

## Mobilize Labor Power Against State Repression, NAFTA Austerity



AFP

Reuters

Mexico City, February 6: Cops drag off UNAM strike leader Alejandro Echevarría and over 700 others in early morning assault on student strike. Tens of thousands of workers, students and parents have taken to the streets in protest.

# Mexico: Outrage Over Cop Attack on Student Strike

FEBRUARY 8—As we go to press, the central campus of Mexico City's National Autonomous University (UNAM) remains under police occupation while hundreds of striking students are in jail, some on charges of "terrorism" which could bring 40 years' imprisonment. Early in the morning of February 6, up to 2,500 thugs of the Policía Federal Preventiva (PFP—Federal Preventive Police) invaded the campus on the orders of Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo. Over 700 people, among them leaders of the General Strike Council (CGH), were thrown behind bars. Five days earlier, federal police working alongside the "Auxilio UNAM" campus cops, "Cobra"

**PRI/PRD: Nationalist Lackeys  
for U.S. Imperialism  
Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!**

paramilitaries and hired thugs brutally attacked the struck "Prepa 3" high school affiliated with UNAM, arresting over 250.

The police occupation of UNAM has helped shatter illusions in Mexico's wafer-thin bourgeois "democracy." A measure of the volatility of the situation was given by the father of one of the

arrested students who told CNN News yesterday, "Instead of giving Mexico education, they are oppressing the country and forcing it into revolution." The "democratic" cover for the cop invasion of UNAM was a phony "referendum" engineered by UNAM rector Juan Ramón De la Fuente last month which he claimed as a mandate to put an end to the strike.

Such attempts to mobilize public opinion against the strikers now lie in tatters. As one woman said at a protest march of UNAM strikers' parents on February 6, "That plebiscite was pure deceit."

For over nine months, the strikers have held firm in their struggle against the Mexican bourgeoisie's attempt to impose tuition at UNAM—with 270,000 students, the largest university in the Western Hemisphere—which the U.S. imperialists demanded as a condition for World Bank loans. Last month, powerful sectors of the Mexican ruling class, headed by the Catholic church, stepped up agitation to "re-establish law and order" and end

*continued on page 5*

## Mass Arrests in Mexico Require Urgent International Protest!

### Free All Arrested UNAM Strikers! Defend Public Education!

#### Statement by the International Communist League

FEBRUARY 6—At dawn this morning, an army of thousands of the notoriously brutal Mexican federal police stormed the Mexico City UNAM campus and arrested up to 700 students and strike supporters at a meeting of the General

Strike Council (CGH). The bourgeoisie's lying claims of the "autonomy" of the largest university in the Americas have been flattened under the iron heel of a military occupation of the campus. Parents and strike supporters bravely put their bodies on the line to block the buses hauling students away to dangerous police custody, but they were overwhelmed by military force. Many hundreds are now in custody in the federal police headquarters in Mexico City's Plaza de la República.

Our comrades in Mexico City in the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM) and Juventud Espartaquista (JE) are fighting now for an urgent mass labor-centered demonstration to demand: **Drop all charges! Free the UNAM strikers! Defend public education!** Internationally, the workers movement and the left must take action to demonstrate that the victimized UNAM strikers do not stand alone. The workers movement everywhere has a stake in this fight against class privilege and state terror in Mexico. International protest and exposure is urgently necessary to fight state

*continued on page 5*



WV Photo

PDC protest outside Mexican consulate, New York City, February 7.



# New York Times: Pandering to Fascism

The *New York Times*, a principal mouthpiece for the U.S. capitalist ruling class, has taken to acting as press agents for the racist killers of the Ku Klux Klan. In a *Times* (16 January) piece headlined “Community Finding Good in Presence of a Klansman,” columnist Matthew Purdy serves up a warm and fuzzy portrait of James W. Sheeley, a fascist lowlife from upstate New York who heads the regional American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Purdy depicts the efforts of a local preacher and friend of Sheeley, one Brian Randazzo, who approves of the Klansman’s “good influence.” When the preacher turned over his pulpit to Sheeley last November, the Klansman railed against the “mongrels” in the congregation. On the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, Randazzo preached a sermon on behalf of Sheeley titled “Loving Your Enemies,” prompting Purdy to report that this “has given Dr. King’s birthday a meaning here that eludes many communities”!

Sheeley’s Klan outfit was run out of New York City last October 23, when at least 8,000 working people, minorities and youth responded to the call by the

Partisan Defense Committee—the class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League—for a labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK. In the lead-up to October 23, the *Times* ran numerous articles, letters and opinion pieces depicting the fascists as an irrelevant fringe group and preaching that no one should interfere with their “right” to rally. On the day of the attempted Klan provocation, a *Times* editorial alibied these racist terrorists by arguing that “no testimony suggested that Klan members were likely to engage in violence.” Try telling that to the family of James Byrd Jr., a black man dragged to his death by KKK murderers in Texas in 1998. The Klan, America’s homegrown Nazis, “speaks” with lynch ropes, guns and bombs. Their “rallies” are recruitment drives for racist murder.

This *Times* editorial was part of the failed efforts of the Democratic Party to derail the October 23 labor/black mobilization. New York Civil Liberties Union lawyer Norman Siegel and Democratic state assemblyman Scott Stringer colluded with Republican mayor Giuliani and the courts to give the Klan a free



**October 23 labor/black mobilization rode KKK out of NYC. Democrats, *Times* defended Klan’s “right” to sow racist terror.**

ride and to stop the anti-KKK protest. Stringer, black Democrat Al Sharpton and Charles Schumer—point man in the Senate for racist “law and order” and gun control—organized a “rally for tolerance” for the KKK, even offering to share a sound permit with the Klan. Meanwhile, former FBI informant Sharpton joined the black establishment *Amsterdam News* in filing “friend of the court” briefs on behalf of the KKK! But the multiracial working class of New York City was determined to drive the Klan killers out—and did, defying Giuliani, the Democratic Party establishment, the cops and courts. The *Times* (24 October 1999) itself headlined, “Unmasked and Overwhelmed, the Klan Is Besieged at Rally.”

A recent *Times* (21 January) article on black radio talk shows gives backhanded acknowledgement of the impact of the October 23 anti-Klan victory on the city. The article, which features a photo of a participant in the labor/black mobilization holding a PDC “Stop the KKK!” placard, quotes a radio listener telling a talk show host, “When the Klan was marching I didn’t see no responsible black leadership speaking against the Klan.”

Indeed, the “responsible” black Democrats, along with trade-union bureaucrats like Dennis Rivera who is himself a leader of the state Democratic Party, were preaching “tolerance” for the Klan. The Democrats were acting on behalf of *their* class, the racist capitalist ruling class, which keeps the fascist killers in reserve, to be unleashed against the working class and minorities in times of sharp social crisis. As revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky explained in his 1934 work *Whither France?*:

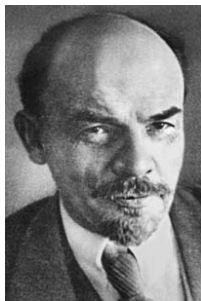
“Finance capital is obliged to create special armed bands, trained to fight the workers.... The historic function of fascism is to smash the working class, destroy its organizations, and stifle political liberties when the capitalists find themselves unable to govern and dominate with the help of democratic machinery.”

The *New York Times* and the Democratic Party liberals seek to obscure the Klan’s role as the historic American nativist fascist group, which has terrorized blacks, organized labor, Catholics, Jews and other minorities since it was born from the defeated Confederate slavocracy following the Civil War. Today, with Sheeley saying that he wants to try again to appear in New York City, the *Times* portrays the KKK fascists as some kind of poor, “misguided” folk. Purdy’s article prints without comment Sheeley’s line that “the Klan was not violent or hateful, but was a white separatist group fighting for white people in the face of intermarriage and civil rights for minorities.” The *Times* article is part of the ongoing campaign by the bourgeois liberals for “tolerance” for the fascist lynchers. Its purpose is to try to lull the working class while preserving the fascists as the reserve guard dogs to maintain the role of capital.

On October 23, the power of the multiracial working class was mobilized in its own self-interest and in defense of all the exploited and oppressed against the deadly KKK threat. The success of that mobilization required the Marxist leadership provided by the PDC and the Spartacist League, which fights to build a workers party which will smash the fascist menace once and for all through socialist revolution. ■



TROTSKY



LENIN

## Imperialism and War

*In promoting protectionist chauvinism, the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy acts to mobilize the working class behind the interests of the U.S. imperialist exploiters against their capitalist rivals overseas. As was seen in two cataclysmic interimperialist world wars, trade wars ultimately lead to shooting wars. Meeting in revolutionary Moscow after the end of World War I, the Communist International stressed in the platform adopted at its First Congress that war is inherent in the imperi-*

*alist system, which can only be overthrown through socialist revolution internationally.*

The contradictions of the world capitalist system, formerly hidden deep within it, have erupted with colossal force in a gigantic explosion: the great imperialist World War.

Capitalism sought to overcome *its own anarchy* by organizing production. Mighty capitalist associations formed, such as syndicates, cartels, and trusts, replacing the numerous, competing entrepreneurs. Bank capital merged with industrial capital. The finance capitalist oligarchy came to dominate all of economic life; it used its organization, based on this power, to achieve exclusive supremacy. Monopoly took the place of free competition. Capitalists in association replaced the *individual* capitalist; organization replaced insane anarchy.

However, the more that capitalist organization replaces anarchy within each country, the more acute become the contradictions, competition, and anarchy in the world economy. The struggle among the largest, best-organized predator nations led with iron necessity to the monstrous imperialist World War. Greed for profits drove world capital to fight over new markets, new spheres for capital investment, new sources of raw materials, and the cheap labor power of colonial slaves. Once the imperialist states had divided up the whole world among themselves and transformed the many millions of African, Asian, Australian, and American workers and farmers into beasts of burden, sooner or later a violent collision was bound to occur, revealing the true, anarchic nature of capital. Thus originated the greatest crime of all, the predatory World War....

The end result of the capitalist mode of production is chaos, which only the largest productive class, the working class, can overcome. This class must establish a real order, the communist order. It must break the domination of capital, make wars impossible, destroy all national borders, transform the whole world into a community that produces for itself, and make the brotherhood and liberation of the peoples a reality.

—“Platform of the Communist International” (March 1919), reprinted in *Founding the Communist International* (1987)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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11 February 2000

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## 1989-90—Revolution vs. Counterrevolution in Germany

Saturday, February 12, 7 p.m.

UC Berkeley, 126 Barrows Hall

BAY AREA

For more information: (510) 839-0851 or (415) 777-9367

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## Black Freedom and Proletarian Revolution

On the occasion of Black History Month, we publish below excerpts from two lectures on “The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution” given in 1953 by Richard Fraser as a spokesman for the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). These lectures were subsequently reprinted by us in *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, “In Memoriam Richard S. Fraser: An Appreciation and Selection of His Work” (August 1990). In these lectures comrade Fraser offers a Marxist, materialist analysis of the oppression of black people as a race-color caste in American capitalist society.

A veteran of the revolutionary Trotskyist movement going back to the 1930s, Fraser developed the program of revolutionary integrationism, the fight against every instance of discrimination under capitalism and for the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. From our inception this program has been the cornerstone of our struggle for black liberation. Fraser was a theoretical mentor of the SL’s precursor, the Revolutionary Tendency (RT), which fought the centrist degeneration of the SWP in the early 1960s. In particular we struggled for an active Trotskyist intervention into the civil rights movement.

The RT was formed in opposition to the SWP majority’s uncritical embrace of Cuba’s Castro and its tailing of the pro-Democratic Party liberal civil rights leaders, and subsequently black nationalism. For this opposition, we were bureaucratically expelled in 1963-64. Dick Fraser’s own political trajectory at the time led him in a different direction. After breaking with the SWP in 1966, Fraser helped found and, before being cut off by a split, briefly led the Freedom Socialist Party. Some years later he was a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). Toward the end of his life, Dick distanced himself from the DSA and joined the SL. His last political act was to endorse the PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization which stopped

the KKK from rallying in Philadelphia on 5 November 1988.

