

The Elián Case and the U.S. Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution

Defend the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!

Ever since the government of Fidel Castro expropriated the capitalist class in Cuba in 1960-61, establishing a bureaucratically deformed workers state, the U.S. ruling class has worked relentlessly to undermine and overthrow the Cuban Revolution. From the 1961 Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) invasion to repeated attempts to assassinate Castro, from funding counterrevolutionary terrorists in Miami to the ongoing economic embargo, the American bourgeoisie has been determined to bring back the days when Cuba was a brutally exploited, viciously racist neocolony of U.S. imperialism.

CIA dirty tricks and military plots were repeatedly stymied, epitomized by the crushing of the mercenary invasion force at the Bay of Pigs by Cuban soldiers and workers. For more than three decades, the biggest obstacle to Washington's drive for capitalist counterrevolution in Cuba was the existence of the Soviet Union, which supported Cuba with some \$4 billion a year in aid and provided a crucial military shield against imperialism. In the wake of the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, the imperialist rulers see their big chance to bury the Cuban Revolution once and for all. Indeed, without the Soviet lifeline, the social gains of the revolution based on Cuba's planned, collectivized economy are today in great peril. This underscores the necessity for the international working class to rally to the defense of Cuba against U.S. imperialism and internal counterrevolution.

For Unconditional Military Defense of Cuba Against Imperialism!

At the same time, the collapse of the Soviet Union has enabled the American bourgeoisie to pursue different means of promoting counterrevolution in Cuba. In turn, this has led to increasing divisions among U.S. capitalists. After the U.S. twice tightened the embargo in the mid-'90s in an attempt to squeeze Cuba

ment has opened up to foreign capital over the past decade. Consequently, many within the Clinton administration now advocate policies of "constructive engagement" with Cuba, aiming to strengthen the forces of counterrevolution from within, while maintaining military pressure against Cuba. This type of

divisions within the American bourgeoisie over Cuba. Spearheading the efforts to keep Elián in the U.S. are the counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms)—the former bourgeoisie and its henchmen from the brutal regime of Fulgencio Batista—who fled the Cuban Revolution and have ever since waged a campaign of terrorism supported by their CIA masters. The *gusanos'* aim is the reconquest of power in Cuba, wreaking bloody vengeance on the workers and peasants, and especially Communist Party members. While the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), on orders from Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno, has declared that the boy must be returned to his Cuban father, INS authorities in Miami handed Elián over to the family of his rabid *gusano* great-uncle, who brandishes him as an anti-Communist trophy.

The *gusanos* have won support in the Republican-controlled Congress and also from Democratic Party presidential aspirant Al Gore. Trawling for votes in Florida, a key electoral state, Gore signed on to a call for Elián and his immediate family to be given permanent residency status in the U.S. Amid the frenzy over

Elián this winter, the government charged a Cuban diplomat and a senior INS official with spying for Cuba and had the diplomat deported. Meanwhile, Clinton and Reno, whose racist immigration cops routinely expel black Haitians and other "undesirables," have bent over backward to appease Elián's Miami

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Return Elián now!

Left: Counter-revolutionary *gusano* mob outside Miami home of Elián González' kidnappers. Millions have rallied in Havana (right) and throughout Cuba to demand Elián's return.



into submission, growing sections of the ruling class have concluded that such moves have only served to rally the population around the Castro regime in the name of national solidarity against U.S. imperialism.

Moreover, American corporations have found themselves cut off from access to the markets which the Cuban govern-

ment has been employed against the Chinese deformed workers state, where more than two decades of increasing imperialist economic penetration under Deng Xiaoping and his heirs have encouraged capitalist-restorationist forces.

The kidnapping of Elián González, the six-year-old Cuban boy rescued off the coast of Florida last fall, has highlighted

IMF Protests

Beware Fraud of "Human Rights" Imperialism!

D.C. Cops Arrest Hundreds, Seize Protest Headquarters

APRIL 17—When some 15,000 demonstrators from around the country gathered in Washington, D.C. last weekend in protests against the Inter-

national Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, they were faced with a massive police mobilization. A good 50 blocks of the nation's capital became an armed camp: police helicopters patrolled overhead; armored vehicles rolled through city streets; police snipers sat atop buildings; baton-wielding riot cops in full body armor lined street intersections. On April 15, the cops staged a pre-emptive

strike by seizing the protest headquarters. Later that day, over 600 people, including supporters of the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Clubs, who were protesting against the "prison-industrial complex" were penned in by riot cops for hours and then arrested and forced to sit, handcuffed, in police buses for up to 18 hours before being released. Some 700 more protesters were arrested over the next two days;

many remain in jail. We demand: Free all the protesters! Drop the charges now!

From all points of the geographic and political compass, the youthful demonstrators came to Washington looking to join a movement against "globalization"—sweatshops, poverty in the "Global South," child labor and other evils inherent in the system of

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International Solidarity Campaign Wrap-Up

Mexico: Free Jailed UNAM Student Strikers and Leftists!

APRIL 16—Before dawn yesterday, some 5,000 cops of the Federal Preventive Police (PFP) re-occupied Mexico City's National Autonomous University (UNAM), site of a ten-month-long student strike until it was brutally suppressed in the government's February crackdown. This cop attack provoked anew widespread anger and indignation among both students and workers. In response, the STUNAM campus workers union has called a mass protest demonstration for April 19, which is also supported by the UNAM students' General Strike Council (Consejo General de Huelga—CGH). The STUNAM union also called a campus workers strike for May 3 and announced that it would refuse to work at any sites where the federal police were present.

The police occupation of UNAM underscores the pernicious effect of the Auxilio UNAM campus cops, who have attacked student strikers, being part of the STUNAM union. The STUNAM leadership has demanded, as a condition for its support to the student strikers, that the CGH drop its demand for abolishing the Auxilio UNAM cops and other repressive

Protest Police Siege of UNAM! Cops Off Campus!

forces on the campuses. The STUNAM tops even gave as a reason for calling the May 3 strike the fact that the federal police were "doing the job" of Auxilio UNAM cops! A heated debate took place at yesterday's CGH general assembly, held at the STUNAM offices, where comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM), section of the International Communist League, intervened to denounce Auxilio UNAM and call for cops out of the unions.

The day before the April 15 cop raid, some 8,000 students and workers had demonstrated to protest the UNAM administration's threat to send the PFP cops onto the campus. Since the crackdown and mass arrests in February, the Mexican government has cynically tried to defuse the ongoing protests in support of student strikers who are still imprisoned by releasing most of those

arrested—who still face serious, trumped-up charges—while keeping eight strike leaders in jail. On April 12, up to a third of the UNAM campus and several preparatory high schools were temporarily re-occupied by students demanding the release of the jailed strike leaders, following a 5,000-strong march to the jail the day before. **Cops off campus! Free all the UNAM strikers now—Drop all the charges!**

In the February crackdown on the UNAM strike, up to a thousand students and others were arrested. On March 20, the Partisan Defense Committee and ICL launched an international fundraising campaign for legal defense and to help pay bail for the UNAM strikers. We are pleased to announce that this campaign has collected US\$4,830.83 plus 2,304.60 Mexican pesos (approximately US\$246) for the imprisoned militants and the hundreds still facing charges for fighting to defend public education. Last week, these funds were transmitted to the CGH's Finance Commission for Political Prisoners. This money—donated by union members, students and others from the United States, Britain, Ireland, France, Italy, Poland, Germany, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Australia and South Africa—is a concrete expression of international solidarity with the courageous struggle of the Mexican students and workers. More funds have been collected since that transmittal and will be forwarded to the CGH's Finance Commission.

