez, an American academic, points out, "'Master' (*khoziain*), a word printed in capitals, could mean only monarchist restoration."

After 1945, American imperialism utilized the spiritual heirs of Baron Wrangel, so to speak, in its Cold War against

ers state. In mortal combat against the false Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country," in whose name revolutionary opportunities abroad were consciously sabotaged, the Trotskyists fought for the Marxist program of world revolution.

This is the internationalist tradition on which we stand and the basis on which we struggle to forge a revolutionary party to fight for new October Revolutions worldwide. This internationalism also animates our program for emancipating the Kurdish people. As we wrote on the eve of the imperialist Gulf War against Iraq in "Saddam Hussein's War on Kurds, Leftists" (*Spartakist* No. 83, February 1991; WV No. 517, 4 January 1991):

"We support the establishment of a Kurdish state, yet as the solution to Kurdish oppression means defeating four reactionary bourgeois regimes, it can scarcely be conceived independently of the struggle for socialist revolution throughout the region. The Kurdish masses must look to an alliance with the Arab, Persian and Turkish proletariat. Saddam Hussein and all the reactionary rulers of the Near East must be brought down by the working people and oppressed who have suffered under their heel. This requires the construction of working-class parties fighting for a socialist federation of the Near East."■

the Soviet Union. In the late 1970s and '80s, the CIA-funded Radio Liberty, which broadcast anti-Communist propaganda into the USSR, was run by a clique of Russian monarchists and Orthodox Slavophile nationalists. The right-wing and Catholic Polish nationalists at Radio Free Europe complained bitterly to their CIA paymasters about the Russian tsarists over at their sister station. Anti-Communism did make strange bedfellows.

The most prominent Russian spokesman for reactionary Slavophile nationalism in the last years of the Cold War was the writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, then living in exile in the U.S., who was lionized by the American political establishment and media. Jack Matlock, the U.S. ambassador to Moscow in the late 1980s, personally appealed to Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev to publish Solzhenitsyn's anti-Communist opus *The Gulag Archipelago* in Russia. Solzhenitsyn only fell into disfavor with American imperialism in 1990-91, when he opposed independence for the Ukraine and instead advocated a Russian-centered Slavic super-state—including half of the then Soviet republic of Kazakhstan—as a bulwark against the "decadent" West.

In the end, however, reactionary Slavophile nationalism played a secondary or tertiary role in the Russian counterrevolution. The main body of capitalist-restorationist forces raised the banner of Western-style "democracy" and "free market" economics. But the counterrevolution was *not* led by long-time anti-Communist and pro-Western "dissidents" like Andrei Sakharov and his wife Yelena Bonner. Rather, it was led by elements of the old Stalinist *nomenklatura* (bureaucratic hierarchy) and the privileged intelligentsia.

Before leading the way for "democratic" counterrevolution, Yeltsin was leader of the Moscow branch of the Communist Party and a member of the Politburo. The ideological shock troops of the counterrevolution came from the intelligentsia, as represented by Yegor Gaidar, Yeltsin's first prime minister and main architect of the economic "shock therapy" in 1992. Gaidar's father was an admiral in the Soviet Navy and his grandfather had been a Red Army commander who later became a famous writer of Soviet patriotic children's literature. In a generational sense, Gaidar personified the evolution of the Stalinist bureaucracy from the political counterrevolution of the mid-1920s, carried out under the nationalist dogma of "building socialism in one country," to the capitalist counterrevolution of 1991-92.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

WORKERS VANGUARD

Defend Santa Cruz Antiwar Protester!



Steve Argue Defense Committee
Santa Cruz cops attack protester with her child at May 22 antiwar demonstration.

Cruz, CA 95060. The Santa Cruz Five Defense Committee can be reached at (831) 425-4467.

We reprint below a June 5 letter from the Partisan Defense Committee protesting the arrest of leftist Steve Argue at a May 22 demonstration in Santa Cruz, California against the U.S./NATO bombing of Serbia. Argue is currently free on \$20,000 bail.

Argue's arrest is part of an upswing of political repression in the context of the U.S. rulers' imperialist intervention in the Balkans. At the University of California in Berkeley in April, campus cops brutally evicted student demonstrators occupying a building (see "Hands Off Ethnic Studies Protesters!", WV No. 715, 11 June). On May 14, San Francisco police arrested anarchist Kevin Keating of the Yuppie Eradication Project, a group opposed to gentrification of the Mission District, and seized "dozens of anarchist and communist books" along with "just about everything else of value" from his apartment (San Francisco Chronicle, 7 June). This ominous move shows

the political police are very much in business.

