

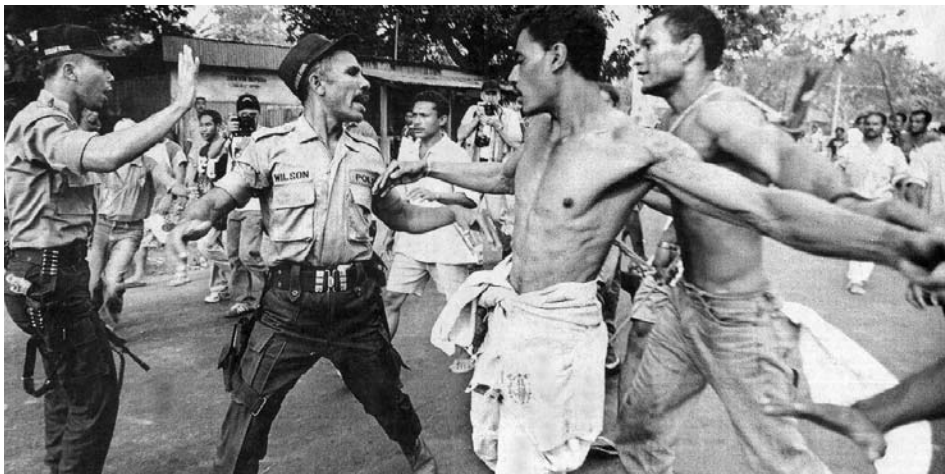
## East Timor

# No Imperialist Intervention!



Reuters

# Independence Now!



AFP

Indonesian police attack East Timorese on eve of massive vote for independence. Right: Cynically seizing on massacres of East Timorese, Australia prepares "peacekeeping" invasion force under UN flag.

SEPTEMBER 13—Yesterday, the Clinton administration announced that the U.S. would join in an imperialist intervention force in East Timor. As the number of East Timorese massacred by Indonesian army-sponsored "militias" grew to the hundreds and with the capital of Dili virtually depopulated through forced expulsions in the past week, there has been a growing clamor internationally for imperialist "peacekeeping" troops. As the Spartacist League of Australia wrote in a September 4 article in *Australasian Spartacist* (Spring 1999) reprinted below, "Imperialist military intervention means continued neo-colonial oppression, death, destruction and terrible poverty."

Imperialist military intervention in East Timor has no more to do with defending the population there than did the U.S.-led war against Serbia and occupation of Kosovo with "humanitarian" concern for the Kosovo Albanians. Only days before the U.S. announcement, Clinton aide Samuel Berger cynically declaimed, "Because we bombed in Kosovo doesn't mean we should bomb Dili." Indeed, the only reason the U.S. laid waste to Kosovo and Serbia was to achieve its longstanding aim of inserting a sizeable American military force there. In East Timor, Washington's principal concern is to maintain neocolonial "stability" in Indonesia through propping up the blood-drenched police-state regime buffeted by two years of political upheaval and economic crisis. Fearing further turmoil throughout Indonesia as the army and its militia gangs run amok, the U.S. is promoting a military force spearheaded by its Australian imperialist ally, which has its own very real interests in the region.

Even more flagrantly than over Kosovo, liberals and reformists have embraced "human rights" imperialism in East Timor. Liberal academic Noam Chomsky argued for economic sanctions against Indonesia and declared in a recent

Internet statement, "There is also no reason to shy away from peacekeeping forces to replace the occupying terrorist army." The Workers World Party's International Action Center participated in a New York City protest on September 9 called by the East Timor Action Network to demand, "The United Nations must immediately send armed peace enforcement personnel to East Timor." In France, Alain Krivine's Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, which pushed for a European-dominated military intervention in Kosovo, now embraces the call for "intervention by an international peace force" in East Timor (*Rouge*, 9 September).

In Australia, there has been a growing frenzy in favor of imperialist intervention, as more than 10,000 rallied in Sydney on September 11. The day before, some 25,000 marched on the Indonesian consulate in Melbourne, burning Indonesian flags and chanting, "Indonesia out! UN in!" Marching in lockstep behind the Australian capitalist rulers in this orgy of "human rights" chauvinism has been an array of fake-left groups, notably including the International Socialist Organisation (ISO). As the article below points out, the ISO has pushed for sanctions against Indonesia under the guise of trade-union bans by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), whose Laborite leadership has stood at the head of demands for troops into East Timor.

Now, *the ISO has explicitly lined up behind military intervention*, endorsing a Melbourne demonstration call with the

slogan, "Indonesia Out—Peacekeepers In," confirming that their call for trade-union bans was no expression of proletarian solidarity with the East Timorese but purely a "labor" gloss for *Australian imperialist* economic sanctions. Thus the ISO aids the ACTU bureaucracy in chaining the Australian proletariat to its class enemy and to the enemy of the East Timorese and Indonesian masses. We say: No to imperialist sanctions!

While the fake left marches for imperialist intervention, the ICL uniquely and urgently fights for internationalist unity in struggle by the proletarians of the region *against* the capitalist rulers. We struggle to win Australian workers to the understanding that the capitalist class which busts their unions can bring nothing but more bloodshed to the East Timorese. Australia and the U.S. are the very imperialist powers which helped orchestrate the 1965 slaughter of *hundreds of thousands* of Indonesian workers, peasants, leftists, women and ethnic Chinese which installed the Suharto dictatorship. Today, they are the chief patrons of Suharto's hand-picked successor Habibie.

Imperialist intervention is counterposed to mobilizing the powerful Indonesian proletariat, which has waged bitter struggles against the austerity and mass unemployment dictated by the International Monetary Fund. Even under the guns of military terror, there have been regular protests in Jakarta—including running battles with baton-wielding police—over the Indonesian army massa-

ces in East Timor. One student protester told a BBC reporter, "We feel for the people of East Timor. They deserve their freedom." Proletarian revolution is the only road to liberation for Indonesia's myriad oppressed peoples. As Marxist revolutionaries in the U.S., our struggle is to build the internationalist vanguard party which can lead the proletariat in ending the rule of the world's most powerful and deadly imperialist ruling class.

\* \* \*

It has just been announced that an overwhelming 78.5 percent of East Timorese have rejected a sham autonomy deal offered by Indonesia in a United Nations-sponsored "popular consultation," clearly opting for independence. In the months before the August 30 vote,

**Australasian SPARTACIST**

pro-Indonesia death squad "militias" killed hundreds and forced tens of thousands from their homes. In the wake of the vote, dozens have been killed while parts of Dili, the capital, and the towns of Maliana and Liquica have been burned, in an orgy of spiralling violence.

These atrocities are being used as the pretext for imperialist intervention in East Timor. Already more than 300 Australian cops and military advisers are there, part of a 1,000-strong UN force. Thousands of Australian troops are on 30-minute standby in Darwin, the largest Australian military force mustered since the Vietnam War. Currently, 7,000 U.S. troops are taking part in "Exercise Crocodile 99" manoeuvres off North Queensland along with 15,000 Australians. A British warship in the South China Sea is reportedly ready to sail to East Timor. As proletarian revolutionaries and implacable foes of our "own" ruling class, we demand that the Australian imperialists, the U.S., the UN and all their lackeys and camp followers get out of East Timor and stay out!

The idea that military intervention by Australian and U.S. imperialism will bring independence and "freedom" to the East Timorese is a horrible lie. These same imperialists backed Indonesia's annexation of the former

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## Chinese Immigrant Workers in Racist America...4



**Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!**



# Teachers Defy No-Strike Law, Union Tops Scuttle Walkout

## Labor/Black Detroit Rallies Behind Teachers Strike

For over a week, 11,500 members of the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) struck in open defiance of Michigan “no strike” laws and union-busting “school reform” plans. The walkout began on August 30, as a union meeting erupted in open rebellion when DFT head John Elliott presented a “tentative” giveback contract and called on teachers to keep working while he negotiated a final deal. The teachers shouted Elliott down, took over the microphones and voted overwhelmingly to strike, marching out to picket at the Board of Education. Having opposed the walkout in the first place, the union tops scrambled to bring it to an end as the government threatened to impose punitive fines mandated by a 1994 law banning all strikes in the public schools. They finally corralled the teachers back to work on September 8.

Even after two decades of capitalist devastation, Detroit remains a union town. While the bourgeois politicians and media tried to whip up popular hostility to the teachers, the city’s overwhelmingly black and working-class population rallied solidly behind the strike by this integrated union. They knew that this strike

was directed against a drive to further gut a school system in which 90 percent of students are black and half live below the poverty level. The *New York Times* (1 September) observed: “There is nothing like a last-minute teachers strike to throw parenthood into chaos, but in this heavily unionized city, many parents lined up today to support the strike that left lots of them unexpectedly spending the day with their children.” Passing drivers honked their horns in solidarity with picketing teachers. Despite having to look after five kids at home, one woman said typically, “I think the teachers deserve more money, and they shouldn’t work without a contract.”

On Labor Day, September 6, the striking teachers marched at the head of several thousand trade unionists, including contingents of the United Auto Workers (UAW). What particularly rattled the city rulers was that the teachers strike took place in the shadow of the pending expiration of UAW contracts with the Big Three. A Michigan Chamber of Commerce spokesman worried aloud of the prospect that “there’s an illegal teachers strike and that is followed by the UAW

going on strike later this fall.” Militant class struggle, particularly by the powerful UAW, is precisely what’s needed to reverse the attacks which have driven down wages, slashed jobs and pushed through massive speedup from heavy industry to the public sector. But the UAW misleaders are wedded to the program of class-collaborationist “partnership” with the auto bosses. On the eve of the September 14 contract expiration, the UAW bureaucracy is working overtime to *prevent* a nationwide auto strike.

Doing his share to further “class peace” with the bosses, DFT head Elliott sold out the strike only hours after the Labor Day march, announcing a new deal with the Board of Education. The teachers succeeded in beating back an attempt to extend the workday an hour and a half with no commensurate pay hike. But the board could nonetheless brag that it had won two-thirds of its union-busting “school reform” demands. With 40 students crammed into schoolrooms built for half that many, and with classes overflowing into the hallways, the teachers’ central demand was to reduce class size. All they got was a token reduction in class size in just 44 of 271 schools. Otherwise the pact is virtually identical to the one teachers rejected a week earlier.

While the teachers remained solid throughout the strike, the leaders of the 17 other school unions without contracts ordered their members to scab on the strike. It is a measure of the labor bureaucracy’s kowtowing to bourgeois “legality” that this was the first teachers strike in Michigan in five years, ever



AP  
**September 3: Detroit teachers strike rally.**

since the 1994 anti-strike law was passed in the wake of a DFT walkout in 1992. Such cringing before the bosses’ anti-labor laws was also what killed the long, bitter strike against the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* which began in July 1995, as the bureaucrats hid behind strikebreaking court injunctions to disperse mass pickets and channel the struggle into impotent consumer boycotts.

The attacks on the Detroit school unions are part of a concerted assault nationwide against teachers unions—carried out with the connivance and complicity of the pro-Democratic Party leadership of the American Federation of Teachers—as education for working-class and minority youth is slashed in favor of more spending for prisons and cops.

