

## East Timor Independence Now! All Indonesian and All UN Imperialist Troops Out Now!



AP  
Australian-led United Nations occupation force lands in East Timor capital of Dili. Imperialists use “human rights” as cover for bloody repression.

*The following article was written for Workers Vanguard by our comrades of the Spartacist League/Australia.*

SYDNEY, September 27—In the largest Australian military operation since the Vietnam War, thousands of troops with tanks, armoured personnel carriers and helicopters are now occupying tiny, impoverished East Timor. Under the guns of frigates stationed offshore, the first troops to land were the notorious killers of the SAS special forces. They are joined by contingents from neighbouring Asian states as well as units from the U.S. and other major powers, while Britain and New Zealand are supplying warships. Against the concerted drum beating for this latest United Nations “peacekeeping” force, the International Communist League declares its unambiguous opposition to this neocolonial invasion.

The imperialist military occupation comes one month after the people of East Timor voted by an overwhelming majority in favour of independence from Indonesia. That vote was followed by a systematic campaign of terror by death squad “militias” sponsored by the Indonesian army which killed hundreds and drove hundreds of thousands from their homes. Australia and its allies cynically seized on the scenes of men, women and children being slaughtered or having their homes burned down as a pretext for yet another military intervention in the name of “humanitarianism.” Thus the bloody-handed regimes from Washington to Can-

berra which have sponsored, armed and trained the Indonesian government’s military butchers are now supposed to “save” the East Timorese from the militias which their ally in Jakarta unleashed in the first place!

Under threat of Western economic sanctions, the Jakarta regime of President B. J. Habibie and General Wiranto agreed to “invite” UN “peacekeepers” while keeping some 1,500 troops there. In the upshot, this means that the subjugation of the people of East Timor is now enforced by the bayonets of the Australian/UN forces rather than those of the Indonesian army. Meanwhile, Australia is sponsoring a “government in exile” in Darwin headed by independence leader Xanana Gusmao. The precondition for East Timorese independence today is the immediate withdrawal of all Indonesian *and all UN imperialist forces*.

Beginning with the 1990-91 U.S.-led war against Iraq, also carried out under the auspices of the UN, missile strikes, starvation blockades and military inter-

ventions have become ever more frequent. Following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the U.S. has sought to assert its pre-eminent position in the “New World Order” by throwing around its military might with numbing regularity, including the continued terror bombing of Iraq. The occupation of Somalia in 1993 and of Haiti in 1994, the bombing and occupation of Bosnia in 1995, the full-scale air war against Serbia earlier this year followed by the introduction of tens of thousands of NATO-led occupation forces—all of these acts of imperialist terror were carried out in the name of “human rights,” generally under the blue flag of the United Nations. Now, with troops pouring into the East Timorese capital of Dili, UN general secretary Kofi Annan—to the applause of U.S. president Clinton and other Western leaders—calls for a “new commitment to intervention.”

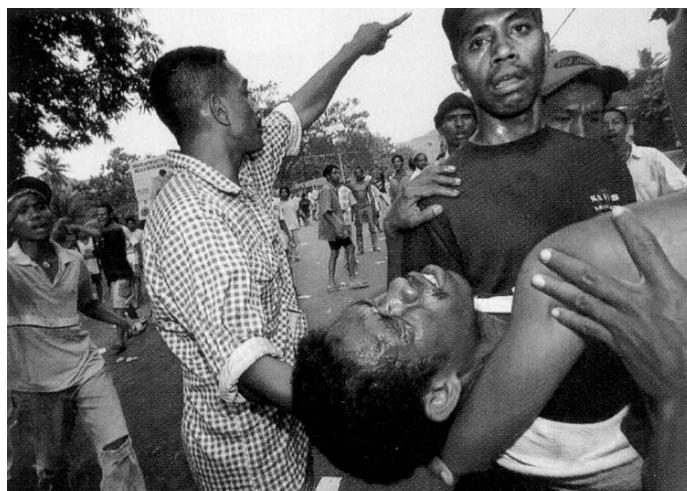
The Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Laborite misleaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) have

been in the forefront in clamouring for the racist Australian state to send troops to East Timor and cloaking this in the garb of “human rights.” In their wake comes the self-proclaimed left, from those who openly demanded that Australia go in—the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), Communist Party and Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)—to the International Socialist Organisation (ISO), Workers Power (WP), Socialist Alternative, Militant Socialist and the Socialist Equality Party, which endorsed and/or joined pro-imperialist demonstrations demanding “Australia/UN In.”

All these social-chauvinists will bear their share of political responsibility as Australian troops move to secure “order,” including by shooting down starving “looters” on the streets of Dili. The Australian-led occupation force is emboldened to perpetrate terror under “rules of engagement” more lax even than those applied to the NATO-led troops in Bosnia.

The UN intervention has nothing to do with defending the East Timorese people and everything to do with defending the interests of the imperialist powers, chiefly the U.S. and its Australian junior partner. The UN mission’s name—“Operation Stabilise”—captures its true intent: to enforce neocolonial stability in Australia’s “backyard” and prop up the Indonesian police-state regime in the face of massive social unrest. To this end, the U.S. relies on its ties to the Indonesian military—cemented in the blood of up to a million workers, peasants and ethnic Chinese killed in the 1965 anti-Communist massacre—while Australia acts as Washington’s “deputy sheriff” in Asia, as Prime Minister John

*continued on page 4*



Uimonen/Corbis Sygma

**East Timorese victims of death squad “militias” sponsored by Indonesian army. Militia rampage following independence vote in August was cynically used as pretext for imperialist intervention.**



# Freightliner, Alabama Mercedes For a Class-Struggle Fight to Organize Southern Auto!

As we go to press, the United Auto Workers (UAW) is pursuing negotiations with General Motors aimed at a contract agreement similar to that reached with DaimlerChrysler earlier this week. Hailed as a “great package” by one UAW official, the four-year contract provides for an annual 3 percent wage raise on top of cost-of-living increases, as well as increased retirement benefits. In exchange, the UAW leadership agreed to allow DaimlerChrysler to continue slashing jobs by attrition to as low as 80 percent of its current workforce—a large drop from the 95 percent level in the previous contract—and to carry out further job cuts during business downturns. Two days after this agreement was announced, the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) reached a similar wage pact with Ford, knifing a possible strike there.

Wall Street breathed a sigh of relief over the settlement with DaimlerChrysler. Noting that “the Big Three’s sales and profits are booming,” the *New York Times* (23 September) reported that “the last thing Detroit wanted was a strike.” Last summer’s walkout by two Flint UAW locals—the costliest strike ever in the U.S., which shut down virtually the whole of GM’s North American operations—gave a taste of the social power the UAW has at its command. But the UAW tops squander and subvert that power in pursuit of their “partnership” with the capitalists, from “teamwork” schemes on the shopfloor to political support to the Democratic Party. Thus, when UAW members at GM’s Saturn assembly plant in Tennessee voted overwhelmingly in favor of strike action during the Flint walkout, Solidarity House ordered

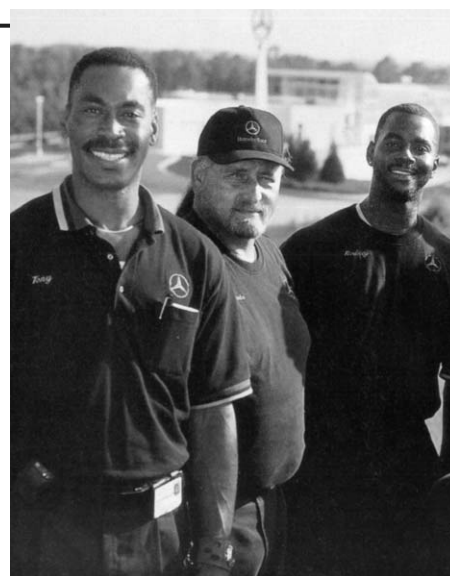
the Saturn workers to stay on the job for fear of shattering the “labor peace” institutionalized in the “teamwork” system there.

Meanwhile, a potential clash still looms with Ford’s American operation over plans to spin off its Visteon parts division—opening it up to non-union labor—as GM did with Delphi last year. To defeat the Big Three’s job-slashing, anti-union offensive through solid strike action, the UAW must be broken from the class-collaborationist policies which have led to a situation where barely 40 percent of U.S. auto workers today are unionized.

A graphic illustration of the union tops’ ties to the companies came when UAW president Stephen Yokich, himself a member of the DaimlerChrysler board of directors, trumpeted a contract provision pledging management to “neutrality” in union organizing efforts at the Mercedes’ sport utility vehicle plant in Vance, Alabama and Freightliner truck plants in North Carolina and South Carolina. Preaching reliance on the good graces of the capitalist class enemy, the UAW tops oppose wielding the sort of class-struggle tactics—mass pickets, sit-down strikes, secondary labor boycotts, etc.—which built the union in the first place.

Particularly in the “open shop” South, where pervasive racist terror and “right to work” laws have kept wages down and unions out, a serious organizing effort would be confronted by the cops and courts of the capitalist state and their KKK auxiliaries. What is needed is a mobilization of union power not only to win economic demands but to actively defend black rights and stop the KKK nightriders who are murderous enemies of integrated labor struggle.

Flush with profits, the auto bosses are willing to shell out a few more dollars now—including to induce older workers to retire—while wringing ever more labor out of a smaller and older workforce. The *New York Times* (17 September) cited a financial analyst exulting that the new “contract will allow the companies to build more cars with fewer workers.” With almost half of all UAW members at the Big Three eligible to retire within the next five years, new-hires at DaimlerChrysler make only 70 percent of full pay. Many other production workers in unionized assembly



Mark Gooch

**Workers at Mercedes plant in Vance, Alabama sign up to join UAW.**

plants are “85 percenters,” so called because as “temporary” workers that is what they get paid compared to others.

Such multi-tier wage schemes—which pit younger workers against those with more seniority—go hand in hand with intense racist discrimination. One long-time black UAW member in Detroit told WV that the management in his plant doesn’t even make a pretense of hiring blacks and other minorities and women into the skilled trades, and the union tops do nothing to fight this. Refusing to combat such discrimination not only weakens the union where it exists but is death to any attempt to organize unions in the South and elsewhere.

Thanks to more than two decades of such givebacks, workers in the U.S. now work longer hours than in any other major industrial country. (And despite CAW chief “Buzz” Hargrove’s occasional verbal militancy, labor costs in Canadian auto are one-third lower than in the U.S.) At the same time, the attacks on wages and working conditions have fueled widespread pro-union sentiment among working people, reflected in the popularity of the 1997 UPS Teamsters strike, last year’s Flint GM strike and the walkout last month by Detroit teachers. The corporations have amassed a huge arsenal of intimidation measures, including an army of anti-union lawyers and security outfits, in order to keep unions out and save literally hundreds of billions of dollars in increased wages and benefits.