These lectures were given when Jim Crow segregation was the law of the land in the South, before the emergence of the mass civil rights movement of the 1950s and ’60s that led to its downfall. The bourgeoisie eventually acquiesced to the demand for legal equality in the South. With the mass migration of black people from the rural South into the Northern

heroic struggles within the framework of “respectable” bourgeois politics, in particular tying the movement to the Democratic Party administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. The liberal-led civil rights movement could not address the roots of black oppression in the capitalist system. Today, aside from a thin layer of the middle class, the mass of the black population is materially worse off than before the struggles of the

of this country are used for the benefit of those who labor to produce them, the material foundation will be laid for the full equality of black people and the eradication of all social inequalities.

\* \* \*

How did the idea of *race* come into being? There was no conception of race before capitalism. Of all the antagonisms between peoples of the ancient and medieval world not a single one had as its focal point the different appearance of peoples. On the contrary, older civilizations were struck with the basic identity of people as human beings independent of the differences in skin color, hair texture, etc.

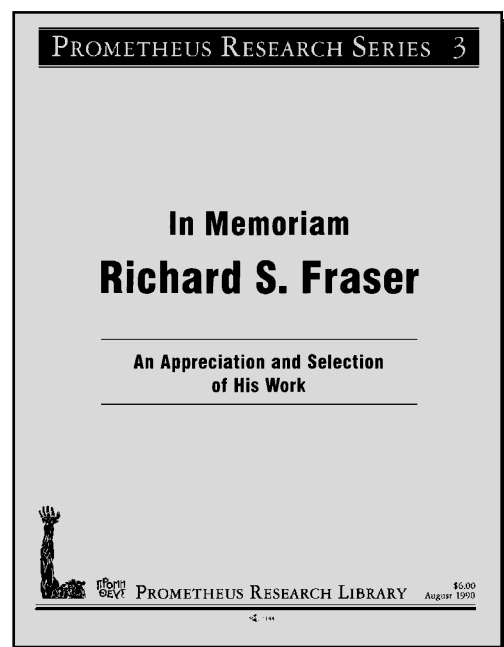
To be sure, ever since the division of society into classes, the owning classes have held those that they exploited in contempt. But in ancient times the claims of superiority of ruling classes never took on a racial character.

The first time in the known history of human society that difference in skin color was the subject of fierce antagonism between people was the direct product of colonial and United States chattel slavery created under the impulse of the development of European capitalism.

It was a peculiar combination of historical accident and necessity by which the Negroes became the slave class of this modern slave system.

The climate, soil and location of the southern United States, the West Indies and Central America were suitable for the production of certain crops. These crops could only be produced in marketable proportions by the use of large scale cultivation methods. With a wide abundance of free land, however, available to all, free labor could not be held on the land of others. It was therefore necessary to create a system of compulsory labor. The system of chattel slavery is quite inefficient and wasteful. But in this part of the western hemisphere the low cost

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The Fraser Family

**Richard S. Fraser. PRS No. 3, containing a selection of his works, is available for \$7 (includes postage). Order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.**

cities and the increasing concentration of blacks in the industrial labor force, Jim Crow segregation had grown anachronistic. Moreover, it was an embarrassment overseas as American imperialism sought to posture as the champion of “democracy” in the Cold War, particularly in competition with the Soviet Union in the Third World.

The fight for black equality broke apart the conservative Cold War consensus and profoundly shook the American bourgeois order. However, the liberal black establishment represented by Martin Luther King Jr. sought to contain these

1960s by every measure—education, housing, job prospects, wages. At the same time black workers make up a significant component of organized labor, integrated into strategic sections of the proletariat, in whose hands lies the power to break the chains of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression. There is no road to eliminating the special oppression of black people other than the working-class conquest of power, and there will be no proletarian revolution to end class exploitation unless the working class actively takes up the fight for black rights. When the enormous productive resources

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#### Break with the Democratic Party of Racism and War— We Need a Workers Party!

**Thursday, February 24, 7:30 p.m.**  
322 W. 48th St., 1st Floor

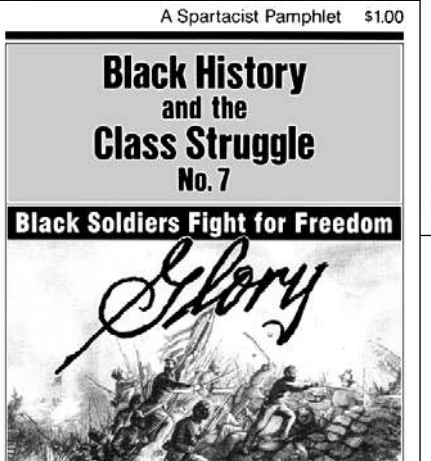
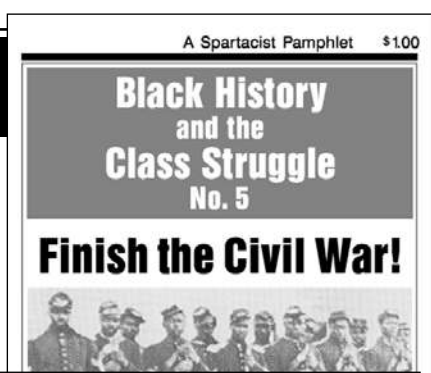
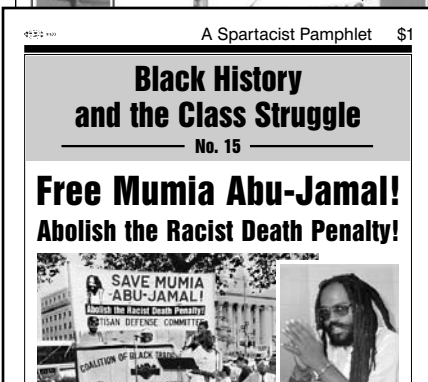
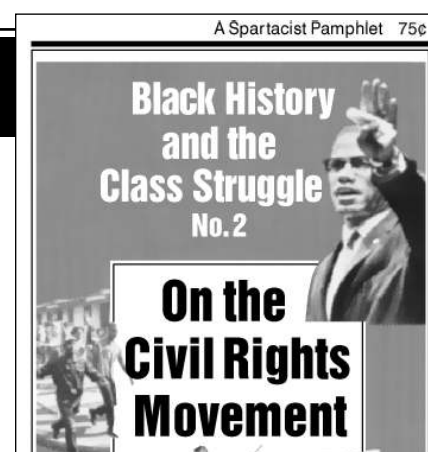
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### Finish the Civil War! For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!



# Young Spartacus

## University of Toronto Teaching Assistants Strike

# ***SYC Joins Picket Lines, Fake Left Organizes Scabbing***

Since January, campuses in Ontario, British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada have been hit by worker and student protests against austerity attacks by the federal and provincial governments and university administrations. For three weeks in January, more than 2,000 teaching assistants struck the elite and filthy rich University of Toronto (U of T), demanding better wages, a tuition waiver and increased benefits. For the last several weeks, B.C. campuses have seen rotating strikes by campus workers. And on February 2, tens of thousands of students protested across the country against high tuition fees, which have more than doubled in several provinces over the last ten years. The Spartacus Youth Clubs in Vancouver and Toronto intervened in these struggles, fighting to win students and workers to our class-struggle perspective. At the February 2 demonstrations, SYC members also mass distributed a leaflet in defense of the UNAM strikers in Mexico.

SYC comrades walked the picket lines with the U of T TAs, emphasizing that in order to win, they needed the active solidarity of campus workers and students, aiming to shut down the campus. But instead, the university kept functioning with little disruption. The national leadership of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)—the TAs' own union—ordered other CUPE-organized campus workers to work behind the TAs' lines, and student leaders like student council president Matt Lerner denounced the strike! The TAs' local leadership itself encouraged students to attend classes, if only they'd walk the lines for a few minutes. As a result of all this, the TAs went back to work on January 31 with almost nothing gained.

At the root of these losing, divisive strategies is the reformist, pro-capitalist politics of the Canadian labor bureaucracy and its "political arm," the social-democratic New Democratic Party (NDP). The NDP is what Marxists call a bourgeois workers party—linked to the working class through the bureaucratic leaders of the trade unions, but thoroughly committed to upholding racist capitalism. Speakers for the NDP graced several TA strike rallies at U of T, trying to prop up their party's abysmal popularity ratings. But when it is in power, the NDP imposes the same austerity and repression as its Tory and Liberal counterparts. The Trotskyist SYC calls to *break* with the NDP and to build a revolutionary workers party.

As the SYC said in a widely distributed January 14 leaflet titled "Victory to U of T Strikers!": "Capitalism can't be reformed—it must be overthrown by workers revolution. The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight to win students and young workers to a lifetime of partisanship for the struggle of the working class. Key to this is actively championing the cause of all those who are oppressed by capitalism: youth and women, immigrants, gays, Native people, the Québécois." Addressing a TA strike support rally on January 7, an SYC speaker motivated this point: "If

you hate the racism, exploitation and war which are endemic to this capitalist system, you belong on the picket lines, because that's where the power to do something about it is." Emphasizing that capitalism means the oppression of the

only as a member of the SYC but as a member of CUPE Local 3907 (Graduate Assistants), where she played a key role in her union's decision to respect TA picket lines. We call on TAs, strike supporters and all who oppose racism and

**Toronto SYC speaker at U of T strike rally in January. I.S. scab "socialists" crossed picket lines, spewed racist filth at SYC supporter.**

Leah Macleod/Varsity



many by the few, she concluded: "The only way to end this is to get rid of the profit system and the exploitation and oppression it entails. Key to that is building a revolutionary workers party that fights for all the oppressed. To students who want an end to the endless cutbacks we say: Victory to the campus workers! Join the pickets! Shut it down to win!"

During the strike, the International Socialists (I.S.—co-thinkers of the American ISO) sponsored "strike support" actions that included crossing the TAs' picket lines, i.e., scabbing. As the SYC denounced these scab "socialists," the I.S. went into a frenzy, culminating in a racist, male-chauvinist attack on an SYC member and U of T trade unionist by I.S. honcho Ritch Whyman. We reprint below a January 30 Toronto SYC leaflet denouncing this bigoted outburst.

### **Open Letter to U of T TAs and Strike Supporters**

### **Condemn International Socialist's Racist, Anti-Woman Provocation!**

On January 21 at a rally of striking U of T teaching assistants at Simcoe Hall, Spartacus Youth Club supporter Stephanie Cheddie was the target of an ugly anti-communist tirade. The perpetrator was one Ritch Whyman, a leading member of the International Socialists (I.S.), who denounced Cheddie to a rally marshal as a "Nazi" and screamed profanities in her face. Not satisfied with slander and male-chauvinist bullying, Whyman then yelled at Cheddie, who is a non-white daughter of Guyanese immigrants, "Why don't you go back to where you came from!"

*Such racist, male-chauvinist abuse has no place on picket lines, at strike rallies or anywhere else!* Stephanie Cheddie is well known as a strike supporter, not

sexism to vigorously protest Ritch Whyman's outrageous attack.

What drove Whyman berserk was Cheddie's denunciation of the International Socialists' longstanding policy of crossing picket lines, i.e., scabbing. At a "strike support meeting" on January 14, in direct response to SYC interventions calling to shut down U of T, Whyman openly advocated crossing the TA picket lines en masse at Sid Smith to "organize solidarity." The I.S. did exactly that five days later. In contrast, from the beginning of the strike, the SYC has joined TA picket lines and called on other students to do the same. Picket lines are the fundamental battle lines of the workers' class struggle against the capitalist rulers: that's why we fight for the elementary principle that picket lines mean don't cross.

This has not been the perspective of the TA union leadership, who have bent over backwards to maintain "business as usual," refusing even to call for a boycott of classes by undergraduates, or for other campus workers to respect their picket lines. That recipe for defeat has been backed by all manner of self-styled "leftists," who loudly oppose our Trotskyist insistence on the need for a class-struggle policy to win this important strike. Most frenzied of all have been the pro-NDP social democrats of Whyman's I.S., whose anti-communism is truly bred in the bone.