Two decades of savage attacks on the living standards of the working class have led to an unprecedented redistribution of wealth in favor of the capitalist class. A recent Congressional Budget Office study reveals that since 1977 the

*continued on page 10*



**TROTSKY**

### Proletarian Unity and Defense of Immigrant Workers

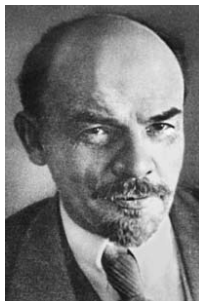
*At its Fourth Congress in 1922, the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky directed its member parties to vigorously champion the rights of immigrant workers. This was in stark contrast to the pro-imperialist labor bureaucracies, whose anti-immigrant chauvinism served then, as it does today, to further the capitalists’ aim of dividing the working class along national, ethnic and racial lines. In the midst of*

*renewed attacks against foreign-born workers in the U.S. and elsewhere, the International Communist League demands full citizenship rights for all immigrants and fights to mobilize the proletariat in defense of all the exploited and oppressed.*

The communist parties of America, Canada, and Australia must conduct an energetic campaign against laws prohibiting immigration and must explain to the proletarian masses of these countries that such laws, by stirring up race hatred, will in the end bring injury to themselves.

The capitalists on the other hand are prepared to dispense with laws against immigration, in order to facilitate the free entry of cheap coloured labour power and thus lower the wages of white workers. Their intentions can only be successfully frustrated by one thing—the immigrant workers must be enrolled in the existing trade unions of white workers. At the same time the demand must be made that the wages of coloured workers must be raised to the level of the wages of white workers. Such a step by the communist parties will expose the intentions of the capitalists and at the same time clearly show the coloured workers that the international proletariat knows no race prejudice.

—“Theses on the Eastern Question,” quoted in Jane Degras, *The Communist International 1919-1943: Documents, Vol. 1* (1971)



**LENIN**

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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



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The closing date for news in this issue is September 14.

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**17 September 1999**

### Spartacus Youth Club Forums

#### The Fraud of “Human Rights” Imperialism

## Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War

### CHICAGO

**Saturday, September 18, 7 p.m.**

University of Illinois at Chicago  
Circle Center, Rm. 505, 750 S. Halsted  
For more information: (312) 454-4930  
[spartacist@iname.com](mailto:spartacist@iname.com)

### MADISON

**Sunday, September 26, 2 p.m.**

University of Wisconsin at Madison  
See “Today in the Union” for location  
For more information: (312) 454-4930  
[spartacist@iname.com](mailto:spartacist@iname.com)

### Spartacus Youth Club Classes

### BAY AREA

First class: ***The Marxist Understanding of the Capitalist State***

Thursday, September 23, 7 p.m.  
UC Berkeley, Room 222 Wheeler  
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851

### CHICAGO

**Meet the Marxists on Campus:**

Tuesday, September 21, 6:30 p.m.;  
University of Chicago, location TBA

**Revolutionary Marxism:  
The Fight for a Socialist Future**

Sunday, September 26, 1 p.m.  
***Marxist Materialism vs. Idealism***  
328 S. Jefferson St., Suite 904  
(near Clinton stop on Blue Line)  
Information and readings: (312) 454-4930

### LOS ANGELES

**Meet the Marxists on Campus:**

Tuesday, October 5, 4 p.m.;  
UCLA, 2408 Ackerman Union  
For information: (213) 380-8239

### NEW YORK CITY

**The Fight for a Socialist Future**

First class: ***Marxism: A Guide to Action***  
Tuesday, September 21, 7:30 p.m.  
New York University, room TBA  
For room and information: (212) 267-1025  
or [nysl@compuserve.com](mailto:nysl@compuserve.com)

### TORONTO

**Smash the Capitalist System  
of Racism and War!**

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m.;  
September 22: ***Marxism and the State***  
U of T, International Student Centre  
33 St. George St. (north of College St.)  
For room and information: (416) 593-4138

### VANCOUVER

**Marxism and World Revolution**

Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.  
September 28: ***War in the Epoch of  
Capitalist Decay: Down With Imperialist  
Occupation of Kosovo!***  
U of B.C., Room 212 Student Union Bldg.  
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

# Proletarian Internationalism in Balkans War

## International Fund Drive Aided Yugoslav Workers

The following article is adapted and abridged from the current issue of Spartaco (No. 54/55, July 1999), published by the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, section of the International Communist League.

From the U.S. to Japan, sections of the International Communist League actively participated in the campaign of material aid launched by the COBAS (Rank and File Committee) at the Arese, Milano Alfa Romeo plant, whose goal was to collect a billion lire, some \$550,000, for the workers of Zastava and other factories in Yugoslavia bombed by NATO (see

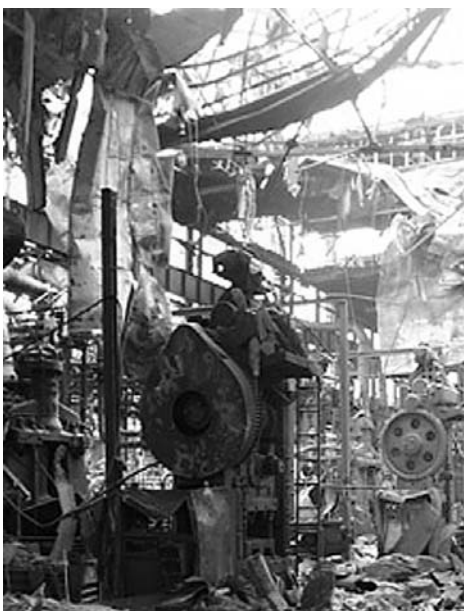


“As NATO Bombs Factories—Campaign Launched for Aid to Yugoslav Workers,” WV No. 713, 14 May). We participated in this campaign of material aid to the Yugoslav workers in line with our military defense of Serbia against the U.S./NATO attack. This campaign gave many workers in the countries where we are present the possibility of making a concrete internationalist gesture in defense of the Yugoslav workers and *against* their “own” imperialist rulers, without giving an iota of political support to the Serbian capitalist regime of Slobodan Milosevic. Throughout the war, the ICL raised the call: Defeat imperialism through workers revolution—Defend Serbia!

We oppose the predatory imperialist “peace,” dictated by the world’s bloodiest mass murderers, which has turned Kosovo into a NATO protectorate. This was NATO’s goal from the beginning, despite its cynical pretense of protecting the Kosovo Albanians. As we warned, the NATO occupation has led to pogromist terror against Serbs and Roma (Gypsies) and the forcible expulsion of the overwhelming mass of the Serbian population, while placing the Albanian majority directly under the thumb of the imperialists. Today we demand: Down with the imperialist occupation—All U.S./NATO/UN troops out of the Balkans now!

The campaign of material aid initiated by the COBAS was an expression of broader proletarian opposition to the imperialist war against Serbia, particu-

### ICL Said: Defeat U.S./NATO Imperialism Through Workers Revolution! Defend Serbia!

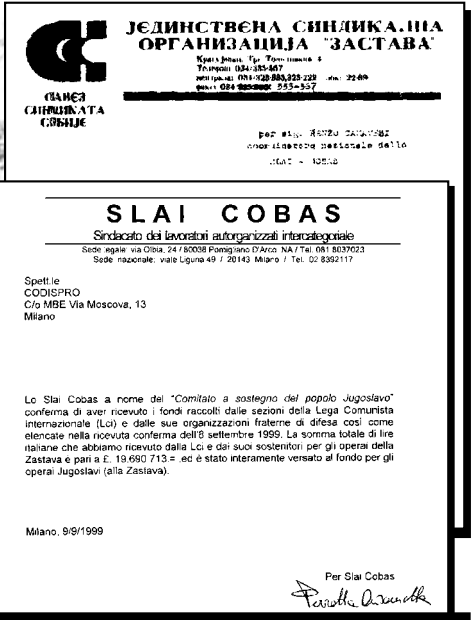


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**Zastava auto plant destroyed by U.S./NATO bombing in April. September 9 COBAS letter confirms receipt of “funds collected by the sections of the International Communist League (ICL) and its fraternal defense organizations...equal to 19,690,713 lira and it has been entirely deposited in the fund for the Yugoslav workers (at Zastava).” Top letter from Zastava to COBAS confirms receipt of fund drive collections.**

larly in Italy. More than a million workers took part in the May 13 strike called by the COBAS against the war; opposition to the war was also evident at the national metal workers demonstration for the renewal of their contract and in many other workers’ struggles at a local level. On May 28, pacifist groups in Trieste stopped a military train transporting arms in preparation for a threatened land invasion. In an internationalist gesture, workers in Veneto published leaflets in Italian, English, Serbian and Albanian that said: “This is not an ‘American’ war; the European governments, in large part headed by social democrats, are involved in it” (*Liberazione*, 30 May).

The leading trade-union bureaucrats supported this war, carried out in Italy by a government led by the reformist Party of the Democratic Left (PDS). But many worker militants, local branches of the reformist Rifondazione Comunista (RC)



and others enthusiastically participated in the campaign of aid to Yugoslav workers. Meanwhile, the leadership of RC, which until last year had been a key prop of the capitalist popular-front government, preached confidence in the United Nations and called for a conference of European capitalist powers to resolve the Balkans crisis when the NATO bombing started. The bureaucrats of RC did not lift a finger for this campaign *when it counted*, during the imperialist bombing. Only after the NATO occupation began did RC’s *Liberazione* and the CGIL trade-union federation publicize a tour of Italy by Zastava workers appealing for solidarity.

Sections of the ICL and their fraternal legal and social defense organizations raised a total of nearly \$12,000 for the campaign of aid to Yugoslav workers. More importantly, while the campaign was launched by the COBAS mainly as a national effort, the ICL fought to extend this important campaign *internationally*. As a comrade of the LTDI said at the May 15 meeting in Bologna setting up the Committee for Aid to Yugoslav Workers:

“The proletariat must be mobilized as an international class and as a revolutionary opposition to the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Italy, the United States and Germany are capitalist powers, but they are also societies divided into classes in which the workers, ethnic and racial minorities and immigrants suffer the exploitation and oppression of the dominant capitalist classes and have every reason to desire the defeat of ‘their’ bourgeoisie. In spite of the anti-American chauvinism of the Italian left, the proletariat and the oppressed of that country are the best allies of the Serbian and Italian working class.”

In Germany, Social Democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder—whose government sent German troops into combat for the first time since World War II—tried to stifle popular opposition to the war against Serbia, which had suffered under Nazi occupation. On May 18, Berlin police detained two *Spartakist* salesmen in front of the Daimler-Chrysler factory to stop them from collecting funds for the campaign (see “Support Fund Drive

for Yugoslav Workers Under U.S./NATO Attack!” WV No. 714, 28 May). Meanwhile, they allowed thousands of buckets to be passed around for the Kosovo refugees, because that bolstered the government’s pretext for this

murderous war. A Spartakist Workers Party protest statement pointed to the Zastava workers’ history of class struggle, including an important strike two and a half years ago against the bourgeois-nationalist Milosevic regime, which had fired more than half of the workforce in the wake of capitalist restoration. The statement declared that the “murderous act of NATO terror against them—like the bombing of other key factories that have so far destroyed the workplaces of a half million workers—was intended as a warning to the proletariat throughout the Balkans.”