Collecting funds for the strikers' legal defense is part of the ICL's active participation in the UNAM strike. As noted in our fund drive call, "The tens of thousands of students and workers who participated in the strike and in huge support rallies were fighting for all those oppressed and dispossessed by capitalism, and it is our revolutionary internationalist duty to raise funds to help get them out of Mexico's dungeons."

The UNAM strike, provoked by the ruling class' attempt to purge poor and working-class youth through tuition hikes, sparked wider social struggle throughout Mexico. Thousands of campus workers took part in demonstrations and defense of the occupied university, and after the PFP raid in February, refused to return to work until the cops vacated the campus. In the state of



Reuters

Mexico City, February 14: Parents and supporters of jailed UNAM strikers demand their release.

Hidalgo, student activists occupied the campus of the El Mexe teachers college, and after the campus was raided by police, the villagers of El Mexe captured 68 cops, who were then traded for the release of the arrested students (see WV No. 730, 25 February).

This campaign clearly struck a chord among workers and leftists in the places where the ICL does political work. In the San Francisco Bay Area, \$300 was contributed by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10. Los Angeles NALC letter carriers Local 2200 gave \$200. In Chicago, transit workers contributed approximately \$175. In one instance, as a Chicago Spartacist supporter was soliciting donations from a group of workers, a transit worker from Guatemala intervened to insist on the importance of the UNAM strike, recalling the 1968 massacre of Mexican student protesters. When he finished, everyone in the group made a contribution. New York City transit workers, city workers and UPS workers also made donations. On March 25, the day of Patrick Dorismond's funeral, predominantly Haitian marchers mourning this recent victim of the NYPD's terror donated \$15.50. In Los Angeles, with its large Mexican population, contributions were received at a downtown labor rally on March 28, at a celebration in memory of Cesar Chavez, at a movie about the Zapatistas of Chiapas, and among Chicano college students. Chinese immigrant workers in Vancouver expressed their solidarity and made donations.

On many campuses where students face cutbacks and attacks upon education, the campaign found a real resonance. At New York City's Borough of Manhattan

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TROTSKY

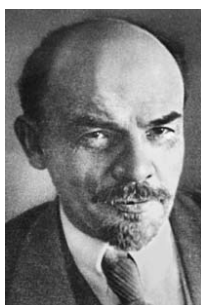
For International Workers Revolution!

As seen in the protests against the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund, the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy promotes flag-waving protectionism in the name of fighting "globalization." In reality, "globalization" is a fundamental feature of the imperialist epoch, marked by relentless competition among the capitalist powers for markets and sources of

raw materials and cheap labor. Against the purveyors of bourgeois nationalism, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky advanced the program of revolutionary proletarian internationalism: uniting the workers and oppressed of the imperialist countries with those of the impoverished "Third World" in the struggle to overthrow capitalist rule and create a world socialist economy.

The bourgeois revolutions were directed in similar degree against feudal property relations and against the particularism of the provinces. Nationalism stood beside liberalism on their liberating banners. Western humanity long ago wore out such baby-shoes. The productive forces of our time have outgrown not only the bourgeois forms of property, but also the boundaries of national states. Liberalism and nationalism have become in like degree fetters upon world economy. The proletarian revolution is directed both against private property in the means of production and against the national splitting-up of world economy. The struggle of the eastern peoples for independence is included in this world process and will subsequently merge with it. The creation of a national socialist society, if such a goal were in a general way attainable, would mean an extreme reduction of the economic power of men. But for that very reason it is unattainable. Internationalism is not an abstract principle but the expression of an economic fact. Just as liberalism was national, so socialism is international. Starting from the world-wide division of labor, the task of socialism is to carry the international exchange of goods and services to its highest development.

—Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. 3, Appendix II (1932)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The Golden Gater

—10 February 2000

Support for Mexican students

Protestors rally against public school tuition hike

By Allan Yu
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Protestors rallied outside the Mexican Consulate in downtown San Francisco Monday night against the arrests of over 700 students who are on strike against the increase of tuition fees at National Autonomous University (UNAM) in Mexico City, the largest public university in the Western Hemisphere with a student population of 270,000 students.

"Drop the charges, free the students, cops out of UNAM!" and "From Wall Street to Mexico, capitalism's got to go!" were slogans demonstrators shouted as they paced in front of the consulate for an hour in support of the student strike and the downfall of capitalism.



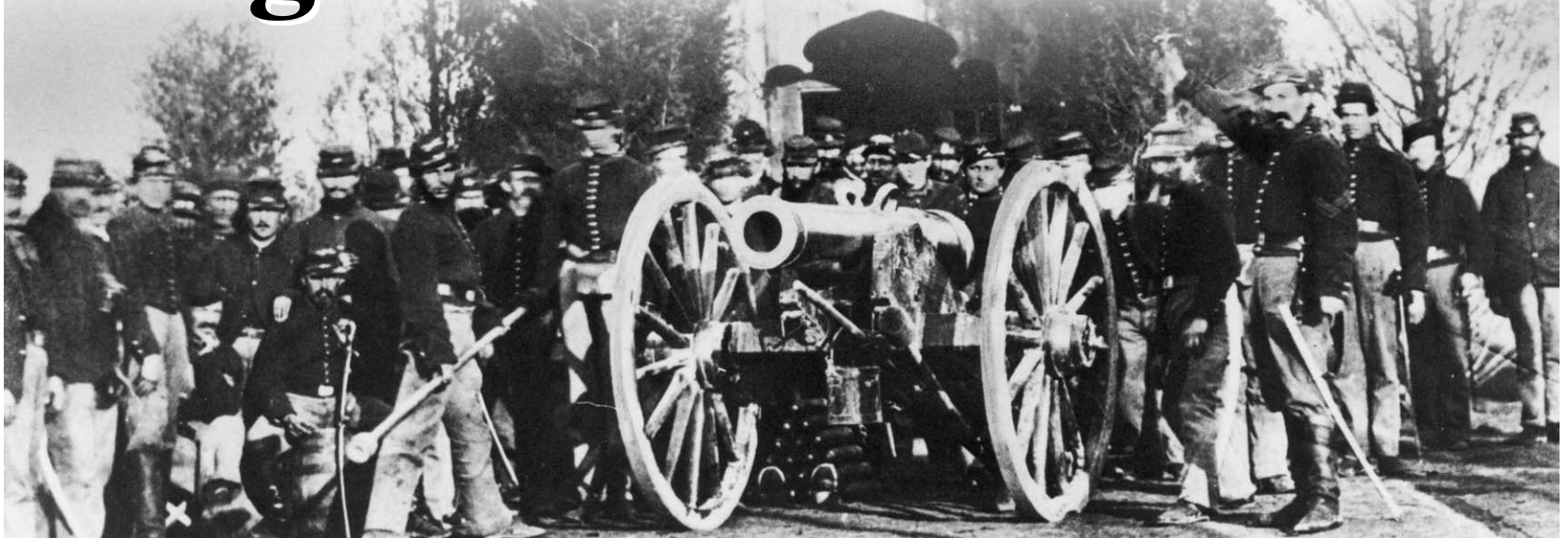
Mendoza/Golden Gater

Front page of San Francisco State campus newspaper highlights speakout by Bay Area SYC in defense of UNAM strikers.