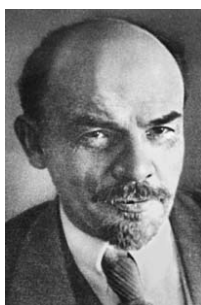
To reverse the assault on labor requires first and foremost a fight inside the unions against the class collaborationism of the pro-capitalist misleaders—from their racist, chauvinist protectionism to their support to the Democratic Party. There must be a fight for a new, class-struggle leadership of labor based on the independence of the unions from the capitalists, their political parties and their state. Workers need a party which fights for their class interests and the rights of all the oppressed as part of a program for socialist revolution. ■



TROTSKY

## U.S. “Democracy” and the Dictatorship of Capital

*It has become common for many so-called leftists to join with liberals in campaigning for the U.S. government to intervene around the world to defend “human rights” and to act on behalf of workers and oppressed minorities at home. In counterposition, we fight to mobilize the proletariat for socialist revolution to expropriate the rapacious U.S. bourgeoisie. As elaborated in the 1938 founding principles of the then-Trotskyist*



LENIN

*Socialist Workers Party, the “democratic” American state is an instrument for enforcing exploitation by the U.S. bourgeoisie in this country and internationally.*

In any society, the real power is held by those who own and control the means whereby that society lives, the instruments of production, distribution, and communication. In capitalist society, such ownership and control is held and exercised by the big bourgeoisie, by the bankers and industrialists. Through its hold on the major natural resources, the factories, mines, banks, railroads, ships, airplanes, telegraph, radio, and press, the big bourgeoisie effectively dominates capitalist society, runs society in such a manner as to secure and maintain its own interest and privilege, and upholds the system of the exploitation of the great majority. The state or government, far from representing the general interests of society as a whole, is in the last analysis simply the political instrument through which the owning class exercises and maintains its power, enforces the property relations which guarantee its privileges, and suppresses the working class. In these essential functions all of the organs and institutions of the state power cooperate—the bureaucracy, the courts, police, prisons, and the armed forces.... In the United States, as in all capitalist nations, we live, in actuality, under a capitalist dictatorship; and the possibilities for purely legal and constitutional change are therefore limited to those which fall within the framework of capitalist property and social relations, which later are severely curtailed by the circumstances of the decline of capitalism and in the long run, if the capitalist dictatorship continues, involve fascism for the United States as elsewhere. Genuine freedom can be realized only in a society based upon the economic and social equality of all individuals composing it, and such equality can be achieved only when the basic means of production, distribution, and communication are owned and controlled, not by any special class or group, but by society as a whole.

—Socialist Workers Party, *Declaration of Principles* (1938)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Quebec: Nationalism and Class Struggle

For more than three weeks in June and July, 47,000 nurses organized in the Federation of Quebec Nurses (FIIQ) set up picket lines outside hospitals in every corner of Quebec. Fed up with their miserably low wages and working conditions, the nurses continued their strike in

## PART ONE

defiance of strikebreaking legislation by the Parti Québécois (PQ) government. This was the first major confrontation between the labor movement and Quebec premier Lucien Bouchard's bourgeois-nationalist PQ regime, and indeed the most significant strike action in Quebec since the early 1980s.

On the picket lines, the nurses, who are overwhelmingly women, showed courage and determination in defying the government. Asked by *Spartacist Canada* about the PQ's strikebreaking legislation, one nurse on the picket line outside Montreal's Jewish General Hospital replied defiantly, "Let them put me in jail!" The strike tapped into deep popular resentment over years of cutbacks in health and other services by the federal and provincial governments, all carried out in the name of "rationalization" and "competitiveness." It came amid an upsurge of labor protest in Quebec centered on a threatened strike by 400,000 public sector workers in the pan-union Common Front this fall.

But the nationalist, pro-capitalist misleaders of the Quebec labor movement are doing everything possible to avoid a large-scale labor conflict with the PQ government, which they helped to elect in 1994 and again last year. The leaders of the Common Front unions—the Quebec Federation of Labour, Confederation of National Trade Unions and Quebec Teachers Central—made absolutely no effort to spread the strike to the other public sector workers who are under the gun. On the contrary, scandalously, they said not one word in support of the nurses until after the PQ had enacted its strikebreaking legislation, and even then only issued a tepid, pro-forma call for "solidarity." With the nurses left isolated, in the end the FIIQ leaders themselves scuttled the strike.

In an article in *Spartacist Canada* No. 122 (Fall 1999), which is being distributed in Quebec as a French-language supplement, our comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste wrote:

"The defeat of the nurses strike shows vividly how the nationalism of the Quebec union tops undermines labor's struggle by tying the workers to their capitalist class enemies. At the same time, central responsibility for this state of affairs lies with the chauvinist leadership of the labor movement in English Canada. Despite occasional, for-the-record calls for Quebec's right to self-determination,

## Independence for Quebec!

these union bureaucrats promote Canadian nationalism—which means, among other things, keeping Quebec in its place within a 'united' country dominated by Anglo chauvinism. The New Democratic Party [NDP], the labor bureaucracy's political arm, is front and center in all of Ottawa's reactionary campaigns for 'Canadian unity.'

"This Anglo bigotry has helped push Québécois workers straight into the arms

classes are the enemy, not each other.

The national polarization in Canada has been shaped by more than two centuries of oppression of the Québécois. As the TL/LT wrote in the Programmatic Theses adopted at its Eighth National Conference in summer 1998:

"For well over a century following the Conquest of 1759-60, Quebec remained a



**Militant 1949 Asbestos strike posed major political challenge to the reactionary clericalist regime of Maurice Duplessis in Quebec.**

of their 'own' bourgeois-nationalist masters, through the vehicle of the Quebec union misleaders. And the nationalist PQ, in turn, runs roughshod over working people and the poor."

The bitter national divide in Canada today is a major obstacle to making the workers of both English Canada and Quebec conscious of their historic task of sweeping away capitalism. The Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyiste opposes all forms of nationalism—first and foremost the dominant Anglo chauvinism pushed by the NDP and the labor bureaucracy in English Canada, but also the nationalism of the Quebec labor tops. We advocate *independence for Quebec* in order to remove the national question from the historic agenda, thereby laying a basis for the workers in both nations to recognize that their respective ruling

priest-ridden backwater. Industrial development and urbanization began to change the character of Quebec society by the beginning of the 20th century, but it took several more decades for this to take political expression.

"Beginning in the 1960s, a Quebec bourgeoisie emerged, based on key nationalizations like Hydro-Québec. The same period saw the development of a militant proletariat, whose struggles were fueled by opposition to national oppression. The aspirations of the ascendant Québécois bourgeoisie to be the exploiters of 'their' working class collided with the dominance of English Canadian capital. Anglo-chauvinist reaction—especially the military occupation of Quebec and the imposition of martial law by the federal Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau in 1970—in turn fueled nationalist sentiment among Québécois workers. This was reinforced by the chauvinism of the leadership of English Canadian labor, expressed not least in its hostility to the 1972 Quebec general strike."

— "Who We Are, and What We Fight For"

In the following talk, first given as an educational presentation at the same conference, TL/LT Central Committee member Charles Galarneau elaborates on the period from World War II to the early '70s, especially the rise of a militant labor movement in Quebec. The cumulative effect of the defeats and betrayals of this stormy period was the decisive deepening of national animosity between the English- and French-speaking working classes. This reactionary outcome continues to cripple possibilities for anti-capitalist class struggle.

We reprint below the first half of Comrade Galarneau's presentation, which was first published in slightly abridged and edited form in *Spartacist Canada* No. 120 (Spring 1999).

**SPARTACIST** CANADA

The petty-bourgeois nationalists who run Quebec's history departments today usually present the Quiet Revolution of the early '60s as both the aim and almost exclusively the achievement of the Quebec Liberal Party governments of the time, and of the francophone bourgeoisie which stood behind them. In short, the story goes like this: Maurice Duplessis, a reactionary instrument of the church, English Canada and American imperialism, ran the province with an iron fist for 20 years, then the people elected Jean Lesage's "*équipe du tonnerre*" (Thunder Team), which proceeded to implement economic and social reforms which turned Quebec into a modern liberal democracy. The working class, if it is mentioned at all, is mainly presented as a passive object.

But the very irony behind the expression "Quiet Revolution" tells a different story. This was a period of the most explosive working-class struggles in Quebec history, indeed in all Canadian history. But for all its militancy, the Quebec working class lacked a revolutionary leadership which could lead the fight for socialist revolution, as shown most clearly during the semi-insurrectionary general strike of 1972. Instead, the proletariat was drawn into the political framework of bourgeois Quebec nationalism. And this is something which has sharply increased in the intervening years, thanks above all to the chauvinist hostility from English Canada's labor misleaders, helping to throw the workers' struggles and consciousness way back.

Especially in the post-Soviet world, where the imperialist rulers have declared that Communism is dead and revolutionary class struggle a thing of the past, Marxists intervening among workers and youth in this country need a clear understanding of the history of the Quebec labor movement in order to fight bourgeois ideology and build the necessary vanguard party. So let's get in our time machine and take a closer look.

### Duplessis' "Great Darkness"

We will land in 1946. As in much of the world, the end of the war saw a dramatic increase in working-class struggle here. In Canada, man-hours lost to strikes reached a record of four and a half million that year. In Quebec, the unionization rate went from 20 to 25 percent in just one year, between 1945 and 1946. Expecting an end to wartime privation, the working class struck all over the province, centrally in the manufacturing sector. But those strikes came up against the ferocious repression of the provincial police and the courts. Picket lines were tear-gassed, union leaders railroaded to jail—for instance, Dominion Textile strike leader Kent Rowley spent six months in jail for "seditious conspiracy."

This was under premier Maurice Duplessis, nicknamed "the chief," whose right-wing Union Nationale (UN) had come back to power in 1944. Duplessis and the UN had had a first term in 1936-39. Their program coincided with that of the church: building a French-speaking

*continued on page 11*



**Duplessis (far left) ruled Quebec with iron fist in alliance with Catholic church for more than 20 years.**

East Timor...