In the imperialist “belly of the beast” in the U.S., our comrades collected funds from trade unionists outside workplaces and union meetings, including among the heavily black and immigrant New York City transit workforce. In Britain, where Tony Blair’s Labour government distinguished itself as the most bellicose of the NATO powers, shop stewards from the Cowley car plant, workers at Ford Dagenham near London and London Underground transit workers contributed. So, too, did immigrant workers—in Britain and elsewhere in Europe—who are on the receiving end of racist state repression and the fascist terror it spawns and did not buy into the cynical “humanitarian” pretext for NATO’s Balkans war.

In Mexico, the Grupo Espartaquista was invited to address and pass the hat among 600 delegates of the trade union of workers at the National Autonomous University in Mexico City, which has been rocked by militant protests against the imposition of tuition. In Japan, at a 50,000-strong protest on May 22 against revisions to the Japan-U.S. security treaty, metal workers, medical workers and rail workers reached into their pockets to give to the campaign—as did youth supporters of the Communist Party, despite their leaders’ attempts to exclude and silence us. And students from the Chinese deformed workers state studying in the U.S., Canada and Australia donated to the fund drive, at protests against NATO’s bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

#### Fake-Left Drummer Boys for Imperialist War

While anger and revulsion against the NATO slaughter were widespread, the capitulation of an array of so-called “socialist” outfits to their “own” bourgeoisies and their social-democratic lackeys was limitless. A case in point is Tony Cliff’s British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and its international co-thinkers, including the International Socialist Organization (ISO) in the U.S. and, in Italy, supporters of the newspaper *Comunismo dal Basso* (who are buried inside RC). When our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain first collected for the fund drive at a May 8 London antiwar protest, a number of SWP members contributed. But the SWP leadership soon brought a halt to this.

After the war, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (30 July) declaimed, “U.S. and NATO talk of ‘humanitarianism’ was a cover—for committing the worst war crimes of this disgusting war.” But while

*continued on page 11*

#### Money Sent by ICL Sections and Fraternal Defense Organizations to COBAS Account for the Zastava Campaign

Itemization by country of funds collected by the ICL and fraternal organizations and confirmed by COBAS in their receipt dated 9 September 1999.

Country	Defense Group or ICL Section	U.S. \$ Total*
Australia	Partisan Defence Committee	834.49
Britain	Partisan Defence Committee	2,359.23
Canada	Partisan Defense Committee	756.25
France	Comité de défense sociale	420.71
Germany	Komitee für soziale Verteidigung	1,104.30
Ireland	Partisan Defence Committee	404.77
Italy	Comitato di difesa sociale e proletaria	348.26
Japan	Partisan Defense Committee	520.86
Mexico	Grupo Espartaquista	351.09
Poland	Platforma Spartakusowców	79.03
South Africa	Spartacist South Africa	18.07
U.S.	Partisan Defense Committee	3,534.40
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 10,731.46</b>

\* At September 9 rate of exchange for Italian lira, amounting to a total of 19,690,713 lira. In addition to the above, another US\$ 686.30 was wired from New York by the Partisan Defense Committee on 7 September, which has not yet been received in the COBAS account.

# Chinese Immigrant Workers in Racist America



Saffold/Sipa

Coast Guard seizes Chinese immigrants aboard *Pai Sheng*, San Francisco, 1993. Garment workers rally against sweatshops in Manhattan's Chinatown, August 1998. Labor must organize immigrant workers and combat anti-immigrant racism.



Michael Schwartz

## Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Throughout its history, the American capitalist class has amassed untold riches through the blood, sweat and toil of wave after wave of immigrant workers. From Michigan auto plants and Chicago slaughterhouses to New York City garment factories, immigrant workers laboring in grimy, debilitating and life-threatening conditions have helped produce the vast wealth which pays for the yachts and mansions of the Rockefellers and Kennedys, and for the vast police and military forces which exist to repress any rebellion by capitalism's wage slaves. Today, a mere five-minute walk from the glittering skyscrapers of Wall Street, immigrant workers from China slave away in garment sweatshops and restaurants under conditions on a par with those faced by their predecessors a century ago.

The plight of these workers is graphically depicted in a recent book titled *Forbidden Workers: Illegal Chinese Immigrants and American Labor* (1997) by Peter Kwong, chair of the Asian American Studies Program at New York City's Hunter College. In this book centering on New York City's Chinatown sweat-

**Garment sweatshop in Manhattan. UNITE labor tops betray interests of these mainly women immigrant workers, collude with sweatshop bosses.**

Peterson/SABA



shops, the third in his series of histories of Chinese workers in America, Kwong tells a story that has seen the light of day as rarely as the workers themselves did. He focuses on the most recent wave of Chinese immigrants—from the coastal province of Fujian—who literally mortgage their lives to human smugglers known as "snakeheads." Kwong describes how, after arriving in the U.S., these immigrants are "exploited by their employers, mistreated by the snakeheads, misunderstood by their fellow Chinese, unwelcomed by the Americans, and unprotected by the law."

The main catalyst for this latest wave of immigration is the economic desperation on the Chinese mainland fostered by the Stalinist bureaucracy's program of "market reforms." With collectivized agriculture destroyed in the 1980s and with whole swathes of industry being privatized, the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed jobs, housing and benefits has been shattered. As Trotskyists, we call for unconditional military defense of the bureaucratically deformed workers state in China against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. The social gains of the 1949 Revolution are under increasing attack by the Beijing bureaucracy as it rushes headlong toward capitalist restora-

tion. As China teeters on the brink of capitalist counterrevolution, what is urgently needed is a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy, revive and defend the nationalized economy and fight to promote socialist revolution internationally. The International Communist League seeks to forge the Trotskyist party needed to lead that political revolution to victory.

The horrific conditions suffered by Chinese smuggled into the U.S. were highlighted when the *Golden Venture* ran aground off Rockaway Beach in the New York City borough of Queens in 1993. The 286 Chinese immigrants on board were immediately arrested; many remained in Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) prison hellholes for years. Coming just two weeks after the arrest of 200 Chinese immigrants disembarking in San Francisco from the freighter *Pai Sheng*, the grounding of the *Golden Venture* added fuel to the virulent, bipartisan anti-immigrant campaign pushed by the Clinton White House and Congress. In defense of these immigrants, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee initiated protests outside INS offices in New York City and San Francisco, which received coverage in the Chinese-language press. The pro-

tests demanded: Free the Chinese immigrants—Stop racist INS deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Deprived of legal rights, undocumented Chinese immigrants are forced to slave away for crumbs, serving to drive down wages and worsen conditions for *all* workers. In our protests, we stressed the need to mobilize the labor movement to take up the fight against anti-immigrant racism and to bring these immigrant workers into the unions. But the pro-capitalist trade-union tops join the capitalist rulers in pushing calls for stronger anti-immigrant laws. In his book, Kwong graphically depicts how Chinese immigrant workers in the garment sweatshops have been ignored, betrayed, vilified and sold out by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) misleaders, giving Chinatown bosses fertile ground to warn workers to stay away from the "white man's unions."

As we noted in the ICL Declaration of Principles (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

"Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison the class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard."

### Labor Must Champion Immigrant Rights!

Seeking escape from the devastation wrought by "market reforms," many Fujianese fork over up to \$5,000 to the snakeheads as a down payment, promising under penalty of death to pay as much as \$30,000 later. This is so far beyond their means that it requires years of

### Spartacist League Public Offices

#### —MARXIST LITERATURE—

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indentured servitude to pay off. To evade U.S. immigration agents, the immigrants travel under conditions Kwong likened to the Middle Passage of the African slave trade. He describes the ordeal of Mrs. Lin and her husband as representative:

“Some 217 people were squeezed under the deck, lined up head to head with barely enough space to lay down. Most passengers suffered from seasickness as soon as the ship sailed into open water, but there were no adequate bathroom facilities. They were not allowed to get fresh air on deck because the snakehead enforcers feared detection and escape. They were given only a few mouthfuls of rice, some pickled vegetables, and a small glass of water a day.”

This nightmarish journey is just a rehearsal for what’s in store once the immigrants reach U.S. shores to partake of the “American Dream.” The Fujianese interviewed by Kwong said they would never have made the decision to come to the U.S. if they had known what things would be like. While some have found jobs in construction or in electronics shops in New York City, the vast majority of men are farmed out to work in restaurants as dishwashers and making deliveries, while most women end up in small garment factories. In the Chinatown garment sweatshops, which generally work under contract to major designers, these women work such long hours—often with their children beside them—that they sleep in the factories or bring work home. They are paid below minimum wage, if they see their pitiful wages at all. The Department of Labor, which is responsible for “enforcing” what minimal labor laws exist, acts in cahoots with the INS by reporting workers who complain about their hideous exploitation.

Kwong describes how these immigrants typically have such little interaction with anyone outside of their ethnic enclave that some of them refer to native-born Americans as *lao wai*—“foreigners.” Preying on and fostering this isolation, Chinatown bosses wield fears of anti-immigrant repression and anti-Asian racism to quell class conflict in the name of “ethnic solidarity.” The Chinese sweatshop owners justify the starvation wages they pay by pointing to the low prices they get from the *lao fan* (barbarian) manufacturers they produce for.

Conditioning the drastic decline of conditions in this industry has been the surrender by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy of hard-won union gains in major industries like steel, auto and trucking. In an industry with many small shops engaging in cutthroat competition, garment workers who demand better wages and conditions face threats of closure or “bankruptcy” from the employers. With debilitating piecework the norm, the price per garment is constantly plummeting. Kwong cites the case of a typical New York Chinatown worker who now labors 12 hours a day for \$30. In the early 1980s, she averaged \$40-50 per day. Practices like

home work and child labor, outlawed long ago, are widespread. Kwong reports that several Hong Kong manufacturers have relocated their operations to New York City to take advantage of cheaper labor costs!

Despite self-serving appeals to “ethnic solidarity” by Chinatown capitalists, Fujianese immigrants often face vicious reaction from bourgeois layers in the Chinese community. Currently in Vancouver, Canada, Chinese businessmen and professionals are in the forefront of a chauvinist campaign for stricter immigration laws sparked by the arrival of hundreds of mainland immigrants smuggled into the country this summer by ship. Everywhere they turn, the message is clear: immigrant workers have no rights.

The Fujianese are but one segment of the growing immigrant component of the U.S. proletariat, from Haitians and

labor movement. But this requires a struggle inside the unions against the chauvinist, pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and for a new, class-struggle leadership which recognizes that the interests of capital and labor are counterposed.

