

Thousands Ride Klan Out of NYC

Class-Struggle Fight for Black Freedom

We print below, in edited form, a presentation by Ed Kartsen, one of the organizers of the labor/black mobilization that drove the Klan out of New York City, at a New York Spartacist League public forum on October 30.

On October 23, the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were confronted in New York City by at least 8,000 militant protesters who came out to stop them. This demonstration was initiated with a united-front call by the Partisan Defense Committee around the slogan: All Out to Stop the KKK! Due to the mass, militant and disciplined nature of this mobilization, the 17 KKKers were forced to scurry back into a courthouse barely halfway into their rally. When it became clear that the fascist KKK had been forced off the streets by their mass, disciplined numbers, trade unionists and others assembled under the PDC banner chanted: "We stopped the Klan!"

This labor/black mobilization was a small example of what a workers party is in action. It was an example of the working class mobilized in its own interest, independent of the government and the political parties of the capitalist class.

This anti-KKK mobilization changed the political landscape of NYC. Analyzing all of the political forces put into motion to prevent masses of anti-KKK protesters from hitting the streets in the thousands reveals the true political character of the organizations and politicians in this city. The courts, the New York Civil Liberties Union, Republican mayor Giuliani, Democrats Scott Stringer and Al Sharpton and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) all lined up in various ways to prevent a mass, militant mobilization to stop the KKK.

The Democrats called for a demonstration of "tolerance" and planned to share a sound permit with the KKK. As it turned out, this diversion wasn't taken seriously by anyone except the ISO, which was the main group that actively built for it. One group that did rally for the Democratic Party diversion was the Latino Officers Association, a police group whose banner the ISO spoke in front of. But the crowd that accidentally ended up at that site had been mobilized around the PDC call to stop the KKK! They showed no tolerance for the rally for tolerance. And in fact they booed Democratic Party electioneering.

Sharpton worked hard on black radio shows to convince black people not to come out to stop the KKK and even filed a "friend of the court" brief on behalf of the Klan. At the very last minute, the night before the KKK's scheduled rally,

October 23 labor/black mobilization to stop KKK gave taste of social power needed for fight against capitalist system of exploitation and racist oppression. Below: Strike last spring at Virginia's Newport News shipyard, in racist "open shop" South.



WV Photos



rumors were spread that the KKK wasn't going to march because an appeals court had upheld the city's requirement that the KKK rally without their masks. In defiance of the diversions and the deceptions, thousands of New Yorkers hit the streets to stop the KKK. And the PDC-initiated mobilization gave a political expression and direction to these thousands.

While it is widely understood that Giuliani is the enemy of working people, prior to this rally many workers and black people would have regarded Democrats like Stringer and Sharpton as some kind of alternative. Many workers would have regarded Dennis Rivera, president of 1199/SEIU (health workers) as some form of progressive labor leader. Many liberal students would have regarded the ISO as some form of progressive organization. All of these actors are now exposed as

enemies of the working class and of all the would-be targets of fascist terror.

Capitalism Breeds Fascist Terror

From the death-squad-style execution of Amadou Diallo to the killing of Hasidic Jew Gedone Busch by the NYPD, an atmosphere has been created in which the KKK feels that it has an opportunity to grow here. Nationally, the 1996 anti-crime bill pushed through by both Democrats and Republicans has led to a sharp escalation in the prison population as well as in racist cop terror. In this right-wing environment, the KKK felt that it could bring its organizing for racist terror to this city. This is the environment in which Mumia Abu-Jamal's appeal was turned down by the U.S. Supreme Court, although his death warrant has been stayed.

The gap between the rich and the poor in the U.S. has grown so wide recently that the richest 1 percent of the population has as much expendable annual income as the bottom 100 million people! This demonstrates that increased profits for the capitalist class means more poverty for the vast majority of the population. Fully conscious of the potential for social unrest caused by this trend, both parties of capital, Democrats and Republicans, have been working to increase government repression—expanding the number of crimes punishable by the death penalty, increasing the length of mandatory sentences and the types of crimes requiring longer prison stays. They have targeted the ghettos and the barrios for racist police terror.

The capitalists maintain their enormous wealth and privileges by constantly attacking the democratic rights of working people and the poor and by constantly strengthening the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state. There are historic conditions, however, under which the police and the National Guard will prove insufficient to suppress mass unrest. When the normal institutions for maintaining this system of exploitation prove inadequate, the capitalist rulers look to the fascists to mobilize reactionary sections of the population for racist, union-busting terrorism.

Klan Terror from Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement

The American ruling class faced a major crisis in 1873. In that year, the capitalist economy fell into the worst crisis experienced up to that point in

continued on page 8



Celebrate NYC Victory Over Klan

Build the Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners!

The labor/black mobilization that rode the KKK out of New York City on October 23 was an important victory for all workers and the oppressed, not least those imprisoned for fighting against racist capitalist oppression. Join the Partisan Defense Committee in the 14th annual Holiday Appeal fund drive to celebrate that victory and to help build a powerful movement to fight for the freedom of the class-war prisoners.

The Holiday Appeal helps to sustain

the PDC's monthly stipend program for 16 class-war prisoners and provides extra funds for holiday gifts for them and their loved ones. This is not an act of charity, but rather the duty of fighters against injustice to those inside prison walls as we struggle for their freedom. The same forces—centered on the social power of the trade unions—which turned out to drive the Klan from the streets must be brought to bear in the fight to free Mumia and all class-war prisoners.



TROTSKY

For New October Revolutions!

November 7 (October 25 by the old Russian calendar) marks the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the first and to date only successful workers revolution in history. Surrounded from its inception by hostile imperialist powers and undermined by Stalinist bureaucratic misrule beginning with the political counterrevolution in 1923-24, the Soviet Union was destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. As American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon stated while the Soviet

Union fought for its life against Nazi Germany during World War II, the Fourth International was founded in the fight to defend the October Revolution and to fight for new Octobers on a world scale.

The Russian Revolution proved three things for all time.... First, it proved that the party and the leadership necessary for victory can be created by the proletariat, as they have been created by the Russian proletariat.

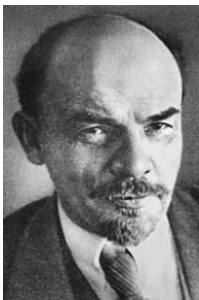
Second, the Russian Revolution proved—I am now repeating what I said before—that the system of nationalized industry and planned economy, introduced by a Soviet revolution, is superior, more progressive, more productive, than any device of capitalism, whether democratic or fascist.

And the third thing which we can say is demonstrated by the revolution, and proved now in the test of war, is that only one class is capable of solving the great social problems of our epoch. That class is the proletariat.

The Fourth International, with its program and its tactics anchored to these three propositions, has been proven correct by the whole test of events. Therefore, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the revolution, we do not change our course. We see not only the Soviet regime's terrible weakness, which derives from bureaucratic mismanagement and control. We see also the strength and the power which derives from the revolutionary origin of the Soviet Union and its basic conquests....

The Russian Revolution is in the greatest peril today. We do not delude ourselves about that. We do not deceive ourselves or others with any false optimism about the danger confronting the Soviet Union. We see the situation as it really is. We know that the fate of the Soviet Union hangs in the balance, that it depends now, more than ever, on the world revolution of the proletariat and the colonial masses. But we have faith in the world revolution, and because of that, we retain our hope in the ultimate regeneration of the Soviet Union. We keep undimmed our faith that the world revolution will release humanity from this terrible vise of the war and open up a new stage of progress on the way to the communist future.

—James P. Cannon, "The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution" (November 1942); reprinted in *Speeches for Socialism* (1969)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

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No. 723

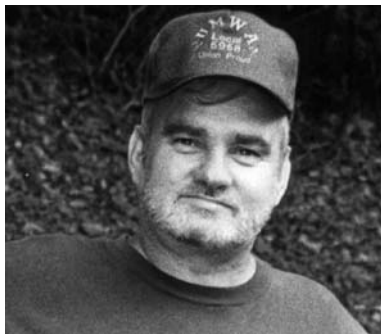
12 November 1999

Mumia Abu-Jamal, December marks 18 years of Mumia Abu-Jamal's imprisonment. Former Black Panther, well-known journalist, "Voice of the Voiceless," MOVE supporter—Jamal was framed up on false charges of killing a Philadelphia cop and sentenced to die for his political beliefs and defiance of the racist capitalist order.

This October 13, Pennsylvania governor Thomas Ridge signed a warrant for Mumia's execution. Ridge's order, setting an execution date of December 2, came just nine days after the U.S. Supreme Court opened its term by turning down an appeal by Jamal. While Mumia has now won a stay of execution from a federal judge pending a decision on his *habeas corpus* petition, he is no less endangered by the police and government forces which have sought his execution. Ridge's death decree came amid an escalating campaign for Jamal's legal lynching spearheaded by the Fraternal Order of Police and a broader speedup in the assembly line of death pushed by both the Republican and Democratic parties. The crusade to kill Jamal is designed to sanctify the state's machinery of death.

Jamal continues to fight from behind bars with biting commentaries which are published in newspapers across the country. Mumia's book, *Live from Death Row*, is a searing indictment of this racist injustice system. Jamal's case has won support from death penalty abolitionists, labor and anti-racist fighters internationally. When Ridge ordered Mumia's death in 1995, international mass protests stayed the executioner's hand. The PDC calls on working people, minorities, youth and all opponents of racist capitalist repression in the U.S. and around the world to raise the cry: **Freedom Now for Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!**

Jerry Dale Lowe, United Mine Workers (UMWA) member framed up on federal charges in the July 1993 shooting death of a scab contractor in Logan County, West Virginia. The scab was part of a convoy leaving the mine, shot in



WV Photo

Jerry Dale Lowe

the back of the head from the direction of the bosses' thugs. Lowe was singled out by authorities because he was a militant defender of the picket line. For the "crime" of defending his union, Lowe was sentenced to nearly eleven years in jail in Ashland, Kentucky with no possibility of parole.

Ed Poindexter and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa, former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. Victims of racist FBI COINTELPRO operation, framed up for an explosion in 1970 which killed a cop. Both were convicted on the basis of perjured testimony and sentenced to life. Nebraska Board of Pardons refuses to lessen sentences so that they can be considered for parole. Poindexter is at Lino



WV Photo

Mumia Abu-Jamal

Lake, MN and Mondo is at Lincoln, NE.