(continued from page 1)

Howard recently put it. The fourth most populous country in the world with vast natural resources, Indonesia is a social volcano waiting to explode. Tens of millions of toilers have been driven to destitution by the ongoing Asian economic crisis, while national and ethnic minorities from one end of the archipelago to the other seethe under the domination of the Javanese-centred bourgeoisie. Last week, Jakarta erupted in mass student protests against legislation granting the military sweeping new powers to impose martial law. At least six protesters were killed by cops and troops. Even before the upheaval started spreading to other cities in Java and Sumatra, Habibie announced that he would delay signing the new bill. With Habibie on his last legs, Washington is using its ties to the Indonesian military to work out an orderly transition. The Australian/UN intervention in East Timor is a dagger aimed at the combative Indonesian proletariat, posing the threat of direct imperialist repression. It simul-

Australian social-chauvinists on the march: ISO pushes call for imperialist sanctions against Indonesia in guise of union bans, while DSP/Resistance openly calls for sending in troops.



taneously serves to promote nationalist support within Indonesia for the Jakarta regime. In Australia, as tens of thousands have been mobilised in chauvinist rallies shot through with anti-Indonesian racism, the Spartacist League/Australia, section of the ICL, has forthrightly opposed—in word and deed—the imperialist intervention. We have organised public meetings and campus protests in Sydney and Melbourne to demand “No Australian Imperialist/UN Troops in East Timor! Independence Now!” There can be no “humane” imperialism. It is a system based on the exploitation and oppression of working people—the highest stage of capitalism, as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin put it—which must be swept away through international socialist revolution. Seeking to win workers and youth to the program of Leninist internationalism, we have raised the slogans, “For Workers Revolution in Indonesia!” and “Racist

Australian Capitalism = Imperialist Murder! For Socialist Revolution!” **Bloody Imperialist Repression in Asia** The occupation of East Timor takes place against the backdrop of increasing tensions throughout Southeast Asia, where the Australian government is seeking to assert its own interests and those of the U.S. As a white racist imperialist outpost in Asia, Australia has long relied on the U.S. military presence in the Asian Pacific Rim as a shield, particularly against Japan, as was seen in World War II in the Pacific. In return, Australia has deployed troops to assist counterrevolutionary wars led by the U.S. in Korea in 1950-53 and Vietnam in the 1960s and ’70s. Peter Cosgrove, the Australian general leading the occupation force in East Timor, got his start butchering Vietnamese workers and peasants in that dirty imperialist war. Yet the Vietnamese prevailed against the imperialist mass murderers and drove them out. The occupation of East Timor better positions Australia to act on behalf of U.S. imperialism, not only to help quell any challenge to capitalist rule in Indo-



nesia but to assist in policing the Straits of Malacca, a strategic waterway through which most of Japan’s oil passes. Meanwhile the Japanese government, which is footing a large part of the bill for the UN operation, is trying to push through a law allowing it to more easily send troops abroad. No longer bound together by common hostility to the Soviet Union, the major capitalist powers like Japan and Germany are today engaged in more open, heightened competition with the U.S. and each other for markets and spheres of investment. In recent years, the American bourgeoisie has sought to reassert its economic dominance in the region, including by buying up industrial concerns from South Korea to Indonesia at bargain basement prices in the wake of the Asian financial crash. Meanwhile, the U.S. and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been cracking the whip against so-called “crony capitalism” in Southeast

Asia, as in the current IMF furor over corruption at Indonesia’s Bank Bali. During the Cold War, Washington was content to allow its local satraps a bigger share of the loot in order to maintain them as anti-Communist bulwarks in the region. But no longer.

On top of this, a particular focus of imperialist appetites in Asia is the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state, which has been targeted for destruction from its inception in 1949 and more recently has faced increasingly bellicose threats by the U.S. As the Stalinist bureaucracy in Beijing drives headlong toward capitalist restoration, the U.S. and Japanese imperialists are jockeying for position over who would get the lion’s share in exploiting the Chinese masses. We stand for the unconditional military defense of China—as well as of North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We seek to mobilise the proletariat of China and the other deformed workers states to prevent capitalist counterrevolution through a political revolution which ousts the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies.

Southeast Asia is a minefield of competing capitalist interests and aspirations, as well as nationalist and ethnic hatreds which are a legacy of colonialism. Each of the Asian regimes participating in the occupation force in East Timor has its own ax to grind in the region and acts as a bloody oppressor of its own workers and minorities. The special forces deployed by the Philippines—where the Catholic hierarchy has a big say in politics—are notorious for the slaughter of leftists and trade unionists as well as separatist Muslim insurgents. As for the Malaysian military, even as it was contributing troops to the UN “peacekeeping” force it was gunning down protesters on the streets of Kuala Lumpur. An Islamic country with close ties to Japan, Malaysia has its sights set on the resource-rich Indonesian province of Aceh, the site of more than a century of separatist struggle first against the brutal Dutch colonialists and later against the Javanese-chauvinist Indonesian rulers.

Subjugation under the thumb of the imperialist “democracies” constantly reinforces the social backwardness and grinding poverty of these societies. As Lenin explained, imperialism is the epoch of capitalist decay, in which the bourgeoisies of the wealthiest countries extract fabulous profits from the superexploitation of the toiling masses in the backward, dependent countries and compete among each other to redivide the world for a bigger share of those profits. Only socialist revolution in the imperialist centres and the semicolonial world can do away with the subjugation and immiseration of the masses of the “Third World” and put an end to the imperialist wars which are inherent in this capitalist system.

“White Australia” and Anti-Asian Racism

The outcry in Australia for imperialist intervention has encompassed a truly syphilitic chain extending from the ALP/ACTU social democrats and their left tails to the Greens, the right-wing Liberals and Nationals and even the fascist One Nation party of Pauline Hanson. The chauvinist street mobilisations have been replete with the burning of Indonesian flags, while platform speakers appealed to the anti-Japanese racism that accompanied the 1941-45 Pacific War. In this virulently racist atmosphere, Indonesian students on Australian campuses fear for their lives and one in the heart of Melbourne was already brutally beaten. Australia’s rulers have seized on the plight of the Christian East Timorese as a club against the predominantly Islamic peoples of Indonesia. Meanwhile, these self-anointed “saviours” of East Timor have, under both Labor and Liberal governments, denied asylum to 1,650 East Timorese refugees for ten years. We say: Asylum now! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! As to the Australian rulers’ credentials



Australasian Spartacist Sydney: Spartacist campus speak-out on September 9 opposes imperialist intervention.

as opponents of genocide, one need only look at the barbarity they have meted out for the past 200 years to the Aboriginal peoples, who were nearly exterminated, their lands and even children stolen from them. Young Aboriginal men continue to be murdered on the streets and in police lock-ups. On 20 September, a judge in the Queensland city of Cairns let five white youth go free after they viciously beat a homeless Aboriginal man with baseball bats, lauding these racist thugs because they wanted to join Australia’s volunteer army!

Announcing his “Howard Doctrine” on 21 September, the Liberal prime minister declared, “Foreign policy needs to be based on national interest and on our values.” It is precisely the national interest and “values” of the capitalist rulers—“White Australia” racism, anti-immigrant hysteria and anti-woman bigotry—that the ALP and ACTU tops have preached for a century. The ALP is a prime example of what Lenin called a bourgeois workers party, based on the workers organisations but with a thoroughly bourgeois programme. From its inception, the ALP has acted to bind the workers to their exploiters with the glue of White Australia chauvinism.

No less than the Liberals, the ALP in power has presided over a capitalist war against Aborigines, immigrants and the unions. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost, real wages cut, hard-won union rights ripped up, funding for health and education slashed. In the last 20 years, the number of unionised workers has been halved. As Howard moves to introduce a “second wave” of vicious union-busting legislation, 100,000 stopped work in Melbourne in mid-August in protest. The ALP does not oppose the current anti-union law, only asking that it be amended to offer job protection to reservists so they can go to East Timor!

Kneeling in obeisance before the bosses’ laws, courts and cops, the ALP/

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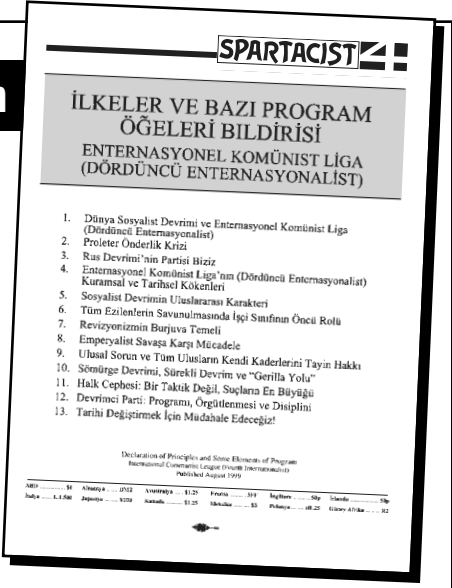
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Adopted in 1998 at the Third International Conference of the ICL.

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ACTU bureaucrats block any mobilisation of labour’s social power against the Australian capitalists, strangling crucial struggles by the miners and the Maritime Union (MUA) dockworkers. But when it comes to acting on behalf of Australian imperialism by carrying out anti-Indonesian union bans and organising chauvinist war rallies, these sclerotic labour lieutenants of capital are rejuvenated with energy and purpose. Today this means hailing as “liberators” of the East Timorese the Australian military deployed by ALP governments to smash strikes in 1949 and 1989.

**Laborite Left: Drummer Boys for Australian Imperialism**

The opportunist left follows in the train of the ALP/ACTU class traitors. Directly capitulating to their own capitalist rulers, these “leftists” trumpet Australian imperialism’s “humanitarian” mission in East Timor even more aggressively than they promoted the U.S./NATO war cry over “poor, little Kosovo.” The Democratic Socialist Party and its Resistance youth group have been the most blatant, joining in and organising protests in city after city to demand, “Send Australian/UN Troops Now!” DSP spokesman Max Lane, whose former service to Australian imperialism was as second secretary at its embassy in Jakarta, has been the most rabid speaker at these rallies in screaming for troops “in, In, IN!”

Thus does the DSP appeal to the very imperialist butchers who helped install the Indonesian military dictatorship in 1965 and armed it to the hilt ever since. In helping orchestrate the 1965 bloodbath, Australia worked as an adjunct to the CIA, which provided hit lists to Suharto’s generals and Islamic mobs, who made the rivers literally flow red with blood. In 1975, the U.S. tacitly gave a green light to Indonesia’s takeover of East Timor after the Portuguese colonialists pulled out, while Australia was the only government to formally recognise the seizure, which was followed by the deaths of at least 200,000 people. Both the U.S. and Australia have helped train Indonesia’s notorious Kopassus special forces killers, while Britain has been a leading arms supplier to Jakarta. Despite the cynical denunciations of genocide in East Timor, the Australian military and secret police retain close links with the Indonesian army and New Zealand continues to train its officers.

The reformist International Socialist Organisation is somewhat more shamed-faced than the DSP in pushing for imperialist intervention—but no less guilty. Now that troops are marauding through Dili, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (24 September) headlines, “Troops No Answer to Timor’s Agony.” But *Socialist Worker* had no qualms about offering that “answer” when it signed on to calls for “Peacekeepers In” demonstrations in Melbourne on 8 and 10 September. And the ISO has marched in one rabidly chauvinist rally after another, gushing in that same issue of its paper that one such rally in Melbourne on 19 September was “fantastic.”