### UNITE Tops’ Partnership with Garment Bosses

Immigrant garment workers, mostly women, have played a vital and inspiring role in building the unions in this industry which gave rise to the epithet “sweatshop.” The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) was built largely by young East European Jewish and Italian women, many of them socialists, who braved arrests, court injunctions and imprisonment. Their struggles are commemorated around the world by International Women’s Day, March 8, which originated in a march in Man-

hattan’s Lower East Side in 1908 by women needle trades workers demanding an eight-hour day, an end to child labor and equal suffrage for women. In 1909, some 20,000 seamstresses walked off their jobs in protest against horrific work conditions. Two years later, 146 seamstresses perished in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire because the exits had been locked by the employer. Popular outrage in response to this heinous crime of capitalist greed compelled the bourgeoisie to implement the country’s first factory reform laws. By the end of World War I, clothing workers were among the best-organized in the U.S., with 100,000 dues-paying union members by 1920 and over double that a dozen years later.

But the gains won through courageous battles were squandered by the class collaborationism of the union’s anti-Communist leaders, exemplified by right-wing social democrats David Dubinsky of the ILGWU and Sydney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (ACWA), who tied the unions to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “New Deal” Democratic Party. While occasionally spouting “socialist” rhetoric, Dubinsky



1993 Spartacist/PDC protests in San Francisco (left) and New York City following arrest of Chinese immigrants aboard *Pai Sheng* and *Golden Venture*.



Dominicans on the East Coast to Mexicans and Asians throughout the country. Hispanic immigrant workers played a crucial role in UNITE’s recent organizing victory at Fieldcrest Cannon in Kannapolis, North Carolina, whose owners had repulsed repeated unionization efforts for 93 years. As the basic defense organizations of the working class, the trade unions must take up the demand that everyone who makes it to the U.S.—“legal” or “illegal”—has the right to stay here, and must champion the call for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants. Successful struggle against the exploiters requires a fight to defend and organize foreign-born workers into the unions *with full rights and protections*.

The defense of immigrant rights is necessarily intertwined with the fight against the racist oppression of black people, which is central to American capitalism. To prop up their system of exploitation, the racist rulers seek to pit white against black, and all against the desperate immigrant. Aggressive union organizing drives, with special measures to recruit black, immigrant and other minority workers, are crucial to revitalizing the

Union). These Chinese immigrant workers have demonstrated tremendous courage and fighting capacity, braving the cops and the Chinatown gangs who act as the bosses’ capos as well as the hated INS. In 1982, 20,000 workers poured out for an ILGWU rally in Chinatown. Kwong estimates that almost 90 percent of seamstresses working in Manhattan’s Chinatown are members of UNITE Local 23-25.

But the UNITE leadership under Jay Mazur carries on the Dubinsky/Hillman tradition of class treachery, working in concert with the garment bosses and shunning any fight for their members’ most basic rights. While the union has won health care for its members, a 1992 survey showed that non-union workers earn on average \$4.97 per hour while *ILGWU members made only \$3.73*. The UNITE bureaucracy has literally sold out its members in pursuit of class peace—through a scheme called “liquidated damages”—with top American clothing retailers and designers who regularly grace the pages of *Cosmopolitan*, *Vanity Fair* and the *New York Times*. The *Village*

*continued on page 8*

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# East Timor...

(continued from page 1)

Portuguese colony in 1975, leading to the deaths of more than 200,000 East Timorese. For 30 years they supported and armed the bloody dictator Suharto while training the Indonesian army, including the Kopassus special forces killers. These are the imperialists who devastated tiny Serbia and are now occupying Kosovo, overseeing brutal ethnic cleansing and pogromist terror against Serbs and Gypsies there. These are the imperialist mass murderers who slaughtered millions in their losing effort to defeat the Vietnamese revolution.

Imperialist military intervention means continued neo-colonial oppression, death, destruction and terrible poverty. For the imperialist rulers, who make fabulous profits exploiting the masses of the Asian region, an overarching purpose of military intervention is to prop up capitalist rule and suppress social struggle, particularly in Indonesia with its militant working class. In the context of the drive for capitalist counterrevolution in China and imperialist sabre rattling over Taiwan, a move into East Timor raises the spectre of a military threat to China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states in Asia, Vietnam and North Korea. For the racist Australian rulers, occupation of East Timor would not only forcibly assert their “interests” in the region, but would also provide a means of keeping out desperate refugees. Portugal wants its piece as well.

In laying the basis for what they want to ensure is stable neo-colonial rule, the imperialists are assisted by the East Timorese petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders who have been demanding armed imperialist intervention. Agreeing that East Timor should become a UN “protectorate” for the next five years, they are bidding to become frontmen in the exploitation of their “own” people.

We say that the real and only allies of the desperately poor people of East Timor are the international working class, from the multi-millioned proletariat of Indonesia to the workers of the imperialist countries in the region, Australia and Japan. This is the program of *proletarian internationalism*. The Australian workers movement has a particular duty to oppose the intervention of its “own” rulers, racist overlords of oppressed neo-colonies from Papua New Guinea to Fiji. We fight for union bans on *Australian* military goods as part of the struggle to defeat imperialism. The maritime workers refusing to handle war goods destined for the imperialists’ attack on Vietnam stands as a proud example of internationalist solidarity.

In Indonesia, a prison house of peoples, the proletariat must struggle to transcend the dominant Javanese chauvinism fostered by the bourgeoisie. A Trotskyist party in Indonesia would fight to mobi-



John Reid

lise the working class in urgent protest and struggle to demand Indonesia get out of East Timor, while opposing imperialist intervention. Championing independence for East Timor, it would fight for the right of self-determination of all the oppressed peoples in the archipelago.

In Indonesia, a country of belated capitalist development, *all* wings of the bourgeoisie are so tied to imperialism and fearful of the proletariat, that they are incapable of fulfilling the tasks historically associated with the bourgeois-democratic revolution—national liberation, agrarian revolution, legal equality for women and political democracy. Achieving these tasks and putting an end to the brutal exploitation of the masses requires the *proletarian* seizure of power—the Trotskyist program of *permanent revolution*. To consolidate proletarian rule in the face of hostile imperialism and lay the foundation for socialist economic development in backward Indonesia requires a struggle for socialist revolution internationally, in imperialist Australia, Japan and the U.S., and throughout the Asian region.

## Laborite Left: “Critical Support” to Imperialism

The Labor Party, notably its foreign affairs spokesman Laurie Brereton, has been the most hawkish in demanding the Australian military go into East Timor, while the ACTU union bureaucrats have called for 5,000 troops to be sent and the Northern Territory Trades and Labor Council calls for economic sanctions against Indonesia. This is chauvinism and class treason, the effect of which is to call on the Australian rulers to wage war on neo-colonial Indonesia. In the wake of the ALP/ACTU come the Laborite left. These leftists do not oppose imperialism as a system, but instead seek to pressure the capitalists into adopting a “progressive” foreign policy. They are purveyors of the deadly fiction that there can be “humanitarian” imperialism.

The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) has long demanded that Australia “act” in defence of the East Timorese, and their

paper *Green Left Weekly* has featured regular calls for UN intervention. Now, in the person of Jon Land, spokesman for their front group Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor (ASIET), the DSP openly calls for a UN military force:

“In the context of the unrelenting violence by the pro-integration militias, a UN peacekeeping force for East Timor should be given critical support. An armed UN peacekeeping force would act as a deterrent to the destabilisation campaign by the militias and the Indonesian military.”

—*Green Left Weekly*, 1 September

The DSP’s support is “critical” because, they say, “Interventions by UN forces elsewhere have often had disastrous consequences.” This is a revolting alibi for UN-sanctioned slaughter, starvation and political subjugation. Look at Iraq. In the name of the UN, this country was bombed to oblivion in 1991, and since then, the UN’s embargo has killed well over a million people. Australian navy vessels to this day patrol the Persian Gulf enforcing UN sanctions against Iraq. From the Korean war to the Congo, Somalia and Cambodia, UN “peacekeeping” interventions are aimed at imposing the diktats of the imperialist powers.

The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) have said they are opposed to Australian troops to East Timor, but they *refuse* to call for the Australian cops and military advisers there now, much less the UN, to get out. Prettifying Australian imperialism, they write, “Instead of sending troops, the government should be sending unconditional aid” (*Socialist Worker*, 12 March) and they back the union tops’ pro-imperialist calls to ban all trade with Indonesia.

Workers Power (WP) claims to oppose Australian imperialism, but they too, do not demand Australia get out. In fact they give tacit approval to the UN presence in East Timor, demanding the recent vote be overseen “by representatives of not just the UN, but of the world labour movement” (*Workers Power*, August-October)! WP seems to think that imperialist occupation is a pre-condition for workers revolution. As in Kosovo, where WP’s British co-thinkers conjure up the possibility of socialist revolution under NATO bayonets, in East Timor they call for a “popular militia,” “councils of workers”, peasants’ and students’ delegates,” and “a Workers’ and Peasants’ Government,” all under the eye of the UN!

The DSP have long been the local press

**Social-chauvinism vs. Trotskyism in Australia: DSP/Resistance at September 11 Sydney rally and leaflet for Melbourne demo demanding imperialist “peacekeepers” endorsed by Socialist Worker (ISO); right, September 9 Spartacist campus speakout.**



Australasian Spartacist

agents for the People’s Democratic Party (PRD) in Indonesia. Recent months have seen waves of worker protests and strikes in Indonesia, and in this volatile situation the PRD has grown. PRD militants have shown great courage in the face of heavy state repression, and workers must demand freedom for all PRD, trade-union and East Timorese militants from Jakarta’s dungeons! However, the PRD’s central strategy is to pressure Megawati Sukarnoputri’s bourgeois Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle (PDI-P). PRD leader Dita Sari, recently released from prison stated: “We must and will demand that the PDI-P meet its responsibilities to the people who voted for it. We will put forward our program for what any new government must achieve for the workers in its first 100 days!” (*Green Left Weekly*, 11 August).

Tailing Megawati, a vicious Javanese chauvinist who has long insisted that East Timor belongs to Indonesia, underscores that the PRD’s program of petty-bourgeois nationalism is counterposed to the perspective of mobilising the Indonesian proletariat against the army’s butchery in East Timor and anywhere else. Pushing illusions in the good offices of the imperialists, as early as 1996 the PRD called for Indonesia “to hand [East Timor] over to multinational peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the UN, as we have seen in Bosnia, Ethiopia and Cambodia” (“Resolution on East Timor,” 26 July 1996).

UN officials are suggesting that a “Kosovo-style intervention” into East Timor of U.S., New Zealand and Australian troops would be quicker to mount than a UN operation. Just as the fake left, who spewed the imperialists’ propaganda about Kosovo as a pretext for the war on Serbia, bear a share of responsibility for the imperialist destruction there, so too will they bear responsibility for what an imperialist occupation of East Timor will bring.

As the Australian section of the International Communist League, we understand that proletarian solidarity with the Indonesian and East Timorese masses means, *above all*, mobilising proletarian opposition to Australian and all imperialist intervention in the region, part of the struggle to overthrow this vicious, racist ruling class. Independence now for East Timor! For workers revolution in Indonesia! Down with Australian imperialism! ■

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# “Chinese Spy” Hysteria Whips Up Anti-Asian Racism

7

# Immigrant Workers...

(continued from page 5)

*Voice* (14 April 1998) reports: "Giant companies like Liz Claiborne, Donna Karan, Calvin Klein, and Anne Klein pay millions each year to UNITE for the right to produce garments more cheaply overseas. And it's allowed the union to bank well over \$100 million in pure cash flow." Meanwhile, the corrupt labor tops cynically scream about "foreign sweatshops."