WORKERS VANGUARD

A Small Town in Texas

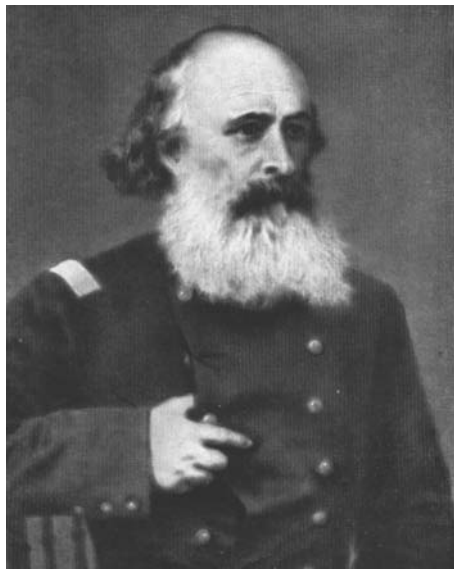
The “Red ’48ers” and the Fight for Black Freedom



Americana Image Gallery

All-German artillery unit in Union Army. Many veterans of 1848 German Revolution played leading roles in Civil War which smashed black chattel slavery.

Even as 50,000 men, women and children took to the streets of Columbia, South Carolina in January to protest the Confederate flag of slavery flying from Southern state capitols, a small but no less telling battle is raging over a proposed monument to anti-slavery fighters in the town of Comfort, Texas. The Comfort abolitionists were among the many “Red ’48ers” who had fled to the Uni-



no credit

“Red ’48er” Joseph Weydemeyer, a collaborator of Karl Marx, was a colonel in Union Army.

ed States to escape counterrevolutionary repression in Germany following the failed 1848 Revolution. Following the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, this Texas community of German immigrants refused to take the state’s oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Confederate thugs retaliated by pillaging and burning their farms.

In August 1862, nearly 100 of the German immigrants fled south, hoping to make their way to Mexico in order to head back toward the North to join the Union forces or to wait out the war south of the border. A Confederate cavalry unit ambushed the group at their camp near the Nueces River. Nineteen were killed in the raid, 15 more were captured and executed. After the war, friends and relatives gathered their bones, buried them in a common grave, and in 1866 erected a marker at the gravesite, believed to be the only monument to pro-Union forces (outside of national cemeteries) in former Confederate states.

Now, plans to commemorate them with a new monument have run aground. When proponents of the memorial wanted the monument’s inscription to note that the settlement was made up of “free-

thinkers”—atheists or agnostics—the religious bigots went running for their pitchforks. Hundreds signed a petition headlined, “No Monument to Atheism in Comfort.” Getting to the heart of the matter, one racist ranted, “I don’t see what we need a monument for in the first place. Those people were turncoats and got massacred, which was just what they deserved” (*New York Times*, 27 February).

The German settlers in Comfort, like their fellow Red ’48ers, were inspired by the rationalist ideals of the Enlightenment. More than a few Red ’48ers were Communists, including collaborators of Karl Marx. These revolutionaries upheld the fundamentals of science and rationalism against religious obscurantism. They naturally allied themselves with the Union side in the Civil War which smashed the Southern slavocracy. As one ’48er and former member of Karl Marx’s Communist League, Fritz Anneke, titled his memoirs, it was “The Second Fight for Freedom.”

From the German Revolution to the Second American Revolution

The year 1848 ushered in a wave of revolutions across Europe, seeking to topple the autocracies and consolidate modern bourgeois nation-states, particularly in East Europe and Germany, which was then divided among a number of disparate principalities. In anticipation of this revolutionary upheaval, and with the expectation that the German bourgeois revolution would be the immediate precursor of a proletarian revolution, Marx and Engels authored the *Communist Manifesto* as the platform of the Communist League. But the revolutions went down to defeat, as fear of the emerging proletariat led the bourgeoisie in Germany and other countries into a compromise with monarchical reaction. In the reactionary terror that followed the defeat of the revolution, the radical and socialist fighters of 1848 faced severe repression.

Upon reaching the U.S., the ’48ers threw themselves into the social struggles of the day, including the cause of women’s suffrage as well as the fight against slavery. As Eitel Dobert described in his essay “The Radicals” (*The Forty-Eighters* [1967]):

“They found a federal government in the hands of slaveholders, election frauds in many of the states, and a growing xenophobia in a country where, after all, everyone was a newcomer....To their horror they saw at every fifth street corner a church, and that an ugly one.”

The ’48ers’ anticlericalism was part

and parcel of their hostility to bigotry and oppression, having experienced religion as the intellectual weapon of a clergy closely allied with the reactionary forces of the state bureaucracy, the army and vested landed interests at home. For the radical ’48ers, as Dobert writes, “Their atheism was not based solely on philosophic materialism, but on the firm conviction that all churches, Catholic as well as Protestant, were in league with reaction and narrow nationalism and consequently were barriers to progress. They had observed this phenomenon in Germany and the attitude of American clergymen strengthened their belief.”

The German radicals brought with them their militant traditions and organizations, in the form of the *Turnverein*, or simply *Turner*. These “athletic clubs” with political, social and military functions were often simply direct transplants of the *Schützverein* (rifle clubs) of 1848. Anneke and another ’48er, Eduard Schultz, founded the first *Turnverein* in 1850; a second was organized in 1852. The ’48ers soon gained leadership of these clubs, as was clear from the platform adopted at a national convention of representatives of the 47 societies of the *Turner* held in Buffalo in 1855:

“The *Turner* are opposed to slavery; particularly they are against extension of slavery to the free territories, and regard this institution as definitely unworthy of a republic and contrary to all concepts of freedom.”

In 1857, Marx’s collaborator Friedrich Sorge co-founded the New York Communist Club. Its members rallied to the antislavery movement, and most of them joined the radical wing of the Republican

Party. Among the Communist Club’s principles were that members “recognize the complete equality of all human beings irrespective of color or sex. They therefore strive, before all else, to do away with so-called bourgeois property, whether inherited or acquired, so that each may have a reasonable share in the national and spiritual riches of the earth, a share answering as far as possible to his needs.”