In London, a 21 September “Freedom for East Timor” meeting heavily built by the ISO’s patrons of the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) featured as its opening speech a panegyric to “the brave Australian soldiers.” When SWP speaker John Rees took the podium, he focussed on criticising Tony Blair’s Labour government for doing too little too late in East Timor, saying he had been “wondering just how long it would take for the government to act” and complaining that Britain had contributed only “a few Gurkhas” to the intervention force (unlike the massive array of fighter jets and cruise missiles Blair deployed against Serbia?). The ISO has sought to provide a “labour” cover for support for Australian intervention in East Timor by promoting the demand for “Trade union bans now” against Indonesian goods and cheering on the ACTU tops for implementing such bans. The dubious International Bolshevik Tendency in New Zealand, in a 10 September leaflet claiming to stand for “No UN/Imperialist Involvement,” like-

wise raised the call “For a union-imposed military embargo.” Working the same side of the street, the right-centrist Workers Power group enthused in a recent undated leaflet, “The recent actions by the MUA and Transport Workers Union in black banning Indonesian goods and ships are a start, but we need to go much further, including the provision of defence fund [sic] for the purchase of hardware the East Timorese desperately need for their own self-defence.” And who does Workers Power expect to provide this hardware but the Australian military itself? By their logic, Workers Power should enlist in the imperialist occupation force!

The purpose of the ALP/ACTU social-chauvinists in carrying out such bans was



Jeff Ballinger

**April 1997 protest by Nike workers in Indonesia. Combative young proletariat has power to sweep away police-state regime, liberate myriad oppressed nationalities.**

precisely to pressure the government “to go much further,” to launch a direct military intervention. Now that Howard has sent the troops in, an ACTU media release announces that the bans have been “suspended due to the arrival of peacekeepers in East Timor.” We noted last issue that the “call for trade-union bans was no expression of proletarian solidarity with the East Timorese but purely a ‘labor’ gloss for *Australian imperialist* sanctions” and warned: “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” (WV No. 719, 17 September). This could not be more evident than in the MUA ban on food and livestock destined for Indonesia, a despicable act targeting working people and the poor when starvation already threatens millions.

These class-collaborationist bans are the *opposite* of union actions which mobilise labour action *against* the class enemy, such as when Australian dockworkers walked off the job in Brisbane, Sydney and Port Kembla in 1991 to protest the UN-sanctioned U.S. bombing of Iraq. In 1967, the Seamen’s Union refused to man the *Jeparit* when it was headed to South Vietnam with weapons and ammunition for the imperialist war

there. A class-struggle leadership would mobilise workers to stop arms and supplies to the *Australian occupation force*. This would be a powerful act of solidarity with workers throughout the region and a blow to the capitalists at home.

Just as they portray imperialism as merely a policy which can be changed through pressure, the reformist and centrist left foster the illusion that the capitalist state—particularly under a Labor government—can act on behalf of the workers and oppressed minorities at home. In a 1935 polemic against Stalinist class collaboration, Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, exposed the reformist underpinnings of those who promote the “democratic” credentials of capitalist imperial-

ism. Describing Lenin’s struggle against the social-chauvinists in World War I, Trotsky wrote:

“To the myth of *pure* democracy he counterposed the reality of *bourgeois* democracy, grown on the foundation of private property and transformed by the course of development into a tool of imperialism. The class structure of the state, determined by the class structure of society, excluded, according to Lenin, the possibility of the proletariat’s taking power within the framework of democracy and with its methods.... The perspective of peaceful progress or democratic socialization is revealed from this point of view as pure utopia. The preparation for revolution demands a simultaneous break not only with the bourgeois radicals but, as we already know, also with the democratic reformists in the working class itself.”

—“The Comintern’s Liquidation Congress” (August 1935)

**For Proletarian Internationalism!**

In lining up behind racist Australian imperialism, the trade-union tops and their left tails not only spread chauvinist poison within the Australian proletariat but also further bind the Indonesian workers to their capitalist rulers, allowing the Jakarta regime to pose as “protectors” of the nation. In symmetry with their press agents of the DSP in Australia, the People’s Democratic Party (PRD) in Indonesia declares in a 13 September

statement that “the presence of the international peace keeping forces in East Timor is a correct action for guaranteeing the security and peace.” The political logic of supporting UN intervention in East Timor is to call upon the imperialists to bring “democracy” to Indonesia as well.

While its supporters have engaged in often heroic trade-union and student struggles against the Jakarta dictatorship, facing imprisonment and death, the PRD’s petty-bourgeois nationalist program serves to deflect the Indonesian masses from struggling against the domestic bourgeoisie and its imperialist patrons. Thus the PRD has consistently supported the bourgeois “opposition” headed by Megawati Sukarnoputri, a die-hard Javanese chauvinist who has long railed that East Timor belongs to Indonesia. Megawati’s current nod of approval to the Australian/UN occupation, bowing to the dictates of the U.S. and the IMF, underscores the complete subordination of all wings of the Indonesian bourgeoisie to imperialism.

Fearful above all of its own proletariat, the bourgeoisie in Indonesia, as in all countries of belated capitalist development, is incapable of realising even the demands of the classic bourgeois revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries: genuine national emancipation, agrarian revolution, political democracy, etc. As the Trotskyist programme of permanent revolution lays out, these tasks can only be achieved through the seizure of state power by the Indonesian proletariat, which has engaged in militant struggle in recent years. The fight for socialist revolution in Indonesia must necessarily be part of an internationalist perspective for proletarian power throughout the region and particularly in advanced countries, like Australia, Japan and the U.S.

The urgent need is to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party to win the proletariat away from the bourgeois-nationalist Javanese chauvinists. Acting as the tribune of the people, such a party would mobilise the working class not only in its own interests but on behalf of women, the urban and rural poor and all the myriad oppressed peoples of Indonesia. Mobilised in struggle against the blood-drenched Indonesian regime and rendered conscious of the need to fight for the liberation of all the oppressed, the powerful Indonesian proletariat would be the best ally the East Timorese could have.

The Australian workers movement has a particular duty to oppose the intervention of its “own” rulers, racist overlords of oppressed neocolonies from Papua New Guinea to Fiji. Breaking the Australian proletariat from its chauvinist, pro-capitalist misleaders is central to the task of forging an internationalist revolutionary workers party, one which understands that solidarity with the Indonesian and East Timorese masses means above all the struggle to overthrow the Australian ruling class through workers revolution. It is to this task that the Spartacist League/Australia is dedicated. For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

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## Sweatshops...

(continued from page 12)

dirty work for them. As long as capitalism exists, sweatshops will exist. To eradicate them requires a socialist revolution that will do away with all forms of capitalist exploitation by overthrowing the capitalist profit system and placing the working class in power. This perspective is anathema to liberals, the pro-capitalist union tops and social democrats like the DSA, whose appeal to “corporate America” to “eliminate” sweatshop labor serves the dual purpose of dressing up the American ruling class (overseers of brutal exploitation worldwide) with a “humanitarian” façade, while promoting chauvinist protectionist schemes.

As Marxists, we find the existence of a layer of young people eager to associate themselves with the working class an important development. Growing student interest in the labor movement was evident in the “Union Summer” program that began three years ago. But most Union Summer activists viewed the working class as merely an oppressed group whose interests must be defended. As we wrote in introducing an interview with a Union Summer activist in “Students and the Labor Movement” (WV No. 651, 13 September 1996): “There is a great leap involved in moving from simply identifying with the working class as one of the victimized sections of the population to seeing it as the key agency for revolutionary change.”

To make that leap requires an understanding that the capitalist system—which produces injustice, inequality, and racial and sexual oppression—cannot be changed through pressure or reform. The proletariat, which derives its strength from its numbers, organization and the fact that it is labor which makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society, is the only class with both the social power and objective interest to smash capitalism.

While youth were recruited to Union Summer as a union organizing drive, we noted that in reality this was a mobilization by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy of DSA member John Sweeney—which seeks to tie the trade unions to the capitalist class enemy—to get the vote out for Clinton and the phony “friend of labor” Democratic Party. Today we warn anti-sweatshop campaigners that what the UNITE leadership has in mind is not the elimination of sweatshops, but the proliferation of protectionist “Buy American” poison. For those who doubt it, ponder why there are no protests about the conditions of six-year-old girls in India slaving at long hours for pennies a day to make rugs—because they are not “stealing” American jobs.

Typically, a leaflet calling for an anti-



Palmer/U.S. News & World Report

**Garment factory in New York City (left), match factory in India. Exploitation of child labor is capitalist business as usual around the world.**



Der Spiegel

sweatshop protest in October 1998 by the “People’s Right to Know Campaign” complained that “only 11% of Wal-Mart’s famous Kathie Lee line of clothing is made in the U.S.” At a June protest at the University of Chicago a member of the Anti-Sweatshop Coalition held a “strip-tease” where layer after layer of his clothes were shed except for his “Made in the U.S.A.” boxers. And while they cynically line up students for this protectionist campaign, the UNITE officials are paid millions by corporations like Calvin Klein and Donna Karan for the “right” to open shops overseas (see “Chinese Immigrant Workers in Racist America,” WV No. 719, 17 September). We uphold what Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote more than 150 years ago: “Workers of all countries, unite!” The proletariat has no fatherland. The main enemy of workers here is the U.S. bourgeoisie, whose imperialist terror abroad has a domestic reflection in racist cop repression and anti-immigrant hysteria.

### Beware Labor Cops for Imperialism!

The U.S. imperialists are not in the business of cleaning up sweatshops

but *creating* them, such as the *maquiladora* hellholes near the U.S. border in Mexico, where largely women workers have waged fierce struggles against mostly U.S.-owned plants. To appeal to this racist capitalist state—which has armed, trained and installed butchers like Chile’s Pinochet, Nicaragua’s Somoza and Indonesia’s Suharto—to ameliorate sweatshop conditions means sowing illusions in the “human rights” pretensions of U.S. imperialism, the greatest enemy of workers and the oppressed throughout the world. Such conditions of horrendous exploitation are inherent in imperialism, which is the highest stage of capitalist development, marked by the domination of monopolies and the export of finance capital. Productive forces have long outgrown the narrow confines of the nation-state, forcing the capitalists to search the globe for cheap labor and natural resources, protecting their investments with massive military might. Capitalist competition increasingly takes the form of trade wars with rival imperialist powers which ultimately turn into shooting wars. This century has seen two inter-imperialist world wars in which millions of young workers and peasants were slaughtered to maintain the riches of the imperialists. Today, growing inter-imperialist rivalries are paving the way for a third world war, this time with nuclear weapons.

At the same time, imperialism brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer countries, who have next to no rights. The existence of such a sizeable pool of hideously oppressed and underpaid workers serves to bring down the wages of the entire working class. As we explained in “Chinese Immigrant Workers in Racist America”:

“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 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.”

Against the bourgeoisie’s anti-immigrant hysteria, abetted by the chauvinist union

bureaucracy, we call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Successful struggle against the exploiters requires a fight to defend and organize foreign-born workers into unions with full rights and protections. We fight for international workers solidarity, based on the understanding that workers all over the world have fundamentally the same interests.