Last year, when Liz Claiborne closed a Brooklyn plant, the UNITE Local 600 leadership pushed through a deal in which the workers who lost their jobs got a mere \$1,200 apiece while the union received \$20.5 million from the company for services rendered. Indeed, according to the *Voice*, "Dues from members now count for only about a quarter of UNITE's revenue. Earnings from a \$225 million securities portfolio along with liquidated damages enable UNITE to run the highest administrative expenses of any U.S. union." Less and less beholden to their members even as a dues base, the UNITE misleaders increasingly act simply as labor contractors for the bosses.

The labor tops' cynicism was evident when UNITE members fought to prevent a factory in Lower Manhattan from shutting down in late 1997, a tactic commonly used by Chinatown bosses to avoid paying workers after withholding months of wages. Two dozen workers camped out in front of the factory to try to block the removal of machinery and the garments their labor had produced. The union brass showed their faces only after the workers appeared on the *Good Morning New York* TV show. A union official named May Chen told workers to move away from the building entrance to a police pen down the block and to shout "Boycott sweatshops!" for the TV cameras as they impotently watched movers take out the factory's machines.

Facing hellish conditions, feeling besieged and sensing no interest from the racist, pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, many of these Chinese workers look to the chimera of "community organizing." This strategy separates workers from their potential power as part of the integrated labor movement and leads them to look to the capitalist government for redress. Typical in this regard is the community-based Chinese Staff and Workers Association (CSWA). In the early 1980s, the CSWA was instrumental in organizing pickets against the Silver Palace restaurant management and later against that at Jing Fong, two of the largest restaurants in Manhattan's Chinatown. But lacking a perspective of



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**Depiction of 1885 massacre of Chinese miners in Wyoming. Chinese railroad workers in California, 1889. Over 1,200 died in building of transcontinental railroad.**

mobilizing workers across ethnic lines throughout the city, the CSWA leaders look to the capitalist state, relying on enemies of labor and immigrants like the New York State Attorney General's office and the Department of Labor.

In December 1997, Congressional right-wingers held hearings on UNITE and the sweatshops at which some disgruntled workers testified against the union, while some Southern California UNITE members have sued the union. At New York University (NYU), the Chinese Construction Workers Association has regularly protested at construction sites to demand a quota of Chinese workers. This effort included appeals to the NYU administration to force construction unions to comply—an implicit call on the bourgeois university administration to bust the unions. The racist, job-trusting practices of the craft union bureaucracies, particularly entrenched in the construction trades, must be combatted and reversed through a political fight *within* the unions. Instead of anti-union

"community organizing," what is needed is a union fight against discrimination, for union-run minority recruitment programs and for jobs for all.

In his book, Kwong states that "protection of the rights of immigrants" is "the ultimate challenge for labor," rightly arguing: "The only way American unions can survive is by organizing the unorganized; the only way unprotected working people can look to a better future is by being part of the larger American labor movement—a revitalized one." But to revitalize the unions, Kwong looks to the likes of AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney, who follows in Dubinsky's and Hillman's footsteps (and is himself a member of the Democratic Socialists of America), and to "reform" outfits like Teamsters for a Democratic Union which specialize in dragging the unions into the bosses' courts. Placing his hopes on such ardent advocates of class collaboration, Kwong not surprisingly hails the community-based CSWA and himself appeals to the good graces of the capitalist state to enforce labor standards as well as measures to prevent runaway shops and calls for "an international convention against forced labor migrant trafficking." You can pass all the laws you want, but the economic laws of capitalist production mandate that capital will seek out labor wherever it is cheapest.

To do away with the hellish sweatshops, here and abroad, requires sweeping away the entire system of capitalist exploitation. We fight to mobilize labor in defense of the rights of immigrants and all the exploited and oppressed as part of the struggle for socialist revolution in the U.S. and around the world.

## Hideous Exploitation of Chinese Workers in America

Chinese workers, one of the earliest immigrant groups, have always faced brutal racism and discrimination in the U.S. The first significant numbers of Chinese workers in the U.S. came to California in the 1840s—spurred by massive social turmoil inside China—to work in the gold mines, where they worked in segregated work gangs. Chinese immigrants were denied citizenship and the most minimal rights.

From the time of the initial influx of

Chinese immigrants before the Civil War, their treatment was largely conditioned by the defining issue of slavery and the status of blacks. The Civil War smashed the slavocracy in the South, ushering in the most democratic period in American history, Radical Reconstruction (see "Defeat of Reconstruction and the Great Rail Strike of 1877: The Shaping of Racist American Capitalism," WV No. 701, 20 November 1998). It also allowed industrial capitalism to develop throughout the U.S. The Northern bourgeoisie's betrayal of Reconstruction—sealed by the withdrawal of the last Union troops from the South in 1877—also initiated a period of intense anti-Chinese racism. As Kwong wrote in the first book in his series, *Chinatown, N.Y.* (1979):

"In the congressional debates over Chinese immigration during the 1870s, the issues and antagonism of the war years remained very much alive, and any question affecting the Chinese was apt to raise the whole complex specter of black liberation. Without a single exception, the anti-Chinese measures were carried in Congress by a combination of southern and western votes."

The years after the Civil War were marked by a tremendous increase in the power of American capitalism, most notably in the development of the railroads. In the mid-1860s, the Central Pacific Railroad hired thousands of Chinese workers to do the hardest, most dangerous work for less pay than white workers. Describing the deadly conditions in which the Chinese workers were forced to slave by the railroad magnates, Kwong writes: "The Chinese carved a path out of the perpendicular cliffs above the American River by lowering one another in wicker baskets by a pulley system to drill holes, inserting gunpowder in the rocks, and then lighting the fuses, quickly hoisting themselves up the line before the explosion." More than 1,200 Chinese died while building the transcontinental railway.

This was also a period of intense class war, as the "Robber Baron" capitalists fought tooth and nail against the nascent working-class movement. In June 1867, 5,000 Chinese railroad workers struck, demanding equal wages with white workers, a reduction in hours, the abolition of whipping and the freedom of any worker to quit at will. The workers surrendered only after the Central Pacific cut off food supplies to the workers' camp in the Sierra mountains. Chinese workers also organized strikes during the late 1800s in various other industries.

With the connivance of the newly fledged labor bureaucracy, Chinese workers were made scapegoats for a series of economic crises during the late 19th century. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) leadership, especially in California, campaigned to ban Asian immigration. Rallies in support of the

## Just Out!

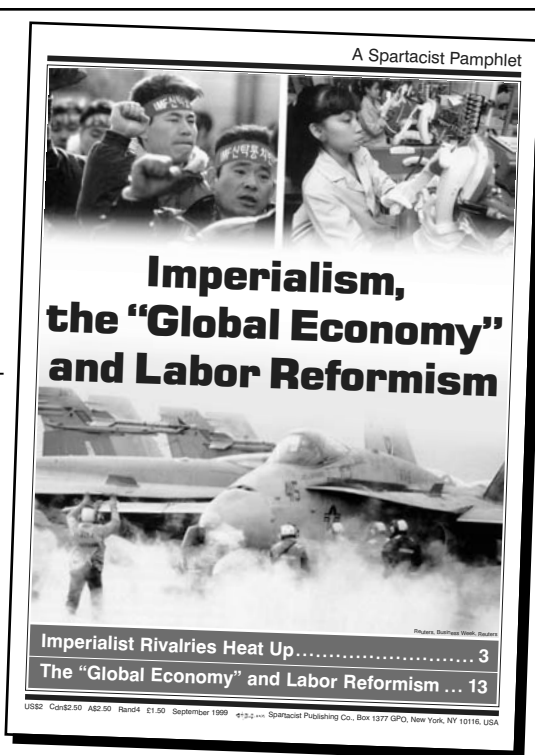
This pamphlet assesses recent changes in the world economy in a historical perspective, from the origins of modern imperialism in the late 19th century through the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the former USSR and its aftermath. Reformist ideologues of "globalization" seek to obscure the role of the capitalist nation-state and the danger of interimperialist war which is inherent in capitalism, while amnestying the refusal of the labor bureaucracies to wage class struggle against their respective bourgeoisies.

Exploitation, poverty and social degradation can be eliminated only through proletarian revolutions in the imperialist centers as well as the neocolonial countries, laying the basis for an international planned socialist economy.

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Boenzi/NY Times

**1985 NYC garment workers rally. "Made in U.S.A." protectionism pushed by union tops is poison to class struggle.**

Great Railroad Strike of 1877 degenerated at times into anti-Chinese pogroms. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which all but cut off Chinese immigration and banned naturalization of Chinese immigrants. AFL chief Samuel Gompers, an outright racist who is lionized today by “progressive” AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney, argued that the “maintenance of the nation depended upon maintenance of racial purity and strength.” Gompers strove to exclude both black and Asian workers from the unions. “Yellow peril” xenophobia ran deep in the early American labor movement. Thus, the Knights of Labor, founded in 1869 as one of the first national trade-union organizations, accepted black workers into membership but barred Chinese workers.

Gompers represented what Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin described as the aristocracy of labor—a stratum which developed with the advent of the imperialist stage of capitalism in the late 19th century. Gompers & Co. derived their privileges as a labor bureaucracy parasitically resting atop the workers movement by acting as the agents of U.S. imperialism within the working class. Starting with the 1898 Spanish-American War, where the U.S. captured Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, the American rulers’ imperialist wars of racist conquest abroad were accompanied by the intensification of racist repression at home, marked by the consolidation of Jim Crow segregation, and the cultivation of the chauvinist labor bureaucracy. In 1904, the Exclusion Act was made permanent, and in 1907 the U.S. government signed a “Gentlemen’s Agreement” with the Japanese government cutting off Japanese immigration. It was not until the middle of World War II that the Chinese Exclusion Act was dropped.

### For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Racist Discrimination!

While Gompers and his ilk were virulent in their anti-Asian chauvinism, there is also a history of interracial class struggle against discrimination and exploitation. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), founded in 1905 with the understanding that “the working class and the employing class have nothing in common,” organized across ethnic and racial lines. Their motto was “An open union and a closed shop.” In contrast to Gompers’ AFL, the revolutionary-syndicalist IWW fought for *industrial* unions which organized all the workers in an industry, irrespective of skill or race. An IWW pamphlet, *Japanese and Chinese Exclusion or Industrial Organization, Which?* stated:

“We the Industrial Workers of the World have organized the Japanese and Chinese in lumber camps, on the farms, mines and railroads, and the United Mine Workers of America have organized Japanese in the coal fields of Wyoming. This is proof that they can be organized.”

—quoted in Philip S. Foner, *The Industrial Workers of the World, 1905-1917* (1965).