The Partisan Defense Committee condemns the brutal and vicious police attack on the May 22nd demonstration against the Balkans War organized by the Santa Cruz Coalition to Stop the Bombing. As the U.S./NATO troops rain death and terror on the Serbian population, the Santa Cruz police brutalize and arrest anti-war protesters at home. The Santa Cruz police are well known in the Bay Area for their violent treatment of the homeless and their supporters.

The demonstration took place outside of a Democratic Party awards dinner featuring Congressman Sam Farr. Protesters were expressing their disapproval of Farr's support to the war by chanting, handing out leaflets to attendees and by playing a tape of bombs falling on Serbia. In an unprovoked attack, the police waded into the crowd, confiscated the tape recorder and

arrested a UCSC student protester. Protesters courageously defended another young woman whose arm was twisted into a "pain compliance hold" by one officer while other officers attempted to seize her four-year-old child. The police responded by viciously beating one protester, Steve Argue, with a night stick and repeatedly spraying his face, eyes and throat with pepper spray. For nearly an hour, the police refused to take a nearly comatose Argue to the hospital for treatment. He was then jailed and held in solitary confinement for over 72 hours. Now Argue faces serious felony assault charges.

The Partisan Defense Committee demands the immediate dropping of all charges against Steve Argue and the other four protesters who were arrested!

Donations to help with Argue's legal defense should be made out to The Steve Argue Defense Fund and sent to 234 High Street #3, Santa

Chicago Cops...

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front of protests against cop terror in a desperate bid to confine them to electoral pressure politics and above all to preserve the "integrity" of the police. We say: Beware these front men for the racist capitalist rulers! For its part, the reformist left could write the "how-to" book on servile prostration before the Democratic Party. The local contender for leadership of Chicago's pressure-the-Democrats coalition is the Reverend Paul Jakes. Jakes called the June 17 demonstration to demand federal intervention, an independent civilian review board,

legislation to outlaw the cops' code of silence and a database on cops who commit acts of brutality. This dovetails with Jesse Jackson's appeal to Janet Reno's Justice Department to investigate the Chicago police. Appealing to Reno to end police brutality is obscene! Her crowning achievement was the incineration of 86 men, women and children of the racially integrated Branch Davidian religious sect near Waco, Texas in 1993.

Yet when Jakes called for volunteers at a planning meeting sponsored by his Christian Council on Urban Affairs on June 11, members of Progressive Labor Party, the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) literally leapt to their feet offering to print 10,000 leaflets for this demonstra-

tion pushing Jakes' reform program. The RCYB's parent organization, the Revolutionary Communist Party, embraces the call for more black cops, regularly featuring Hampton as a speaker at its annual October 22 Coalition protests against police brutality. The Black Radical Congress has issued a list of demands virtually identical to those of Jakes, except they would like police brutality to be videotaped—a "reform" raised by Superintendent Hillard himself.

In an article on Chicago in *Socialist Worker* (2 July), the ISO urges Jakes to act more like Sharpton, enthusing that "two of the cops who tortured African immigrant Amadou Diallo were indicted only after the Rev. Al Sharpton, along with other activists and community leaders, helped to organize daily demonstrations." Sharpton's aim was to channel the seething outrage in New York into a 10-point program for reforming the cops. Tailing right behind, the ISO joined in a "Citywide Network against Police Violence" with a 10-point program barely distinguishable from Sharpton's.

Particularly in "Segregation City," the intersection between race and class oppression is starkly evident. As protesters marched toward police headquarters on June 17, Teamsters members driving their trucks to a nearby UPS facility honked their horns in solidarity. The

1997 UPS strike broke a long string of defeats for U.S. labor. A powerful show of force by Chicago's integrated labor movement would give the cops some pause. A small taste of that came in 1987 when members of the Amalgamated Transit Union mobilized to beat back the frame-up of black transit worker Cassandra Seay when she was beaten and arrested by cops.

There is a way forward: the road of integrated class struggle leading to workers revolution, the only way to put an end to the capitalist system and its racist repression. The very thought of labor taking up the fight for black freedom in America sends a shiver down the spine of the American bourgeoisie—and of the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy. The Spartacist League and the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League, which was formed in the wake of the Cassandra Seay victory, seek to bring to the working class the understanding that labor and black rights either go forward together or fall back separately. It is the task of Marxists to strip away any illusions among workers and minorities in this capitalist state, to lay bare the nature of the two parties of capital, the Democrats and the Republicans. We need a workers party to fight for a workers government! For black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

Evergreen...

(continued from page 16)

Democratic mayor (and former district attorney) Ed Rendell to Republican governor Tom Ridge to Bill Clinton, who staged an ostentatious appearance at a 1995 F.O.P. gathering just before Mumia's death warrant was signed. Jamal has been the target of sinister police "demonstrations," repeated denunciations in Congress and numerous prime-time TV "exposés" rehashing the lies of the cops and prosecutors who framed him up.