Jaan Laaman and Ray Luc Levasseur were arrested in 1984 and '85 and are radical activists with a shared history of opposition to racism and imperialism. They were sentenced to 45 years to life under RICO conspiracy laws on allegations of bank expropriations and bombings targeting symbols of U.S. imperialism in the late '70s and '80s. Jaan Laaman is at Leavenworth, KS and Ray Luc Levasseur is in Atlanta, GA.

Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. Militant anti-racist, leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, who was murdered by prison guards in 1971. In prison for over 30 years. He is currently serving a life sentence at the notorious Pelican Bay prison in Crescent City, CA.

Eight MOVE members are in their 22nd year in prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 1978 police attack on their Philadelphia home, falsely convicted of killing a police officer. **Chuck Africa** and **Michael Davis Africa** are imprisoned at Graterford; **Debbie Sims Africa**, **Janet Holloway Africa**, **Janine Phillips Africa** at Cambridge Springs; **Edward Goodman Africa** at Camp Hill; **Delbert Orr Africa** and **William Phillips Africa** at Dallas. This past summer MOVE filed a PCRA appeal to overturn the frame-ups.

Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, was sentenced last year to 15½ years on bogus firearm possession charges, targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although Hart was initially charged under Pennsylvania laws, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton's Justice Department took over the case in order to have Hart thrown in prison. Jamal's appeals have been denied and he is not eligible for parole. Hart is at Fairton, New Jersey.

Send Your Contributions to the PDC Now!

The cops and courts seek to ensure that those who fight the poverty and racism endemic to capitalism are "safely" housed in prison hellholes or their graves. In 1986, the Partisan Defense Committee revived an International Labor Defense (ILD) tradition of sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners as an expression of solidarity. In addition to its regular monthly support, the ILD raised extra funds during the holidays for the prisoners and their families. Help build our program of monthly stipends to these victims of racist capitalist injustice.

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization that champions cases and causes in the interests of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

All proceeds collected for the Holiday Appeal will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. ■

Benefit for Class-War Prisoners

Organize for Jamal's Freedom

New York

Friday, December 10
6 to 9 p.m.

AFSCME District Council 1707
75 Varick St. (at Canal)

For more information:
(212) 406-4252

P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Sta.
New York, NY 10013

Chicago

Sunday, December 5
3 to 8 p.m.

UE Hall
37 S. Ashland (at Monroe)

For more information:
(312) 454-4931

P.O. Box 802867
Chicago, IL 60680

Bay Area

Sunday, December 5
1 to 4 p.m.

ILWU Local 34 Hall
4 Berry St., San Francisco

For more information:
(510) 839-0852

P.O. Box 77462
San Francisco, CA 94107

SPONSOR: PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE

Free Mumia! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

On October 26, a federal district judge in Philadelphia granted Mumia Abu-Jamal a stay of his execution, which had been scheduled for December 2. This must not lull for one moment the millions of workers, youth and opponents of racist state repression who have rallied to Mumia's defense internationally. As Jamal wrote in 1995 when an earlier death warrant was stayed through an international campaign of protest, "The state of Pennsylvania still has every intention of killing me—just not right now."

Pennsylvania governor Thomas Ridge waited only nine days after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear Jamal's legal appeal before signing a new death warrant on October 13. The warrant came even as Mumia's attorneys were preparing a federal *habeas corpus* petition detailing 29 constitu-

tional violations in the travesty of justice which led to the 1982 frame-up conviction of this innocent man. The federal judge who will rule on the *habeas* appeal then forced Jamal to wait 13 torturous days before granting a stay, which routinely follows immediately after such an appeal is filed.

With 83 people dragged off to the death chambers since January, 1999 has already seen the highest execution rate in 45 years. Meanwhile, the forces screaming for Jamal's legal lynching, spearheaded by the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.), have revved up their crusade to speed his execution and intimidate the growing ranks of his defenders. Most recently, the F.O.P. has called on cops throughout the area to stage a "protest" provocation outside a rock concert featuring Sting this month in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania in order

to "send a message" to this supporter of Mumia's cause (*Philadelphia Daily News*, 1 November).

While favoring the use of all possible legal levers on Mumia's behalf, the Partisan Defense Committee has stressed from the moment it took up his defense more than 12 years ago that the way to free him from the clutches of the state's executioners is through mass mobilizations centered on the social power of labor. A taste of that social power could be seen in the streets of New York City on October 23 in the PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization which rode the KKK out of town. Thousands of trade unionists, minorities and youth joined in chants of "Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!" The political program on which they were mobilized is based on an understanding that labor must champion the fight for black free-

dom, that the capitalist state is a force for organized violence against the exploited and oppressed.

Counterposed to this class-struggle perspective are those who build deadly illusions in the "justice" of the capitalist courts. Supporters of Jamal have been active in recent weeks both in the U.S. and internationally. But the perspective of the liberal and reformist organizers of many of these events is exemplified by an editorial in the liberal *Nation* (15 November) signed by Angela Davis, June Jordan and Alice Walker calling for "a new trial"—as if Jamal could ever get a fair trial from the courts of the Dred Scott decision, the courts which sent the Haymarket martyrs, Sacco and Vanzetti and the Rosenbergs to their deaths. Just as many thousands around the world raised the

continued on page 11

When the Partisan Defense Committee publicized black Democrat Al Sharpton's collusion with Republican mayor Giuliani and the KKK in seeking to prevent the PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization to stop the Klan, Sharpton retorted, "Who is the PDC?" This demagogue, who would himself be a target of Klan terror, worked every angle he could trying to dissuade black people from coming out to stop the hooded nightriders, cynically claiming it would be a diversion from fighting police brutality and the threatened execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal. This is a sick joke coming from a fink who wore a wire for the Feds against black community leaders a few years back and has done next to nothing to win Mumia's freedom.

Nonetheless, we will take Sharpton's slimy innuendo as the opportunity to explain to the many thousands of the KKK's intended victims—trade unionists, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Jews, immigrants, gays and others—who rode the Klan out of New York what the PDC is and the class-struggle policies through which this mobilization was built. As we state on the back page of every issue of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, "The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League." The PDC is guided by the Marxist understanding that the capitalist state—the cops, courts and prisons—is an organ for the repression of the working class and oppressed: "We place all our faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatever in the 'justice' of the courts."

Cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people: Raising funds for victims of U.S.-backed Afghan mujahedin cutthroats, 1989; NYC united-front speakout for Mumia Abu-Jamal chaired by Ossie Davis (far right), 1994.



WV Photos

Initiated by the SL in 1974, the PDC stands in accordance with the record of principled defense work conducted by the SL, guided by the anti-sectarian principles of the early communist movement. We draw on the internationalist defense traditions bequeathed from the early years of the Communist International (CI), organized by Lenin and Trotsky in the aftermath of the Russian October Revolution of 1917. Through the tactic of the united front—"march separately, strike together"—the CI sought to achieve the maximum unity of the working masses in their defensive struggles while exposing in action the bankruptcy of the reformist misleaders and the inability of their program to win against the ruling class. The free debate of contending strategies and programs in the context of united action around common demands is vital to advancing the consciousness of the working class and anti-racist youth.

In 1922, the CI launched the International Organization for Relief to Revolutionaries (MOPR), known as the International Red Aid, whose first activities were relief efforts for victims of counter-revolutionary White terror in East and Central Europe in the 1920s. Our legal and social defense work is modeled on

the International Labor Defense (ILD), American affiliate of MOPR, in its early years when James P. Cannon was its secretary. Cannon's ILD merged the non-sectarianism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)—encapsulated in the slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all!"—with the internationalism of the MOPR.

Our first major international publicity and protest campaign succeeded in winning asylum in France for Mario Muñoz, a Chilean miners' leader who fled the 1973 coup there only to be targeted for death in 1976 by the Argentine military junta. In 1985, the PDC launched the Aid To Striking British Miners Family Fund Drive, which raised over \$23,000 from workers around the world to help support the miners after their union's funds were seized by the British government under Mrs. (later Baroness) Thatcher during their bitter year-long strike.

In 1989, the PDC offered to organize an international brigade to Afghanistan to fight alongside the forces of the left-nationalist Kabul regime against the imperialist-backed anti-woman Islamic fundamentalists on the occasion of the withdrawal of Soviet troops. When the Afghan government instead proposed

that we organize financial support, we launched a campaign which raised over \$44,000 for the victims of the mullah-led assault on Jalalabad. More recently, the PDC joined in the campaign initiated by the Italian COBAS (Rank and File Committee) at Alfa Romeo to aid the workers of Zastava and other factories in Yugoslavia bombed by NATO. Through the efforts of the PDC and other fraternal defense organizations, the International Communist League fought to extend this important campaign internationally, giving many workers in the countries where we are present the possibility of making a concrete internationalist gesture in defense of the Yugoslav workers and *against* their "own" imperialist rulers, without giving an iota of political support to the Serbian capitalist regime of Slobodan Milosevic.

Central to our work has been support to those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist oppression. In 1986, the PDC revived an ILD tradition of sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners (see Holiday Appeal, page 2). Past recipients included British miners locked away for defense of their union during the 1984-5 strike, U.S. steel worker

continued on page 11

Partisan Defense Committee
CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 26 50c Winter 1998-99

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

Letter must be included in defense of all the oppressed: Trade unionists march in August 1995 Philadelphia demonstration for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Holiday Appeal Benefits! Save the Date!

<p>NEW YORK Friday, December 4 6-8 p.m. AFSCME District Council 1707 100 W. 42nd St. New York, NY 10036</p>	<p>CHICAGO Sunday, December 6 1-3 p.m. 37 S. LaSalle St. Chicago, IL 60604</p>	<p>BAY AREA Sunday, December 6 4-6 p.m. 4001 14th St. Berkeley, CA 94710</p>
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No. 26, Winter 1998-99
50c (16 pages)
Order from/pay to:
Partisan Defense Committee
P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013-0099

Young Spartacus

Join the SYC!

The following are excerpted comments by a New York Spartacus Youth Club member during the floor discussion at the October 30 NYC Spartacist League forum.