Scratch a social democrat like Ritch Whyman hard enough with a revolutionary program of class struggle and he oozes racism, misogyny and anti-immigrant chauvinism. Why? Because the reformist I.S. takes its lead from the NDP and union bureaucracy, who fundamentally share the "values" of the capitalist ruling class. The pro-imperialist social democracy is the transmission belt for all manner of reactionary bourgeois ideology into the workers movement. The social democrats are the enemy of anti-capitalist class struggle, committed as

they are to the maintenance of the necessarily racist, anti-woman profit system. NDP speakers Rosario Marchese and Howard Hampton have regularly graced the platform at strike rallies, hypocritically pledging their support. While I.S. members have literally acted as cheerleaders for them, a 14 January SYC leaflet pointed out: "As attorney-general in Bob Rae's NDP government, Hampton *jailed* striking postal workers for defending their picket lines. It was the 1990-95 NDP regime that paved the road to Mike Harris through austerity attacks like the union-busting Social Contract and the racist attempt to eliminate health care for refugees and foreign students."

Whyman's gross outburst therefore accurately reflected the politics of the eternally NDP-loyal I.S., refracted through his own particular personal pathology.

For years, the I.S. championed all manner of reactionary, anti-Communist outfits which aimed at the destruction of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe. Among their heroes were the Vatican-inspired anti-abortion bigots of Polish Solidarność, and the murderous CIA-backed Afghan religious fanatics who fought the Soviet army and murdered schoolteachers for teaching young girls to read.

The same politics played out at the 1998 International Women's Day fair in Toronto, when the fair's feminist organizers authorized a booth staffed by propagandists for the anti-woman Iranian regime. The I.S. defended these mouthpieces for Islamic fundamentalism—who lauded the practice of stoning women to death for "adultery"—after they were confronted by outraged Iranian and Kurdish women supporters of the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (WPI). The SYC is proud to have participated in the WPI-led action, which drove the mullah-lovers from the fair. In revolting contrast, the I.S. denounced the protesters as "racists" and "violent," ugly slanders which amounted to an invitation to the racist capitalist state to send the Iranian leftist refugees "back where they came from."

Once again, the I.S. has taken its place on the wrong side of the class line, crossing picket lines at U of T and embracing some of the worst excrescences of bourgeois society—like Ritch Whyman, a walking negation of proletarian morality. Students and campus workers who want to fight against the oppressive capitalist system epitomized by the wealthy and arrogant Bob Prichard [U of T president] must reject with disgust any "socialist" organization that harbors a creep like Whyman in its leadership. They should look instead to the SYC for a revolutionary proletarian-internationalist program to sweep away capitalism and its manifold injustices. Down with I.S. anti-communist slanders and scabbing! Picket lines mean don't cross! ■

# UNAM...

(continued from page 1)

the strike by whatever means necessary. Now the government of Zedillo’s Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), working in tandem with the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas which runs Mexico City, has moved to crush the strike on behalf of the Mexican capitalists and their U.S. imperialist overseers.

But while the police occupation of UNAM continues, the city is not under siege, and masses of working people continue to rally almost daily in defense of the students. On February 4, at least 20,000 protesters gathered in Mexico City’s main square, the Zócalo, in defense of those arrested at Prepa 3. Two days earlier, some 2,000 marched to the Reclusorio Norte prison where those arrested students are being held. As the crowd yelled out, “Son, listen to me, your father has joined the struggle!”, hundreds of voices from within the prison walls were heard shouting “We are not alone!”

When the police stormed onto the main UNAM campus on February 6, students’ parents bravely attempted to block buses carting strikers off to prison, shouting “Let our children go!” “They are not criminals!” That evening, parents organized a demonstration of 20,000 people, including contingents of the STUNAM campus workers and other unions, which marched to the Plaza de la República to demand unconditional freedom for the arrested students. Protesters chanted, “La UNAM no es cuartel—Fuera Ejército de él!” (UNAM is not a barracks—Army out!).

At a STUNAM press conference earlier that day, the union announced that it would refuse to return to work as long as the campus is under police occupation. A representative of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League, made an urgent statement to the workers gathered there: “Because of its role as the motor force of the capitalist economy, only the working class has the social power to stay the repressive hand of the bourgeoisie and its state” (see article, page 6). Addressing the presence of the Auxilio UNAM cops in the STUNAM union, our comrade was cheered when he raised the call, “Auxilio UNAM out of STUNAM and UNAM!” The GEM and its youth group, the Juven-



Mexico City, February 4: At least 20,000 march to demand release of over 250 students arrested two days earlier when police and hired thugs attacked Prepa 3 high school.

tud Espartaquista, have fought for this elementary class principle from the beginning of the strike as well as for extending the student strike to the powerful Mexican proletariat, which faces a barrage of privatizations and other attacks on its jobs and livelihoods dictated by the imperialist vultures of the International Monetary Fund.

The actions of the thousands of Mexican workers who have taken to the streets to protest the police crackdown have blown apart the lies of the capitalist media that state authorities are committed to “peacefully” resolving the strike and that the UNAM strikers are crazed “ultras” with no support in the society. This is the same Mexican ruling class which unleashed the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre in which hundreds of students were slaughtered and army troops occupied UNAM. Cynically trying to defuse

intersect the struggles of the working class, especially in this election year when the different bourgeois parties (PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party], PAN [National Action Party]) want to prove to their imperialist masters that they are capable of maintaining capitalist ‘law and order,’ even if the cost is the blood of workers and students.... While the popularity of [the PRD] has decreased among sectors of workers and students as a result of the continuous attacks that its riot police have perpetrated against the strikers, it is necessary to give this disillusionment in the PRD a *class* character: the PRD is a *bourgeois* party, and its nationalism and democratic pretensions reflect nothing other than its bourgeois class interests. The fragile Mexican bourgeois regime cannot offer workers and the oppressed anything but hunger and repression.”

The government has bloodied and repressed the students because they think they can get away with it. The student strike has held out for many months and the students have fought valiantly. But student protest on its own is insufficient. To go beyond verbal protest and change society, students and all those seeking social justice must be anchored in the social and economic realities of the country and must mobilize the tremendous social power of the proletariat against the Mexican rulers and their imperialist overlords. We say: *No new 1968 massacres! Mobilize the power of the working class! Forge a revolutionary Trotskyist party!* ■

protest and anger by parents and others, the Mexican government announced today that several hundred of those arrested have been released. The *New York Times* (7 February), a mouthpiece of U.S. imperialism, peddles a portrayal of the brutal cop attack on UNAM as a school picnic, talking of a “peaceful” end to the strike. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The arrested students are in dire danger. Meanwhile, the cops continue to roam the streets rounding up militants on their hit list and any student strikers they can get their hands on.

It is urgently necessary for the workers movement and the left internationally to show that *the victimized UNAM strikers do not stand alone!* The ICL has appealed to unions around the world for solidarity with the UNAM strikers and has organized emergency demonstrations internationally, both last week after the attack on Prepa 3 and this week following the assault on the main UNAM campus. We demand: *Free all the arrested UNAM strikers! Drop all charges! Defend public education! No new 1968 massacre!*

### The Mexican Volcano

Particularly with the approach of the federal elections later this year, Mexico’s ruling parties had been reluctant to make a decisive move to end the strike, fearing it could touch off a social explosion. Likewise, the regime has refrained so

far from unleashing a full-scale bloodbath to drown the Zapatista (EZLN) peasant rebellion in Chiapas. A crisis in Mexico would be no less welcome to the Mexican bourgeoisie’s godfathers north of the border as the U.S. presidential election campaign heats up.

The fact that the UNAM strike has been able to last for nine and a half months is fundamentally due to the bourgeois regime’s worry that unleashing massive repression could spark resistance by the powerful Mexican working class. The UNAM strike has taken place not in a vacuum but on the volatile ground of social unrest. A few months ago, 50,000 sugar cane workers went on strike while the SUTERM electrical workers union, threatened with privatization of the electrical industry, began to raise its head after years of inaction. This demonstrates that the proletariat is beginning to break its chains, even within the corporatist unions controlled by the corrupt *charros* (old-line bureaucrats) of the PRI. As the GEM/JE wrote in a 4 February leaflet:

“Currently facing a wave of calls for strikes, the bourgeois regime wants to smash the UNAM strike so that it doesn’t intersect the struggles of the working class, especially in this election year when the different bourgeois parties (PRD, PRI, PAN [National Action Party]) want to prove to their imperialist masters that they are capable of maintaining capitalist ‘law and order,’ even if the cost is the blood of workers and students.”

As it attacks the student strikers at UNAM, the Mexican government is massively escalating its bloody repression in Chiapas, which has been under military occupation since the New Year’s 1994 uprising launched by the Zapatista guerrillas when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was imposed. Meanwhile, the government has been expelling most foreign visitors in Chiapas. In this framework, the secretary of the Mexican army is now coming to the U.S., which has been shipping massive quantities of arms and military “advisers” to the Mexican regime to help suppress the insurgent peasants. While our comrades have defended the heroic EZLN fighters against state repression, the petty-bourgeois Zapatistas have been tied to the PRD, hoping through this agency to pressure the bourgeois state for concessions through negotiations. The GEM/JE demands: Stop state provocations against the Zapatista rebels! Army out of Chiapas!

Well before the police occupation of UNAM, the regime made death threats against strikers, kidnapped strike leaders and supporters, including a supporter of the GEM, and unleashed violent attacks by strikebreakers. Throughout the strike, the Mexican bourgeois media railed against the “ultras” and “mega-ultras,” helping to prepare the ground for bloody repression. Outrageously, this was also the stance taken by the American *Socialist Action*, which is associated with the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat. In its

continued on page 6

## ICL Statement...

(continued from page 1)

repression of the left, the labor movement and the students in Mexico!

This morning’s police raid was preceded last week by the cops and hired thugs storming a striking high school affiliated with UNAM. High-school students and UNAM strikers were savagely beaten, hundreds were jailed and face serious felony charges of “rioting” and “terrorism” that could incarcerate them for decades. From the beginning of the UNAM strike, the GEM and JE have insisted that the police, including the campus police (“Auxilio UNAM”), are the hired thugs of the capitalist class and do not belong in the labor movement. These bloody police attacks add urgency to our call: *Cops out of the unions! Military/Police off campus!*

The attempts to restrict access to higher education for thousands of working-class youth—and the unleashing of brutal state repression, from the campus to the Zapatistas and peasants in Chiapas—are part of the intensification of the exploitation of the Mexican working class and oppressed by the Mexican bourgeoisie in line with the dictates of its U.S. imperialist masters through the International Monetary Fund and North American Free Trade Agreement. As the GEM/JE wrote in a February 4 leaflet distributed at a 20,000-strong protest march to the Zócalo: “Currently facing a wave of calls for strikes, the bourgeois regime wants to smash the UNAM strike so that it doesn’t

### Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

#### BAY AREA

Thursday, February 17, 7 p.m.  
**For Women’s Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**  
UC Berkeley, Dwinelle, Room 179  
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851 or (415) 395-9520

#### CHICAGO

Saturday, February 12, 3 p.m.  
**The Class Nature of the State**  
328 S. Jefferson St., Suite 904 (near Clinton stop on Blue Line)  
Information and readings: (312) 454-4930 or spartacist@iname.com

#### NEW YORK

Tuesday, February 15, 7 p.m.  
**Imperialism and War**  
New York University, Student Events Center, Room 403 5 Washington Pl. (at Mercer St.)  
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

#### TORONTO

Thursday, February 24, 7 p.m.  
**Free Mumia-Abu Jamal! The Fight for Black Freedom in America**  
U of T, International Student Centre 33 St. George St. (north of College St.)  
For room and information: (416) 593-4138

#### VANCOUVER

Tuesday, February 22, 7 p.m.  
**Anglo-Chauvinism and Canadian Capitalism: Why Marxists Advocate Quebec Independence**  
University of British Columbia Student Union Building, Rm. 215  
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

### Visit the ICL Web Site!

[www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org)

UNAM...

(continued from page 5)

January issue, this social-democratic outfit retails stories of the “isolation of the CGH before public opinion” and shrieks that “the strike is swiftly losing a sense of purpose and there is a danger it will become merely the *modus vivendi* of a shrinking group of ultralefts.”

Break with Bourgeois Nationalism!