When the war broke out in 1861, the *Turner* became mass recruiting agencies—often instant regiments—for the Union Army at a critical time when the North was desperately short of experienced soldiers. *Three-fourths* of the *Turner* signed up for the army of the North, and in the end over 176,000 German-born Americans fought for the Union cause. There were some 500 German officers from major to general in the Union Army. Three of the very few major generals under Ulysses S. Grant were ’48ers—Franz Sigel, Carl Schurz, and Peter Joseph Osterhaus, as was a majority of the nine Germans who were brigadier generals. Osterhaus participated in the Atlanta campaign and the march to Savannah with General William Tecumseh Sherman.

The revolutionary German fighters played an important role in the Civil War from the opening days of the war to Sherman’s march to the sea (see “German Red ’48ers in the U.S. Civil War,” *WV* No. 494, 26 January 1990). Their role was acknowledged by no less an authority than Confederate army commander Robert E. Lee, who exclaimed, “Take the

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Spartacist Forums

25th Anniversary of the Defeat of U.S. Imperialism by Heroic Vietnamese Workers and Peasants
Defeat U.S. Imperialism! For Workers Revolution!

Wednesday, April 26, 7:30 p.m.
Columbia University, Hamilton Hall,
Rm. 602, 116th and Broadway
(take 1 or 9 to 116th St.)

NEW YORK CITY

Saturday, May 6, 3 p.m.
The St. Clair Restaurant
93 Smith St., Brooklyn
(at Atlantic Ave., take A, C, or F to Borough Hall)

For more information: (212) 267-1025

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

Saturday, April 29, 3 p.m.

BOSTON

Harvard University
Science Center, Room 109
For more information: (617) 666-9453
Event not sponsored by the Science Center of Harvard University

IMF Protests...

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imperialism. But the protest was organized by the Mobilization for Global Justice, aided by the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy and supported by most self-styled “socialist” organizations, to corral these youth behind the interests of U.S. imperialism, the main exploiter of labor on the planet. Among the speakers at the main rally on April 16 were Democratic Party politicians and officials of the United Steelworkers, UNITE garment workers, the AFL-CIO and other union bodies pushing economic protectionism and the anti-Communist crusade against China.

The D.C. demonstrations were consciously built in the “Spirit of Seattle”—the protests last fall against the World Trade Organization (WTO) which we characterized as a circus “dominated by national chauvinism, racist protectionism and counterrevolutionary attacks on the Chinese deformed workers state.” An April 12 rally organized by Teamsters and AFL-CIO officials seeking to pressure Congress into voting down normal trade relations with China featured the racist rantings of Pat Buchanan, who announced that if he were president and the “Communist Chinese came to my office, I’d tell them to stop threatening my country” or “you have sold your last pair of chopsticks.” Buchanan is the closest thing the U.S. has to a clerical-fascist: a racist, anti-Semitic, anti-abortion bigot who champions the defense of Nazi war criminals while railing against dark-skinned immigrants from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Joining the “yellow peril” festival was liberal Democratic Senator Paul Wellstone and Michigan Democratic Congressman David Bonior, who denounced how American jobs are “ripped off, boxed up and shipped away to a factory in China.”

The student youth who converged on Washington over the weekend did not share this flag-waving enthusiasm for trade protectionism and belligerence toward China. Most hadn’t even heard of the April 12 China-bashing rally, which was organized by many of the same union officials who provided organizational backbone for the anti-IMF/World Bank protests. SL/SYC comrades encountered little overt anti-Communism except for a few pockets of right-wingers like the “Free Tibet” crowd and sold hundreds of copies of *Workers Vanguard* with front-page articles headlined “Defend Cuba Against U.S. Imperialism!” and “Down With U.S. Anti-China Crusade!” 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.

Demonstrators were organized into “affinity groups” based on the particular cause they supported or campus they came from. For many, this was their first foray into political protest of any kind. For their efforts, they were assaulted by cops with tear gas and potentially lethal pepper spray for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Many were clubbed before being dragged off into police vehicles. Several were intentionally hit by speeding police motorcycles. Here was an object lesson in the workings of the capitalist state—a machinery of repression to defend the profits and rule of the capitalist class.

Protesters were looking for solutions to the brutal exploitation and oppression which are rooted in the capitalist system. The pro-capitalist labor tops, liberals and fake leftists all try to sell them a bill of goods: that capitalism can be made more “humane” and that its state can be pressured to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. This is a lie. Depredations like the war against Serbia and continuing U.S. bombing of Iraq, miserable wages and sweatshop conditions, racism, hunger and the despoliation

of the planet are all inevitable products of this system of capitalist imperialism. And they will persist until socialist revolution sweeps away the capitalist state and places the wealth of society in the hands of the workers who created it.

The Liberals and “Globalization”

The labor bureaucrats and liberal left present “globalization” as a *new* development in which a handful of multinational corporations, represented above all by organizations like the WTO, IMF and World Bank, are responsible for the impoverishment of the masses in the “Global South”—Africa, Asia and Latin America. 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, leader of the Russian workers revolution of 1917, built on this understanding in his book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Lenin explained that by the beginning of the 20th century, world capitalism had become dominated by industrial monopolies and big banks represented by different imperialist states whose interests are in sharp *conflict*. Against Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, who prefigured the “globalization” theorists with his idea of “ultra-imperialism” (see the Spartacist pamphlet, *Imperialism, the “Global Economy” and Labor Reformism*), Lenin wrote:

“Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German ‘Marxist’, Kautsky, ‘inter-imperialist’ or ‘ultra-imperialist’ alliances, no matter what form they may assume, 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.”

The small number of imperialist powers 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. Particularly since the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, there has been a sharp escalation of interimperialist rivalries, as evidenced in the breakup of the Seattle talks and the growth of bourgeois militarism in the U.S., Europe and Japan.

It is significant that many young “globalization” protesters are looking to the trade unions—the basic defense organizations of the working class—as allies in the fight against exploitation. But the power of the labor movement to wage class struggle against the capitalist exploiters is chained by the pro-capitalist union tops. Both in the Seattle anti-WTO protests and in Washington last week, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy *manipulated* liberal student youth, whose concern for global poverty is mixed with illusions in the “democratic” nature of the American state, for their own reactionary ends: chauvinist trade protectionism and anti-Communist China bashing.

What the organizers of the Seattle and D.C. protests share with labor bureaucrats like John Sweeney and ultra-rightists like Pat Buchanan is the notion that supranational institutions like the WTO and IMF now dominate the world, thereby stripping the American nation of its “sovereignty.” 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.” One of the main chants of the Seattle protests was, “Clinton, say no to the WTO!”

The idea that the world is governed by bodies like the WTO and IMF which trample on the “sovereignty” of the most powerful imperialist countries is both

reactionary and absurd. The authority exercised by these bodies derives from the power of the imperialist states for which they function as agents. Formed at the end of World War II to help finance the reconstruction of Europe as a bulwark against the spread of Communism, the World Bank and IMF later shifted their attentions to Asia, Africa and Latin America. The U.S. has armed countless death-squad regimes, provided economists to draft austerity plans and sent its advisers and troops to squeeze debt repayments out of the blood and over the corpses of workers throughout the Third World.