We worked very hard alongside the Partisan Defense Committee and the Spartacist League for the last couple of weeks to build this demonstration and to bring it to the campuses. And you can see from the photographs on the walls that contingents came from NYU, Columbia, Bronx Community College—from across the city. And one of the things you encounter in building such a demonstration is the difference between a revolutionary socialist party that puts out a call to stop the KKK and all the other organizations out there that claim to be revolutionary, but in reality have no interest in doing such things.

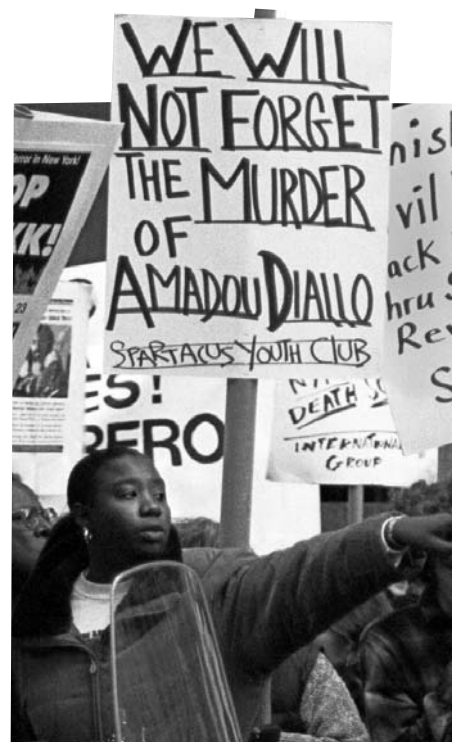
All of them basically stayed silent for a whole week waiting to see what the Democratic Party was going to do. And when Scott Stringer issued his call

for a “rally for tolerance,” defending the Klan’s “rights,” suddenly they all jumped on that demonstration. The ISO and the Communist Party endorsed the Democratic Party diversion, against the labor/black mobilization. They didn’t want to see labor and black come out that day. They didn’t want to see all the intended victims of the Klan coming out behind the power of the trade unions to stop the KKK on the streets of New York City. That was the last thing they wanted to see, that was the last thing the Democratic Party wants to see, and that’s the difference between us and them.

We want to build more of these things. We want to bring the understanding of what fascism is and what the capitalist state is. The cops were clearly on the side of the Klan—they herded the Klan into the courthouse, appropriately enough. That’s what the capitalist state does. We fight against the idea that capitalism can be reformed, that the capitalist state can be reformed. We think there needs to be a

workers revolution, with the leadership being people like the ones who were out there last week. In that light, what we think is necessary for the youth in this room is to go out to build this party that’s going to lead this.

You have to ask yourself a question: Who issued the call last week that mobilized all these people? It took socialists to do that. And we think what’s necessary is to build this workers party. Youth can be a very important component of that by mobilizing on the campuses and where they work to help build the Spartacus Youth Clubs that are the youth group of the revolutionary socialist Spartacist League. So if there are youth here who are interested in socialism, you should join the Spartacus Youth Club and become a communist fighting for a better future against all forms of racial and sexual oppression. ■



Young Spartacus

Meet the New York Spartacus Youth Club!

Come meet and join the New York SYC every Saturday in the month of November at our office from 2:30-4:30 p.m. The address is 299 Broadway (north of Chambers St. between Duane and Reade), Suite 318 in Manhattan. We also have planned weekly meetings and public events to build on the October 23rd victory against Klan terror. For more information: (212) 267-1025.

Mexico: Down With State Repression Against UNAM Strike!

We reprint below a leaflet distributed on October 15 by the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League, and the Juventud Espartaquista in response to a vicious police attack against striking students at Mexico City’s National Autonomous University (UNAM). The state continues its campaign of terror against the student strikers. On October 13, Ricardo Martínez, an activist with a Zapatista solidarity group, was kidnapped and held for a day and a half. The six-month student strike, which has gained considerable support from teachers and workers, particularly in the STUNAM campus workers union, is directed against administration plans to sharply raise tuition, privatize the university and further restrict access, especially for working-class youth.

The brutal beating on October 14 of UNAM student strikers by riot police of the DDF [Federal District Department]—leaving several students injured, one seriously—was carried out under orders of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) government, now under the administration of Rosario Robles. This once again exposes the role of the PRD as a bourgeois party and class enemy of the workers, and the cops as the armed fist of the bourgeois to repress the labor movement, the left and all the oppressed. **Cops are not “workers in uniform.” They are the guard dogs of the bourgeois state, and they must be expelled from workers unions.** On the UNAM campus, the cops of Auxilio-UNAM are in charge of maintaining the bourgeois order. That is why we Spartacists have called for **Auxilio-UNAM out of STUNAM and UNAM!**

On the other hand, the administration’s dirty tricks are obvious. They say they want to negotiate, and then they unleash a bloody police riot against the strikers to try to intimidate them into capitulating. This bourgeois terrorist campaign against education and the unions was already manifest on October 5, when the well-known student leader Alejandro Echavarría (el Mosh) was abducted and brutally beaten. That same day, Humberto Herrera, a longtime unionist and supporter of the strike, who is a supporter of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, was abducted for several hours and threatened with death. The


only real response to this criminal state terror is to extend the strike to the proletariat, which has the social power to fight against the bourgeoisie’s privatization drive that aims to put an end to public education as well.

We Spartacists of the International Communist League have initiated emergency protests around the world, urgently demanding: “Defend UNAM strikers beaten by Cárdenas’ cops!—Down with state terror against the left!” Protests have been held at Mexican consulates and embassies in Boston, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Toronto, Vancouver, London, Berlin, Paris and

Sydney. Sections of the ICL have also obtained significant solidarity statements from powerful workers unions, representing tens of thousands of members. Particularly noteworthy are the powerful miners and transport unions of South Africa, the French CGT/CEGELET, as well as dozens of other unions from postal workers in Canada to Service Employees Local 1877 Justice for Janitors in California.

Free quality education for all, in the cities and the countryside! For union strikes against privatizations and in defense of education! Cops out of the unions! For workers revolution! Build a Leninist party! ■

South African Unions Defend UNAM Student Strikers



NATIONAL UNION OF METALWORKERS OF SOUTH AFRICA
153 Bree St.
Cnr. Smeets & Smeets St.
Newtown
Johannesburg 2001
E-mail: info@numsa.org.za
011-8338330

F.O. Box 260683
Eskom 2023
Tel: 011-8320000/9
Fax: 011-8330408

TO: MEXICO GOVERNMENT
October 15, 1999
Re: UNAM PROTEST ACTION

Dear Sir or Madam:


We are very much disturbed by the reports we heard regarding the way your government is handling the students' struggle for decent and affordable higher public education, in your struggle against the state and its repressive military machinery.

We call upon you to desist from using security forces to crush the legitimate protest and withdraw from all institutions of learning.

We call upon you to accede to demands of the students, workers and communities to refrain from destroying education by provoking it.

Yours faithfully,
MOTAT
National Office

South African unions representing hundreds of thousands of metal, transport, mine and other workers joined in protesting attacks on Mexican leftists and students.



Transport and General Workers' Union Head Office


15 October, 1999

MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY TO UNAM STRIKERS

TGWU sends its revolutionary greetings in your determined and legitimate struggle for decent and affordable higher public education, in your struggle against the state and its repressive military machinery.

The situation is very similar to what we experienced in South Africa in our struggle against the repressive apartheid regime. They (the regime) believed that increased repression would smash popular organisation, and this is of course made us more determined and resolved to achieve our noble peoples victory and liberation.

Repression is one of intensifying




COSATU
CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS
End Mexican Victimisation

October 18, 1999

COSATU has noted with dismay the repression and victimisation of students in Mexico. Students are boycotting classes in protest against government plans to impose unaffordable tuition fees on them. What this would mean effectively is that those from working class and poor backgrounds would no longer have access to tertiary education.

Education is one of the foundation stones of democracy. Access to education is often used as a factor to measure poverty. To deny the poor access to education would be morally reprehensible. Privatisation has never served the interests of the poor and working class.



NATIONAL UNION OF MINeworkers
7 Main Street
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INTERNATIONAL DESK

TUTA CONTINUA TO UNAM STRIKERS

October 15, 1999

...includes the strikers of UNAM against them. We urge you to be employed in the solidarity with the

Running Dogs of the Democrats ISO Covers for KKK

Mass Labor/Black Mobilization Rattles PL

The October 23 labor/black mobilization that drove the Klan from the streets of New York left an imprint on the consciousness of thousands of workers, black and Hispanic militants, students and others who got a taste of what could happen when the social power of the multiracial proletariat was mobilized independently of the capitalist class enemy. It also laid bare the obstacles to such a class mobilization in the form of not only the open agencies and parties of the capitalists—the cops and courts, Giuliani’s City Hall and the “friend of labor” Democrats—but also the self-styled socialists who do their bidding. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) acted purely and simply as running dogs for the capitalist Democrats. For its part, the Progressive Labor Party (PL) dismissed the mass labor-centered mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and sought to substitute its own small forces against the Klan terrorists.

The ISO social democrats provided a pale pink cover for the cynical machinations of Democrats Scott Stringer and Al Sharpton as they actively worked to head off the labor/black mobilization. Stringer colluded with the Giuliani administration as the Klan’s rally site was secretly moved from where the PDC had called for the labor/black mobilization to *stop* the Klan and then agreed to *share a sound permit with the KKK*. Sharpton worked the airwaves trying to convince black people not to come out against the KKK lynchers, then endorsed Stringer’s “tolerance”—for the Klan—diversion and even went to court on the Klan’s behalf on October 20.

That very evening, at an organizing meeting for the Stringer/Sharpton “demonstration for tolerance,” an ISO member gushed about what a wonderful speaker Sharpton was and how many people he would draw. On the morning of the October 23 mobilization itself, an ISO member from Columbia University baited one of our comrades: “If anyone is going to bring out thousands, it’s Al Sharpton, not you guys!” In the upshot, Sharpton didn’t even bring himself out, no doubt ill-inclined to face the fury of demonstrators disgusted by his defense of the Klan. Now, well after the fact, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (5 November) slaps its erstwhile idol Sharpton on the wrist for defending the KKK!

In another ruse to cover its tracks, the ISO put out a flyer for an October 28 meeting on “Lessons of the Anti-KKK Demo” which asks: “Who Do the Government and Cops Serve?” Well, on the afternoon of October 23, some of these cops served to hold up the banner of the Latino Officers Association that provided a backdrop for the ISO speaker on the Democrats’ platform, while their fellow cops massed to protect the robed and hooded racists.