Now, as prominent personalities like Elena Poniatowska who had earlier called on the students to end the strike denounce the plebiscite and subsequent crackdown, every party, even the right-wing PAN, has criticized Zedillo’s moves to end the strike. The PRD in particular has cynically adopted a posture of “support” for the CGH’s “just” demands. Trying to refurbish its credentials as a populist, “anti-imperialist” alternative to the PRI and PAN, the PRD has called a February 9 protest against the cop seizure of UNAM, while Mexico City PRD mayor Rosario Robles has demanded the removal of the federal police from the campus. But the party showed its “support” to the students with the truncheon blows of its *granadero* riot police sent out to crush UNAM strikers, as early as last August and as recently as the assault on Prepa 3.

The 4 February GEM/JE leaflet pointed out, “While the popularity of this party has decreased among sectors of workers and students as a result of the continuous attacks that its riot police have perpetrated against the strikers, it is necessary to give this disillusionment in the PRD a *class* character: the PRD is a *bourgeois* party, and its nationalism and democratic pretensions reflect nothing other than its bourgeois class interests.” The GEM/JE has fought throughout the strike to shatter illusions in the PRD which are widespread among CGH activists and militant workers.

These illusions are a reflection of the nationalist ideology which has served historically to tie the Mexican proletariat to its “own” exploiters. In an eyewitness report on the strike at a Boston Spartacus Youth Club forum last fall, a GEM speaker noted, “The biggest obstacle we have to combat in Mexico is bourgeois nationalism.... Nationalism leads you to supporting your own capitalist rulers because they are Mexican, rather than looking to solidarity with your *class* brothers, for example, across the border in the United States” (WV No. 721, 15 October 1999).

In a society so directly under the yoke of U.S. domination, this ideology runs very deep, reinforced by ceaseless propaganda extolling the bourgeois Mexican Revolution of 1910-20 and the waving of the Mexican flag at student and worker demonstrations. The real nature of Mexican nationalism as *false consciousness*

GEM Speaker at STUNAM Press Conference

“It Is Up to the Working Class to Take Up This Struggle”

We print below a speech by a supporter of the Grupo Espartaquista de México at a February 6 press conference of the STUNAM campus workers union executive committee. At the press conference, held the same day as the bloody police crackdown at UNAM, the union announced its refusal to work as long as the campus is under police occupation.

In attacking the students, the bourgeoisie and its state think that they can get away with this given students’ lack of social power. The attacks against free, public education are in reality an attack against the working class and all the poor. It is up to the working class to take up this struggle and show the bourgeoisie that this brutal assault on the students will not pass with impunity. Because of its role as the motor force of the capitalist economy, only the work-

ing class has the social power to stay the repressive hand of the bourgeoisie and its state. The Spartacists call on the working class to carry out mass mobilizations in defense of the UNAM strike and for the immediate freedom of all the arrested activists. The working class must use its muscle against bourgeois repression. This attack must not pass with impunity.

This shows, yet again, that the police are the armed fist of the bourgeois state, its guard dogs and bloodhounds. The police are not part of the workers movement and have no place in the unions. The presence of Auxilio UNAM and of any security agencies in STUNAM is a threat to the very existence of the union. Police out of the unions! Auxilio UNAM out of STUNAM and UNAM! All Federal Preventive Police and police agencies out of UNAM!

To wield its social power in its own interests, the working class must break the shackles that chain them to the bourgeoisie, especially the ideology of bourgeois nationalism and the political subordination to its principal exponent, the bourgeois PRD, whose only interest is to maintain the capitalist order of exploitation and oppression. The working class needs a party of its own. We Spartacists fight to build revolutionary workers parties throughout the world that are capable of leading the working class to taking state power in the internationalist, revolutionary union of the proletariat of the world. For workers mobilizations against repression, privatizations and in defense of free education! Free the arrested activists now! Drop all the charges! For new October revolutions! Forge a revolutionary workers party!

for the exploited and oppressed is captured in the fact that students’ parents have been massing in the Plaza de la República, where hundreds of subjectively revolutionary students are now imprisoned for demanding access for the children of workers and the poor to this national institution.

Tied by a thousand threads to their imperialist masters, the Mexican bourgeoisie is incapable of achieving the fundamental democratic gains historically associated with the bourgeois revolutions, such as national emancipation, agrarian revolution, political democracy and legal equality for women. Instead, following the dictates of their imperialist overlords and fearing above all any challenge by the proletariat and the oppressed, the Mexican capitalist rulers seek to smash even the smallest democratic gains won by the masses through militant struggle.

The only road to the resolution of the burning democratic tasks in Mexico is the conquest of power by the Mexican *proletariat*, which would place the tasks of socialist construction on the agenda, requiring a fight to extend workers rule to the advanced capitalist countries. This is the perspective of permanent revolution developed by Leon Trotsky and embodied in the Russian October Revolution of 1917. Key to this perspective in Mexico is the political struggle to break workers and radical youth from the bourgeois-nationalist PRD and to build a Leninist vanguard party as the champion of all the oppressed.

The Spartacist League/U.S. fights to bring down the American imperialist behemoth through socialist revolution. The anti-Mexican chauvinism pushed by the AFL-CIO misleaders, the labor lieutenants of U.S. imperialism, was evident at the Seattle WTO protest, where the Teamsters tops tried to rally American workers against Mexican truckers. Against this chauvinist poison which ties U.S. workers to their “own” capitalist rul-

our comrades have insisted on the need to extend the strike beyond the walls of the university, so that the struggle for free education is taken up by the industrial working class which has the social power to win this battle. Our call for Auxilio UNAM cops out of the union and off the campus has increasingly found resonance among sections of the working class. The Mexico City daily *La Jornada* (4 February) ran a statement signed by



Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras

Mexican workers occupy Ford plant in Nueva Laredo, 1995. Against chauvinist poison of AFL-CIO tops, we fight for class-struggle unity of workers in U.S. and Mexico.

ing class, we fight for internationalist class-struggle unity between workers in the U.S. and Mexico. In a 1991 joint declaration of the SL/U.S., the GEM and the Trotskyist League of Canada on NAFTA, we said: “Stop U.S. ‘Free Trade’ Rape of Mexico” (WV No. 530, 5 July 1991). We wrote:

“Yankee imperialism wants to turn Mexico into a giant *maquiladora*, or free trade zone—‘free’ of unions, and ‘free’ for capital....

“The ‘free trade’ assault on Mexico poses pointblank the need for building Trotskyist parties as part of a revolutionary Fourth International which can lead the proletariat of the region to power.”

The fight for workers revolution in Mexico and the U.S. is directly linked, including by the human bridge of millions of Mexican and Central American workers who have “gone north.” Mexico’s proximity to the U.S., which has cost it half its territory and subjected it to repeated Yankee aggression, can be a powerful lever for international socialist revolution. With Latin America currently in turmoil, as workers, peasants and students fight IMF-dictated austerity measures, social upheaval in Mexico could spark proletarian struggle throughout the hemisphere.

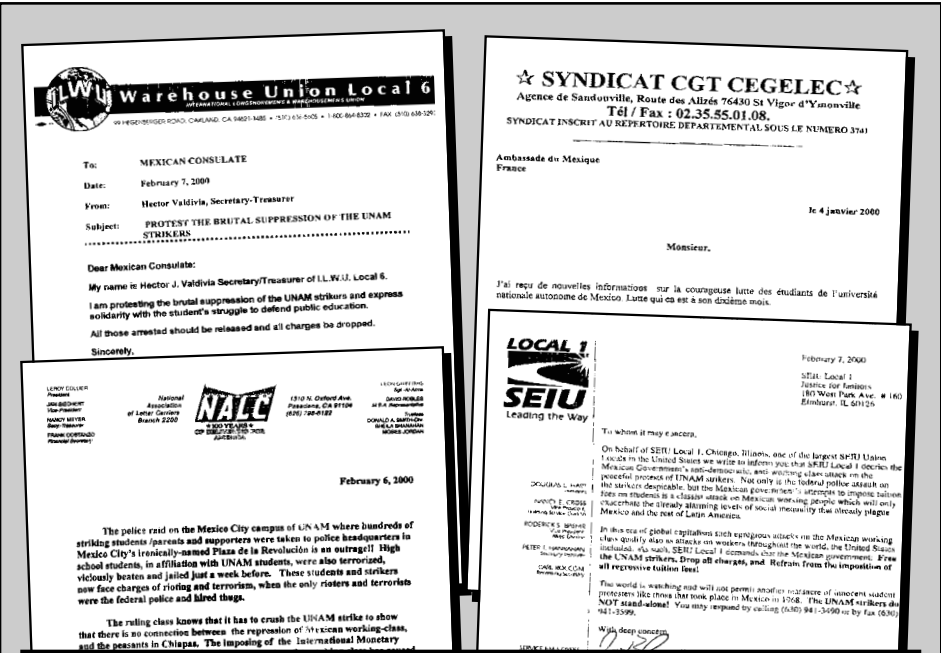
Lessons of the UNAM Strike

The GEM/JE have actively participated in the UNAM strike from the beginning, helping occupy buildings and defending picket lines against strikebreakers. In strike meetings and in our propaganda,

a grouping within the powerful teachers union and other organizations which called to “disband the police body ‘Auxilio UNAM’.” The statement was titled “For Public and Free Higher Education! Reject Police Repression Against the Workers of Chapingo, the Prepa 3 and the Student Teachers!”

It is crucial for every working-class and left tendency to rally in defense of all the arrested strikers, regardless of political affiliation. The arrested include supporters of many leftist tendencies, including the Partido Obrero Socialista (POS—Socialist Workers Party), En Lucha, Liga de Trabajadores Socialista (LTS)/Contracorriente, Militante and the Internationalist Group (IG). But it is necessary as well to draw a balance sheet of this tumultuous battle, whose lessons must inform the struggles to come.

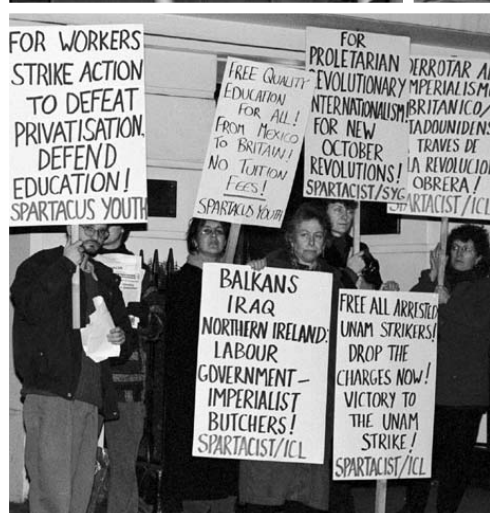
After more than nine months of resistance against the police and strikebreaking thugs, the student strike went as far as it could go on its own. Despite their remarkable combativity, the students could not achieve the power of a workers strike that paralyzes production and stops the flow of profits. This has demonstrated in a raw way the limits of the CGH leadership, which opposed linking the student struggle to the power of the working class. Serving up the myth of the student “vanguard,” CGH leaders pushed utopian schemes to turn the university into a “liberated zone.” This notion buys into the bourgeoisie’s myth of UNAM’s



Chicago SEIU Justice for Janitors declares: “The world is watching and will not permit another massacre of innocent student protesters like those that took place in Mexico in 1968.” Protests have also come from West Coast letter carriers and longshore and French electrical workers.



# ICL Protests: Defend UNAM Strikers!



Workers Hammer

ICL mounted emergency protests around the world following cop attacks on Prepa 3 and main UNAM campus.

Clockwise from bottom left: London, February 4; Chicago, February 2; NYC, February 7; Berlin, February 7; San Francisco and NYC, February 3.

Protests were also held in Boston and Los Angeles and in Milano, Paris, Toronto and Sydney, Australia.



WV Photos

“autonomous” status, a central component of nationalist ideology in Mexico. This illusory notion has been shattered under the iron heel of military occupation.