The night before the April 24 "Millions for Mumia" rally in Philadelphia, 800 members of the city's racist political establishment forked over \$100 each at a

benefit for "Justice for Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, Inc." While this tax-exempt front claims to have received only \$41,000 in donations in 1998, it has run full-page ads in major daily papers like the *New York Times* screaming for Mumia's execution. Meanwhile, someone is footing the bill for Maureen Faulkner as she jets around the country as a poster girl for racist legal lynching. The "Faulkner, Inc." Web site retails the patently absurd lie that not one of the thousands of people executed in the U.S. this century was innocent!

Since the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee took up Jamal's cause a dozen years ago, we have insisted that the case of this eloquent journalist and unbowed fighter for the oppressed symbolizes what the racist, barbaric death penalty is all about—a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery. The forces of "law and order" have mobilized to kill Jamal because he represents defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. We must mobilize our forces to win his freedom—not through futile appeals to the racist "justice" system but through powerful labor-centered protest actions.

Based on the only significant integration in racist America—the workplace and the factory floor—the trade unions have the potential to become battalions in the struggle against racism and exploitation. A mobilization of the social power of labor—drawing in black people, anti-racist youth and all the oppressed—in the fight to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty would be a huge step forward in the struggle for socialist revolution needed to sweep away the capitalist state and its deadly apparatus of racist repression. ■

Drop Charges Against RCYB Activists! Free AK Small Now!

Chicago

The following letter, dated July 5, was sent to Richard J. Devine, Cook County State's Attorney, by the Partisan Defense Committee in Chicago.

The Partisan Defense Committee vehemently protests the June 16 conviction of AK Small and Shawn Wall on trumped-up charges of "resisting" and "obstructing" arrest for their role in protesting the city's plans to flatten the Cabrini Green housing project. Outrageously, Small was sentenced to 45 days in Cook County jail. We demand that Small be freed immediately!

The police campaign against Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade activists—a pure and simple political persecution—is designed to chill social protest against Daley's plans to

dump thousands of black public housing residents in the streets. Small's inclusion on the state gang database, with his "gang affiliation" listed as "Communist Party," is a sinister attempt to designate leftists as criminals. The witchhunt expanded on April 20 when the city bulldozed the RCYB's organizing center at 1142 N. Orleans. Five activists—Small, Wall, Grant Newberger, Sarah Klepner and Michael Coffman—were arrested on bogus charges of "obstruction" and "battery" with a plastic soda bottle. This vendetta is a deadly threat to all those who would struggle against racist capitalist repression in Chicago.

We demand: Free AK Small! Drop all charges against AK Small, Shawn Wall, Grant Newberger, Sarah Klepner and Michael Coffman! Down with the witchhunt against the RCYB!

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1

Black History and the Class Struggle
No. 15

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Black or White, Cops Are Racist Killers

Chicago Cops on Killing Spree

CHICAGO—LaTanya Haggerty was a 26-year-old computer analyst on her way home from work. Robert Russ, driving home from a party, was to receive his degree from Northwestern University in two weeks. Both were gunned down by Chicago police on the night of June 4 for the crime of “driving while black” in Segregation City. LaTanya Haggerty was shot in the back as she stepped out of the passenger side of her car pleading with the cops not to shoot. In a separate incident, cops stopped Robert Russ, broke the window of his car, stuck a gun inside and killed him when he didn’t immediately respond to a demand to get out. His mother Vera Love said, “They get to pull guns on citizens for routine traffic stops and they shoot to kill; this needs to stop.”

Less than two weeks later, Gregory Riley was strangled to death by undercover cops on Chicago’s West Side for supposedly running away from police who claimed he was a suspected drug dealer. These cop killings demonstrate once again the raw racist reality that is capitalist America: down and out, or up and coming, black people are targeted for deadly cop terror. Between 1990 and 1998, Chicago police killed 115 people, 82 of them black. Just as your social status makes little difference to the cops if you’re black, it makes no difference whether the cops are white or black. In the cases of both LaTanya Haggerty and Robert Russ, the killer cops were black.

Initially, the cops tried a cover-up and exonerated the killers. Democratic Party mayor Richard Daley called for a ban on tinted car windows, effectively blaming Robert Russ for his own killing by echoing the cops’ alibi that they had to break the car window—and shoot Russ—because they couldn’t see through it. But the intense outrage over these coldblooded killings was evident in a

**June 17:
Hundreds
march to
Chicago police
headquarters to
protest racist
killings by cops.**



WV Photo

large integrated march to police headquarters on June 17, which included many families and friends of the victims of police terror. Fearful of a social explosion in Chicago on the heels of the recent wave of protest in New York City over the death-squad-style execution of Amadou Diallo, Chicago’s rulers immediately went into action to put a lid on mass protest. Black cop and alderman William Beavers initiated a City Council hearing on police brutality where black police superintendent Terry Hillard promised a thorough investigation. Nobody believed the cops.