American Imperialism: Biggest Exploiter on the Planet

The union misleaders and opportunist “socialists” who aim all their fire at agencies like the IMF and WTO promote the illusions that these institutions can be reformed and the U.S. imperialists pressured to serve the oppressed around the world. It is grotesque to call upon the American state—the biggest exploiter of labor on the planet—to eliminate sweatshop labor abroad, cancel the Third World debt and impose “fair labor standards” globally. The official anti-IMF protests virtually buried the questions of poverty, sweatshop labor and racial oppression *in the United States* itself. Not surprisingly the demonstrators were overwhelmingly white and middle-class, although it is black and Latino youth who are most alienated from and hostile to the American ruling elite in Wall Street and Washington.

For all the talk about the concern for the poor abroad, the organizers of the Seattle protest and April 16-17 D.C. protest had nothing to say about the nearly daily bombings of Iraq ordered by the Democratic Party Clinton administration, following the massive bombing during the 1991 Gulf War, which is accompanied by the ongoing United Nations starvation blockade. Ten years ago, the literacy rate in Iraq was 95 percent, and 93 percent of the population had access to modern health facilities. The child mortality rate, once one of the lowest in the world, is now the highest. Likewise, the anti-IMF protest made no mention of last year’s NATO terror bombing of Serbia. In fact, most liberals and ostensible leftists fully supported U.S. imperialism’s war against Serbia in the name of “humanitarian” concern for the Kosovar Albanians.

Prominent among the left apologists for “human rights” imperialism are the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Workers World Party (WWP), both of which hailed the Seattle protest and helped build the Washington demonstrations. Recently these groups have sought to distance themselves from the AFL-CIO

tops’ rabid anti-China crusade. Thus the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (3 March) article headlined “Why China-Bashing Hurts U.S. Labor.” In fact, the ISO has always refused to defend the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and supported every counterrevolutionary movement arrayed against the former Soviet Union and East European deformed workers states. The ISO social democrats alibi China-bashing when it comes out of the mouths of the pro-imperialist labor bureaucrats, writing “Sweeney’s call for keeping China out of the WTO is tied to an effort to promote labor rights around the world.” The ISO’s virulent anti-Communist hostility to China puts it in the same bed as ultra-rightists like Jesse Helms and Pat Buchanan. This is hardly the first time they have found themselves in such company. But now they’re trying to cover their tracks, evidently feeling the pressure of youth who are understandably revolted by the ISO’s political companions.

The Marcyites of the WWP are simultaneously slavish supporters of the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy which is trying to sell China out to the imperialists and tails upon the Democratic Party donkey at home. Differences over China’s entry into the WTO have sharply divided the Democrats, making it more difficult to mobilize the labor vote for Al Gore in November. At the same time, Sweeney’s anti-China crusade has bolstered the credentials of right-wing demagogues like Pat Buchanan. The Progressive Labor Party (PL) provides some left-sounding criticisms of the national chauvinism and anti-Communism of the liberals and labor tops. But PL joins with the rest of the fake left in tailing these forces by denouncing “fascist” China.

The reformists act as waterboys for the union bureaucracy—the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class—which aims to line up American workers behind their “own” exploiters. We fight to instill in the working class the consciousness that its interests are diametrically *opposed* to those of the capitalists. The eradication of the poverty, racism and war endemic to capitalism can only be accomplished by the one revolutionary class in this society, the working class. Because of its central role in capitalist production, the proletariat as a class has the power to sweep away the capitalist system and lay the foundations of a socialist society—based on an international planned economy providing material abundance for all. This requires the instrumentality of a revolutionary workers party to render the proletariat conscious of its historic tasks and lead it in revolutionary struggle against the exploiters. That is the purpose of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs. Join us! ■

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4

WORKERS VANGUARD

Young Spartacus

The “Spirit of Seattle” Is Protectionist Poison, American Chauvinism and Anti-Communism!

For Workers Revolution to Smash U.S. Imperialism!

SYC at Socialist Scholars Conference

The rotten, pro-imperialist politics at the center of Seattle’s backward, national-chauvinist anti-World Trade Organization protests pervaded the dry academic panels and discussion at the recent Socialist Scholars Conference 2000 in New York, an annual confab sponsored by the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America. At the conference, entitled “Rockin’ the Boat: Building Coalitions for the New Century,” the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club interjected the fight for international workers revolution into discussions awash in the consensus reformism of ostensibly Marxist organizations and the “socialist scholars.” Wrapped in the “spirit” of the WTO protests, this entire lot of fake socialists entrusts rapacious U.S. imperialism with the “human rights” mission of bringing the rest of the world under its heel, in particular the Chinese deformed workers state.

Two panels focused on China. One featured Chinese academic apologists for Mao’s heirs, openly heralding the attempts of the Communist Party bureaucrats to dismantle the collectivized economy, legacy of the 1949 Revolution. At the other panel, émigré speakers who think China is already capitalist (since 1979) expressed their nostalgia for Mao by denying both his alliance with U.S. imperialism against the USSR and the famine that followed his “Great Leap Forward.” Both groupings stand on the terrain of nationalism and at bottom, the acceptance of the “death of communism.” Meanwhile, American “socialists” such as the International Socialist Organization, who effusively cheered every counterrevolutionary movement aimed at the Soviet Union and ultimately hailed its collapse, are now lined up in support of a similar fate for the Chinese proletariat—the wholesale destitution accompanying capitalist restoration. The SL/SYC intervened at these panels in defense of China against imperialism and counterrevolution. Chinese workers must overthrow the bureaucracy through a proletarian political revolution with an internationalist program—a perspective that includes saving the gains of the 1949 Revolution which the reformists and “socialist” scholars reject outright.

A main point of “contention” at the Socialist Scholars Conference was the degree to which the murderous U.S. military should intervene to protect “human rights” around the world. One panel wholeheartedly supporting intervention called on U.S. imperialism to expand its profit-grabbing and spheres of influence in the name of “democracy.” A panel of European academics, more concerned with the prospects of their own respec-



Spartacist contingent counterposed proletarian internationalism to pro-imperialist pacifist appeals at 5 June 1999 antiwar protest in San Francisco.

tive ruling classes, called on NATO and the United Nations to do the same bloody work in lieu of the U.S. military. With their “humanitarian” rhetoric, these “socialist” scholars echo the premise of imperialist ideologues from the turn of the last century and their cry to take up the “white man’s burden.” In both cases,

pro-imperialist paternalistic moralism provides the pretext for the ruling classes of America, Western Europe and Japan to rip off the wealth of the entire world while the masses of the Third World are consigned to permanent impoverishment.

What follows is a leaflet put out by the Spartacus Youth Club for the Socialist

Scholars Conference. It puts forth our Marxist program, the revolutionary alternative to heightened global capitalist plunder.