The trade unions are the economic defense organizations of the working class. The union movement in America was built through massive and heroic struggles, often involving recent immigrants and women, against individual capitalists and the capitalist government. But the pro-capitalist labor misleaders seek to suppress militant class struggle, instead opting for consumer boycotts and impotent campaigns to “expose” corporate greed. These bureaucrats defend the interests of the bourgeoisie within the labor movement. In his 1916 work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained the material basis of the opportunism of the labor bureaucracy:

“The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists in one of the numerous branches of industry, in one of the numerous countries, etc., makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers, and for a time a fairly considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry or given nation against all the others. The intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this urge. And so there is created that bond between imperialism and opportunism.... The most dangerous of all in this respect are those who do not wish to understand that the fight against imperialism is a sham and humbug unless it is inseparably bound up with the fight against opportunism.”

In and of itself, even the most militant trade union struggle does not challenge the capitalist mode of production but only seeks to better the immediate conditions and wages of the workers in struggles with individual employers. For the working class to become conscious of the historically necessary task of emancipating itself from the yoke of capitalist wage slavery, requires the leadership of a revolutionary vanguard party. Such a party must be forged in sharp political struggle against the pro-capitalist labor misleaders and based on the Marxist understanding that the capitalist profit system must be rooted out and replaced by workers rule. The best workers party in history was the Bolshevik Party led by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, which led the workers of Russia to power in the October Revolution of 1917, creating the first workers state in history.

### “Human Rights”: Cover for Imperialist Repression

The recent anti-sweatshop protests have typically taken off when corporations like Nike, infamous for its brutal use of sweatshop labor, enter into licensing contracts with the universities. For example, anti-sweatshop protests at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill began when the administration signed an \$11 million promotion contract with Nike in 1997. The protests have mainly demanded that campus administrations adopt UNITE’s “Code of Conduct” agreement as opposed to the Fair Labor Association, which is an acknowledged creature of the Clinton White House in league with major garment corporations. The “Code of Conduct” campaign amounts to nothing more than pressuring the Collegiate Licensing Company, which licenses products for 200 universities and 2,000 retailers, to deal only with corporations that do not use sweatshop labor.

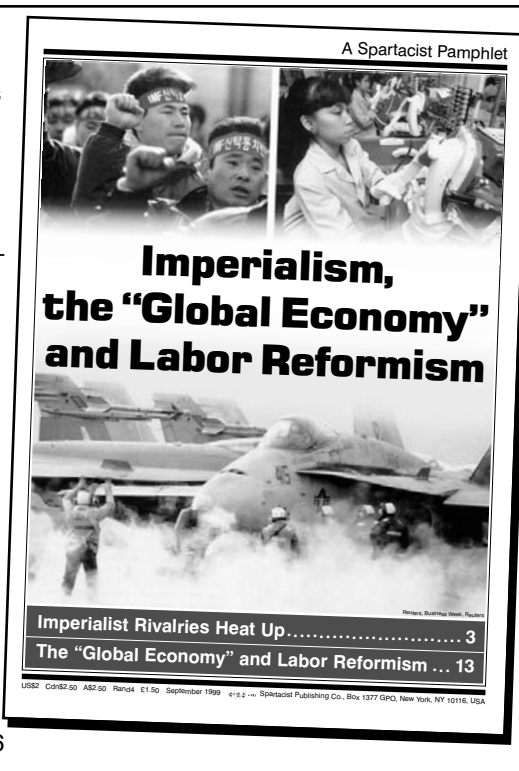
Many of the campus anti-sweatshop protests are infused with a large dose of petty-bourgeois moralism. Petitioning against The Gap and Guess? Jeans, and wearing campus sweats made by seamstresses getting the minimum wage may make these students feel better about

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 counter-revolution 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 inter-imperialist 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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themselves and the “campus community,” but changes the desperate working conditions of Asian and Latin American workers not a bit. Much of the rhetoric in the anti-sweatshop campaign has as its purpose the refurbishing of the image of the specific universities involved. For example, an Internet posting by the Wesleyan College “Students Against Sweatshops” in Connecticut reads, “Our goal is to guarantee decent working conditions and wages for the people who produce clothing bearing Wesleyan’s name.”

Indeed, is it surprising that campus officials “have even praised the protesters” (*New York Times*, 29 March)? Such statements offer the bourgeois campus administrations a way to tout their universities as “enlightened” institutions of “higher education.” But the administrations have no such “humanitarian” concern for their own workers. Even while the entire University of California system has agreed to abide by the protesters’ pitiful demands not to sell clothes made by sweatshop labor, the wages of janitors, cafeteria workers and numerous other campus workers remain far below a decent “living wage.”

UNITE’s anti-sweatshop campaign is based on the union bureaucracy’s collaboration with America’s capitalist rulers. Deluding workers that capitalist society can serve their interests, the labor tops foster the illusion that through exposure of sweatshop conditions the government will somehow be pressured to compel the garment industry’s slavemasters to “do the right thing.” This perspective is shared by the reformist left, as seen in an article by “human rights” activist Medea Benjamin in *Against the Current* (March/April 1999), magazine of the social-democratic Solidarity group, which admonishes anti-sweatshop groups to pressure the government to “enforce mandatory standards that will guarantee garment workers throughout the world the respect and dignity they deserve.” And the People’s Right to Know Campaign, which focuses on demands for the Wal-Mart chain to disclose where its products are manufactured, complains, “Even the President of the United States could not find out from Wal-Mart where it manufactures its goods.”

Peddling these same illusions while covering for the chauvinist bureaucracy is the International Socialist Organization (ISO). In an entire page devoted to the anti-sweatshop campaign in their current paper, *Socialist Worker* (24 September), these dyed-in-the-wool reformists say not a word about protectionism (nor capitalism or imperialism). While exulting in the “impressive” gain that 15 universities “have agreed to full public disclosure,” they display their faith in the

**Garment workers striking for eight-hour day in 1913 carry signs in Yiddish, Italian, Russian. Immigrant workers played key role in building U.S. unions.**



capitalist state, whining that the Labor Department only has “800 investigators to monitor all 6 million American workplaces.”

Investing the U.S. imperialists with a mission to protect “human rights” is obscene. “Human rights” imperialism has nothing to do with human rights and everything to do with imperialism. The recent U.S./NATO war against Serbia and the ongoing occupation of Kosovo show the real face behind their “human rights” mask. As the U.S. and NATO rained death and destruction upon the Serbian and Albanian peoples, deliberately bombing factories which provided livelihoods for tens of thousands of workers, they had no bigger cheerleader than the DSA’s top honcho Bogdan Denitch who baldly stated, “The bombing should stop only when Belgrade agrees to pull out or is pushed out of Kosovo, if necessary by ground troops” (*Nation*, 26 April). We were the only group on the left that unambiguously called for the defeat of U.S. imperialism through socialist revolution and for workers around the globe to defend Serbia against U.S./NATO terror. Now, fresh from their Balkan slaughter, the U.S. imperialists are backing their Australian junior partners in a “human rights” military occupation of tiny East Timor. Meanwhile, the U.S. continues its vicious starvation blockades of Serbia and Iraq, where well over a million people have died as a result of the imperialist sanctions.

In their role as anti-communist henchmen for U.S. imperialism, the AFL-CIO labor officialdom has a long history of helping to create the very conditions of horrendous exploitation in Third World countries which they now cynically decry. Among militant workers in many of

these countries, the American labor bureaucracy is rightly despised as the “AFL-CIA.” In South Korea, for example, they were instrumental in building up the government-sponsored Korean Federation of Trade Unions (KFTU), which fought strikers and mobilized scabs during mass strikes in 1946-47 and acted to prevent the rise of independent unions. Among those playing a leading role in the formation of unions independent of the KFTU were women garment workers in 1970-71 who were met with brutal repression by the U.S.-backed South Korean police state. The AFL-CIO’s Asian American Free Labor Institute has been only one of a number of CIA “labor” fronts around the world which has served the U.S. capitalist rulers in suppressing Communist-led and other militant unions.

High on the imperialists’ agenda right now is the drive for capitalist counterrevolution in China, aimed at burying what remains of the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. It is no accident that China is a particular focus of the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy in the anti-sweatshop campaign. Nor is it surprising that the “Free Tibet” movement, long a favored tool of the CIA, is prominent in the campus anti-sweatshop protests. The entry of Chinese forces into Tibet in 1959 liberated the Tibetan people from forced peasant labor and a ruthless clerical aristocracy which appropriated young boys as consorts and held a starving population of peasants and herdsmen in virtual slavery. The followers of the Dalai Lama who glorify the abject backwardness of “traditional” Tibetan life before 1959 seek to reintroduce conditions in which sweatshops would be a step up!

China is a deformed workers state, where capitalism has been overthrown

but the working class is denied political power by a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy. Trotskyists call for unconditional military defense of China, as well as the other remaining deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea—against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. It is the Beijing bureaucracy itself which is today at the forefront of the drive toward capitalist restoration. We fight for a workers political revolution that will oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy and establish a regime of genuine workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

## For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!

A leader of the anti-sweatshop campaign at Duke University went out of his way to assure the administration, “We’re not asking for a revolution. We’re just asking for improvement of working conditions” (*New York Times*, 29 March). But even the most minor improvement of working conditions is reversible under capitalism—witness the sharp decline of workers’ living standards in the U.S. over the past 25 years, confirming Marx’s understanding that the tendency toward immiseration of the proletariat is endemic to capitalism. Any lasting and genuine improvement of working and living conditions for the mass of the working people, both in the U.S. and internationally, means uprooting the entire system of production for profit: the expropriation of the capitalist class through workers revolution and the establishment of an egalitarian socialist society where production is based on human need rather than profit.

Pro-labor youth who genuinely want to eradicate the ravages of capitalism must confront the fact that without a socialist revolution, capitalist exploitation will not only remain, but intensify. The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight to win youth to the perspective of building the proletarian vanguard party essential for the fight for socialist revolution. As we wrote in “Students and the Labor Movement”:

“The task of Marxists is to fight within the working class and among all layers of the oppressed to build the integrated revolutionary workers party necessary to revitalize the labor movement and lead its future struggles to victory. Revolutionary student youth can play an important role on the campuses by organizing Spartacus Youth Clubs, which seek to be the student/youth auxiliary to a class-struggle opposition within the labor movement.”