Many of the best IWW militants, such as James P. Cannon, joined the early Communist Party (CP) following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

The Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky, founded two years after the Bolshevik Revolution, waged a merciless struggle against the chauvinist and class-collaborationist policies of the pro-imperialist labor bureaucracies and the social-democratic parties. In the “Theses on the Eastern Question” passed at its Fourth Congress in 1922, the Comintern specifically warned against the poisonous influence of anti-immigrant racism within the workers movement in the U.S., Canada and Australia. Noting that anti-immigrant “legislation deepens the antagonism between the coloured and white workers, and splits and weakens the workers’ movement,” the theses instructed the CPs in those countries to “conduct an energetic campaign against laws prohibiting immigration” (quoted

in Jane Degras, *The Communist International 1919-1943: Documents, Vol. 1* [1971]).

Breaking down racial and ethnic barriers was integral to building the mass CIO industrial unions at the height of the Great Depression. This included a successful attempt to organize Chinese workers by the National Maritime Union (NMU). When thousands of Chinese seamen were stranded in New York during the 1936-37 NMU strike, the union strike committee approached the Chinese seamen’s organization to urge its members to join the strike. The Chinese seamen agreed, asking in return for equal treatment, equal wages and the right to shore leave. When the NMU agreed to fight for these demands, 3,000 Chinese



ACWA



ACWA



M.E. Sharpe

**1915 garment strike in Chicago. Unions built in heroic struggles were shackled to capitalists by pro-Democratic Party bureaucrats Sydney Hillman (far left) of ACWA clothing workers and David Dubinsky of ILGWU.**

seamen joined the strike. By fighting for the rights of black and Asian seamen, the NMU soon surpassed the corrupt and racist AFL seamen’s union.

But the Stalinist leadership of the NMU, as elsewhere in the CIO, chained the union to Roosevelt’s Democratic Party. In their support to U.S. imperialism in World War II, the Stalinists joined in pushing the vilest anti-Japanese chauvinism, even ordering their Japanese American members to go into the concentration camps set up by the U.S. government and hailing the A-bomb incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the close of the war.

### Labor Tops in Service of U.S. Imperialism

The formation of the industrial unions was a historic gain for the multiracial American working class. But these gains have been undermined by the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy. In the red purges of the late 1940s and ’50s, thousands of militants were driven out of the unions, with social democrats like Dubinsky and Hillman and Walter Reuther in the United Auto Workers taking the lead in the Cold War witchhunt. Today, the Sweeney AFL-CIO bureaucracy turns a blind eye to sweatshop labor in the U.S. while spearheading a chauvinist campaign on behalf of the capitalist rulers to “buy American” and boycott clothing made abroad, especially in China.

In a speech to college students last year, Sweeney paid lip service to the plight of sweatshop workers in the U.S. but reserved the bulk of his talk for a tirade against China. Expressing the AFL-CIO tops’ concern for the profits

of the American capitalists, Sweeney lamented the unfairness of sweatshop labor to “the corporations that live up to their responsibility to share the wealth.” “Made in the U.S.A.” protectionism is deadly poison for workers in the U.S., spreading the illusion that their enemies are the workers of other countries and not the American capitalist class. Wielded against China, it also serves the imperialists’ drive for capitalist counterrevolution and the reopening of that society to unbridled exploitation.

In their appeals to boycott products made by foreign sweatshop labor, the AFL-CIO and UNITE bureaucrats conveniently hide the fact that the “code of conduct” they push for U.S. capitalists operating abroad is routinely violated *in*

American imperialism. Dubinsky long helped funnel funds and personnel into CIA anti-Communist plots like the splitting of the French union movement after World War II. One Harry Goldberg was an operative for Lovestone in Indonesia in the period leading up to the bloody anti-Communist 1965 coup, which was backed by the CIA.

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe has resulted in utter destitution and fratricidal slaughter for the proletariat, while emboldening the imperialists to engage in ever bloodier military adventures, like the recent U.S./NATO war against Serbia. At the same time, the capitalist rulers have sought to drive down workers’ living standards worldwide.

This only serves to underscore the urgency of the fight to stop the drive toward capitalist restoration in China, which would plunge a fifth of all humanity into counterrevolutionary chaos and bring to a white heat growing rivalries among the major imperialist powers, especially the U.S. and Japan, as they compete for the spoils. Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy’s protectionist tirades have served to fuel anti-Asian racism in the U.S., which has historically run deep particularly in California. Amid a huge growth nationwide in racist attacks against Asian Americans, two years ago a white street gang in San Francisco carved swastikas into the storefronts of Asian businesses in the Sunset District.

The pro-imperialist labor tops chain the workers’ power to the capitalist class enemy, chiefly through their support to the Democratic Party. The working people need their own party. The Spartacist League seeks to forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the exploited and oppressed as part of the struggle for proletarian revolution. We fight for a workers government to expropriate the bourgeoisie and construct an egalitarian socialist society. Only when those who labor rule can the tremendous wealth of this society be used to provide a decent life for working people, the poor, blacks, the young, the aged and immigrants. As we wrote at the time of the *Golden Venture* (WV No. 578, 18 June 1993):

“From the chemical-drenched farmlands and orchards to the dangerous anti-union sweatshops and factories throughout the country, immigrants and ‘illegal aliens’ have built this country. The answer to the horrendous conditions these workers labor and live under is not racist INS imprisonment or more corrupt cop patrols against ‘crime.’ We need a fighting labor movement that will launch massive campaigns to organize the unorganized workers. It will take revolutionary socialist leadership to break from the racist traitors in the labor movement and build an international workers movement that will be a powerhouse for social justice.”■

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# “Chinese Spy”...

(continued from page 7)

Mao’s China aimed against the Soviet Union. With the Soviet degenerated workers state destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution, U.S. imperialism has been increasingly brazen in its threats against China.

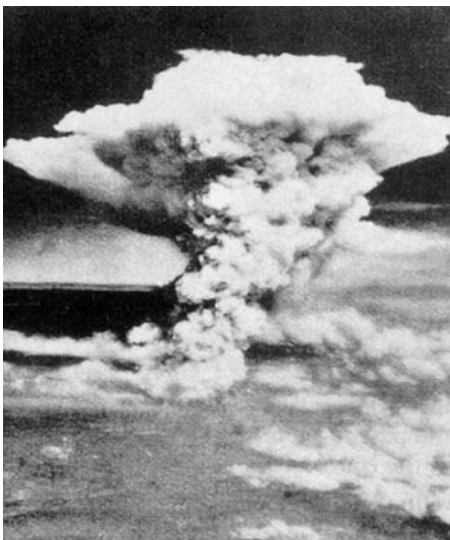
The furor over “Chinese nuclear spies” and the supposed missile threat from impoverished North Korea, which last year launched a ballistic missile that passed over Japan, was used to push through a bipartisan bill to revive a limited version of the “star wars” anti-missile defense system Reagan had tried to get. The Clinton administration is simultaneously promoting a “theater missile defense” including China’s closest neighbors—Japan, South Korea and possibly Taiwan. Such “defense” schemes are aimed at preventing China—as well as, in the future, Washington’s imperialist rivals—from targeting the U.S. in response to an American nuclear first strike.

The bipartisan outrage over espionage which emanated from Congress was the purest theatrics. Every government spies, and everyone knows it. Among its innumerable covert operations against China, U.S. imperialism (with the “AFL-CIA” in the lead) promotes anti-Communist “free trade unions” in the service of counter-revolution. And the cause of “independence” for Tibet has long been sponsored by the CIA as a potential lever to smash the Chinese workers state. U.S. imperialism threatened to invade China during the 1950-53 Korean War and has maintained Taiwan (and South Korea) as a heavily armed fortress targeting the mainland.

The “hard line” toward China advocated by both the Republican right and liberal Democrats and their lackeys in the labor officialdom and the “engagement” strategy favored by much of corporate America are complementary, not counterposed policies. Their shared goal is the overturn of the 1949 Revolution. With the Stalinist bureaucracy driving headlong toward capitalist restoration, American imperialism has, for the present, opted for a carrot-and-stick policy toward the Beijing regime. Although a U.S. military attack on China is not currently in the cards, this could

quickly change if, for example, a full-scale counterrevolution is met by proletarian resistance.

The Beijing bureaucracy has been clamoring for membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) to facilitate further capital investment. In holding out



Asahi Shimbun

**1945 A-bomb incineration of Hiroshima by U.S., world’s deadliest nuclear power.**

WTO membership—which would entail even deeper encroachments by foreign capital and further privation of the Chinese masses—the imperialists look to encourage the bureaucratic caste holding political power in China as it continues to reintroduce capitalist “discipline” into the economy. Having already destroyed a wide swath of state-owned industry, the Stalinist regime under Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader Jiang Zemin now projects further slaughtering of the state sector of the economy, with 1.2 million textile workers alone scheduled for the scrap heap.

The bureaucracy’s drive toward capitalist restoration poses a clash with the powerful Chinese proletariat. The CCP bureaucracy has made very clear its intent to squash opposition by the proletariat, which has displayed its capacity to speak and act militantly in its own name. In the events around Tiananmen Square in 1989, it was the workers who, throughout China, raised demands which challenged the rule of the venal bureaucracy and militantly resisted the regime’s repression.

The most savage repression, including summary executions, was exerted against the workers who dared to rebel.

Buffeted by the centrifugal forces arising from its capitalist market measures, the CCP bureaucracy lashes out at *anything* in society that raises its head. Recently, the regime has cracked down on the reportedly millions-strong Falun Gong meditation sect, which has a substantial membership in the growing petty bourgeoisie and in the ranks of the CCP itself. At the same time, the working class has continued to wage struggles against the ravages of “market reforms.” Defense of the workers’ interests demands, with immediacy, a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. Crucial to this prospect is the building of a Chinese section of the International Communist League, firmly grounded in the revolutionary internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky and armed with a perspective of promoting socialist revolution to overthrow the neighboring capitalist states, particularly by the powerful Japanese proletariat.

## For New October Revolutions!

Despite the anti-Communist hue and cry by American imperialist reactionaries over Chinese espionage, breakthroughs in nuclear weapons technology—as in science generally—are never the exclusive preserve of one nation-state. As Princeton academic Frank von Hippel observed in response to the spy furor, “No secret stays secret forever” (*Scientific American*, June 1999). In any case, spying itself is at bottom simply a mode of information exchange, an exchange which would be open in a world socialist order.

One measure of the power of the planned economies created by the revolutionary social transformations in backward Russia and China is that scientists were able in the space of two generations to achieve the pinnacles of theoretical prowess in the hard sciences. But, as Trotsky emphasized in his book *The Revolution Betrayed*, in the absence of proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries, the isolation of the USSR would inexorably lead to the throttling of the October Revolution. Promoting the utopian and self-serving notion of building “socialism in one

(their) country,” the Stalinist bureaucracy opposed proletarian revolution in the capitalist countries and instead offered a mutual co-existence pact to the imperialists. In 1941, Stalin preferred to rely on German “promises” of “non-aggression” rather than accept the hard evidence of the impending Nazi invasion secured by heroic Soviet spies Leopold Trepper and Richard Sorge. A half century later, Stalin’s heirs led the capitalist counter-revolution in league with imperialism.