What unites the reformist and centrist left groups active in the strike is their shared embrace of bourgeois nationalism as purveyed by the PRD. This is overtly the case with the *Militante* group, which works within the bourgeois PRD of Cárdenas to make it “more militant.” When the PRD’s vicious strikebreaking made it unpopular with students, as when Cárdenas, then mayor of Mexico City, sent the riot police against the strikers in August and again when his PRD successor unleashed the cops in December, the *Militante* outfit could only rarely be seen at strike support actions. But when the PRD tried to distance itself from the attack on Prepa 3, *Militante* took it upon itself to reintroduce the PRD as a “supporter” of the students.

Just as it embraces this party of bourgeois nationalism, so does *Militante* embrace the bourgeois cops as “workers” in uniform, a line also sold by the POS. Meanwhile, the STUNAM bureaucracy, which admits that it sent seven Auxilio UNAM cops to Prepa 3 at the request of the rector, contrasts the “bad” Cobra thugs with the “good” Auxilio police. When the thugs of Auxilio UNAM cracked students’ heads or spied on the strike, they were doing their job as the armed guardians of the capitalist state. The cops have one and only one role: to protect private property and the capitalist

order. *The cops are not part of the workers movement!*

The POS was notorious for calling as early as last July for ending the strike, just when the powerful electrical workers were showing support for the students. In its newspaper *El Socialista* (January 2000), the POS welcomed the January plebiscite, writing, “Hundreds of thousands demand it: The solution at UNAM should arise from dialogue.” These opportunists are far behind the consciousness of the militant Mexican workers who have come to recognize in the sham plebiscite a cover for bloody capitalist repression.

## No Student Vanguardist Illusions

Responsibility also falls on the more radical-sounding left groups such as En Lucha and the LTS/Contracorriente, which are hostile to a proletarian orientation and have dedicated themselves to nourishing student messianism, dreaming of a return to the “marvelous years” of 1968. Both En Lucha, which does not even pretend to fight for a Leninist party and acts instead as the aide-de-camp for other reformists and nationalist organizations, and the self-proclaimed “Trotskyists” of the LTS push student vanguardism and a touching faith in the bourgeois state. Disdaining working-class struggle, the LTS/Contracorriente raises as its maximum slogan that workers support the students’ struggle, calling on the CGH to “unify” the struggles of workers and the oppressed.

In contrast, the GEM/JE called to *extend* the strike to key sectors of the proletariat and worked to win students to the side of the working class in the struggle for socialist revolution. Some students told our comrades that the call for workers strikes is utopian, given that the unions are controlled by mafia-type *charros* or by nationalist demagogues of the “left.” But this only underlines the necessity of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party to politically defeat these misleaders, who do everything they can to keep the workers in the straitjacket of bourgeois nationalism and prevent them from using their social power. In pushing student-vanguardist politics, the LTS/Contracorriente in fact serve as accessories to the union bureaucracy in isolating the strike.

The GEM/JE addressed illusions in “student power” and university “autonomy” in a 5 July 1999 leaflet (reprinted in WV No. 717, 6 August 1999) which stated:

“As Marxists, we understand that the university is an important pillar of bourgeois society and that its primary function is to train the future administrative, technical and cultural personnel for the capitalist system....

“The democratic demands we advance for education are inextricably linked with the understanding that only when the system of capitalism is destroyed through the seizure of state power by the working class led by a revolutionary party will the basis be laid for genuine equality in all spheres of society. We call for full open admissions made economically meaningful by providing all students with a living stipend!... Abolish the rectory! Nationalize all the private universities under teacher-student-campus worker control!

“The question for militant students is: with whom will you ally—the working class or the bourgeoisie in the form of the nationalist PRD?”

Giving more of a left cover for tailing the PRD is the centrist Internationalist Group (IG). The IG is led by former members of the ICL who left our Trotskyist organization in order to freely tail various alien class forces, from trade-union opportunists in Brazil and the U.S. to Third World nationalists and Stalinists. The IG has raised the slogan “Auxilio UNAM out of STUNAM!”—on paper, especially internationally. But where it counts, in addressing the STUNAM workers (as at an assembly of students and workers on 6 July 1999), this crucial demand is dropped. For its entire existence, the IG has devoted considerable

effort to whitewashing an act of *class treason* by its comrades in Brazil, who sued a municipal workers union in Volta Redonda at least three times in the bourgeois courts in an effort to gain control of that cop-infested union (see WV No. 671, 11 July 1997).

Like the rest of the fake left, the IG peddles its wares in the shadow of the PRD of Cárdenas. Obscuring the class nature of the PRD, the IG invokes a “Cardenista popular front,” as the LTS did for many years. The popular front is a precise Marxist category characterizing a bourgeois formation—a coalition of bourgeois and reformist workers parties, such as the Unidad Popular of Salvador Allende in Chile in the early 1970s. But in Mexico, there is no mass workers party of even a reformist kind. Rather, bourgeois-nationalist ideology is the fundamental instrument for politically subordinating the workers movement to its exploiters. As the GEM/JE wrote in its 5 July 1999 leaflet:

“The IG concocts a supposed working-class sector of the PRD, by which it means a mass of discontented sectors like bank debtors, peasant organizations, slum inhabitants, Zapatistas, etc. They do so in order to prettify the PRD—which is nothing more than a bourgeois-nationalist party. In this way, the IG capitulates to the current level of consciousness of the working class and evades the necessary fight for a revolutionary Trotskyist party to combat nationalism and struggle for the complete political independence of the proletariat.”

The political struggle against bourgeois-nationalist ideology is key to defeating the nationalist, class-collaborationist union bureaucracies—both of the PRI-aligned corporatist unions and the “independent” labor formations—and mobilizing the Mexican proletariat in its own class interests as the liberators of all the millions of oppressed and dispossessed of the country. The GEM/JE seeks to win the best fighters among student youth and in the working class to the task of forging a revolutionary workers party to lead the proletariat in the fight for state power in Mexico. That fight can only be waged with an internationalist perspective linking the class struggle in Mexico to the fight for proletarian revolution in the belly of the U.S. imperialist beast. It is the task of the SL/U.S. to forge the multiracial revolutionary workers party needed to lead socialist revolution in this country. *For new October Revolutions! Reforge the Fourth International!* ■

## Espartaco

Publication of the Grupo Espartaquista de México

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# Archives...

(continued from page 3)

of maintenance of labor made it possible to utilize slavery profitably in spite of its wastefulness.

The native labor supply of the American, Caribbean and other West Indian tribes was neither extensive enough nor so easily adaptable to agriculture as to provide an adequate working force of plantation labor. European peasant labor was inefficient in the sub-tropical zone and expensive to maintain and replace. Labor from Africa, on the other hand, was plentiful, accustomed to agriculture and efficient in the heat of the sub-tropical zone.

Furthermore a slave trade had been going on in Africa for years, organized by the Arabs. It was by no means an extensive trade but it could serve as a starting point.

Another advantage of African labor was that as a chattel slave—i.e., a piece of property—a Negro could be identified by his skin.

Chattel slavery was a system of production which had been outgrown by European society because it was a system of low productivity and wastefulness. Therefore, the very existence of a mode of production based upon the absolute ownership of one human being by another, after it had been so long outgrown, was repulsive to progressive people. Particularly when the world was bursting with revolutions proclaiming the equality of all men. This slave system became so repulsive in fact that only weird and perverse social relations could contain it. To despise the black skin as the mark of the slave was the principal and focal point of these social relations.

Thus, around the question of skin color, society in the West Indies and North America proper began to divide itself, as social relations degenerated under the slave system. First the black skin was despised because it was the mark of a despised mode of production. But this despised mode of production was the creator of untold wealth and prosperity, and capitalist society cannot despise riches for long. So they turned the whole matter on its head.

The slaves were in an inferior position economically. Gradually, white slave-owning society constructed a wall of color: that it was not the mode of slave production which was to be despised, but the slave: that the reason the black skin was the mark of the slave was that it was first the mark of human inferiority.

In this manner the class problem of slavery became complicated and confused by the color question. The slaves, besides being an exploited social class, became, in the perverted thinking of the dominant society, an inferior race as well.

It was upon this foundation that the “science” of physical anthropology built its structure. In service to the American planters, the international slave traders and colonial exploiters, fake scientists and politicians took a set of perverted social relations based upon a discarded social system and made them into the foundation stones of a science. They justified slavery as natural and completely desirable for those with a colored skin.

And they had great need for such a justification. At the beginning of the slave trade the idea of spreading Christianity to the heathen was sufficient justification for Negro slavery. Slave traders were the missionaries and the slave-owners the priests of a crusade to bring the word of God to heathen “savages” who would otherwise be doomed to eternal torment in their awful ignorance.

But the revolutions in Britain, America and France stripped away the veil of religion from knowledge and initiated

entific justification, what then remains of *race*? Race is a relation between people based upon the needs of capitalist exploitation. The race concept in anthropology grew out of the social relations of slavery. It was congealed by the adaptation of these obsolete social relations to the needs of capitalist production.

The concept of race has now been overthrown in biological science. But *race* as the keystone of exploitation remains. Race is a social relation and has only a social reality.

The basic form of race relations is segregation. In the colonial countries it is expressed by the voluntary self-segregation of the white agents of empire. But it would be an error to judge race relations as a whole by their expressions in colonial exploitation. Race relations in the colonies are derived primarily from the existence of the race question in America and particularly in the United States.



Washington Post

**5,000-strong labor/black mobilization initiated by Spartacist League stopped Klan provocation in Washington, D.C., November 1982. Finish the Civil War—For black liberation through socialist revolution!**

the age of science and rationalism. Social relations could no longer be explained by reference to God. So a fake “scientific” explanation of the social relations of slavery grew up to justify them. This is the actual foundation of the science of physical anthropology.

Slavery itself was overthrown in the Civil War and Reconstruction. But the needs of the American capitalists for compulsory agricultural labor in the South remained. A new semi-capitalistic mode of agriculture grew up in which the semi-slave condition of the freed Negroes was made permanent by the re-establishment of the social relations of slavery: color discrimination buttressed by segregation and race prejudice.

Race thus became a fetish of American capitalism, a system of special exploitation based upon the social relations and customs of a previous mode of production, which had itself been an abomination to society. Stripped of sci-

entific justification, what then remains of *race*? Race is a relation between people based upon the needs of capitalist exploitation. In the United States special exploitation is dependent upon race relations. In the colonies race is dependent upon exploitation, but here the exploitation is dependent upon race....

The special colonial exploitation to which the masses of Asia, Africa and South America are subjected is dependent primarily upon the financial, military and political control which the imperialists are able to maintain. The establishment of race relations reflecting the concept of white superiority is an important instrument of this domination, but not fundamental.

With or without segregation the special exploitation of colonies would continue upon the basis of the economic, military and political power which the U.S., Great Britain, France, etc. wield over the colonial world.

\* \* \*

The Bourbon rule of the South today is founded upon the destruction of the glorious revolutionary movement of the Reconstruction and the subsequent failure of the Populist revolt. The wealthy whites could not possibly have subdued these movements with their own small numbers. A mass support in a significant segment of the population was necessary to organize the Ku Klux Klan and to elevate the ruling classes to their present position. This mass base of support was to be found primarily in the white middle classes of the southern cities and towns, and the better-off section of the small farmers.

One striking feature of the South under slavery was the absence of the commercial and industrial towns which were so characteristic of the North. This was quite normal in an agrarian society dominated by huge plantations, which provided no basis for a rich internal market. Without towns it follows that there was no sizable urban middle class.

Commercial towns arose during the Reconstruction under the impulse of capitalist economy in agriculture. The development of these towns produced a middle class.

Everybody knows something of the

fierce competition which goes on among the middle classes all the time. They must compete not only against each other, but also against big business which has more efficient and cheaper ways of doing things.

But the middle class of shopkeepers, farmers, independent artisans, doctors and lawyers—small businessmen of all kinds—furnishes the only avenue of escape from wage slavery into the ranks of the capitalist class. Consequently, the lower the middle class the more intense and feverish is the competition for survival.

It is not hard to see that a tremendous advantage would be gained by a section of the actual or potential middle class if it could arbitrarily exclude half of the population from the right to compete with them for these occupations.

Immediately after the Civil War privileged poor whites established themselves in middle class occupations. They made of these positions a white monopoly by the organized terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan. One of the most important achievements of terrorism during the later days of the Reconstruction was the complete exclusion of the Negroes from the general middle class.