Left Wing of “Democratic” Imperialism

Providing cover for the racist nightriders in league with the cops and capitalist politicians certainly strips bare what socialist pretensions the ISO has. But such treachery comes naturally to these reformists, who see in the “democratic” capitalist state and its cops and courts

potential allies of the oppressed and have supported police “strikes” from one in NYC in 1971 to one by Toronto prison guards in 1996. The ISO’s British patron, Tony Cliff’s Socialist Workers Party, even ran an article titled “Are All Coppers Really Bastards?” which claimed that the cops would cease to be “agents of the state” if they “rebel collectively” (*Socialist Worker*, 8 February 1997). How about the NYPD’s “collective rebellion” in September 1992, when 10,000 armed cops besieged City Hall in a lynch mob frenzy against black Demo-

and China against U.S. and British imperialism in the Korean War. In the name of “anti-Stalinism” and their spurious, anti-Marxist “theory” that the Soviet degenerated workers state was “state capitalist,” the Cliffites went on to support every reactionary force intent on smashing the Soviet Union—from cut-throat Islamic fundamentalists fighting the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan to CIA/Vatican-backed Polish Solidarność (see “The Bankruptcy of ‘New Class’ Theories,” *Spartacist* No. 55, Autumn 1999). When Russia’s Boris Yeltsin and

vided a platform for the Klan, the Stalinoid Progressive Labor Party counterposed its confrontationist posturing to the PDC-initiated mobilization of labor/black power which rode the Klan out of New York. PL actually called on people to assemble at the PDC rally site and had a contingent there, endorsing the labor/black mobilization on the spot. Immediately after the mobilization, a PL Internet statement ludicrously claimed that “thousands” were “led by PLP” that day and crowed, “It took the PLP to lead a breakaway march of hundreds who really wanted to confront the Klan.” In fact, as we wrote last issue, “what PL did was ‘lead’ itself straight into a line of riot cops a short distance away.”

Now PL’s *Challenge* (3 November) rails about “the enemy in our midst” in the form of “two counter-demonstrations,” one organized by “liberal politicians from the Democratic Party” and the other by “the fake leftists of the Spartacist/Partisan Defense Committee.” The *Challenge* report recounts futile attempts by isolated groups of PLers to push through police lines—“Back and forth we went, fighting the cops, trying to get more people into our group so we could lead an all-out attack on the Klan”—and enthuses that when the KKK first showed up “three anti-racists organized by PLP” managed to land a few blows against the Klansmen. The PDC has contributed to the legal defense of the arrested anti-Klan protesters and demands: Drop all charges now!

But such substitutionism is utterly ineffective as a strategy to stop the fascists. It dismisses the need for and is in fact counterposed to the mass mobilization of labor and its allies. As the PDC call for the labor/black mobilization declared: “What is needed is a determined, disciplined mobilization of labor standing at the head of all the oppressed to *stop the fascists*, not for small groups to engage in confrontations with the police which accomplish nothing other than getting some heads busted and people thrown in jail.” What kept the cops at bay on October 23 was the show of labor power, including disciplined contingents of trade unionists, mobilized by the PDC.

PL is clearly rattled by this mass anti-Klan mobilization initiated by those it customarily denounces as “Trotskyite fascists.” In the issue of *Challenge* (27 October) immediately following the anti-Klan mobilization, PL came out for the defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal after refusing for years to defend him on the grounds that Jamal is a “black nationalist.” *Challenge* even acknowledges that “the Trotskyite group, the Spartacists, have made Mumia a major thrust of their organizing one of the main defense committees.” PL then attacks us as “very unprincipled” for “never criticizing Mumia’s nationalist politics.” Our policy of class-struggle defense of those victimized by the racist capitalist state is non-sectarian, i.e., it is not dependent on the political viewpoints of those we defend. Moreover, our position for revolutionary integrationism as against all currents of black nationalism and liberal reformism is expressed in numerous publications which we distribute at Jamal defense rallies.

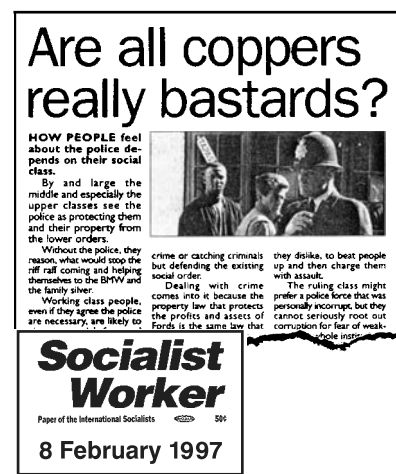
PL’s sectarianism is directly linked to its rejection of the need for a political struggle to win the proletariat to revolutionary consciousness. In fact, while in practice carrying out “left-center

continued on page 7



WV Photo

ISO cynically asks who cops serve after sharing platform with them at Democrats’ tolerance-for-Klan diversion on October 23. ISO views cops as “workers.” ISOer with security guard at Columbia University.



Young Spartacus

cratic mayor David Dinkins? When the cops “rebel collectively,” it is to get more firepower and throw off any constraints on their murderous rampages against working people and minorities.

Just as the ISO views cops as “workers,” it looks to the capitalist class enemy to “clean up” the unions. The ISO-supported Teamsters for a Democratic Union literally wrote the blueprint for the Justice Department’s takeover of that union in the late 1980s, capping a decades-long government vendetta against the Teamsters. We say: Cops out of the labor movement! Government hands off the unions!

Embrace of “democratic” capitalism has been the Cliffites’ lodestar since that tendency’s formation. Cliff was expelled by the Trotskyist Fourth International at the outset of the Korean War in 1950, when he refused to defend North Korea

his pro-imperialist “democrats” in 1991 launched the capitalist counterrevolution which led to the final undoing of the October Revolution of 1917, the Cliffites cheered, “Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing” (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991).

As long as the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe existed, we Trotskyists called for their unconditional military defense against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, as we do today in the case of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies.

PL: Revolutionary Phrasemongering

Where the social-democratic ISO openly embraced the Democrats who pro-

Building the Anti-Klan Mobilization

We publish below excerpts from a report by a Workers Vanguard correspondent who interviewed Spartacist League supporters and others actively involved in building the Partisan Defense Committee-initiated united-front labor/black mobilization that rode the KKK out of New York City.

New York City's working people embraced the anti-Klan mobilization as their own. When we did sales, flyer distributions and soapboxing the weekend before the demonstration, at some sites the literature tables were practically overwhelmed. This was particularly the case on Saturday at the Fulton Mall and at Flatbush and Nostrand in Brooklyn.

At one Manhattan Sanitation facility, workers practically dragged one comrade into the shop and told other workers to shut up while they had her give a speech on the demo. When Giuliani's name was mentioned, one of the workers said, "Giuliani is our boss. We hate him." At Harlem Hospital, when our comrades got there for the first time early in the week before the demo, the flyer had already been posted all around the hospital, in the lounge and the reception area, in the coffee shop across the street. One black transit worker told a co-worker he had never seen anything like this before: "Everybody in the neighborhood is talking about it. The leaflet is everywhere."

At a UPS location, a black worker volunteered to help build the demo but said, "I thought the Klan was denied a permit." When a comrade argued that you can't trust the courts, the cops and Giuliani, the worker turned to his friend, a young Asian, and said, "That's right. Look, it's like for us. We never trust the boss. We know that everything he says is a lie."

Two young women from the Fort Greene housing projects in Brooklyn came to the SL public office and got leaflets to build the demo. Four students from Transit Technical High School in the East New York section of Brooklyn helped distribute some 2,000 leaflets. On her way home the night before the rally, a comrade ran into a group of black women transit workers talking about the PDC mobilizing leaflet and sold a *Workers Vanguard* subscription to one of them. Another pointed to the leaflet and said, "Is that you organizing that demonstration? I want that paper." As comrades were walking to the mobilization site on Saturday morning carrying "Stop the



Young Spartacus

SYC rallies support at NYU for October 23 labor/black mobilization.

KKK!" posters, bus drivers honked in solidarity. At the demonstration, one transit worker said, "This is working people against the Klan."

The party acted as the tribune of the people, mobilizing blacks, Hispanics, Asians, immigrants. Scores, probably hundreds, of merchants posted the flyer or took stacks for distribution. Every fast-food restaurant in the Flatbush/Nostrand area took it, as did all the stores and coffee shops around one of the bus depots in Brooklyn and Indian newsstand vendors in lower Manhattan. A Korean grocery store owner in Harlem came out of his store to contribute \$10 and started giving out leaflets. Some grocers offered our comrades free cokes when they saw the poster. A bar owner near a Brooklyn bus depot offered free drinks to anyone who went to the demo. Hundreds of individuals took stacks of leaflets to distribute, from a jogger in Jersey City's Journal Square to black youth in Flatbush/Nostrand.

When comrades were soapboxing in Chinatown, a merchant came out, took a stack of leaflets and told them how to say KKK in Chinese—*San K Dang* ("3K Party"). After one youth told them how to say "Stop the Klan"—*Tingzhi San K Dang!*—the response was enormous.

A number of people reported discussions on subways and buses. In one instance, someone involved in building the mobilization offered the PDC flyer to

another passenger on the subway and soon everyone in that section of the train was talking about the demo. When the supporter said that everybody who is targeted by the Klan should come out—blacks, Jews, Hispanics and homosexuals—a black woman who had been reading Farrakhan's *Final Call* said, "Right on!"

As one PDC worker was taking the mobilization leaflet to the printer, she told the Asian cab driver about the demo. He said the Klan provocation was part of the government going after immigrants. He added, "We're all immigrants in this country, especially in this city."

On the campuses, a wide variety of immigrant and other groups leapt to make the demo their own. A member of the Arab Club at Hunter College took leaflets to help organize the demo. At NYU, the organizations that endorsed included LUCHA, Asian Initiative, Womyn's Center, Catholic Center, Islamic Center, Chabad. The 14 students who attended a Spartacus Youth Club planning meeting at NYU included an NAACP member who had already been leafletting for the demo; a woman from Chabad, a Jewish religious group, who supported the anti-Klan mobilization but couldn't come because it was on a Saturday; and an Islamic woman in a headscarf who said, "Giuliani probably wants to be in the Klan, but he can't because he's Italian Catholic."