* * *

The call for this year’s Socialist Scholars Conference lauds the Seattle anti-WTO protests as a “glimmer of the future.” The kind of future these “socialist scholars” are trying to sell you is one of American chauvinism, protectionist poison, anti-Communism and dressing up the bloodiest ruling class in the world as potential allies of working people and the oppressed. Though some youth might view throwing rocks through the windows of Starbucks as a major statement against exploitation, this merely was the streetfighting veneer for the grotesque nationalist festival that was the Seattle protests. What was seen in Seattle was the labor face of the capitalist Democratic Party, shot through with strident calls for a more belligerent U.S. imperialism.

From the anti-China ravings of the AFL-CIO tops to the banners reading “People First Not China First” and the dumping of Chinese steel into the harbor, the “spirit of Seattle” courtesy of the AFL-CIO tops and their reformist left tails was anti-Communism and poisonous protectionism ever so thinly veiled as a campaign for “human rights.” For example, Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa, who has never displayed any concern for the “human rights” of the Mexican truckers he wants banned from the U.S., railed against “slave labor” in “undemocratic regimes” like China and Vietnam. It is no coincidence that both countries happen to be places where revolutions led to the overthrow of the capitalist system. The American capitalist class would very much like to destroy the remaining gains of these revolutions so that *they* can secure rights to exploit Chinese and Vietnamese workers in the same way the U.S. imperialists already exploit workers throughout the rest of the world and in the U.S.: through “slave labor” and by propping up “undemocratic regimes.”

continued on page 8

“The Main Enemy Is at Home!”



We reprint below Karl Liebknecht’s 1916 May Day Manifesto, a speech upholding proletarian internationalism at a time when the reformist Social Democrats were supporting the imperialist war efforts of the German bourgeoisie and thereby acting as an obstacle to revolutionary workers’ struggles. For their role in leading the Spartakist uprising of 1919, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered in the white terror unleashed in its wake by the Social Democrats.

* * *

Poverty and misery, need and starvation, are ruling in Germany, Belgium, Poland and Serbia, whose blood the vampire of imperialism is sucking and which resemble vast cemeteries. The entire world, the much-praised European civilization, is falling into ruins through the anarchy which has been let loose by the world war.

Those who profit from the war want war with the United States. Tomorrow, perhaps, they may order us to aim lethal weapons against new groups of

brethren, against our fellow-workers in the United States, and fight America, too. Consider well this fact: As long as the German people does not arise and use force directed by its own will, the assassination of the people will continue. Let thousands of voices shout “Down with the shameless extermination of nations! Down with those responsible for these crimes!” Our enemy is not the English, French, nor Russian people, but the great German landed proprietors, the German capitalists and their executive committee.

Forward, let us fight the government; let us fight these mortal enemies of all freedom. Let us fight for everything which means the future triumph of the working-classes, the future of humanity and civilization.

Workers, comrades, and you, women of the people, let not this festival of May, the second during the war, pass without protest against the Imperialist Slaughter. On the first of May let millions of voices cry, “Down with the shameful crime of the extermination of peoples!” “Down with those responsible for the War!”

Chicago Cybercops Entrap Priest

Government Sex Snoops Target Everyone

They are lurking in chat rooms in ever-greater numbers, dangling temptations hoping to lure their prey out for a sexual tryst and when they succeed—you're busted! "They," of course, are the growing number of cops engaged in a vicious national campaign of Internet entrapment aimed at those wishing to engage in consensual, intergenerational sex. The scenario is becoming a regular spot on the evening news: two people meet on the Internet and set up a date; one is of age, the other allegedly underage—except when the fellow shows up, he finds out that his "date" is a cop and he is now branded a pedophile, a sexual deviant, and dragged off to prison. The spate of arrests has netted a wide variety of victims, including a vice president of the Bank of America, a roadie for Engelbert Humperdinck, the U.S. Senate's top Y2K expert and, most recently, a Chicago priest named John Furdek. What these men have in common is that they were set up and arrested for a "crime" that never happened. One can now be charged with "endangering a child" without the existence of a child anywhere! Taking their cue from the Christian doctrine that includes thoughts under the category of sin, Illinois lawmakers have passed a law that allows a suspect to be charged with "solicitation of a child" merely for believing that it is a child with whom he is chatting.

Defense attorney Warren Breslin commented, "I think it's outrageous we're really aggressively looking for people on the Internet who engage in fantasy conversations. They're looking for crimes that have not yet developed" (Chicago *Sun-Times*, 27 February). Indeed. Father Furdek of Villa Park, Illinois was nabbed when he showed up at a Racine, Wisconsin McDonald's allegedly to meet a 14-year-old boy he met online. Furdek was charged with attempted second-degree sexual assault and two counts of child enticement involving sexual contact. The fact that the "child" was an undercover agent and no sexual relations ever took place is deemed irrelevant! He was also charged with possession of anabolic steroids with intent to deliver and possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. We say drop the charges against John Furdek! We are opposed to all laws

against victimless crimes (such as carrying or using drugs). There was no child and there was no crime.

The cops and the media whip up a frenzied depiction of an Internet crawling with Chester the Molester and his ilk. But make no mistake: the real stalkers are the hundreds of cops and undercover agents infesting the chat rooms. The Chicago *Sun-Times* (27 February) noted that in Illinois alone the number of law enforcement agencies that have special officers or units assigned to investigate "computer sex crimes" has jumped from six to 50 in the last two years. Cases handled by the FBI and convictions nationally have nearly doubled in the same period, climbing to 209 and 130 respectively. The mere act of sending "pornographic pictures" accounted for one-third of the 24 "computer sex" arrests of late in Wisconsin.

We condemn governmental entrapment and are opposed to reactionary age of consent laws. Age of consent laws are designed to repress youth sexuality. They



Lisa/Time

"Cybersheriffs on Patrol": these men want to "protect" you!

have about as much to do with "protecting youth" as the death penalty has to do with preventing crime. Both are repressive tools in the bourgeoisie's arsenal to maintain its grip on a disgruntled population. In this society, where the small minority that owns the means of production relies on state repression to maintain its class rule, you can bet that their obsession with snooping on the population flows from their need to keep a

March for abortion rights, San Francisco, 1992.



WV Photo

tight rein on "acceptable behavior." Sex is a particularly effective target as it raises explosive fears and prejudices, and it doesn't get much more dicey than the combination of minors, adults and sex. Witness the incessant persecution and prosecution of the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), which advocates the right of consensual sexual relations with young men under the age of consent. We find it particularly repulsive that the state that regularly perpetrates atrocities in the name of human rights—condemning millions of Iraqis to a slow death through sanctions, incinerating over 80 men, women and children in Waco, Texas, executing juveniles and the mentally disabled—tries to dictate what is socially acceptable behavior.

For tens of thousands of years the

institution of the family, which historically came into existence with property ownership and is thus crucial for capitalism which is based on such ownership. The family is the key institution for the oppression of women under capitalism. Gays are persecuted and held in contempt in bourgeois society because homosexuality is perceived as a threat to the "holy" family. One of the roles of organized religion is to shore up the family and its "values," i.e., it operates to perpetuate women's oppression, coyly described as the "special status" of women. Countless poor and working-class women have been driven to despair and, at times, to death by religious prohibitions against birth control and abortion. The apparent irony when a member of the clergy "does it" outside the boundaries of the moral code only speaks to the utterly normal character of sexual activity of all types. To paraphrase Cole Porter, birds do it, bees do it, evangelicals and priests do it.