It was principally this movement of the middle class organized into the Klan, channelized and controlled by the capitalists and landowners, which gave to these new rulers complete political control over the South.

The white monopoly of privileged middle class positions tended to extend down into the higher skilled sections of the working class itself, gaining additional points of support for the rule of the new Bourbons.

A further expression of the privileges held by the white middle class of the South is to be found in their traditional exploitation of domestic servants.

It has been usual in the South that for a couple of dollars a week, carfare and old clothes a white family can have a maid. And for slightly more, a gardener or a cook.

In this way, due to the extreme degradation of labor, it has been possible for the southern middle class to live in a condition of luxury and freedom from all domestic labor which is found only among the ruling classes of other social systems and the colonial agents of imperialism.

Thus, the mass base of the naked rule of the capitalists and landowners is revealed as a privileged middle class and labor aristocracy which owes its special position to the racial division of American society.

Herein is revealed the sociological and historical antecedent of German fascism. The Nazi Party and the Storm Troopers are almost the exact prototype of the Bourbon Party and the Ku Klux Klan. The Nazis, like the Klan, were essentially of the middle class. They served the basic interests of the large capitalists while defeating and demoralizing the working class and creating the basis for the totalitarian dictatorship, just as the Klan operated against the Negroes and the white Populists. The principal ideological weapon of both was racism and their principal organizational weapon, terrorism.

It is well known that the Nazis sent official and unofficial observers to the United States to study and learn American methods of racial discrimination and segregation to be applied to persecution of the Jews.

But the comparison of the South with Nazi Germany must take account of two important differences. First, the white middle class had a genuine advantage to exploit in the southern states in maintaining a racial monopoly of its privileges. In Germany the “Aryan” middle class found only complete destruction and humiliation by the capitalists after the destruction of the labor movement and the Jewish people was completed.

The second difference is that Negroes are a fundamental part of the southern working force. The object of terrorism is

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China...

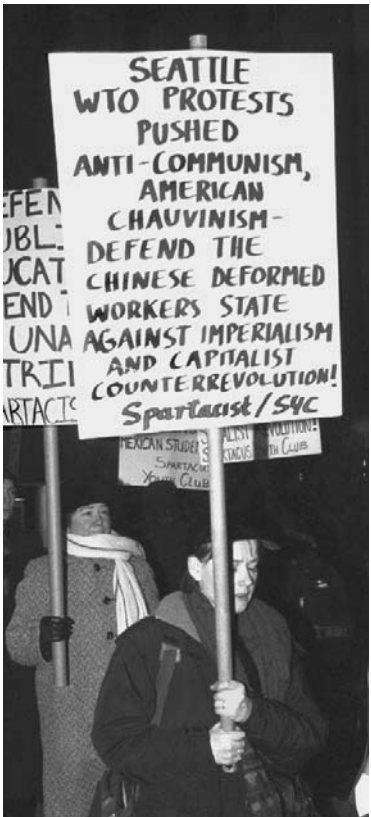
(continued from page 12)

1949 Chinese Revolution that smashed capitalist class rule and marked a historic defeat for U.S. imperialism. The Seattle protests were marked by foam-flecked speeches denouncing Chinese “slave labor,” by signs promoting the CIA’s “free Tibet” crusade and by the dumping of Chinese steel into Puget Sound. As proletarian internationalists fighting to build a world party of socialist revolution, we call for unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution and are unalterably opposed to the pro-imperialist chauvinism which permeated the Seattle protest.

Defeat Capitalist Counterrevolution in China!

The immediate backdrop to the Seattle protest was the deal worked out weeks earlier between the Clinton administration and the Stalinist regime in Beijing for China’s entry into the WTO. The ICL warns that this deal is a mortal danger to the Chinese deformed workers state. China’s entry into the WTO would pose a frontal assault on what remains of the state monopoly of foreign trade, allowing foreign firms to own up to 50 percent of strategic economic sectors such as telecommunications and slashing tariffs protecting state-owned industry and agriculture, leading to millions more unemployed.

These measures, which follow on the Chinese Communist Party’s 1997 decision to sell off most state-owned industry, are part of the Beijing regime’s years-long march toward a full-scale market economy. The Chinese Revolution was a world-historic event, destroying the rule of the rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie and replacing it with a centrally planned, collectivized economy which lifted the workers and peasants out of entrenched poverty and degradation. A nation which had been ravaged and divided by foreign powers for a century



WV Photo

was unified and freed from imperialist subjugation. However, that social revolution was deformed from its inception, with political power held not by the proletariat but by a nationalist bureaucracy centered on Mao’s peasant-based Communist Party/People’s Liberation Army hierarchy. Today, Mao’s heirs are leading the country toward capitalist restoration.

Among those hit hardest by the market “reforms” are women, who are often the first fired by state industries now forced to compete in the market. In rural areas, barbaric prerevolutionary practices like the buying and selling of “wives” are again in evidence, while peasant girls are increasingly denied an education because their families cannot afford tuition. Such horrendous conditions would be vastly magnified by full-fledged capitalist restoration, which is the aim of the imperialists, the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie and their allies in the Beijing bureaucracy. But to carry out that aim would

SL denounced circus of pro-imperialist protectionism and anti-Communism at Seattle WTO protest which was hailed by fake lefts. Below: contingent organized by “progressive” ILWU bureaucracy at anti-WTO protest.



Lichtenstein/Corbis Sygma

require first and foremost smashing the resistance of the powerful and combative Chinese proletariat.

As we wrote in “China: WTO Entry Means Mass Unemployment, Imperialist Plunder” (WV No. 725, 10 December 1999), “*What is urgently posed is struggle by the Chinese proletariat to defend the already greatly attenuated gains of the 1949 Revolution.*” For nearly a decade now, China has experienced an unprecedented level of strikes and other labor protests, as desperate working people struggle to maintain their jobs and livelihoods in the face of the bureaucracy’s dismantling of the planned economy. What is necessary is the forging of an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party which can direct the spontaneous, localized protests and strikes toward a proletarian political revolution which ousts the Stalinist regime—replacing it with a government of democratically elected workers, soldiers and peasants councils—and fights for socialist revolution throughout the region, particularly in the industrial powerhouse of Japan.

Our opposition to the WTO deal is premised on *defense* of the gains of the 1949 Revolution. The AFL-CIO labor tops, in concert with liberal Democrats and right-wing Republicans, denounce the WTO deal in order to push a *more bellicose* line for U.S. imperialism. In a statement just before the Seattle protest, Sweeney railed that “the fevered rush to admit China to the WTO is a grave mistake” and criticized the White House for “prostrating itself in pursuit of a trade deal with a rogue nation.” He continued, “The agreement reached this weekend would deal away our democratic principles and most cherished values and we



will fight it.” This is an anti-Communist *war cry* by the labor lieutenants of Wall Street. In Seattle, trade-union placards demanding “People First Not China First” mingled with banners like one screaming “For the Basic Human Rights in Vietnam—Kill the Red Evil.” From the podium, Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa Jr. railed against “slave labor” in China and Vietnam. Shortly before the protest, Hoffa had saluted incipient clerical-fascist Pat Buchanan as “the only candidate that is speaking out about the issues of world trade, of China and the fact that China is...almost a rogue state that is threatening Taiwan, that is persecuting people in Tibet, that is persecuting Christians.” Hoffa’s anti-Communist tirades were outdone only by the United Steelworkers (USWA) bureaucracy, which organized an obscene “Seattle W-Tea-O Party” where Chinese and other foreign-made steel was dumped into Puget Sound as onlookers chanted, “USA! USA!”

Today the Clinton administration is pursuing a policy of “engagement” with the Beijing regime, aiming to encourage it farther along the road of capitalist restoration while steadily increasing the economic penetration of China by American corporations. This is in no way counterposed to a more belligerent stance toward China; rather these policies are complementary and share a common aim: bloody capitalist counterrevolution. Indeed, while the White House opposes the overwhelming vote in Congress recently to strengthen military ties with capitalist Taiwan, Clinton himself has repeatedly brandished American military might against the Chinese deformed workers

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Rex Features

Teletubby toy factory in southern China. As Beijing regime opens China to increased imperialist exploitation, women workers are among hardest hit.

to make them more profitable workers. In the case of the Jews the object of the Nazis was not to put the Jews “in their place” but to exterminate them.

\* \* \*

The police state of the South is administered by the Bourbons through the Democratic Party machinery under the protection of the national government. But it must be remembered that if it was the Democratic Party which created the semi-fascist southern system, it was the Republican Party which voluntarily turned the South over to the Klan.

The Democrats, it is true, are the main upholders of white supremacy. But it was the Republican Party which, during its purge of the Black Republicans during the 1890’s, caused the coining of the epithet “lily white.”

The so-called struggle between the Republicans and Democrats in the South is essentially a struggle between two capitalist political cliques for the allegiance of the most reactionary section of southern political society, the Dixiecrats.

Whatever the ups and downs of this struggle, the basic political structure will remain intact until the working class, jointly with the Negro people, vanquishes and destroys the Republican-Democratic dictatorship.

One of the main struggles of the Negro movement in the South since World War II has been directed towards achieving the right to vote. This has had some success. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the mere addition of an increasingly larger number of Negroes to the voters list will materially change social conditions in the South. Votes don’t determine or control anything of great importance in the South.

The battle for the vote is an absolutely necessary part of the Negro struggle in the South. But as long as it finds expression merely in the right to support one or another wing of the ruling Bourbon dictatorship, its scope is extremely limited, and it will change nothing essential.

There is no progressive tendency in the reactionary southern dictatorship. The Bourbons enjoy sending their “liber-

als” to Congress as a malicious joke on the nation. But at home they are united on the fundamental questions. To the Negroes’ demand for equality they unanimously reply with the doctrine of “separate but equal,” for they well know that there is no equality with segregation.

The effectiveness of the struggle for the right to vote in the South will remain limited until it is coupled with the struggle for the right of the southern workers to establish their own independent party of labor with no compromise on the basic question of civil rights.

However, equality is not enough, either in the North or South. The Negro has the right to ask: “What is it to be equal to the undernourished white sharecropper in South Carolina? What is it to be equal in the disease-infested slums of Detroit?”...

In the North and West, equality of Negroes as wage workers can never become a reality under capitalism. For capitalism is a system of scarcity, and the Negroes, the last to be hired by modern industry, will continue to be the first victims of the periodic spasms of unemployment which

characterize capitalist production.

What would equality bring to the Negro middle class at a time monopoly capital is squeezing out the white middle class? A hundred years ago it would have had meaning. But today equality, even if possible under capitalism, which it is not, would be only the equality of destitution which is the future of the middle class of the United States.

Each of these examples demonstrates that discrimination against Negroes in the United States is so ingrained in the social structure that only complete destruction of capitalism can lay the foundation for the solution of the Negro question.

A hundred years ago Karl Marx, in urging the American workers to support the struggle of the slaves for emancipation and to support the northern cause in the Civil War, proclaimed the following truth: “Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded.” This is just as true today in the modern context of racial discrimination as it was during the struggle against slavery. ■

China...

(continued from page 9)

state, from the deployment of U.S. warships in the Taiwan Strait in 1996 to the current plans for an East Asia “theater missile defense.”

The greater the imperialist economic penetration of China, the more this will buttress calls for military intervention in the event of a working-class upheaval, as the American rulers and their labor lieutenants call to “protect our economic interests.” The American labor bureaucracy, known throughout the Third World as the “AFL-CIA” for its role in helping to smash militant and Communist-led unions and setting up “labor” fronts for U.S. imperialism, joined in fomenting capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR and the deformed workers states of East Europe. Today these labor bureaucrats are lining up behind their own ruling class in the drive to bring full-scale imperialist exploitation back to China.

Down With National Chauvinism!