At Borough of Manhattan Community College, there was a bitter debate in the student government over the question of "free speech for everyone." Some Caribbean students argued that Hasidic Jews always try to stop their Caribbean Day parade, so why should they stop a parade by people who hate Jews. A PDC representative spoke sharply against this kind of backward consciousness and anti-Semitism, which had been evidenced on both sides of the debate. The student government voted to endorse the anti-Klan mobilization.

Many of these campuses have, in the past period, become practically police states. At Hostos, a comrade was escorted off campus by cops and told that even students cannot distribute leaflets or post flyers without administration approval. When some students at Bronx Community College raised the "free speech" issue, this comrade told them, "You're worried about free speech for the fascists, and *you* don't even have that right!" By the end of the week, students were putting up mobilization flyers without getting approval.

Many of the community college students have to hold down jobs while they

study, and they spread the news at their workplaces. The morning after a mobilizing team went to Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, a team at a UPS facility met a worker who told them that the student government at Medgar Evers was building the demo.

The call to stop the KKK also struck a chord at a number of private colleges. A contingent of 40 students from NYU marched into the demo chanting. Other contingents came from Columbia and Cornell. Students at Sarah Lawrence organized a van of 18 students to come to the demo, plus some others who came on their own. One student said, "I really like this idea of the working class being the ones who have social power."

Our political fight against the Democratic Party's "free speech" cover for the Klan acted to polarize the unions and black organizations. As the date of the KKK provocation drew closer, and workers came to understand that the PDC was not calling on Giuliani to ban the Klan but rather for a mobilization of labor/black power to *stop* the racist terrorists on the streets, the question of "free speech" became much less of a hot issue. By the Thursday before the demo, the day after Al Sharpton filed his "friend of the court" brief on behalf of the KKK, workers in one transit shop who had been defending Sharpton weren't doing so any more. One worker said, "Sharpton is just a politician like all the rest of them."

The polarization caused by our political fight against the "free speech for the Klan" forces was reflected in the trade-union bureaucracy, which was caught between the groundswell of pressure at the base to stop the KKK and its traditional Democratic Party allies. Sharpton and Assemblyman Scott Stringer promoted "tolerance" for the KKK and tried to organize a diversion from the only mobilization aimed at stopping the lynchers. One union local president said he couldn't endorse our demonstration (because the union lawyer told him he couldn't!), but he kept asking incredulously, "Why is Sharpton doing this? How could he do this? What's up with Sharpton?"

A municipal union official we had been trying unsuccessfully to contact all week finally took a phone call on Friday, saying, "It's a damn shame. It looks like they're going to let them march." She offered to get an endorsement from AFSCME District Council 37 but later said DC 37 was split down the middle and therefore was not endorsing either the PDC demonstration or the one called by Democrats Sharpton and Stringer. Another municipal union official also told us, "We can't endorse either demonstration. Our local is divided down the middle." The same was true with other union locals.

SEIU Local 1199 president Dennis Rivera, himself a leading figure in the state Democratic Party, endorsed the Stringer/Sharpton "free speech" diversion in his own name. But the local did not take a position. At a Local 1199 delegates meeting, the delegates overwhelmingly understood that this was not a question of free speech, and many took stacks of leaflets from a PDC representative to take back to their work locations. When the purpose of the Democratic Party rally endorsed by Rivera was explained, one Local 1199 member told a team leafletting outside her hospital, "I voted for Rivera but I can't support him anymore if he's helping the Klan."

Some unions that didn't endorse gave some support to the PDC-initiated mobilization in other ways. The Laborers Union didn't endorse, but they took

Spartacist Forums

Black and Red: Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

Labor/Black Mobilization Rides KKK Out of New York City!

— Organizers' Eyewitness Reports —

Saturday, November 13, 7 p.m.

Lecture Hall E, Science Center
Harvard University
For more information:
(617) 666-9453

BOSTON

Monday, November 15, 7 p.m.

Mary Ward Residence, Cantina Rm.
San Francisco State University
For more information:
(415) 395-9520 or (510) 839-0851

BAY AREA

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste

Plus: Update on Urgent Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Saturday, November 20, 7:30 p.m.

St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor Street West (One block west of Spadina Station)

TORONTO

For more information: (416) 593-4138



Members of SEIU Local 371, postal, civil service, transit and other unions formed backbone of October 23 mobilization to stop the KKK.

stacks of leaflets and put them in the union halls. An official in another union said he couldn't get an endorsement but put us in touch with the union dispatcher to try to organize some marshals for the demonstration.

When a team distributed flyers near Rev. Herbert Daughtry's church in Brooklyn the Sunday before the demo, Daughtry had just given a news confer-

ence calling for free speech for the Klan. One deacon tried unsuccessfully to make the team go away, while another later took an endorsement packet and told the comrades that there was a split among the deacons and that he did not agree with Daughtry.

The danger posed by the Klan was understood by the mass of the population. Many New Yorkers had directly



experienced racist Klan terror. Workers who came from the South, or had family in the South, were especially clear on the need to stop the Klan. One said, "We should be *right there*, where the Klan is!" A transit worker who brought his two children to the demonstration and bought a subscription to WV originally came from Mississippi and said his neighbor's family had been bombed

out of their home by the Klan. A Mexican worker said that he had worked in Georgia for a guy whose father was in the Klan. A member of the Social Service Employees Union described how she had been terrified as a child in the South when the Klan burned a cross on her family's lawn. Another demonstrator said, "My mother brought me from South Carolina 38 years ago to get away from stuff like this. They killed my grandfather. Now it's 39 years later and it's the same thing." His wife added, after the Klansmen had scurried off into the courthouse under police escort, "And they're protected within the confines of the courthouse!" As a PDC spokesman led chants of "Remember Greensboro, Stop the Klan Now!" at the demonstration, workers from the SSEU Local 371 contingent called out the names of other victims of Klan terror to him on the podium: "Remember Emmett Till...Remember James Chaney...Remember Michael Schwerner...Remember Andrew Goodman...Remember Medgar Evers!" At the victory party after the demonstration, one woman from the New School said, "I saw on TV that there were several different demonstrations, but I knew which one I wanted to go to. I felt empowered today." ■

The mobilization of New York City's working people and minorities to ride the Klan out on October 23 required a ceaseless political battle by the Partisan Defense Committee against the courts, the Giuliani administration, Democratic Party politicians like Scott Stringer and Al Sharpton and the phony socialists who covered for the Democrats' efforts to provide a "free speech" platform for Klan terror. They *failed* in their attempt to sabotage this labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK, and now the Democrats and their "left" tails are desperately trying to cover their tracks.

Stringer now proclaims, "The real story is that *we ran the KKK out of town* (*New York Press*, 3 November [emphasis in the original]). The real story is that Stringer and his fellow Dems who preached "tolerance" for the Klan were jeered by many of the thousands who had come to run the KKK out of town. Chiming in is the Communist Party (CP), which endorsed Stringer's diversion and now talks of "a spontaneous anti-Klan protest by 8,000 New Yorkers" (*People's Weekly World*, 30 October). In a similar vein, the Workers World Party (WWP) reported, "Thousands of anti-racists turned out to confront the Ku Klux Klan here on Oct. 23" (*Workers World*, 4 November)—without any mention of either the Democrats who opposed those thousands or the PDC-initiated mobilization which brought them out. With this bit of deception, WWP tries to hide its own role: while not openly supporting Stringer's diversion, WWP (in the name of an "Emergency Mobilization" which mobilized nothing) issued a last-minute call for protesters to gather at the Stringer rally site.

That the WWP covers for Sharpton's despicable role in defending the Klan should come as no surprise. Two years ago, *Workers World* (25 September 1997) urged its readers to support this capitalist

Workers World, CP Covering for Democrats, Disappearing the Reds



NYC, October 23: WWP's International Action Center sows illusions in "justice" of capitalist courts, SL fights for freedom for Mumia.

politician's mayoral bid as a "vote of solidarity with the African American, Caribbean and Latino communities." Continuing its opportunist sleight of hand, the *Workers World* account of the anti-Klan mobilization reports that "signs and placards demanding freedom for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal were clearly visible." Indeed they were, but the bulk of the signs distributed by the WWP, in the name of its International Action Center, read, "New Trial for Mumia!" WWP even sent a handful of supporters to the PDC rally site to distribute its signs. But of the anti-Klan demonstrators who had unwittingly taken them, most traded them in for PDC signs demanding *freedom for Mumia* when our comrades explained

that the "new trial" call sowed illusions in the very courts which had railroaded Jamal to death row and had upheld the KKK's "right" to rally for genocide.

As many thousands of New Yorkers know—and is evident from the numerous accounts in our "Reporter's Notebook"

(page 6)—it was the PDC call "All Out to Stop the KKK on October 23!" which galvanized the mass outrage against the fascists. Hundreds of working people, students and others joined in distributing 175,000 flyers for this united-front demonstration, which was endorsed and built by the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Club and Labor Black League as well as dozens of trade-union, student and minority organizations.

As we wrote in our article on the mobilization (WV No. 722, 29 October), "What was seen on the streets of New York City on October 23 was a microcosm of a workers party in action, i.e., the working class mobilized in its own interests, acting independently of the government and parties of the capitalist class." For the reformist tails of the Democratic Party, such a mobilization is a crime against nature.

In his *History of the Russian Revolution*, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky noted: "The mystic doctrine of spontaneity explains nothing.... To the smug politicians of liberalism and tamed socialism everything that happens among masses is customarily represented as instinctive." It was clear from the outset that there was mass outrage among New Yorkers against the Klan. But it took Bolshevik leadership and organization to give direction and political expression to what the most politically conscious workers, black militants and others knew had to be done. ■

ISO...

(continued from page 5)

coalition" opportunist maneuvers within the unions, PL dismisses the unions as "pro-boss" organizations that must be "smashed." PL explicitly denies any class distinction between the mass organizations of the working class under pro-capitalist leadership and church groups, the imperialist army and thoroughly reactionary outfits like the all-male religious bigots of Promise Keepers!