While the Soviet Union existed, its nuclear arsenal acted to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism, which had incinerated 200,000 civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki when it had a nuclear monopoly and repeatedly threatened to launch nuclear attacks to “contain Communism” during the Cold War. Today, the march of U.S. imperialism’s military juggernaut has all-sided support in both ruling-class parties. It is aimed not just at the remaining deformed workers states but at the imperialist competitors of the American capitalist class, despite their current status as U.S. “allies.” Born within the confines of the nation-state, the imperialist powers can only expand in competition with each other, a competition ultimately realized in interimperialist war, the next of which can only end in nuclear holocaust.

The human debris of capitalist counter-revolution in East Europe and the former Soviet Union—the jobless, the homeless and those sick and dying with no access to medical care—are living testament that the Trotskyist call for unconditional military defense of these states against imperialism and counter-revolution was, in fact, a fight for the progress of humanity. No less, it underscores the urgency of the fight to stop capitalist restoration in China today. The only road to a secure, plentiful future for humanity is the overthrow of the capitalist order—centrally U.S. imperialism—through proletarian revolution, laying the basis for an internationally planned socialist economy. But to begin on the road to such an order, it is necessary for those who detest oppression, exploitation and injustice to embrace the program of Trotskyism and join the fight for a reformed Fourth International to lead the proletariat to state power internationally. That is the purpose of the ICL.■

# Detroit...

(continued from page 2)

income of the richest 1 percent of Americans doubled, while the average take-home pay of the poorest 20 percent of households dropped from \$10,000 to \$8,800. While American workers are making less money, they are working longer hours than workers in any other industrialized country.

The attacks on labor take a double toll on black workers, who are “last hired, first fired”—segregated at the bottom of American capitalist society, generally consigned to the worst jobs, the worst housing, the worst schools. The Detroit area is one of the most segregated in the country. Racist state legislators use “Detroit” as a code word for “black.” A recent study rated the city one of the three worst in the country in which to raise a child, while white suburban Livonia received an “A plus.” Capitalist Detroit offers youth no future except a lifetime of grinding poverty and unemployment, or death at the hands of racist

killer cops like the ones who beat Malice Green to death in 1992.

The contingents of black and white workers who marched down Woodward Avenue on Labor Day went past vacant lots and hulks of abandoned buildings. The devastation of Detroit speaks to the truth that labor and black rights march forward together or they will surely fall back separately. The trade-union bureaucracy has let these racist, anti-labor assaults continue unabated because of its allegiance to the capitalist system, expressed through their political support to the Democratic Party. The anti-union role of black Democratic Party mayor Dennis Archer was obvious to many striking teachers. As one black striker told *Workers Vanguard*, Archer “is a stooge for big business and the corporate structure.” Yet even strikers who despise Archer still hark back to the “good old days” of black Democrat Coleman Young, whose “progressive” reputation was promoted by the labor tops and their reformist tails like the Communist Party.

Young presided over the devastation of Detroit in the 1970s and ’80s, with the able assistance of the UAW tops in particular, who helped ensure that the capitalists would get away with their attacks without a massive explosion of class struggle. While the streets were flooded with cops, 200,000 auto jobs were lost, thousands of city workers laid off and social services and school funding slashed. In 1982, Young went after the teachers union, demanding an 8 percent pay cut. As we wrote in “Coleman Young: From CIO Union Organizer to Overseer for Auto Bosses” (WV No. 689,

24 April 1998; reprinted in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 15):

“The ‘Motor City’ was not only the center of American capitalism’s principal industry, but also the bastion of a powerful and combative black proletariat. When Young was elected mayor in 1973, Detroit had experienced years of labor ferment and social struggle—from the 1967 ghetto upheaval to a wave of wildcat strikes. Young was installed in office precisely in order to put a lid on the city’s rebellious black population and to quell the multi-racial workforce in auto, as the bosses moved to dismantle and decimate the plants which had once provided a livelihood for tens of thousands of unionized workers. By the time he left City Hall in 1993, Detroit had been transformed into a crumbling shell,

emblem of the Midwest ‘Rust Bowl’ devastated by plant closures and run-away shops.”

What is needed is a new, class-struggle leadership of the labor movement, one which understands that the interests of labor and capital are counterposed, which actively champions the fight for black freedom, and which fights to break workers and minorities from any illusions in the Democratic Party. The fight for a socialist future—for free, quality, integrated education for all, for an end to racist oppression and unemployment—requires the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead the multiracial proletariat to power through workers revolution.■

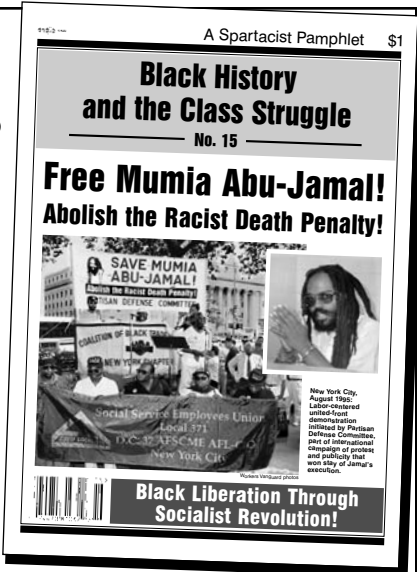
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# Waco...

(continued from page 12)

since the government wiped it out, they have brandished the Waco holocaust as a rallying cry for their own sinister cause. That cause includes support for expansion of the racist death penalty, attacks on immigrants, elimination of welfare—all of which Clinton has pushed through.

To the capitalist rulers, the masses of the ghettos and barrios are a surplus population, with wide layers consigned to homelessness, disease and starvation. As the living standards of the working class have been driven down and the poor plunged into even deeper misery while the stock market soars, the ruling class has moved to intensify state repression in order to stifle, contain and suppress the seething discontent which it fears will sooner or later explode. Billions are poured into new prison construction, thousands more cops roam the streets, and a goodly part of a generation of black and Hispanic youth have been ensnared in the criminal “justice” system through the racist “war on drugs.” In California, for example, five black men are behind bars for each one in a state university. Over 1.8 million men and women—more than 60 percent of them black or Hispanic—inhabit the nation’s prisons and jails, a 300 percent increase over the past 20 years.

## Deliberate Mass Murder

The lie that the FBI and BATF had not used incendiary devices, and therefore could not have caused the fire, was at the centerpiece of the government’s line that Branch Davidian leader Koresh had led the sect into a mass suicide. We responded then: “We doubt it, but even if someone in the commune started the fire as the tanks of their sworn enemies were smashing through their walls, the responsibility for the deaths of all these people lies squarely on the government.”

The Feds were determined to exact revenge for the deaths of four BATF agents and the wounding of 16 others when they staged a Gestapo-like raid on the commune that February to arrest Koresh on false charges of illegal weapons possession. Like a street gang asserting its turf, the government decided to show the Branch Davidians who was top dog. We warned that “the government assault is designed to create an atmosphere in which dissidents can be mowed down with impunity” (WV No. 571, 12 March 1993). For over seven weeks, hundreds of state police, National Guard, FBI and BATF agents with M1A1 tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles laid siege to the compound. Now it has come out that the Army’s elite Delta Force com-



UPI

mandos were also there.

At 6:04 a.m. on April 19, the FBI unleashed its combat engineering vehicles. M-60 heavy tanks rigged with bulldozer blades and huge booms smashed gaping holes in the side of the farm buildings and drenched the inside with CS gas, which is banned in international warfare. Six hours later, the fire began. The FBI waited eight minutes to even call the Fire Department, and then waited another 21 minutes after the fire engines arrived before allowing them into the compound. Millions of TV viewers watched in horror as the flames enveloped the commune.

The Feds claimed that the fire originated nowhere near where the tanks were tearing the building to shreds. But the truth was that smoke first came out of a second floor window, above and right next to where the M-60 had been smashing the building. As the first flames appeared, a CNN correspondent on the scene reported, “For the last 15 minutes we’ve watched this M-60 vehicle...make large holes in the side of this building and pump tear gas in there. And at times, as you well know, tear gas can be incendiary and apparently this is what’s happened.” Government spokesmen cynically claimed that Koresh and his followers could have escaped from the gas through an underground tunnel, but the Feds had also pumped gas into the hallways leading to that escape route to make sure this wouldn’t happen. In short, this was coldblooded mass murder.

When Reno subsequently appeared at a Senate committee hearing on Waco, Republicans and Democrats alike joined in a lovefest to praise her handling of the situation. But the recent disclosures brought forth calls from many corners



Barger/WCAU-TV

**1985 bombing of Philadelphia MOVE commune killed eleven, destroyed entire black neighborhood. MOVE massacre was signature of Reagan years, Waco inferno was signature of Clinton administration.**

for a new and “independent” investigation. Bowing to the pressure, Reno set up an inquiry to be headed by former Missouri Senator John Danforth, a rabid defender of the reactionary Clarence Thomas when he was nominated for the Supreme Court by Bush. Republicans hope to use the Waco inquiry to embarrass Clinton and bolster their electoral fortunes. But while some heads may roll for perjury and concealing evidence, both capitalist parties see the primary mission of the Danforth “investigation” as restoring the “credibility” of the government and its political police.

## Waco, Clinton and the Left

The Waco massacre illustrates the barbaric lengths to which this country’s capitalist rulers will resort to bolster their class rule. While the reformists and liberals preach faith in the capitalist state, the blaze which consumed those 80-plus men, women and children again illuminates the basic Marxist understanding that the bourgeois state is an instrument for murderous repression against the workers and oppressed which must be smashed through a socialist revolution and replaced by a workers state. In contrast, the liberals embrace the capitalist state as their own, while the reformist “socialists” foster the illusion that it can be pressured to serve the interests of the working class and minorities. With a Democrat in the White House for the first time in over a decade, the response of the liberals and reformists to the Waco massacre ranged from backhanded support to muted “protest.”

The rad-lib *Nation* lamely called the Waco holocaust “disgraceful,” but on the eve of the assault they practically scripted the Feds’ case, painting Koresh

as a crazy, gun-toting polygamist. The reformist Communist Party was even more blatant in pushing Clinton’s line, grotesquely reporting: “The Waco cultists, armed with a .50-caliber machine gun and assault rifles, engaged in a fire-fight in which cultists and FBI agents died” (*People’s Weekly World*, 24 April 1993). The self-styled “revolutionary left” was no less obscene. Thus the tiny Revolutionary Workers League wrote not a word about the massacre in its press at the time while its supporters at the University of California at Berkeley amnes-tied Clinton by comparing the integrated Branch Davidians to anti-abortion terrorists and even the KKK!

The International Socialist Organization (ISO), whose reformist view of the state is exemplified by its claim that the cops can be allies of the workers as well as its support for government intervention into the trade unions, said not one word about Waco for months during the siege. After the slaughter, they “condemned” the “government-orchestrated massacre” (*Socialist Worker*, May 1993), meanwhile going on about the many peaceful ways Clinton could have averted “the Waco fiasco.” Ever attuned to petty-bourgeois public opinion, the ISO conspicuously avoided the question of gun control, implying that the Branch Davidians brought the massacre on themselves by depicting them as an “armed religious cult” which “would consider either mass suicide or taking a final stand as its options for ending the siege.” Even today, *Socialist Worker* (10 September) writes of “the FBI’s botched raid” and attributes the “deadly violence at the core of the U.S. government” to “professional killers accountable to no one,” letting Clinton/Reno off the hook for mass murder and obscuring the elementary Marxist understanding that this murderous bourgeois state is nothing other than the “executive committee” of the capitalist class as a whole.