We look to the example of the heroic Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. We fight for new October Revolutions to expropriate the racist capitalist ruling class and establish the uncompromising rule of the multiracial proletariat. ■

## Spartacus Youth Club Class Series and Events

### CHICAGO

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

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.  
October 2: **The Class Nature of the State**  
October 16: **Imperialism and War**  
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

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

Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. at NYU  
October 5: **Anti-Labor Attacks, Cop Terror and the Capitalist State**  
Student Events Center, Rm. 305  
5 Washington Pl. (at Mercer St.)  
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

### BAY AREA

Next class: **The Economics of Communism and the Transitional Period**  
Thursday, October 7, 7 p.m.  
UC Berkeley, Room 222 Wheeler  
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851

### TORONTO

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

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m.  
October 6: **The Bolshevik Revolution**  
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, 7 p.m.  
October 12: **National Chauvinism Is Poison to Class Struggle: Independence for Quebec!**  
University of British Columbia  
Room 212, Student Union Building  
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

## Eyewitness Accounts of Mass Student Strike in Mexico City

# Victory to the UNAM Student Strike!

Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México and the Juventud Espartaquista youth group have intervened in the five-month-old student strike at the National Autonomous University (UNAM) from the outset. The GEM/JE fights to mobilize the social power of the trade unions in strike action to defend the right to education and defeat union-busting privatization plans pushed by the government and its U.S. imperialist patrons. Against the nationalism which ties workers to the ruling class, our comrades seek to forge an internationalist revolutionary workers party that fights for socialist revolution.

### BOSTON

Saturday, Oct. 2  
7:30 p.m.

Tufts University  
Mayer Campus Center  
Large Conference Room  
(Ground Floor)  
For more information:  
(617) 666-9453

### CHICAGO

Saturday, Oct. 9  
7 p.m.

University of Illinois  
at Chicago  
Circle Center, 750 S. Halsted  
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# Unionize the South...

(continued from page 12)

scuttled the strike, diverting it into impotent corporate lobbying and red-white-and-blue chauvinist appeals to the government. This underscores what we wrote following the union vote in Kannapolis:

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

Because of their program of class collaboration, the labor bureaucrats are tied by a thousand threads to the class enemy and are utterly incapable of waging the kind of class-struggle campaign needed to unionize the growing ranks of industrial workers in the South. Their dependence on the good graces of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), whose very purpose is to bind the unions to the state, has repeatedly caused organizing drives to flounder on the endless delays built into the law, setting up pro-union workers to be victimized. A former head of the AFL-CIO’s Organizing Department vowed to “work better with employers in respecting their right to exist and make a profit,” and pleaded: “In exchange, we ask that employers respect our right to exist” (*South Carolina Business Journal*, June 1996). The United



Schneider/Charlotte Observer

**Heavily immigrant workforce celebrates pro-union vote at Fieldcrest Cannon textile complex in Kannapolis, N.C. in June.**

think they’re not serious about war, consider the case of Gary McClain, a worker at Tenneco Packaging in Beech Island, South Carolina, who stood up in a plant meeting called by management last July and suggested that the union attempting to organize the plant be given equal time to address the workers. While driving to work a few days later, McClain was pulled over by six sheriff’s patrol cars, taken from his car at gunpoint, and involuntarily committed to an insane asylum!

Above all, the crucial battle to organize the South must go hand in hand with the fight against racist discrimination. Only through an all-sided struggle against black oppression can the working class carry out the kind of integrated class struggle needed to defeat the bosses’ attacks. America’s rulers foster racial divisions in the North and South in order to obscure the division between classes,



Redmond/NY Times

company goons and professional strike-breakers but, if hard pressed, also to the Klan and its ilk, while using racist demagoguery to turn backward white workers against the labor movement. In short, a union organizing drive in the South will become a major arena of political struggle between the oppressed black masses and the white ruling class.”

For this perspective to become a reality will require a sharp political struggle against the politics of class collaboration and to oust the sellout labor lieutenants of capital who tie the unions to the Democratic Party. It is necessary to forge a class-struggle leadership within the unions as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party.

## Class Struggle Built Industrial Unions

A massive organizing drive in the “open shop” South, where conditions are ripe for unionization, is vitally necessary if the U.S. labor movement is to regain its strength in manufacturing. A major factor behind the gutting of the union movement in this country since the late 1970s has been the massive transfer of industry from the North and Midwest to the “open shop,” low-wage South and Southwest, particularly centered on the I-85 industrial corridor in the South. By 1990, North and South Carolina combined had more manufacturing production workers than any state except California. A few years ago, Philip Morris was blocked from building a \$100 million plant in South Carolina for fear that the workforce would be unionized.

The harsh laws and practices enforcing wage slavery in the South today are rooted in the black chattel slavery of the old South before the Civil War. The reestablishment of legalized racial segregation following the betrayal of Radical Reconstruction by the Northern bourgeoisie in league with the Southern landed aristocracy entailed the suppression of any attempt to organize labor, white as well as black. The heroic efforts of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the early years of this century to organize white and black workers in the South into “one big union” was met by laws against “criminal syndicalism.” The “right to work” laws passed after the Second World War, which have perpetuated the South as the main regional bastion of social and political

which is fundamental to capitalist society, and to head off united working-class struggle. The special oppression of black people as a race/color caste is a cornerstone of American capitalism. The mass of the black population is kept at the bottom of this capitalist society. At the same time, doubly oppressed black workers form a strategic component of the American proletariat. Won to a revolutionary program, black workers will play a leading role in the struggle to emancipate the black masses and all working people by sweeping away the entire system of capitalist exploitation.

In the South, more than in any other region of the country, it is especially clear that the support of the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy to the Democratic Party perpetuates violent racist oppression and the brutal exploitation of the working class. In the main resolution adopted at the Ninth National Conference of the Spartacist League in 1994 (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 51, Autumn 1994), we wrote:

“The unionization of the South cannot and will not have a narrowly economist character, nor will it likely emanate from the top echelons of the AFL-CIO. On the one side, the entire black community will tend to rally behind racially integrated workers fighting the local white power structure. On the other side, the Southern branch of the American ruling class will resort not only to the police,

reaction in the United States, were the outgrowth of an entrenched apparatus of segregation and oppression, from the post-Civil War “Black Codes” and “anti-vagrancy” laws to the sharecropping system and prison chain gangs.

Every major organizing effort in the South has involved massive confrontations with the capitalist state—the cops, troops and courts which are at the core of this apparatus of repression through which the bourgeoisie defends its profits and class rule. Yet the pro-capitalist officials of the AFL-CIO cannot conceive of going up against their “friends” in the bosses’ Democratic Party and the capitalist government. So strong are the bureaucrats’ ties to the capitalist order that they have renounced the very means by which mass industrial unions were built in this country: sitdown strikes to occupy the plants and keep out the scabs, mass picket lines that defy injunctions, secondary labor boycotts (refusing to handle struck goods).

In 1934, a unionization drive led by the United Textile Workers Union of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was capped by a national textile strike involving more than 400,000 workers. Battling cops, company goons and National Guard troops, flying squads of strikers closed hundreds of mills along a broad front from Gastonia, North Carolina to Greenville, South Carolina. In Georgia, the governor declared martial law and had troops throw strikers and their families into concentration camps surrounded by barbed wire. Though 16 workers were killed and hundreds wounded nationwide, the strikers held firm. But textile union leaders cravenly called off the strike at the request of Democratic president Franklin D. Roosevelt for nothing more than his cynical promise to “survey” conditions in the industry.

The mass labor upsurges of the mid to late 1930s, often led by communists or socialists, brought together black and white workers in major class battles against the capitalists and their state, forging the mass integrated industrial unions that changed the face of American society. Breaking down the racial and ethnic job-trusting and segregated union locals of the old AFL, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) sought to mobilize black workers, who were critical to organizing most basic industries. United Mine Workers’ efforts in 1934 to organize the Alabama coalfields relied heavily on black miners, who composed 60 percent of the membership of the locals organized there.

In 1936, black steel workers in Birmingham, led by Communists, won a strike by organizing Alabama’s first plant sitdown. This challenge to the capitalists’ private property terrified the bosses. Throughout this period, Communist union organizers were beaten, jailed and tortured by the Klan and cops, but their defiance attracted the downtrodden black masses. When the fascists warned, “Negroes Beware—Do Not Attend Communist Meetings—The Ku Klux Klan Is Watching You,” black Communists responded with their own leaflets declaring: “KKK! The Workers Are Watching You!” In his history of Alabama Communists



Alabama magazine

**Sit-down strike at American Casting Company in Birmingham, Alabama which won union recognition in 1937 was led by Communist organizers.**

Auto Workers (UAW) tops are currently trumpeting the contractual pledge by DaimlerChrysler management to remain “neutral” in unionization efforts at the key Mercedes plant in Vance, Alabama.

The fundamental starting point for a serious union organizing drive must be the understanding that this capitalist society is divided between two hostile classes—the workers who have to sell their labor power and the bourgeoisie who owns the means of production—whose interests are irreconcilably opposed. The American labor bureaucracy openly supports the capitalist system and is duly rewarded for this with certain social and political privileges. Hence the union tops stand for collaboration with the bosses, not class struggle against them.

But class struggle is the only way to bring down the “open shop” bastion which is the South. This was made clear by a spokesman for the employers in South Carolina, which has the lowest rate of unionization of any state in the country. Writing in the *South Carolina Business Journal* (September 1997), published by the state Chamber of Commerce, a lawyer who specializes in company anti-union campaigns declared: “Almost any South Carolina company should be able to defeat the union if they have ‘prepared for the war’.” And if you

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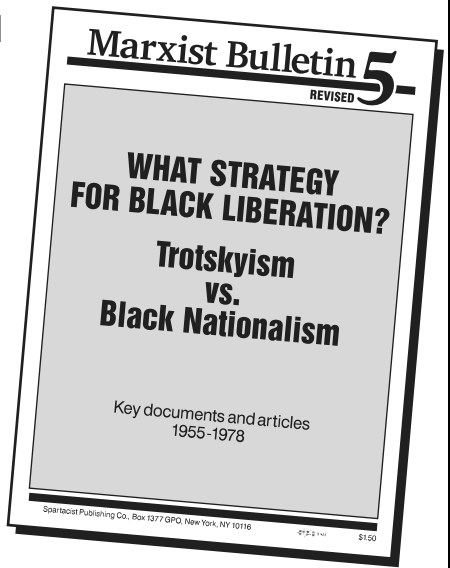
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during the Depression, *Hammer and Hoe* (1990), Robin D.G Kelley noted that Birmingham blacks saw the fight for industrial unions “as a crusade for racial justice” and poured into the new CIO unions.

Union organizers—black and white—confronted the same brutal terror that for decades had been used to keep blacks “in their place.” A CIO organizer in Florida signing up black workers was kidnapped by the KKK, castrated, tarred and feathered, dipped into the boiling tar and left to die from his wounds. In 1938, the CIO reported: “Often an organizer dares not to enter a town in daylight; he relies upon a union-minded merchant or a handful of key men to keep in touch with those workers who are sympathetic to the union. Mass meetings are seldom held, except in large cities, and unionists in the same village may not even know their fellow union members. In many areas, mill workers provide union organizers with day and night body guards for there have been beatings and shootings by mill police, thugs, and vigilantes” (quoted in Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker: 1619-1973* [1974]).