The social-democratic ISO is abjectly servile to the bourgeois liberals. The

Stalinoid PL combines adventurist confrontationism and empty "fight for communism" rhetoric with philistine backwardness. But these are flip sides of the same opportunist coin: both the ISO and PL despair of the possibility of making the working class conscious of its historic interest in overthrowing capitalism. For this, it is necessary to forge a revolutionary workers party on the model of Lenin's Bolsheviks, who led the Russian proletariat to victory in the October Revolution of 1917. The October 23 labor/black mobilization in New York City was a step on the road to forging that party. ■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Saturdays, 3 p.m.

November 13: **Stalinism—Gravedigger of Revolutions**

November 20: **Black Oppression and Revolutionary Integrationism**

328 S. Jefferson St., Suite 904 (corner of Jefferson and Van Buren near Clinton stop on Blue Line)

Information and readings: (312) 454-4930 or spartacist@iname.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. at NYU

November 16: **Trotskyism vs. Stalinism: The Revolution Betrayed**

November 30: **For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Student Events Center, Rm. 307 or 309 5 Washington Pl. (at Mercer St.)

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025 or nysl@compuserve.com

BOSTON

Saturday, 2 p.m.

November 20: **Reform vs. Revolution** Zamparelli Room 112, Mayer Campus Center, Tufts University

For room and information: (617) 666-9453

TORONTO

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m.

November 17: **The Family and Women's Oppression**

International Student Centre, U of T 33 St. George St. (north of College St.)

For room and information: (416) 593-4138

VANCOUVER

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

November 23: **For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky: The Fight for a Revolutionary Party**

Room 212, Student Union Bldg., UBC

Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

Black Freedom...

(continued from page 1)

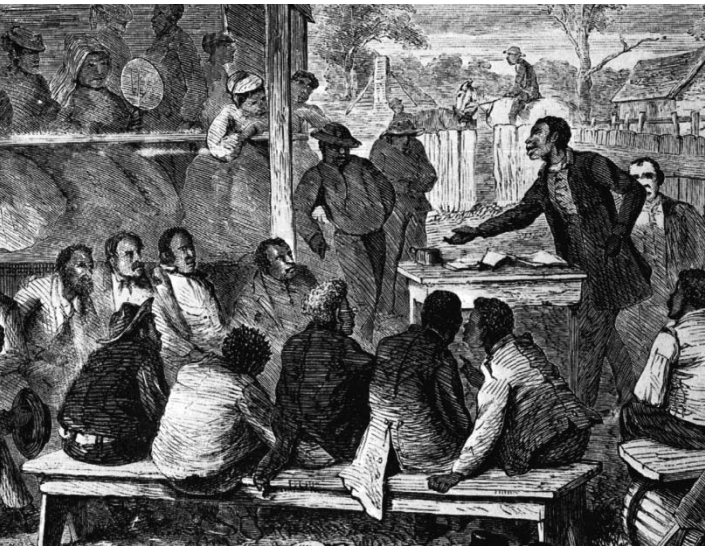
U.S. history. Millions lost their jobs and unemployment remained high for several years. By 1877, the cumulative hardships stemming from the prolonged depression had created widespread discontent. The Great Railway Strike broke out in 1877, and the capitalists mobilized the police and the National Guard to suppress it. Also in 1877, the last nail was put in the coffin of Reconstruction with the complete withdrawal of Union troops from the South.

This, of course, only encouraged the KKK in its campaign to destroy as many gains of the Civil War as possible. A former Confederate general and Freemason, Nathan Bedford Forrest, founded the Ku Klux Klan and served as its first Imperial Wizard. Following the Civil War, the Ku Klux Klan launched a campaign of terror that targeted for beatings or assassination local Radical Republican leaders as well as blacks who asserted their rights in dealings with white employers. The Klan decimated the Republican organization in many localities. Increasingly, the new Southern governments looked to Washington for survival. Congress enacted a series of Enforcement Acts authorizing national action to suppress politi-

organization Benjamin Smith was associated with, the man who went on a shooting spree last July Fourth weekend, killing two and wounding nine Jews, blacks and Asians.

These are the kind of killers the capitalists plan to unleash when mass discontent erupts on a scale that will overwhelm the existing forces of the state. In August 1998, the New York Stock Exchange plunged 554 points. This led to a meltdown in September of stock markets around the world. In a matter of a few weeks, \$2,300 billion of “paper profits” vanished into thin air! This illustrates the anarchy of capitalism. This illustrates the basic instability of international financial capital, where thousands of dollars of paper speculation are traded for every dollar of real value.

The capitalists keep the fascists in reserve, intending to survive the most devastating economic collapse and social crisis by placing the fascists in power at the head of a mass movement of reactionary violence. The capitalists protect the paramilitary fascists of the KKK, including by invoking “freedom of speech,” as if the lynch rope and the gas chamber are simply forms of expression. The courts, as part of the capitalist state, used the “free speech” argument to justify granting the KKK a public platform in Manhattan to organize terror. Meanwhile, they



Harpers Weekly

1868 election rally of freed black slaves in South during post-Civil War Reconstruction. KKK was formed to smash newly won black freedom through terror.

cal violence. In 1871, the administration launched a legal and military offensive that virtually destroyed the Klan.

The depression that began in 1873, however, put economic questions in the forefront of capitalist politics, and Reconstruction became expendable. When Democrats won control of the House of Representatives in 1874, for the first time since the Civil War, it was clear that Southern Republicans could expect little further help from Washington. Northern Republicans, besieged by labor strikes and economic crisis, forged an alliance with the Southern Democrats to stabilize American capitalism on the foundations of anti-strike terror by cops and troops in the North and KKK lynch mob terror in the South.

The strength of the KKK has peaked and receded at various times in history, coinciding with the rise and decline of social and economic discontent. There were surges in KKK membership in the 1870s, the early 1920s and in the 1950s and 1960s. This corresponds with the racist terror campaign to overturn Reconstruction in the 1870s, the white race riots and economic downturn of 1919-1921, and the civil rights movement of the late 1950s and '60s, when the KKK went on a rampage of violence against civil rights workers.

The 1990s has seen a resurgence of KKK activity. The KKK faction that was chased off the streets of New York last Saturday was the Indiana-based American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which has been the most active KKK faction in the last two years. Led by Jeffery Berry, it was formed in 1995 and has organized rallies throughout the Midwest and the South. It has carried out a recruitment drive in central Illinois. The Rantoul, Illinois chapter of this KKK faction shares a post office box with the World Church of the Creator. This is the fascist



WV Photo

Democrat Al Sharpton led pro-cop “anti-crime” march in Brooklyn in August; defense of KKK in October made headlines in black press in Britain.

ship and instead had a token contingent of TWU officials at a Sharpton rally. The trade-union leaders who tie the unions to Democrats like Sharpton must now be seen as fake union leaders who are subordinating the labor movement to the defenders of the KKK.

The Democratic state assemblyman from the 67th District, Scott Stringer, played a prominent role in organizing a diversion from the PDC united-front mobilization to stop the KKK. On October 21, Stringer worked out a deal with the city that allowed his demonstration to share a sound permit with the KKK: the Stringer people would speak between 12 noon and 1 p.m. and the KKK would speak from 2 to 4 p.m. The Stringer leaflet was titled “Come tell the KKK their message of hate has no place in NY!”

It was clear that the thousands who came out on the streets of NYC last Saturday weren’t interested in a dialogue with the KKK. They came out to stop them! The intent of the Stringer demonstration was to divert people from that objective. Fortunately, their call for a dialogue with the KKK was aggressively rejected by the thousands who came out. Stringer is a liberal Democrat who, like Sharpton, pretends to defend the interests of the oppressed. But his collaboration with the Giuliani administration in a failed attempt to divert and split the mobilization to stop the KKK clearly exposes him as an enemy of labor and all those targeted by the KKK.

On October 20, representatives of the PDC attended a meeting built by the ISO and several other left and liberal groups which was advertised as an organizing meeting to protest the Klan. It turned out that this was an organizing meeting for the Stringer diversion. The PDC representatives appealed for the broadest possible unity against the fascists of the KKK and for endorsing the united-front mobilization that the PDC had called. Eventually, a spokesman for Stringer simply stated that the difference between them and us is that they recognize the constitutional rights of the KKK! And they went on to build a rally for tolerance for the Klan.

In Germany during Hitler’s rise to power, there was a political party much like the ISO, the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Unlike the ISO, the SPD had a real mass base in the working class of Germany. By 1932, the year before Hitler became chancellor, the SPD rested on the sullen, halfhearted support of the German



workers. The Social Democrats worked hard to make German society safe for capitalism by sacrificing struggles even for reforms. They kept a suspicious watch on the working class in order to appease the capitalists. But for the German capitalist class, the time for halfway measures had passed. In order to find a way out of the crisis, the capitalists sought to rid themselves of all pressures exerted by the working class. Their intention was to eliminate the workers organizations, that is, to completely crush them.

The Stalinist-led Communist Party of Germany was politically incapable of tearing the masses away from the influence of the Social Democratic Party. For one thing, instead of proposing to the SPD united-front defense measures against the Nazis as revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky was urgently calling for, the Communist Party ultimatically demanded that social-democratic workers abandon the SPD, which it labeled “social fascist.” The subservience of the Social Democracy to the capitalists and the inability of the Stalinist Communist Party to provide a revolutionary alternative opened the road to the seizure of power by Hitler’s Nazis. We do not intend to allow this to happen again!

The October 23 labor/black mobilization was a united-front demonstration initiated by the PDC, a non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League. The united front provides the only effective organizational method for stopping the KKK with the maximum possible forces. In the united front last Saturday, everyone who came out to stop the KKK was welcomed to join the demonstration and present their own opinions. These opinions are not necessarily harmonious. But the expression of all these opinions offers workers an opportunity to determine which is the most effective strategy for defeating the KKK.

We base our tactics on the lessons of the October Revolution of 1917 and the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevik Party. The Russian word for council is soviet. And the workers soviets which were the basis upon which power was seized in Russia were the highest expression of the united front. But it was the Bolsheviks who provided the leadership for revolution. Two months before the workers seized power, the Bolsheviks were able to lead workers to defeat a counterrevolutionary mobilization led by General Kornilov, winning over troops to

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U.S. Imperialism Hands Off Iraq!