We understand that only when the racist American bourgeoisie is swept away through proletarian revolution will we put an end to the mass murder—from MOVE and Waco to Iraq and the Balkans—which it perpetrates to maintain its rule. As we wrote following the massacre: “The Branch Davidians’ ‘crime’ was to want to be left alone to live as they chose on their 77-acre piece of Texas. We understand that religious superstition in all its variants is at best a fanciful refuge from—and more often, a cynical apology for—the horrors of this capitalist world. As communists committed to forging a party that can bring workers and the oppressed to power through a socialist revolution, in this country and around the world, we intend to make sure that those who carried out the holocaust in Waco will be brought to justice by a future workers government.”■

# Zastava...

(continued from page 3)

the bombs were raining down on Serbia, the ISO worked assiduously to help provide this cover under the guise of aiding the Albanian refugees, pleading with the imperialist rulers for “Money for refugees, not for war!” (*Socialist Worker*, 7 May). The Cliffites did not defend Serbia against the NATO assault, nor did they oppose their own ruling class. Indeed, leading SWP spokesman Alex Callinicos was a signatory to a statement in the *New Statesman* (10 May) calling for imperialist military intervention in Kosovo by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as an alternative to the U.S.-dominated NATO alliance.

Much of the reformist and centrist left demonstrated their support to the war aims of the imperialists by clamoring for “independence for Kosovo” and supporting the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), which acted as a U.S./NATO pawn. The British Workers Power (WP) group went all the way with the UCK, joining an April 10 “Workers Aid for Kosova” demonstration in London which was shot

through with slogans like “NATO Good Luck” and co-sponsoring a May 11 London meeting which prominently featured two unvarnished pro-NATO spokesmen. After NATO bombs and missiles had reduced much of Serbia to rubble, an August 11 statement by WP’s League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) crowed, “In the aftermath of NATO’s victory in Kosova, a pre-revolutionary situation is maturing”! This is thinly veiled support to the Serbian pro-imperialist opposition to Milosevic hailed by Western capitals. At the same time, the LRCI statement conspicuously avoided any mention of opposition to British imperialism.

## March Separately, Strike Together

In spite of profound political differences with many of the organizations that participated in the campaign, including the COBAS, we participated in this campaign in the spirit of the united front: march separately, strike together! Our participation in the aid campaign necessarily meant a political struggle against the reformists and the centrists who served their bourgeoisie. As Leninists, we understand that opposition to imperialism

abroad means class struggle at home, that socialist revolution, which requires the instrument of a revolutionary party to lead it, is the only way to put an end to the capitalist system which breeds war.

The ICL did not join the committee set up on May 15 by many of the groups adhering to the campaign because we did not agree with the programmatic basis on which it was constituted. For example, the committee called for “working to force the government and Italian institutions to stop the aggression against Yugoslavia, to stop the bombing and to end the war, as well as to withdraw from NATO and to close all foreign bases on our territory.” This means trying to pressure the Italian bourgeoisie to be less warlike and more independent from the American bourgeoisie. NATO is a military pact between imperialist states. In contrast to the fake left, we seek to smash NATO through workers revolution. Intervening at the meeting, our speaker called for “strikes and workers actions against the bases...from which the bombers leave.”

One of the groups at the May 15 meeting, the Comunisti Autorganizzati, wrote in its leaflet that Serbia “by embodying the inheritance of anti-fascist and anti-

imperialist Yugoslavia, is an obstacle to Western expansionism,” and did not raise the slightest criticism of the nationalist Serbian regime in Belgrade. (A similar line was pushed in the U.S. by the Workers World Party.) Our military defense of Serbia did not mean even the most minimal political support to the capitalist Milosevic regime; and we long defended the right of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians. This question became subordinate to military defense of Serbia against NATO imperialism as the UCK became a puppet of imperialism. As we said in our intervention in Bologna:

“Milosevic personifies the connection between murderous nationalism and counterrevolution, like Tudjman in Croatia who adores the Ustashi fascists of Ante Pavelic and the Islamic reactionary Izetbegovic in Bosnia. Against the poison of nationalism, we of the ICL fight for the class unity of the workers of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, etc. to overthrow all the bloody regimes of the region. *For a socialist federation of the Balkans!*”

Our internationalist opposition to the U.S./NATO war against Serbia was part of the fight to overthrow capitalism around the world. The indispensable instrument for this is a revolutionary proletarian and internationalist party, a reformed Fourth International.■

## Clinton/Reno Cover-Up Unravels

# Waco Was Government Mass Murder

For over six years, President Bill Clinton, Attorney General Janet Reno and the FBI have peddled the obscene lie—dutifully echoed by the capitalist media—that they were not responsible for the fiery holocaust which killed at least 80 people, including 25 children, in the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas on 19 April 1993. For 51 days before the massacre, an army of FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) agents had laid siege to that racially integrated religious group, tormenting them, trying to starve them out, finally unleashing a full-scale military assault on their home. Even as flames engulfed the house, Clinton and Reno took to the airwaves to justify the slaughter, wielding outlandish charges of “child abuse,” denouncing the Branch Davidians for possessing “illegal weapons,” finally blaming the victims for having started the blaze themselves.

Now the disclosure of long-concealed FBI tapes confirms that the Feds fired at least two incendiary tear gas canisters at the Branch Davidian home before it burst into flames. For those who wanted to see, it didn’t take FBI tapes six years after the fact to know that the government had lied. In denouncing this horrendous mass murder, the biggest government slaughter of American civilians this century, we wrote that the Big Lie cover-up pushed by Clinton/Reno and the media “would have made Nazi propagandist Goebbels jealous.”

In contrast to the liberals who stood by their man in the White House, and the reformist “leftists” who said barely a word, the Spartacist League immediately organized demonstrations of outrage in response to the Waco holocaust. Four hours after the Branch Davidians’ compound went up in flames, the SL picketed Justice Department offices in New York City with signs including, “We Will Not Forget: MOVE Massacre, Desert Slaughter in Iraq, Waco Holocaust.” In the days that followed, we staged protests outside the FBI building in Washington, D.C. and outside federal govern-



Clinton and Reno ordered 1993 assault which killed over 80 men, women and children at integrated Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas.

ment offices in Boston, Chicago and San Francisco.

In a protest letter to Reno the day of the massacre of this small religious group, the Partisan Defense Committee—a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—noted that “their only ‘crimes’ were to exercise rights guaranteed under the first two amendments of the U.S. constitution—freedom of religious worship and the right to bear arms—and the inherent right of all individuals to defend themselves from a brutal assault.” The PDC statement declared:

“The history of American capitalism is strewn with mass graves—from the massacre of Sioux at Wounded Knee to the invasion of Panama. Today’s massacre

immediately calls to mind the Mother’s Day 1985 bombing of the Philadelphia MOVE commune, ordered by Democratic Party mayor Wilson Goode with the aid of the Reagan White House. Eleven black people were burned to death, five of them children, and an entire block of homes burned to the ground as a government message to all who stand up for their rights.”

As communists fighting for workers revolution to sweep away this racist capitalist ruling class, we have sought to sear the MOVE and Waco atrocities into the memory of the working class.

With the Feds’ transparent cover-up over Waco now unraveling, Clinton, Reno & Co. are frantically scrambling to put a fresh gloss on their lies by ordering yet another government “investigation.” But whatever comes out of this whitewash, what happened at Waco was not a “mistake” or an “aberration.” Rather, it was a gross example of the normal workings of capitalist state repression. As we wrote in “Waco and the White House: First the Massacre, Now the Lies” (WV No. 575, 7 May 1993): “Like the massacre of the Philadelphia MOVE commune in 1985, the Waco holocaust was intended as a deadly warning to all those who ‘have a hostile attitude’ toward this racist ruling class.”

That warning was especially aimed at black people, leftists and trade-union militants, and ultimately the working class as a whole. The “final solution” at Waco came at the time of a massive police-state occupation of South Central Los Angeles and other inner-city areas.

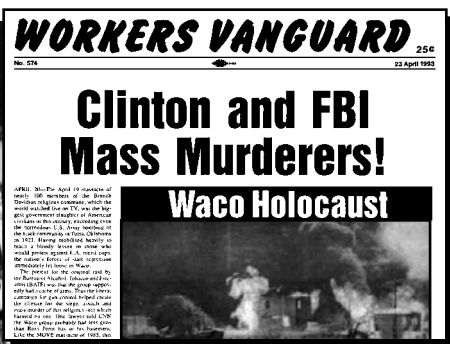
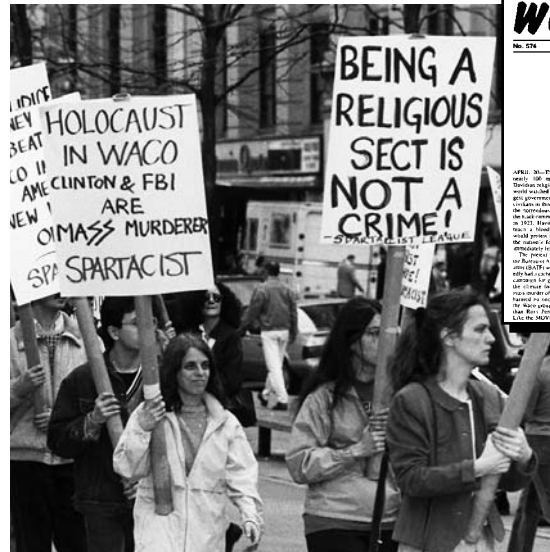
The aim there was to crush in blood any protest following the second trial of the four L.A. cops who had brutalized black motorist Rodney King and whose acquittal in 1992 had triggered a massive plebeian upheaval.

The killing fields of Waco provided a defining moment for the first months of the Clinton administration as it moved to strengthen the forces of repression which had already burgeoned in the Reagan/Bush years. In the past seven years, Clinton has presided over an assault on civil liberties—including widespread expansion of wiretaps, drastic curtailment of the right of *habeas corpus*, use of secret trials to deport immigrants, acceleration of the racist death penalty—that Reagan and Bush only dreamed of. A key element in this has been the drive for ever stricter restraints on the right to bear arms, a right which was at the core of the siege in Waco. The purpose of gun control is to ensure that it is the bourgeoisie and its state which maintain a monopoly on the means of violence while the working class and oppressed minorities are left defenseless. Marxists oppose all restrictions on the right to bear arms.

It is particularly their opposition to gun control that has led the far-right fringe of the Republican Party and the fascistic militia types to play a prominent role in going after Clinton for the Waco massacre. A racially integrated commune such as the Branch Davidians is considered an abomination by racist right-wingers, but

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WV Photo



**Workers Vanguard told the truth: Waco massacre was state murder! Spartacists protested outside Federal Building in New York City within hours of Waco holocaust.**