The formation of integrated industrial unions represented the biggest gain for black people since the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. Where barely 50,000 black workers nationwide were union members in the early 1930s, by the 1940s there were 500,000; and by the mid-1950s, almost two million black workers were unionized. But while the CIO brought better pay and working conditions along with some measure of job security for those blacks who had industrial jobs, the CIO leadership generally



**Packinghouse workers strike in Chicago in late 1930s. CIO organizing drive built mass industrial unions by uniting black and white workers.**

whom Roosevelt gave a free hand to wage naked racist terror against blacks and unions. This was accompanied by energetic efforts by the capitalists, seeking to suppress the tremendous wave of class struggle sweeping the country, to create a body of laws and measures (for example, the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, which set up the NLRB) aimed at legally subordinating the new unions to the bourgeois state.

**Break with the Democrats!  
Organize the South!**

At its founding congress in 1937, the CIO launched a new organizing drive

then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) opposed both blocs of competing imperialist powers while calling for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state. The SWP opposed the no-strike pledge and gave its full support to the fight against racist discrimination in industry and “Jim Crow” segregation in the military. For their revolutionary opposition to U.S. imperialism, 18 Trotskyist leaders were jailed under FDR.

The last, feeble attempt by the CIO to organize the South following World War II, grotesquely called “Operation Dixie,” was quickly shipwrecked on the shoals



**Police attack civil rights march, Birmingham, 1963 (left); striking sanitation workers in Memphis, 1968. Defense of labor’s interests cannot go forward without struggle against racist oppression and terror.**



shied away from tackling head-on the pervasive racist discrimination in hiring and in the skilled trades. In 1940, three years after the UAW victory in the Flint sitdown strike, Jim Crow still reigned at GM plants, from the total exclusion of blacks at Fisher Body to the restriction of blacks to foundry jobs at Buick.

The tremendous working-class upsurge of the 1930s was accompanied by a political radicalization which opened possibilities for forging an independent workers party. This was clearly indicated in 1934 as three city-wide general strikes—in Minneapolis, Toledo and San Francisco—were led by reds. To head off the organization of the working class by leftist radicals, a section of the AFL bureaucracy, led by John L. Lewis, split and launched a mass unionization drive.

But the CIO leadership, including the reformist social democrats and Communist Party (CP), chained the new unions to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Democratic Party and its “New Deal” coalition. By the mid-1930s, the Stalinized Communist Party had embraced a reformist strategy of support to a liberal wing of the capitalist class. The New Deal coalition—which literally extended from white Southern sheriffs who were members of the Ku Klux Klan to black union organizers who were members of the CP—put organized labor in a self-defeating alliance not only with its liberal class enemies in the North but also with the Southern Dixiecrats, to

focused on the textile industry in the South. But from the start, the pro-capitalist CIO tops undercut any chance of success by aiming to “avoid strikes and show employers the value of unions” (F. Ray Marshall, *Labor in the South* [1967]). The black and white union organizers who braved beatings and kidnappings by cops and Klansmen succeeded in organizing a number of key mills, but these were the exception rather than the rule. By the end of the decade only five percent of the South’s spindles were estimated to have been affected by union contracts.

At its November 1941 convention, the CIO again resolved to launch a campaign to organize the South. But just two weeks after the convention came the bombing of Pearl Harbor, which led to Washington’s formal entry into World War II. The fine words about organizing the South were all laid aside as the union leaders, the Socialist Party and the CP joined the capitalists in subordinating everything to the American/Allied imperialist war effort—from imposing a no-strike pledge to opposing the fight for black rights. The reformist misleaders painted this as a “war against fascism.” In fact, for the U.S. and all the imperialist powers, World War II was a conflict for division of the world’s markets, sources of raw materials and cheap labor, as was the case in World War I.

In contrast to the social-patriots, the

of the Cold War red purges, racism and the bureaucrats’ ties to the Democratic Party. In many cases, the anti-Communist labor bureaucracy worked to *destroy* integrated union locals in the South, like at R.J. Reynolds in Winston-Salem, rather than see them led by reds. Meanwhile, the union tops’ loyalty to the Democrats made them incapable of waging a fight against the Jim Crow white power structure, which was run by the Dixiecrats and their KKK auxiliaries.

The CIO’s abandonment of any effort

to organize the South was part of an overall retreat and weakening of the labor movement in this period. The onset of the Cold War against the Soviet Union was accompanied by an anti-labor offensive on the home front, in part as a response to the massive strike wave of 1945-46. The main legal instrument of this union-busting offensive was the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act which mandated the purging of Communists and other radicals from union leadership, outlawed secondary labor strikes (a key tactic in extending unionization, especially in the South) and legitimized state “right to work” laws. Almost the entire AFL and CIO leadership stated that they would “live with” Taft-Hartley despite strong sentiment within the ranks to defy it.

**“Right to Work” Laws  
and Racist Reaction**

The so-called “right to work” laws, which outlaw the “closed” union shop, are at the center of the reactionary legislation that Southern rulers use in trying to keep the region “free” of unions. Not coincidentally, among the 21 states with “right to work” laws—which includes practically the entire South as well as a number of plains and Rocky Mountain states—are those with the lowest levels of unionization. The average pay in these states is fully 15 percent lower than in the rest of the country. The billions of dollars in super-profits that this represents for the capitalists underlines why the bourgeoisie is determined to maintain this vast area of low-wage, non-unionized labor.

The intimate link between the fight for unionization of the South and the fight against black oppression is graphically illustrated by the history of the “right to work” laws. These statutes were largely enacted during and immediately following World War II as a counter to the expansion of unionism during the war. Also passed in that period were “anti-violence” bills to curb picketing, as well as measures requiring union organizers to register with state governments. In Georgia, a local ordinance required union officials to foreswear belief in communism and “in the overthrowing of the municipal or state laws in regard to segregation” (quoted in *Labor in the South*).

The organizations pushing for these reactionary laws combined vicious anti-unionism with virulent racism. One of these groups, the Southern States Industrial Council (SSIC), headed by the president of the Tennessee Association of Manufacturers, was formed in 1934 in opposition to the New Deal. The SSIC railed against unions, immigrant workers, and “dilution of racial purity” in the workforce (John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day*). Another prominent promoter of the “God-given right-to-work” was Christian America, a Texas-based outfit which had fanned the flames of racial and religious bigotry from its inception in 1936.

A measure of the all-sided reactionary nature of these racist Southern Bourbons was provided in Robert Sherrill’s *Gothic Politics in the Deep South* (1968), which describes Roger Milliken, the boss

*continued on page 10*

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# From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

## Waco,...Again

“Every government is run by liars and nothing they say should be believed.”  
—Journalist I.F. Stone (1907-1989)

With the recent revelation that FBI agents fired several “incendiary devices” into the flimsy, wooden home, headquarters and church of the Branch Davidian religious commune near Waco, Texas, began renewed charges that the agencies and operatives of the U.S. Government sparked the deadly conflagration that left 80 men, women and children incinerated.

For over 6 years the U.S. Justice Department said no such flammable canisters were used at any time on April 19, 1993. For over six years government officials lied, insisting that the Branch Davidians killed themselves by setting the fire in an orgy of suicidal violence.

Now, who can really say? The “incendiary devices” story was broken, not by a major U.S. newspaper, or network, but by an independent filmmaker and journalist. The national media is just following some-

body else’s play.

When the state attacked MOVE Headquarters on May 13th, 1985, they also blamed MOVE people, saying they set their own home and headquarters aflame, incinerating themselves!

To date, almost 15 years after the police mass murder of MOVE men, women, and children (11 people), the *only* person to serve even an hour in jail was MOVE survivor Ramona Africa, “guilty” only of surviving.

Similarly, the Waco survivors have been socked into prison for exorbitant periods of time, based, at least in part, on FBI and government lies at trial.

According to at least one source, there was U.S. Army Delta Force members active at Waco. The magazine *Soldier of Fortune*, as early as its August 1996 issue, reports Delta wasn’t some background, observing outfit. *SOF* cites sources which claim Delta actually talked U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno into the chemical and armored assault on Mount Carmel. The



magazine quotes a Department of Defense attorney saying the Delta unit members were “forward deployed” on the inner perimeter surrounding Mt. Carmel, adding that Delta’s role in the assault was “much more advisory than observatory; active, not passive.”

And now, the same government promises to, once again, “investigate” Waco. We are witnessing the birth of but another, “new and improved,” whitewash.  
9 September 1999

© 1999 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

**Join the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Contact the Partisan Defense Committee. In New York: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099; phone (212) 406-4252; E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com. In Chicago: PDC, P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867; phone (312) 454-4931. In the Bay Area: PDC, P.O. Box 77462, San Francisco, CA 94107-0462; phone (510) 839-0852.**

**Urgently needed contributions for Mumia’s legal defense, which are tax-deductible, should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked “Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense,” and sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370. ■**

## Unionize the South..

(continued from page 9)

of the Deering-Milliken textile chain in the early 1950s:

“He is a great advocate of what he calls voluntary unionism, which sounds fair enough, but to Milliken, and in South Carolina, it has a special meaning: Shortly before Christmas 1956 he closed the Darlington Manufacturing Company, throwing 500 workers on the street, because they had voted to unionize. Desperate to get back on a payroll, on any terms, 83 percent of the workers signed a petition swearing never to even mention unionism again if he would keep the plant open and keep their jobs going. It wasn’t enough to please Milliken. He wouldn’t be satisfied, he said, if only 17 percent ‘hard core’ union people were left on the payroll; he didn’t want *any*. He auctioned off his machinery and moved out of town. People don’t talk unionism and liberalism in Darlington and nearby towns like they used to before the strike.”

The SWP’s *Militant* reported how a Steelworkers organizer from Birmingham, Alabama told the 1941 CIO convention that “it was the poll tax senators in Congress, representing those areas where the workers were unorganized and terrorized, who were the strongest advocates of vicious anti-labor legislation.” The *Militant* continued:

“Any serious struggle to smash the open-shop rule of the southern land and industrial barons will inevitably lead to a clash with the whole apparatus of the United States government, including president Roosevelt himself....

“The most uncertain factor bearing on the ultimate success of this drive is the

political tie of the CIO leadership to the Roosevelt administration and its war program. This political attitude confronts the CIO leaders with a fundamental contradiction. In the showdown fight that must ensue in any effective union organization drive in the South, they will in all likelihood meet the opposition of the government. The CIO has the choice of successfully organizing the South and smashing the greatest reservoir of open-shop strength, thus facing a break with the administration, or watering down the drive and retreating on the basis of the CIO leadership’s political commitments.”