In the aftermath of the WTO protests, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (7 January) lauded the call for a “new internationalism” in an article in *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2000) by Jay Mazur, the protectionist president of the UNITE garment workers union. In a similar vein, the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) saluted what it called an “interna-

female workforces in factories in Third World countries generates billions in profits for American and other imperialist corporations. But the operational conclusion of the AFL-CIO’s “anti-sweatshop” campaign is a call to ban imports from countries like Pakistan and Indonesia, which would mean shutting down factories there and driving the workers into utter destitution. Meanwhile, the UNITE bureaucracy which is in the forefront of the campaign against overseas sweatshops does nothing to fight pervasive sweatshop conditions in the U.S. garment industry.

The protectionist chauvinism of the pro-capitalist labor tops was on full display in Seattle. One Teamster banner read, “Keep the Borders Closed to Unsafe NAFTA Trucks,” alluding to the union bureaucracy’s racist crusade against implementing a provision of the 1994 NAFTA “free trade” deal allowing Mexican truckers to operate on U.S. highways. This campaign directly feeds the anti-immigrant chauvinism being whipped up by the American bourgeoisie as it militarizes the border with Mexico and carries out roundups of immigrant workers in order to bust union organizing drives.

We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants and fight for the internationalist class unity of the working people throughout the hemisphere and beyond. It is from that standpoint that we oppose NAFTA, which has meant impoverishment for millions of working people in Mexico. Against the pro-



Victorious People’s Liberation Army enters Beijing, 1949. Chinese Revolution overthrew capitalist/landlord rule, expelled rapacious imperialists.

(IMF), is some kind of all-powerful global agency through which a handful of “transnational” corporations rule the world. Thus a statement building for Seattle by a coalition of student and environmental groups in the U.S. and Canada decried the WTO as “so mighty, it could make the next vote you cast for government meaningless.”

The idea that today’s world is governed by bodies like the WTO and IMF which trample on the “sovereignty” of the most rapacious and powerful imperialist countries is both reactionary and absurd. As we explained in our pamphlet, *Imperialism, the “Global Economy” and Labor Reformism* (September 1999), “The current authority exercised by the IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organization et al. derives from the power of the imperialist states for which they function as agents.” The union misleaders and opportunist “socialists” who aim all their fire at these agencies thereby buttress support for the bourgeoisies of their respective nation-states.

As far back as the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, Karl Marx explained how the productive forces of capitalism had outgrown the nation-state system which accompanied the rise of the bourgeoisie. V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Russian workers revolution of 1917, built on this understanding in his book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, explaining that by the beginning of the 20th century, world capitalism was dominated by industrial monopolies and big banks who are represented by *different* imperialist states whose interests are in sharp *conflict*. These conflicting interests constantly lead to trade wars, and ultimately shooting wars.

The idea that conflicts among competing nation-states can somehow be surmounted through multinational agencies like the WTO denies the Marxist understanding that war is inherent to the capitalist system. As Lenin wrote in *Imperialism* in debunking the theory of “ultra-imperialism” advanced by German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, inter-imperialist alliances “whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing *all* the imperialist powers, are *inevitably* nothing more than a ‘truce’ in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars.”

In this book, Lenin showed how the material basis for the opportunism and chauvinism of the labor bureaucracy lies in the fact that high monopoly profits make it possible for the imperialist rulers to “bribe certain sections of the workers, and for a time a fairly considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie.” Lenin noted how “The intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this urge. And so,” he concluded, “there is created that bond between imperialism and opportunism.”

The burgeoning social-chauvinism of

the opportunist left is no less evident today in the face of intensifying inter-imperialist antagonisms. The French USec group, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), complains that “democratic sovereignty is put into question by the WTO” (*Rouge*, 18 November 1999). This is a flagrant defense of the “democratic” French imperialist state, fully in keeping with the LCR’s role as a “left” prop for the capitalist popular-front government centered on the Socialist and Communist parties. Of late, the LCR has been cheering peasant protests led by one José Bové against McDonald’s, calling to defend French agriculture against American “cultural imperialism.” Bové himself was a prominent player in the Seattle protest, where he stood in front of a McDonald’s handing out Roquefort cheese!

In their defense of the particular interests of French imperialism vis-à-vis the U.S., the LCR has gone so far as to support the *war* efforts of its own bourgeoisie. Earlier last year, at the height of the U.S.-led NATO war of domination against Serbia, leading LCR spokesman Daniel Bensaïd explicitly supported a French nationalist call for a European-dominated *imperialist military intervention* in Kosovo under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (*Rouge*, 1 April 1999). More recently, the USec openly supported another imperialist military intervention carried out in the name of “humanitarianism,” backing the Australian/UN occupation force in East Timor and calling on it to “guarantee the immediate disarmament of the civil militias created and backed by the Indonesian army, and the arrest of all its leaders” (*International Viewpoint*, November 1999).

In contrast to such “socialist” drummer boys for “human rights” imperialism, we Trotskyists proclaimed in an April 1999 ICL statement: “Defeat Imperialism Through Workers Revolution—Defend Serbia!” (reprinted in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 55, Autumn 1999). Today we call for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S./NATO/UN troops from the Balkans and an end to all imperialist economic sanctions against Serbia. Likewise, we oppose the Australian-led UN occupation of East Timor (see “East Timor Independence Now! All Indonesian and All UN Imperialist Troops Out Now!” WV No. 720, 1 October 1999).

Everywhere, the reformist left is increasingly lining up behind its “own” domestic ruling class. Thus it follows in the footsteps of the social democrats who led the working class to the slaughterhouse of World War I.

Fake Lefts Push Imperialist Anti-China Crusade

Many of the pseudo-socialists who marched with the anti-Communist AFL-CIO tops in Seattle last November joined with these labor bureaucrats in egging on



Chinese-language NYC newspaper ran photo of SL literature table, reporting: “Fourth International Still Exists Today, Spreading Marxism-Leninism on the Streets of Chinatown.” Placard in picture reads: “Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State Against Imperialism and Internal Counterrevolution!”

tional dynamic” (*International Viewpoint*, January 2000), while its Japanese group claimed that the “AFL-CIO leadership has changed due to working-class animation...based on international grass-roots solidarity.” (*Kakehashi*, 1 January).

That avowed leftists in different parts of the world could push this line reveals only the degree to which they have themselves abandoned any pretense of internationalism in adapting to their own respective chauvinist labor bureaucracies. A supposed example of the AFL-CIO’s “new internationalism” is the campaign against sweatshops which was highlighted in Seattle and has also been prominent on university campuses. The grinding superexploitation of largely

imperialist chauvinism of the union tops, we declared in a 1991 joint statement with our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada and the Grupo Esparquista de México against the then-impending NAFTA deal: “Stop U.S. ‘free trade’ rape of Mexico!”

Imperialism and Social-Chauvinism

To be sure, not every protester who went to Seattle had the explicit intention of being mobilized for chauvinism and anti-Communism—though that is in fact what happened. For many youth who joined the protests, the central issue was “globalization”: the idea that the WTO, like the International Monetary Fund

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the counterrevolutions which destroyed the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe a decade ago. Today they line up behind the imperialist crusade for capitalist counterrevolution in China.

In its article on the AFL-CIO's "new internationalism," the ISO says that Sweeney & Co. "rightly argue that China is run by a dictatorship that represses labor and human rights" (*Socialist Worker*, 7 January). Trying to present a bit of a left face, the ISO goes on to intone:

"The only political forces that will gain from China-bashing are right wingers bent on starting a new Cold War.

"If the labor movement plays into this campaign, it will simply give a 'progressive' cover to the labor-hating Buchanans and Helmses."

The ISO would be hard put to explain *why* "China-bashing" aids the Cold War right wing, since this social-democratic outfit has itself been bashing China for years.

The ISO and its British mentor Tony Cliff have been animated by anti-Communist hatred for the degenerated and deformed workers states since the inception of Cliff's political tendency, when he and his followers refused to defend China and North Korea against the U.S. and British imperialists during the 1950-53 Korean War. When Boris Yeltsin's August 1991 coup opened the floodgates for counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the Cliffites exulted: "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991). When U.S. warships plied the Taiwan Strait in 1996 in a provocation against Beijing, the Cliffites aimed their guns in the same direction as the Pentagon—against the Chinese workers state—proclaiming: "We would oppose any Chinese invasion of Taiwan as an act of imperialist aggression" (*Socialist Review* [Britain], April 1996).

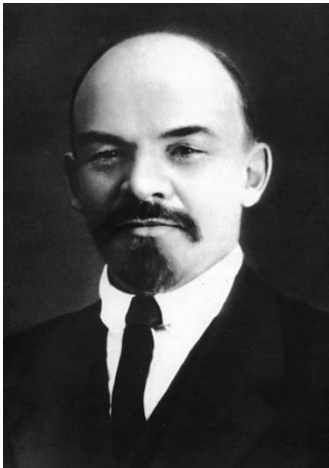
Despite its nominal pretensions to Trotskyism, the centrist British Workers Power (WP) group sings much the same anti-Communist tune as the Cliffites from whom it split in the 1970s. In its "Special Millennium Issue," *Workers Power* (December 1999-January 2000) hails the chauvinist Seattle protests as "an international symbol of deep discontent with capitalism." In the same issue, WP warns that the U.S./China WTO deal "spells misery" for the Chinese masses, writing:

"Although the attempt to force through the decisive stages of capitalist restoration will bring terrible threats to the livelihoods of millions, it will also undermine that dictatorship and give workers the opportunity to settle scores with the old regime.

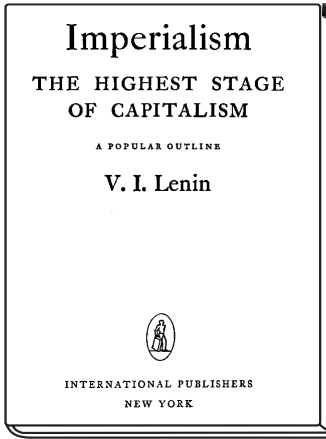
"Thus Zhu's chosen road to capitalist restoration also opens the road to a revolutionary struggle that can stop it."

Despite lip service to "revolutionary struggle," WP declaimed in its international journal, *Trotskyist International* (July-December 1997), that "there are no grounds for expecting workers to mobilise in defence of what remains of post-

capitalist property relations that were created and imposed on them by an essentially rural-based Stalinist bureaucracy." This logic leads WP to tail openly counterrevolutionary forces against Stalinist "dictatorship." In Russia in 1991, WP *joined* Yeltsin's barricades of counterrevolution, even as it acknowledged the "socially counterrevolutionary nature of Yeltsin's programme" (*Workers Power*, September 1991). In his 1940 work *In Defense of Marxism*, Leon Trotsky stressed that "the question of overthrowing the Soviet bureaucracy is for us subordinate to the question of preserving state property in the means of production." For the Labourite Stalinophobes of WP, conversely, the preservation of the collectivized economy is



W. Plier



**Written amid the slaughter of World War I, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin's 1916 pamphlet explained how imperialism breeds war and exposed role of social-chauvinist labor misleaders as servants of capitalist rulers.**

decidedly subordinate to the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy. This, in turn, is simply an expression of their embrace of the interests of their own ruling class.

It is a measure of how far to the right the fake left has moved under the impact of the bourgeoisie's "death of communism" triumphalism that the thoroughly reformist American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Jack Barnes could posture as a left critic of the Seattle protest. The SWP denounced the anti-China fervor and "Buy American, America First, defend-our-sovereignty politics of the protest leaders" (*Militant*, 13 December 1999). The SWP calls to "stop economic and military pressure against China" and claims to stand in defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against counterrevolution. But when it came to capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the SWP hailed Yeltsin's U.S.-backed power grab against a pathetic "coup" attempt by a handful of former lieutenants of then-Soviet president Gorbachev, proclaiming: "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup" (*Militant*, 6 September 1991).

In any case, the quirky reformists of the SWP barely seem to know what world they're living in. To this day, the SWP's *Militant* (6 December 1999) blithely asserts that "World capitalism has suffered an historic defeat in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union" and that "It was imperialism which lost the Cold War"!

### Anti-Spartacist Renegades Tail WTO Protests

The so-called International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT), formed by renegades who defected from our party during the Cold War of the 1980s, stood way to the right of the reformist SWP on the Seattle protest. In a January 3 diatribe titled "WTO Protests in Seattle and Anti-KKK Protests in New York City: Spartacist League Rationalizes Its Sectarianism and Political Isolation," the IBT denounces our principled opposition to joining the chauvinist, anti-Communist mobilization in Seattle (while finding evidence of our "political isolation" in the mass labor/black mobilization we initiated and led against the KKK on October 23!).