The casualties of the escalating entrapment campaign go far beyond the lives and livelihoods of those arrested. It feeds directly into the climate of fear and intolerance and endangers the democratic rights of all, beginning with those most vulnerable. Branding these men as monsters is a conscious effort to intensify the sexual hysteria and further ostracize those who do not fit into the narrow sexual, social confines prescribed by this rotting capitalist society. By the authorities' own admission these cases are generally not about coercion. A *New York Times* (14 October 1999) article detailing a police sting pointed out that "none of the men charged today were accused of forcing the teenagers to have sex, but because the boys were minors, the law does not recognize any consent they may give." Small wonder that in the same article District Attorney Jeanine F. Pirro bemoans the fact that "several victims" in the entrapment arrests were unwilling to testify against those arrested.

The capitalist state can only promise to continue to mete out more punishment as it continues to cling to a decaying social system. It is our job as revolutionary Trotskyists of the International Communist League, acting as the tribune of the people, to fight against all manifestations of oppression and backwardness. As Marxists, we maintain that the guiding principle of sexual relations should be that of effective consent, nothing more than mutual agreement and understanding. Determining effective consent requires assessment of the particular relationship, especially when young people are involved with older ones; but such relationships are not *prima facie* evidence of abuse or coercion. Only when the working class sweeps away this capitalist system and takes power in its own name, can we begin to lay the groundwork for a society in which sexual relationships can be truly free from coercion, economic or otherwise. ■

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On Winning the New Generation to Revolutionary Trotskyism



Demonstration in March against Prop 21 and 22 in San Francisco (left). 23 October 1999 labor/black mobilization against KKK in New York City; SYCs helped organize successful action against racist terror.

We print below in edited form a presentation by comrade Don Cane to the Bay Area Spartacist League local on 1 April 2000.

This presentation will narrowly focus on the party question and will be centered on our own local and therefore limited experience. I was recently reading some of the prison letters of [founding American Trotskyist leader] James P. Cannon; in one, I believe, he was proposing the transfer to New York of a valuable comrade who had spent too much time in California and was growing soft. So the problem of the laid-back California lifestyle has a history. The California lifestyle problem is nothing more than the pressures of bourgeois society on a revolutionary party as they manifest themselves within this western state with its own unique but very American history.

I grew up in California as a post-World War II baby boomer; here is a slice of my experience. My parents arrived here in the early '50s as Southern migrants, semi-illiterate small-farm people, products of the Jim Crow South. For them this state was the land of milk and honey because black people lived well here. There was factory work and wages, no field work and sharecropper income. Blacks lived in stucco and brick houses and apartments, not whitewashed wooden shacks; their children attended good

schools with white kids, not unheated, rickety one-room schoolhouses where it was common practice to pull kids out to work the fields. They could boast that their children will never work a field. The expectation of their generation of escape from the degradation of the Jim Crow South was in many ways met in this state.

The expectations of their children's generation—who knew of, but had not lived in the Jim Crow South, and desired much more—could not be so easily satisfied. These expectations collided with the constant threat of violence of the all-white LAPD, collided with the contempt of the all-white school administration (I was a very good, hard-working student but the San Pedro schools kept me off the all-white honor rolls every semester; I'm still mad about this) and they collided with the booming job market that kept blacks in the dirty, backbreaking jobs while the clean, easy and good jobs remained all white. Official bourgeois society said that all was well in this land of milk and honey, even the colored people were happy, making progress and treated fairly. As we know these lies exploded and burned in the '60s ghetto rebellions. This opened up a huge window on American society: blacks weren't the only ones that were pissed off in the land of milk and honey; the Mexicans were pissed off and a wide layer of white youth and workers were too. Asian youth expressed their displeasure as well.

Now here we are in California in the year 2000. There is no talk of milk and honey, only the clamor of Silicon Valley dot-com millionaires congratulating themselves as they add up their profits. After a series of state propositions targeting every segment of the population in general and the working class in particular, we face the youth generation of Prop. 21. We are familiar with the outline of their experience: liberal integrationism's crowning achievement was the integration of the repressive capitalist state. So there are the Diallo and Rodney King cases, but increasingly the murderous cops are black and brown, grade-school kids are mobilized for Martin Luther King Day while their older brothers and sisters are mobilized for the Balkan War and Desert Slaughter.

The black middle class and their white counterparts have gotten fat at the government's pork barrel, while a new term is coined to describe workers, black

and white and mainly youth—it is the "working poor." Bourgeois propagandists preach to them about the death of communism and that tobacco is a drug—drugs fry your brain, commies are amoral dreamers because there is nothing wrong with robbing your neighbor if you can get away with it. What are the expectations of this new generation? How do they see the world? The party must be able to open up a line of communication with the best, most conscious layer of this generation in order to act on a program of revolutionary Marxism.

Cannon refers to "men of common clay" to explain that Marx, Lenin and Trotsky were rare men of genius that we should not expect to encounter again in our lifetime. What we "men of common clay" can and should expect to encounter are great leaders of revolutionary action. In other words, good party people who, having learned the art of politics of what to do next, actually do it—take the programs and principles laid out by the greater men of our movement and achieve final victory over the capitalist enemy. This concept distinguishes Leninist organizational methods from all others in the workers movement.

The Leninist organization is a combat organization, not a debating or mutual

aid society. The Leninist organization is designed to conduct a relentless struggle against the capitalists and their agents in the workers movement. The reformist workers organizations see this as a rigidity and a commandist organization that threatens their individual stardom. Cannon points out that the Leninist organization is in reality not this at all; it is flexible and varied. For the Leninist, organizational questions are subordinate to political aims. In other words, in order to advance the program of revolutionary Marxism the Leninist will adapt and improvise his organizational means. The program and principles of revolutionary Marxism are the only sacred weapons that cannot and will not be tampered with.