—C.L.R. James, et al., *Fighting Racism in World War II* (1980)

### For a Revolutionary Leadership of the Working Class

Today, the “New South” of the likes of Bill Clinton and Al Gore tries to project a more “respectable” image than the openly segregationist Dixiecrats and vicious sheriffs of a generation ago. As a result of the civil rights movement, a section of the black petty bourgeoisie was recruited into the governmental administration and bureaucracy to help pacify the black masses. A black mayor of Atlanta is now a local institution. However, despite a substantial degree of industrialization, the *economic condition* of black as well as white workers in the South has not fundamentally changed since the days of Jim Crow segregation.

And efforts to organize labor are still met with police-state measures abetted by fascist terror. Witness the 1979 killing in Greensboro, North Carolina of five members of the Communist Workers Party, some of whom were trying to unionize textile mills in the area, by Klan



Greensboro Daily News

**Greensboro, North Carolina, 1979: Five members of the Communist Workers Party, including union organizers, were shot and killed by Klan and Nazi terrorists.**

and Nazi terrorists acting in collusion with state and local officials. That same year, cops rampaged against Newport News picket lines. Strikers were dragged off in handcuffs as snarling police dogs bit their arms and legs. Just a few years ago, a burning cross was ignited by plant managers in Alabama to intimidate workers from joining a union.

The AFL-CIO bureaucracy’s “America first” protectionism, which will only get more virulent as interimperialist competition intensifies, not only poisons the needed international solidarity between workers in the U.S. and their class brothers and sisters abroad but also fuels racism against black and immigrant workers here. Complaining that workers in other countries are “stealing” American jobs, the labor bureaucrats tie the interests of the working class in the U.S. to maintaining the competitive edge of American imperialism.

In fact, in numerous struggles across the country—not least in the South—Hispanic, Asian, and other immigrant workers have breathed new life into unions crippled by the betrayals of the labor bureaucracy. But the bureaucrats have not only refused to defend the rights of immigrants but have called for increased state repression against “illegals.” The seizure of thousands of foreign-born workers in the South by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the 1995 “Operation South PAW” (“Protect American Workers”) came after the Atlanta Labor Council called for raids against undocumented workers

there. The fight for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants is a crucial part of mobilizing the power of labor in struggle against capitalist exploitation.

Racist divisions within the working class remain the fundamental barrier to political *class* consciousness in the American proletariat and the chief reason today why there is no mass workers party in this country. Because of the experience of both racial and class oppression, black workers are among the most conscious and militant sections of the U.S. proletariat. We fight for revolutionary integration: The understanding that the struggle for integration of black people into American society on the basis of full economic, social and political equality can only be realized through a proletarian revolution which uproots the capitalist system and ushers in an egalitarian socialist society.

As Karl Marx wrote at the time of the Civil War, “Labor in white skin cannot emancipate itself where the black skin is branded.” There will be no effective resistance to the immiseration of American working people without the unity in struggle between the trade unions and the black, Hispanic and Asian poor. This requires a revolutionary workers party forged in opposition to the Democratic Party, which is supported by the labor lieutenants of capital in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, and committed to the struggle for a workers government, which alone can provide a decent life for all through a planned, socialist economy. ■



Culver

**Black veterans returned from the Second World War to confront continued racist terror and economic impoverishment.**



(continued from page 3)

Duplessis' appeal was his occasional rhetoric against the federal government in Ottawa and his deeply religious brand of French Canadian nationalism. At election times, priests would remind their parishioners that "Heaven is blue, Hell is red." Blue was the color of the conservative UN. "Red" in this case meant the opposition Liberal Party, but the double-entendre was not lost on anyone. The influence of the church in politics was greatly helped by the fact that electoral ridings were hugely drawn in favor of the more sparsely populated countryside. And on top of all that you had the usual array of corruption and blackmail, not to forget voting rights for the dead.

To understand what happened you have to look above all to the struggles of the working class. Almost to a man, the so-called architects of the Quiet Revolution started their careers in the Quebec labor movement of the 1940s and '50s. Pierre Elliott Trudeau first made his mark as a supporter of the 1949 Asbestos strike. His collaborators Gérard Pelletier and Jean Marchand were in the top leadership of the Catholic union federation before moving into federal politics. For his part, future Liberal minister and later nationalist leader and premier René Lévesque was arrested in 1959 on the picket lines of the Radio-Canada strike.

[illegible]

## The Asbestos Strike

The miners went over the heads of their CTCC leadership and walked out, illegally, before mandatory arbitration. For Duplessis, this in itself was tantamount to a revolt against Western civilization. Let's listen to the little man himself:

"The present strike is fundamentally illegal because the strike leaders refused to go through arbitration.... Disregard for the laws engenders anarchy and disorder. Disregard for civil laws leads to disre-

The miners demanded the elimination of asbestos dust, higher wages, more vacation and a union voice in promotion, transfers and layoffs, as well as the Rand Formula of collecting union dues at the source. The strike lasted almost five months and encompassed almost 5,000 workers. It was very popular, and it polarized Quebec society along lines never seen in living memory. Half a million dollars was collected in financial support of the miners, and another \$75,000 in foodstuff and supplies. And we're talking 1949 dollars here. The strike gained wide support among young intellectuals like Trudeau, and even in a big section of the lower clergy.

The strike eventually lost in the face of brutal repression and scabbing. The union was not smashed, but otherwise the

Spartacist Canada

And yet the ruling clique was stuck in the Dark Ages. Books and movies which the church deemed offensive were pro-

On 1 September 1959, Satan recalled his creature: Maurice Duplessis went belly up. He was replaced by one Paul Sauvé, who in his turn died four months later. Elections were called for June 1960. There was no third party, new, democratic or otherwise, so the Liberals won with the support of the labor movement and a big section of the local bourgeoisie.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Spartacist Canada



AFP

**1 OCTOBER 1999**

# WORKERS VANGUARD

No to “Made in U.S.A.” Chauvinism — For International Workers Solidarity!

## Sweatshops, Profits and Protectionism

Over the last couple of years, students at universities across the country, particularly at “elite” campuses like Yale, Duke and Harvard, have staged protests, sit-ins and rallies against the hideous conditions of sweatshop labor, especially in countries like Indonesia, Thailand, China and El Salvador. Touted by the *New York Times* (29 March) as the “biggest surge in campus activism in nearly two decades,”

### Young Spartacus

the anti-sweatshop campaign has been promoted by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) and more broadly by the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy as a whole. Deeply immersed into the various anti-sweatshop coalitions on the campuses is the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), which has long been a loyal component of the Democratic Party.

Motivating many of the student activists is a healthy revulsion for the slave-like conditions in sweatshops around the world. Workers as young as ten, mostly



Watts/NY Daily News

female, labor in filthy and unsanitary conditions more than 16 hours a day for less than a couple of dollars. Often these workers are literally imprisoned in their sweatshop factories; those who have the



AP

August demonstration against Donna Karan sweatshops in NYC (left). Anti-sweatshop campaign promoted by AFL-CIO bureaucracy pushes chauvinist protectionism.

option of leaving face the prospect of starvation. Rape, sexual abuse and beatings are rampant, with government authorities either turning a blind eye or encouraging the perpetuation of such

conditions. And these vile conditions do not simply flourish in countries like Bangladesh and the Philippines but also in the garment districts of cities like New York and Los Angeles, right here in the U.S. imperialist bastion. Usually, such practices in the U.S. are inflicted upon recent, often “illegal,” immigrants who have no legal recourse to follow for fear of deportation.

Such conditions bear a striking resemblance to those described in Dickens novels and political and popular literature at the time of the rise of industrial capitalism in 19th century Europe. This should suggest to student activists that the problem of sweatshop labor is systemic. It is inherent in the capitalist mode of production, a system based on maximizing the rate of profit. Particularly in industries requiring only rudimentary technology and a largely unskilled workforce, capitalists will always go where labor is cheapest. And where it is not cheap enough, the capitalists will drive it down through mass terror and repression, often by having the weak local bourgeoisies in these “Third World” countries do the

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## Labor Must Fight for Black Freedom

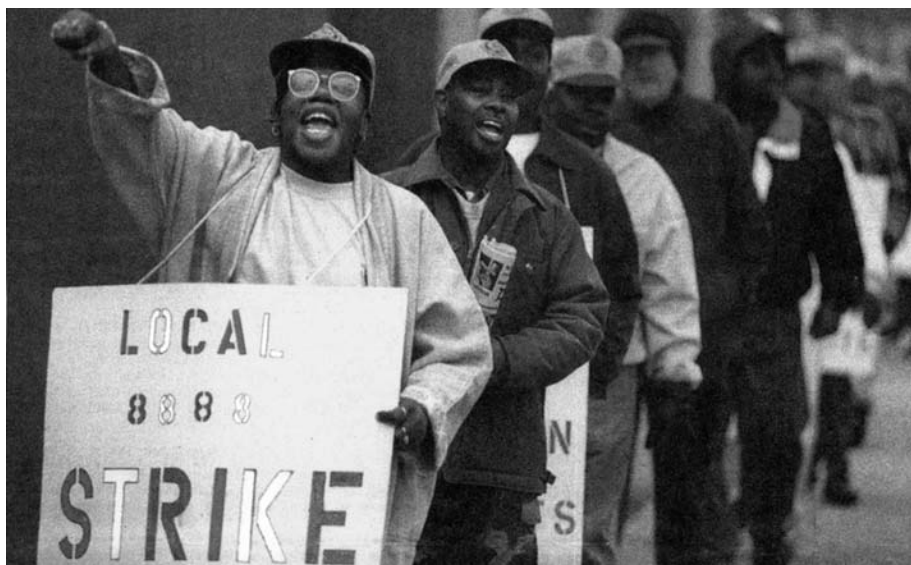
# The Fight to Unionize the “Open Shop” South

### Racist Roots of “Right to Work” Laws

The success last June in the long struggle for union recognition by the heavily immigrant workforce at Fieldcrest Cannon in Kannapolis, North Carolina—the country’s largest textile complex and a symbol for generations of the racist anti-union South—was an important victory for labor throughout the country (“Big Win for Unions in ‘Open Shop’ South,” WV No. 716, 9 July). But the vote in favor of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) is only a first step. Unions are built in struggle, not through ballots. And this is particularly evident in the South, with its panoply of anti-union “right to work” laws enforced by vicious racist terror.

Thus, even though workers at New Orleans’ Avondale Shipyards voted for a union more than six years ago, management has succeeded in keeping the union out through repeated appeals in the bosses’ courts. United Steelworkers Local 8888 at Newport News Shipbuilding in the Virginia Tidewater area, the biggest integrated industrial union in the South, was consolidated well after the union won recognition—through bitter struggle on the picket lines in 1979. The recent four-month strike by Local 8888 pointed to the critical need to link defense of the union with the fight against racist discrimination. But the pro-capitalist USWA bureaucracy

*continued on page 8*



Lyons/Daily Press

Bastion of industrial unionism in the South: four-month strike by United Steelworkers Local 8888 against Newport News Shipbuilding was scuttled by pro-capitalist labor tops.