For eleven months since last December's concentrated four-day air assault, the Clinton administration has continued to wage a savage aerial war against the people of Iraq. In one of the few reports in the capitalist press on this constant terror bombing, the longest sustained American military operation since U.S. imperialism's counter-revolutionary war in Vietnam in the 1960s and '70s, the *Washington Post* (30 August) headlined "U.S. Air Raids on Iraq Become an Almost Daily Ritual." The U.S. and its ally, Labour prime minister Tony Blair's Britain, have carried out *over 27,000* sorties—including the use of 2,000-pound concrete-filled bombs against densely populated areas containing supposed military targets—killing some 200 Iraqi civilians since December.

Meanwhile, the starvation blockade imposed under the auspices of the United Nations in 1990 continues to claim the lives of *6,000 children every month*, while fully one in four Iraqi children suffers from chronic malnutrition. On top of the tens of thousands killed by the U.S.-led "Desert Slaughter" in 1991, some 1.5 million Iraqis have died from disease and hunger because of the imperialist sanctions.

Having failed to get rid of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein through repeated assassination attempts and starving and immiserating the population, the U.S. has also devoted nearly \$100 million to fantastical schemes aimed at cohering an internal mercenary force through the Iraqi National Congress, an unsavory lash-up including Islamic reactionaries,

Constant Terror Bombing, Starvation Blockade



AFP

Civilian buildings in Iraq reduced to rubble by U.S. bombing in summer.

former military men, monarchists and pro-imperialist Kurdish and Shi'ite minority spokesmen. The *New York Times* (28 October) recently reported that some of these imperialist stooges are being trained at a military base in Florida "to organize a military in an emerging state." Saddam Hussein is a butcher of Iraqi workers and Kurds and other minorities, whose bloody anti-Communist efforts were fully supported

by the U.S. imperialists for years. It is the task of the Iraqi proletariat, led by a Trotskyist vanguard party committed to the program of permanent revolution, to lead the peasantry and all the oppressed in sweeping away his despotic regime.

Washington's cynical prating about restoring "democracy" in Iraq is a transparent cover for its real purpose: to assert control over the vast oil and natural gas resources in the region. In turn,

America's imperialist rivals, especially France, have been increasingly vocal in pushing for an end to the UN sanctions in order to facilitate investment in the area. Within the U.S. as well, there has been growing sentiment among sectors of the bourgeoisie that the economic sanctions against Iraq have outlived their usefulness.

Echoing such sentiments, groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and the Workers World Party (WWP) plead with Democrat Clinton to "lift the sanctions" and "end the bombing." Betraying its appetites, the ISO recently gave as an example of growing opposition to the U.S. rulers' war on Iraq a liberal anti-sanctions advertisement in the *New York Times* (28 April) which "evenhandedly" declared: "The Iraqi people are suffering because of the actions of both the Iraqi and U.S. governments."

Reformists like the ISO and WWP promote the illusion that American imperialism can be pressured to pursue a more peaceful and humane policy. But the death and destruction being wreaked upon the people of Iraq show what imperialism is all about, a rapacious system based on the exploitation, subjugation and murder of the workers in order to expand the profits of a handful of filthy rich capitalists. The only way to put an end to imperialist mass murder, exploitation and oppression is through the forging of a revolutionary workers party to lead the multiracial U.S. proletariat to the conquest of state power. *Down with the starvation blockade! U.S. hands off Iraq!*

the side of the revolution as they prepared to march on the capital. Kornilov was placed under arrest. After his defeat, the masses decisively swung to the side of the Bolsheviks and the October Revolution moved ahead more rapidly.

A social and economic crisis in Russia led to a successful workers revolution because of the leadership of the Bolshevik Party. In Germany in the 1930s, a social and economic crisis led to the conquest of power by the Nazi Party due to the fact that an effective revolutionary workers party didn't exist.

For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

America needs a workers party that will ensure a workers' future. The mass outpouring of militant defiance to the KKK last week must be transformed into a class-conscious revolutionary workers party. The demonstration to stop the KKK was an expression of what a party like this would be in action. With disciplined workers at its core, it would mobilize all those who are oppressed by capitalism, who are also the intended victims of the KKK. A workers party will lead the working class in fighting the oppression of immigrants, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, women, gays, youth and others. It would stand in firm opposition to all forms of bigotry.

Last week's anti-KKK mobilization demonstrated the ability of labor to win when it is mobilized in its own name, independent of the capitalist politicians and the capitalist state. The struggle by the working class to free itself from wage slavery is inseparable from the struggle for black liberation. Karl Marx put it this way: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

Labor must not only mobilize to stop the KKK as it did last Saturday, it must destroy the system that promotes the growth of the KKK. Labor must fight to offer a future for the youth in the ghettos



Wide World

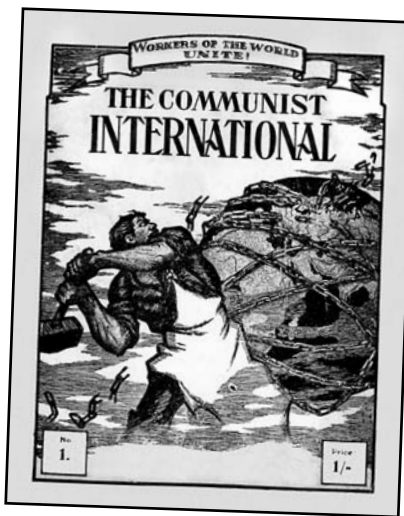
Black poet Claude McKay speaking at Communist International's Fourth Congress, Moscow, 1922. First issue of CI journal, 1919.

and barrios other than that of poverty and prison. The unions need to win a living wage protected by a full cost of living adjustment. They need to establish union-run recruitment and training programs that will provide union jobs for all those who have been thrown on the economic scrap heap by this system. They need to fight for full employment and a reduction of the workweek with no loss in pay. Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Program in 1938:

"Under the menace of its own disintegration, the proletariat cannot permit the transformation of an increasing section of the workers into chronically unemployed paupers, living off the crumbs of a disintegrating society. The *right to employment* is the only serious right left to the workers in a society based upon exploitation."

All the slave-labor programs that force welfare recipients to work for their benefits must be abolished. Giuliani's new scheme to force the homeless to slave in order to sleep in city shelters must be defeated as well. All "workfare" workers should be recruited to the unions with full union wages, benefits and protection.

This is also the case for immigrants



to be here. The unions must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

But in order for the unions to be effective in the struggle to win these gains, they must break free from the stranglehold of the Democratic Party. Labor must get the courts out of the unions and take responsibility for cleaning its own house. The cops who are the first line of enforcers of strikebreaking, who play the role of an occupying army in the ghettos and the barrios and who defend the KKK killers are not part of the labor movement. Labor must demand: Cops out of the unions! The unions need to protest in large numbers against racist police shootings like the execution of Amadou Diallo and fight for the freedom of framed-up class-war prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

TWU Local 100 members, whose contract expires in December, should regard the policy of the union's New Directions outfit of suing the union in the capitalist courts with contempt. It was these courts that imposed the Taylor Law fines following the sellout of the 1980 strike. But

continued on page 10

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Black Freedom...

(continued from page 9)

it should also be remembered that a more severe anti-strike law called the Condon-Wadlin Act was effectively abolished after the victorious 1966 TWU strike. Last week's mobilization showed that the determined mass, militant social power of labor was able to overcome all of the legal obstacles and police threats protecting the KKK. If labor beat back these obstacles to driving the KKK from the streets of Manhattan, it can defeat the Taylor Law. The working class needs a leadership that understands that strikes aren't won or lost in the courthouse or in the legislature but on the picket line!

The fight to organize the open-shop South with its newly built industries will mean carrying out a struggle to defeat the KKK. In November 1979, the KKK, with the assistance of federal agents, massacred five leftists at an anti-Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina. Throughout the South, the KKK has been associated with the burning of black churches, cross-burning and murders, including the dragging death of James Byrd Jr. in Texas last year. Organizing the South means the formation of massive workers defense squads to protect labor organizing efforts from KKK terror.

To paraphrase Trotsky, ultimately it will be disciplined, militant detachments of armed workers, who feel the support of tens of millions of toilers behind them, which will successfully defeat the fascist gangs. The struggle against fascism starts in the factories and ends in the streets. Scabs in the factory plants



1966 NYC transit strike brought center of finance capital to a halt.

are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. Strike pickets, on the other hand, are the nuclei of the workers' army.

The Wall Street capitalists serve as the



1966 antiwar protest: SL fought for revolutionary perspective in struggle against imperialist slaughter in Vietnam, racist oppression in U.S. Right: SL/LBL at March 29 NYC protest over cop execution of Amadou Diallo.

nerve center for promoting anti-labor terror internationally, from backing the police-state measures of the Mexican government against striking UNAM university students to the terror bombing in Serbia and Kosovo. There can only be a workers' future if workers of all countries stand as one against the capitalists of all countries. The main enemy of the American working class is the American ruling class. This means that workers in this country must fight for the right of self-determination for the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico. Those countries where capitalism has been overthrown—Cuba, North Korea, China and Vietnam—must be defended against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution.

The only way to permanently remove the threat of fascism is to take industry out of the hands of the incompetent, corrupt, racist exploiters and rebuild society based on a socialist economic plan. A workers' future means a socialist future, an economy that will no longer rest on the chaos of the capitalist market and the impoverishment of human society for the benefit of a minute minority. It will mean the final elimination of poverty, racism and imperialist war. In order to accomplish this, a workers party needs to be built. We of the Spartacist League are the core of that party.

The following are excerpts from a speaker's comments during the floor discussion following comrade Kartsen's presentation.

I just want to say, I was around the Spartacists for a while in the late '60s. I do support a lot of the positions of the group. I just wanted to compliment the demonstration last week.

I don't know if people know this, but when I was coming to the demonstration, the trains that go from the East Side at 96th Street were all turned off and you couldn't take a train down to this demonstration. You had to go to Harlem, 125th Street, and wait for the so-called special express. I didn't do that. I took the bus across town and took another train on the West Side. And I was reminded by what the speaker was saying of reading about the Russian Revolution. It was just like living in the history of it from Trotsky because it was so clear: We weren't supposed to get there.

I had been called late the night before by a friend who told me it was all off. She was watching the news. And it was only because I had been in touch with the Partisan Defense Committee that I had the phone number by my phone and I called them up at 11:30. And they were there! The importance of these little things makes the difference between whether you're just talking about it or you actually get there. And it's very much of a war. I really know that. I have been in wars since I left the party. I was a war correspondent briefly. I know what it's like to be on the lines where you may be shot at.