With a straight face, the IBT claims that "the Seattle protests were not, in any case, centered on China's WTO membership." The IBT simply refuses to mention the "free Tibet" crusaders, the anti-Communist speeches, the dumping of Chinese steel. Here is the totality of what

the IBT has to say about the USWA steel-dumping rally: "At the Steelworkers' rally, the largest banner was carried by the IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] reading 'Capitalism Cannot be Reformed'."

The IBT singles out for particular praise the ILWU leadership, which staged a stop-work action at the West Coast ports in support of the Seattle protests. But this was only "America first" chauvinism with a "militant" twist. The ILWU tops organized a contingent in Seattle under the slogan "Fair Trade Not Free Trade," and in his speech at the protest, ILWU president Brian McWilliams repeatedly denounced the WTO's "takeover of the world economy" while not once *mentioning*, let alone opposing, the *American* capitalist



Imperial War Museum, London

ruling class. This is nothing new for the ILWU bureaucracy; McWilliams regularly boasts of the ILWU's support to the boycott of Japanese shipping in the late 1930s which was a direct prelude to the 1941-45 war between the U.S. and Japan.

All the IBT really cares about is that the Seattle protest was supported by its favorite "left" union bureaucrat, ILWU Local 10 executive board member Jack Heyman. Heyman also has a fan club these days in Jan Norden's Internationalist Group (IG). Where the IBT types defected from our Trotskyist organization in the direction of Stalinophobia, the handful of former SL cadre who went on to form the IG chase around nostalgically looking for a few good Stalinist bureaucrats. What they shared, under the different pressures of Cold War II and the subsequent "death of communism" crusade, was an abandonment of a proletarian revolutionary perspective. At the time of their defection in 1996, we noted that the Nordenites' opportunist appetites could lead them in any direction. And here they are now, swimming with the fake-left stream over the anti-Communist WTO protests.

On December 11, cops in Mexico City attacked a demonstration called by the UNAM university General Strike Council (CGH) to protest the police repression in Seattle and in defense of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. In calling the protest, the CGH passed a resolution politically solidarizing with the Seattle mobilization: "We hail with pleasure the peaceful demonstrations repudiating neoliberalism and WTO directives which took place in Seattle." Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista issued an urgent statement vigorously defending the 98 students who had been arrested, while making clear our political opposition to the chauvinist mobilization in Seattle (see "Down With Mexican State Repression Against UNAM Strikers!" WV No. 726, 31 December 1999).

Not so the IG, which went out of its way to avoid criticizing the Seattle mobilization. Its Mexican supporters participated in a December 13 Mexico City defense rally with signs only denouncing the cop repression in Mexico City and Seattle. And an IG leaflet calling for a protest outside the Mexican consulate in New York that day had not one word in its five paragraphs characterizing the anti-WTO mobilization. Only when challenged by our comrades at the protest did the IG finally produce a sign reading,

"Protest Police Repression in Seattle! For International Labor Solidarity, Not National Protectionism!" In a supplement posted on their Web site at the end of December, the IG fumed over our supposed "smears" and "fabrications" for writing in WV No. 726 that it "says not a word of criticism" of the Seattle protest. So, yes, their last-minute placard did constitute "a word of criticism." Only in that supplement did the IG finally note that those mobilizations were "built on a chauvinist program of protectionism and proletarian internationalists would not participate in them."

In an attempt to cover for its failure to address illusions in the Seattle protest by UNAM students, many of whom look to the Zapatista rebels who were represented

in Seattle, the IG denied that the December 11 Mexico City protest was explicitly motivated by political solidarity with the Seattle protests. The IG cynically asks: "Why would Mexican students be solidarizing with *U.S.-chauvinist* protectionism, which is often directed against Mexico?" Why? Not least because an array of opportunist "socialists" sold radical activists around the world a bill of goods by painting the chauvinist, anti-Communist frenzy in Seattle as a display of "internationalism."

### For World Socialist Revolution!

Just as they served as labor auxiliaries for the imperialist rulers in earlier wars, today the trade-union misleaders, who long ago separated themselves from their working-class base, seek to line workers up behind their "own" bourgeoisie in the face of a new intensification of competition among the imperialist powers. And the opportunist "socialists" act as drum majors, overtly joining or acquiescing to these campaigns for economic nationalism and to bring back capitalist exploitation in China.

Our opposition to the chauvinist mobilization in Seattle was an expression of our revolutionary, internationalist and proletarian program. Upholding the class interests of the proletariat requires drawing a sharp line between Marxism and social-chauvinism, against what Lenin called "the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class."

In today's post-Soviet world of heightened interimperialist rivalry, the road of the labor bureaucracy leads inexorably toward World War III. This only underlines the urgency of the fight for the political independence of the unions from the capitalist class enemy and the forging of a class-struggle leadership of labor. We fight to break the working class from the Democratic Party and to build a workers party based on the theory of the class struggle, a party whose purpose is to give conscious leadership to the struggle of the workers, not only to improve their present conditions, but to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery and imperialist war through socialist revolution. This must be an *international* fight. Our watchword is not the chauvinist call to "defend American interests" but the words which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels inscribed on their banner more than 150 years ago: "Workers of the world, unite!" ■

A Spartacist Pamphlet

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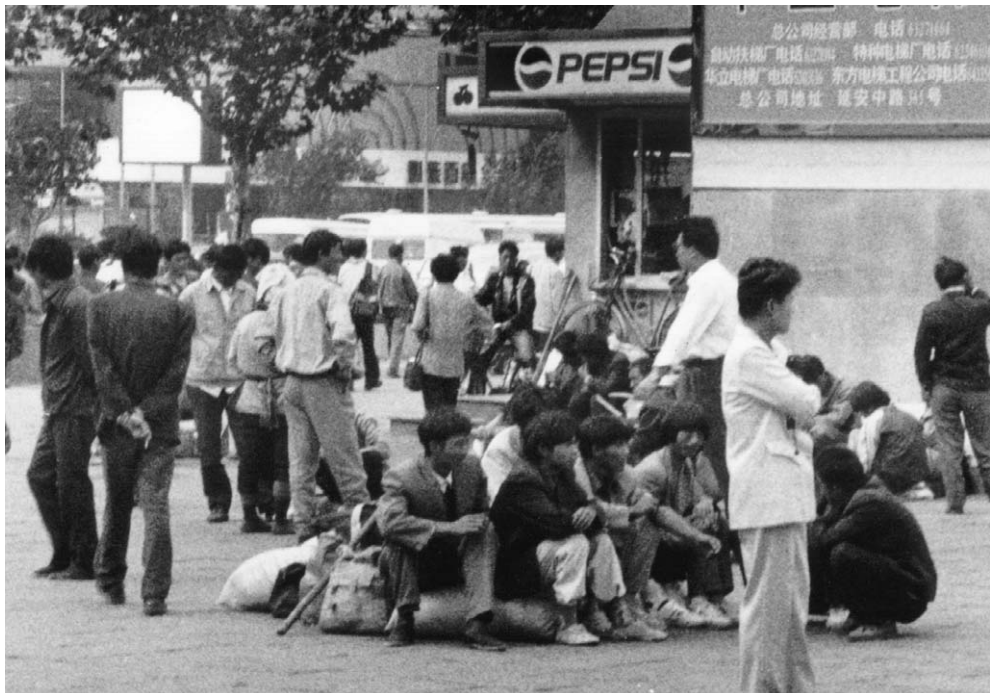
# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Defend China Against Imperialism, Counterrevolution!



Reuters

**Clinton at WTO summit. Migrant workers outside Shanghai railway station. Chinese proletariat must defeat imperialist-backed drive for capitalist restoration.**



WV Photo

# Imperialists Push “Open Door” for Counterrevolution in China

Addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland on January 29, Bill Clinton said: “Those who heard a wake-up call in Seattle got the right message.” The wake-up call the U.S. president spoke of was the protest by upwards of 40,000 people against the World Trade Organization (WTO) summit in Seattle in late November. While drawing in everything from right-wing supporters of Pat Buchanan and eco-radical “greens” to anarchoid youth and spokesmen for the Mexican Zapatista peasant-guerrilla movement, the anti-WTO protest was politically and organizationally dominated by the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy. It was the labor face of the capitalist Democratic Party, shot through with strident calls for a more belligerent U.S. imperialism. As the headline of our article on Seattle said, “AFL-CIO Tops Push Anti-Communism, Protectionist Poison” (WV No. 725, 10 December 1999).

In warmly praising the “new forces seeking to be heard in the global dialogue,” Clinton singled out AFL-CIO president John Sweeney by name no less than three times. In turn, Sweeney hailed the Democratic Party president for being “firmly committed to making labor issues a part of trade negotiations.” Sweeney himself addressed the political and corporate elite of the major capitalist powers (and their neocolonial lackeys) assembled in Davos, where he offered his own impassioned paean to the anti-WTO protest, prominently featured as a column in the *Washington Post* (30 January) under the headline “Remember Seattle.”

In the two months since the anti-WTO protests, “Remember Seattle” has become a rallying call for the most seemingly diverse forces, from imperialist spokesmen to the labor statesmen of the AFL-CIO officialdom to an array of self-styled “socialists” around the world. In the U.S., the Communist Party

## AFL-CIO Tops, Fake Socialists—Running Dogs for U.S. Rulers



Giase/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

**Seattle, November 30: AFL-CIO tops spearhead anti-Communist crusade against China with chauvinist signs reading, “People First Not China First.”**

enthused in a front-page headline, “Protests Sink WTO” (*People’s Weekly World*, 11 December 1999). *Socialist Action* (December 1999) avidly boosted the protests as “entirely positive and highly significant.” The International Socialist Organization (ISO) crowed, “Spread the Spirit of Seattle” (*Socialist Worker*, 7 January), while its Canadian affiliate spoke of “a victory against capitalism” which is “radicalizing millions of students and workers around the world” (*Socialist Worker* [Canada], 8 December 1999).

That the “message” of Seattle is invoked by none other than the commander in chief of U.S. imperialism is evidence enough that this was not a “victory

against capitalism.” Far from it. The anti-WTO protest was “a circus...dominated by national chauvinism, racist protectionism and counterrevolutionary attacks on the Chinese deformed workers state,” just as we had predicted it would be in a November 4 motion of the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, resolving that we would “not participate in, or sell at” these protests.

While defending the hundreds of protesters arrested in Seattle and denouncing the ominous mobilization of the National Guard there, we wrote in our article, “At bottom, the protests were nothing more than a grotesque nationalist festival

which held up ‘democratic’ American imperialism, the most rapacious exploiter of labor on the planet, as the model for the world.” Rather than saying that the enemy of the U.S. working class is the ruling class of Washington and Wall Street, the anti-WTO protest blamed so-called “global capitalism” and Third World sweatshops for the attacks on labor in America. One banner concisely captured it: “Clinton, Say No to the WTO.” In response, Clinton “sided with the cause of many of the peaceful demonstrators” (*New York Times*, 2 December 1999).

What was evident in Seattle, both in the AFL-CIO protest and in the collapse of the WTO talks, is the sharp escalation of rivalries among the imperialist powers in recent years. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the competing capitalist powers are no longer bound by a U.S.-led anti-Soviet consensus and their respective and conflicting national interests have come to the fore. They are engaged in a ruthless struggle to improve their relative competitive position by increasing the rate of exploitation of their domestic working class, by plundering the colonial and semicolonial world and by seizing markets at the expense of their rivals. The emergence of rival trade blocs dominated by the U.S., Germany and Japan points ultimately to new wars to redivide markets and spheres of exploitation—and the golden fleece, they hope, is a China which has been returned to untrammelled imperialist exploitation through capitalist counterrevolution.

The aim of the labor bureaucracy in Seattle was to further the interests of U.S. imperialism. Front and center in all this was anti-Communist hostility to China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state which, despite enormous capitalist inroads in the past 20 years, is based on the collectivized economy ushered in by the

*continued on page 9*