Coming to the aid of their cohorts in City Hall, Jesse Jackson and other black Democratic Party politicians and preachers strained to channel black outrage into demands for cosmetic police reforms. NYC Democrat Al Sharpton, a former FBI informant who postures as a militant opponent of police brutality, rolled into town to lend his services to this effort. Liberal columnist Mary Mitchell urged

black Chicagoans to “Stop Protesting, Start Talking” (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 15 June). Echoing concerns that the ghetto masses don’t buy the lie that adding more blacks to the police force will stop cop racism—especially when the superintendent and 25 percent of the force is already black—she wrote: “When black police officers are caught protecting drug dealers, refusing to back off chases when ordered, or end up shooting unarmed motorists, some people begin to see those who are supposed to be more sensitive to their plight as being part of the problem.”

The police are at the core of the capitalist state, hired thugs whose job is to protect the property, profits and rule of the bourgeoisie. And in the U.S., where black oppression is the cornerstone of the system of capitalist wage slavery, that necessarily means terror against black people, whether the cops are white or black. An article on the Chicago anti-police protests in the *New York Times* (19 June) quoted National Black Police Asso-

ciation head Ronald Hampton saying, “If you’re a black police officer who wants to be successful, who wants to get ahead, you’re going to take on the thinking of the institution.” And that means, the *Times* continued, acting “especially tough with people in black neighborhoods.”

Indeed, significant numbers of black cops were recruited only with the onset of the racist “war on drugs,” because they were deemed to be more effective in occupying the ghettos and rounding up massive numbers of black youth. Behind this war on black people is the calculation of the American bourgeoisie that large swathes of the ghetto population, which used to provide a reservoir of unskilled labor for the auto plants and steel mills, are no longer needed. As the number of unionized industrial jobs has plummeted in the last two decades, the prison population—overwhelmingly black and Hispanic—has soared.

The black Dems seek to get out in
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Evergreen College Defies Sinister F.O.P., Honors Mumia

In featuring a 13-minute taped address by death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal at their June 11 graduation ceremony, 800 students at Evergreen College in Olympia, Washington defied a nationwide campaign of police intimidation and Congressional condemnation. Graduating senior Stephanie Guilloud observed, “Selecting Mumia Abu-Jamal as the graduation speaker is an historic opportunity that will reverberate beyond the walls of this particular institution.” For the past two years, Evergreen students had fought to include Jamal as a graduation speaker. When the administration consented to the students’ demand, the “Kill Mumia” machine spearheaded by the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) and its political allies went into overdrive.

Outside the graduation ceremony, the F.O.P. staged a menacing “protest” featuring Maureen Faulkner, widow of the Philadelphia cop whom Jamal was falsely charged with killing. Before the ceremony, Pennsylvania attorney general Michael Fisher wrote to Evergreen’s president demanding the speech be canceled. Newspapers across the country churned out editorials and commentaries vilifying the students. Racist Texas Republican Tom DeLay pushed through a “minute of silence” in the House to protest the Evergreen students’ courageous act. DeLay ranted against the “twisted radicals” who “take empty minds and work methodically to replace them with demented ones.”

DeLay’s demented ravings reflect the fury of Jamal’s would-be executioners

over the fact that millions of people in the U.S. and around the world have rallied to the defense of this innocent man framed up for his eloquent voice on behalf of the oppressed. The publication of Jamal’s book *Live from Death Row* in 1995 vividly exposed the lying cop portrayal of Mumia as a crazed killer. The outpouring of protest internationally which stayed Mumia’s execution that summer put the lie to the cops’ and prosecutors’ attempt to depict Jamal’s supporters as a tiny handful of “radicals” and Hollywood celebrities. That is why the F.O.P. has spearheaded an ominous campaign of intimidation against Mumia’s defenders. Philly cops and U.S. Park Service rangers arrested 95 of some 300 Mumia supporters who circled the Liberty Bell on July 3. When Oakland high school



WV Photo

teachers and students announced a teach-in for Jamal last January, the cops and politicians raised a clamor to get it canceled. But they failed in a similar attempt to shut down a benefit concert for Jamal that month by the Beastie Boys and Rage Against the Machine at the New Jersey Meadowlands, which drew over 17,000.

It is unprecedented that police and prosecutors continue to wage such a high-volume campaign 17 years after the travesty of a trial which sent Mumia to death row. While declaiming against rich Hollywood liberals, the F.O.P. has run a well-oiled crusade embracing a gamut of powerful politicians, from Philly’s
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