I really, really, really loved it that there were all those signs that you could pick, you could carry your own. And so you weren't under control. I mean, you could have said none of them fit you and you didn't have to carry anything. I could actually feel the power of being in a

group that actually changed the way the police treated us. At first, the police were telling me with my gray hair: "Move back ma'am, move back ma'am. Move back, you can go over there and see the Klan." And by the end, they were moving away from us!

During the discussion, another speaker asked why there weren't more blacks and Hispanics attending leftist events. Comrade Kartsen addressed this and other questions in his concluding remarks.

America was founded on lynch mob terror and union-busting. This is a deeply racist society. This is what makes it possible for it to be such a profitable operation for capitalism. There was a time, during the 1930s, after several general strikes, when the Communist Party drew thousands and thousands of black militant workers to its ranks. And for the first time in the history of this country, you had a massive participation of black industrial workers fighting for the cause of black and labor liberation. Something happened to that. It was betrayed.

The position of the Stalinist CP was "socialism in one country." Stalin revised Lenin, revised the program of international revolution. Instead of relying on the mobilization of the working class internationally to defend the Soviet Union and to crush fascism when Nazi Germany attacked the USSR in 1941, he instead put his lot in with the "democratic" regimes of Britain and the United States and France. And accordingly, he instructed the American Communist Party to abandon the fight for black liberation and defense of the unions. That goes a long way to explaining why, in the years that followed, many black people, and white workers as well, turned their backs on the Communist Party.

In fact, the Spartacist League defines as one of the aspects of its existence a fight during the civil rights movement to give communist leadership to that struggle. It was one of the points over which we broke with the Socialist Workers Party. The SWP's position was: whatever black leadership came forward—whether that black leadership was for peaceful nonviolence or for militant self-defense—it just didn't matter, they supported it. Well, that's an abdication of leadership.

We fought for the program of revolu-



tionary integration, against both liberal integrationists and black nationalists. And that is what gave us the ability to do this mobilization. It was the understanding of the need to combine the essential fight for black liberation with the fight for workers emancipation into one solid fist. And this is what we're building on. So if you see the American left being mostly white, there is a historical reason for that. We are providing an answer to that. And the mobilization was key to it.

The landscape of this city has been changed politically by this massive anti-Klan mobilization. The political organizations in this city have now been defined and will be defined in terms of what they did on October 23. Did they defend the Ku Klux Klan? Or did they stop the Ku Klux Klan? There's no doubt that Sharp-ton will be supplemented by other black misleaders. But one thing's for sure: the old misleaders such as Sharpton will never look the same again.

Armed with a Marxist understanding of the roots, the causes of what drives capitalist society and what occurs within it, and based on the authority which we have gained from this mobilization, we are in a position to better unmask the misleaders that the capitalist political machine will throw up against the working class and nonwhite sections of the population in the future. What we want to do is deepen the political understanding as to who stands in the way of the fight for the liberation of minorities and the working class in this city. This mobilization went a long way to doing that. It went a long way toward the struggle for a workers future. But this advance must be transformed into new recruits for the revolutionary movement of the working class, must be transformed into new recruits for the Spartacist League, the Labor Black League and the Spartacus Youth Clubs.

Capitalism can maintain its existence only by lowering the standard of living of the working class. Now it is time to build a party that can provide leadership for the struggles to come—a party that can lead in winning the battles against the encroachments of capital. Last week, a significant battle was won. Let's turn that victory into the building of a party that will transform labor into an invincible force that will sweep capitalism and its fascist killers into the junkyard of history.■

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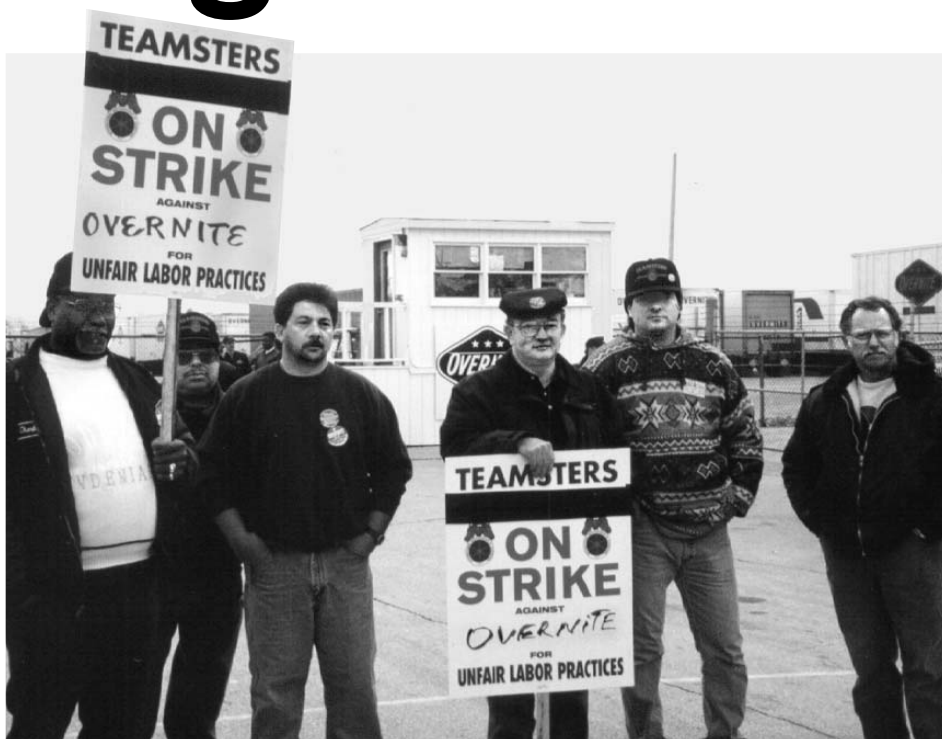
Organize the Unorganized!

Victory to Teamsters Strike Against Overnite!

Anti-Mexican Chauvinism Is Poison

NOVEMBER 7—For two weeks, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) has been on strike against Overnite Transportation Company, the sixth largest trucking company in the country and the largest non-union outfit in the industry. At stake is a battle to organize over 8,000 truck drivers and dock workers in 166 terminals in the 50 states as well as in Canada, Mexico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam. This is one of the largest efforts at union organizing in the private sector in decades and the first national strike since World War II against a company where the workers have neither a contract nor full union representation.

Although the Teamsters do not have a majority of the Overnite workers organized, they have a powerful strategic base of 3,600 drivers and dock workers in 37 terminals, including some of the largest ones. With the lucrative holiday shipping season approaching, Overnite has already had to close a number of terminals. Furthermore, a good and powerful move by the Teamsters in this strike was to enlist the support of the nine major railway unions, which have pledged to honor Teamster picket lines at rail yards and freeze Overnite freight nationwide if the company, a subsidiary of Union Pacific



Teamsters picket Overnite terminal in Bedford Park, Illinois. Instead of building mass pickets to shut down company, union tops push reliance on capitalist government.

Railroad, carries out its threat to shift freight to the railroads.

Since the Teamsters began trying to organize Overnite in 1994, the company has pulled every dirty trick in the book to smash the union, repeatedly filing decertification petitions at terminals where the union has succeeded in winning recognition, harassing pro-union workers and firing many others. Several hundred such

workers have been fired in the last four years at the Memphis terminal alone. Since the strike began, the company has brought in an army of strikebreaking "security guards" and hired scabs to augment those workers who refused to join the strike. Strikers have been hit by scab trucks and menaced by company goons wielding guns and knives. A number of strikers have also been arrested.

We say: Drop all the charges!

Instead of mobilizing the full power of the union against Overnite by organizing mass picket lines that nobody dares cross, the Teamster leadership is relying on what one union communiqué called "federal laws that protect American workers," complaining that "Overnite workers played by the rules but the Company will not." This class-collaborationist claptrap will set up the strike for attacks from the Feds and the company. Workers must clearly understand the role of the state as the repressive apparatus of the capitalist class enemy.

It is scarcely surprising that the current Teamster leadership preaches reliance on the capitalist state and its laws. James P. Hoffa became union president last March through a government-run election. In fact, the government has directly controlled the leadership and finances of the Teamsters for many years—with the complicity of both Hoffa and his predecessor Ron Carey as well as the so-called Teamsters for a Democratic Union. The Feds ordered the recent election in large part to punish Carey for the successful and popular strike against UPS in 1997. UPS agreed to a union demand to provide 10,000 full-time jobs for part-timers. But these jobs have *never* materialized—a source of deep-seated anger throughout the UPS workforce, particularly among the heavily black and Latino youth who form the bulk of the part-time workforce.

continued on page 11

Courts Trash Women's Rights

Free Abortion on Demand!

On October 26, a federal appeals court in the Midwest upheld Illinois and Wisconsin laws that criminalize a late-term abortion procedure and threaten life imprisonment for any doctor who aids a woman in what should be a purely personal, medical decision. The drive to ban late-term abortions, misleadingly labeled "partial birth" abortions by bigots, is aimed directly at rolling back the 1973 decision legalizing abortion nationally as part of a relentless campaign spearheaded by Christian fundamentalists to outlaw abortion entirely. Already some

30 state legislatures have voted for similar bans. And in late October, the U.S. Senate voted yet again to outlaw the same late-term abortion procedure, a measure already passed by the House of Representatives.

To a large extent, Clinton owed his election as president to the votes of women who opposed the virulently anti-abortion stand of the Republican right. While Clinton has said he would again veto the proposed Congressional ban on late-term abortions, he has done so on the narrowest of grounds—that it should

allow for some exceptions based on a "woman's health." More fundamentally, this Democratic administration has axed welfare for millions of poor women and children, while *implementing a host of anti-abortion measures* including denial of federal funds for abortions.

We are for free abortion on demand, regardless of what trimester it should fall in, as part of free, quality health care for all. A woman's decision whether or not to

carry a pregnancy to term is hers alone to make, just as a terminally ill patient has the right to make fundamental decisions on his or her final care, without outside interference from state authorities.

Abortion is still technically legal in this country—but if you're poor or young, it's increasingly impossible to get one. Thirty states have "squeal rules" requiring parental consent or notification for a minor

continued on page 11



SL/SYC at NYC protest over murder of Dr. Barnett Slepian, October 1998. Attacks on abortion rights by capitalist politicians and courts embolden "right to life" terrorists.