The revolutionary party must bend over backwards to provide a political education on the party and Trotskyist history to our youth. Cannon made the point that the history of the Bolshevik Party is not confined to Russia, buried under a foreign language; after October 1917 this party became international, it has a living history in many languages. Youth must learn that our party does not just study the history of the Russian Revolution, we are the party of the Russian Revolution. The class war goes on, the Bolshevik comrades of Lenin and Trotsky remain at their post. ■

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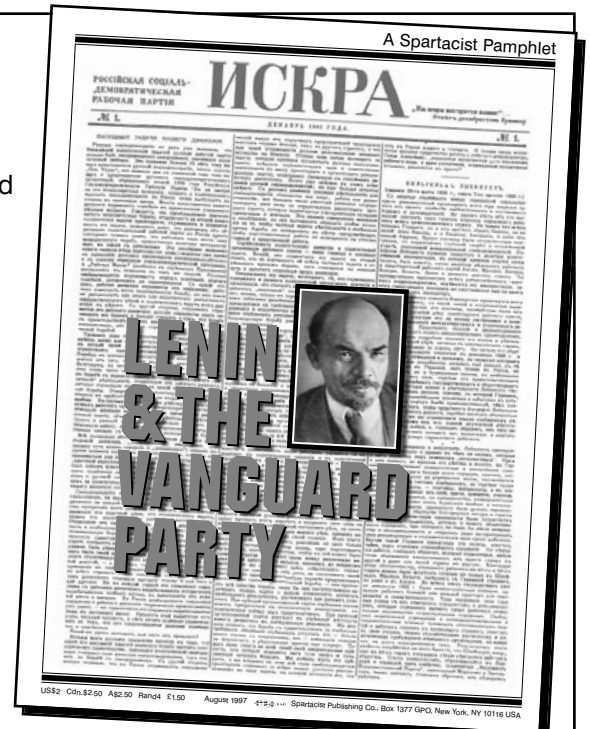
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Red '48ers...

(continued from page 3)

Dutch (Deutsche) out of the Union Army and we'll whip the Yankees easily."

In the first few days of the war, Washington was in danger of being isolated, as secessionist mobs in Baltimore cut the rail lines and prevented reinforcements from reaching the nation's capital. Just about the only reliable troops in the area were two German companies, who cleared the Confederate rabble out of Annapolis Junction and secured the railroad lines until troops from Massachusetts and New York arrived.

Similarly in Missouri, German units were crucial in the grim early days, managing to save the state for the Union despite strong secessionist sentiment. At the war's onset, the pro-secessionist governor massed troops in a plot to seize the vast federal arsenal in St. Louis, guarded by only 200 Union soldiers. In May, *Turner* regiments seized the secessionists' encampment at Camp Jackson in a surprise raid, saving St. Louis and its arsenal. Serving as a Union officer in the St. Louis military district was Joseph Weydemeyer, a comrade of Karl Marx. Weydemeyer supervised the building of ten forts around St. Louis, and then became the colonel of a volunteer artillery regiment tracking down Confederate guerrillas.

In July 1863, New York City was the scene of anti-draft riots by Irish immigrants, who feared their precarious living standards would be threatened by an influx of black freedmen. The rampaging mob, including Irish cops, lynched blacks and burned down a black orphanage. It was the *Turner* who moved in to put a stop to the riot.

The hefty weight of the German presence in the Union forces could be seen in the eastern Army of the Potomac, whose XI Corps was composed of three largely German divisions led by Sigel. "I fights mit Sigel" was the proud boast of the ranks of the XI Corps, expressing admiration for the man who had led insurrectionary forces in the German state of Baden in 1848-49 against the Prussian Army.

The XI Corps saw bloody action at Chancellorsville and engaged Confederate troops in the battle for Cemetery

Ridge at Gettysburg. Perhaps their most memorable battle came in the fall of 1863 when they were sent to help Grant's Army of the Tennessee relieve the besieged Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga. The breakthrough came after Schurz's and Steinwehr's divisions attacked the Confederate stronghold on Lookout Mountain at dawn. This "battle above the clouds" opened the way for the



Harper's Weekly

August 1865 funeral ceremony in Comfort, Texas honors German immigrants killed in fight against Southern slavocracy.

assault on Missionary Ridge by mostly German regiments from Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Ohio and Wisconsin, led by Brigadier General August Willich (who in 1848 had also been a commander in the Baden campaign, with Friedrich Engels serving as his adjutant). Under intense fire, Willich ordered his nine regiments up the ridge without waiting for orders, leading to a quick victory which made it possible for the Union armies to begin their march to Atlanta and the sea.

The '48ers drew strength from the influential pen of Marx and Engels, whose articles in the New York *Herald Tribune* and elsewhere provided detailed political and military analysis of, in their words, the "first grand war of contemporaneous history." Under Marx's leadership, the First International rallied the European working class behind the Union cause, most significantly in England,

where workers' opposition was instrumental in preventing a British intervention on the side of the Confederacy.

In his 1861 article "The Civil War in the United States," Marx made special note of the German immigrants in Texas in opposing the designs of the slavocracy. Noting that Texas was entitled to form five separate slave states out of its territory when it was admitted into the Union

in 1845, thereby greatly enhancing the political power of the slaveholders in the federal government, Marx continued:

"However, the slaveholders found it impracticable to cut up Texas, where the German population plays an important part, into even two states without giving the party of free labor the upper hand over the party of slavery in the second state. This furnishes the best proof of the strength of the opposition to the slaveholding oligarchy in Texas itself."

Finish the Civil War!

The German Red '48ers thus participated in two of the greatest revolutionary upheavals of the 19th century. The bourgeoisie's role in sealing the defeat of the German Revolution made clear that the era during which the capitalist class could play a historically progressive role was drawing to a close. Drawing a balance sheet of the events two years later,

Marx insisted on the need for working-class independence from the parties of the liberal bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, denouncing those who sought to entangle the workers in a party in which "their special interests are concealed and in which the particular demands of the proletariat may not be brought for the sake of beloved peace."

The Civil War was the Second American Revolution, exemplified by the 200,000 black troops who flocked into the Union Army and were crucial to the North's victory over the slavocracy. However, after the Civil War, the victorious Northern capitalists saw their class interests best served in betraying the promise of black freedom ushered in by the smashing of the slave system. Breaking up the plantations and distributing the land to the freedmen was inimical to the capitalists' worship of "private property" and counterposed to the bourgeoisie's need for large-scale farming. So they sealed an alliance with the ex-slaveholders by withdrawing Union troops from the South in the infamous Compromise of 1877, marking the defeat of Reconstruction. Left defenseless against the landowners and the rising racist terror of the Ku Klux Klan, the emancipated slaves were forced back onto the plantations as tenant farmers and sharecroppers.

Since then, the racist ideology developed by the slaveholders to justify chattel slavery has been adopted by the bourgeoisie in order to maintain their class rule through keeping the workers divided along racial and ethnic lines. What Marx wrote at the time of the Civil War is no less true today: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

In a society where racial oppression is the bedrock of American capitalism and where religious obscurantism is increasingly used to prop up capitalist rule, the controversy in Comfort, Texas illuminates both the unfinished business of the Civil War and the vast regression from the Enlightenment principles which animated the bourgeois-democratic revolutions of the past. We honor the Red '48ers in our struggle to build the multi-racial revolutionary workers party which will lead the working class to power through a socialist revolution which will finish the Civil War. ■

Socialist Scholars...

(continued from page 5)

The Spartacus Youth Club (SYC), youth group of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League, stands for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese, Vietnamese, North Korean and Cuban deformed workers states against imperialism and attempts at internal counter-revolution. We call for a workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats who have grievously undermined the gains of these revolutions. While the rest of the left celebrates the pro-imperialist "battle of Seattle," the SYC will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the humiliating defeat of U.S. imperialism by the heroic workers and peasants of Vietnam—a true victory for working people around the world.

The bloody U.S. imperialist rulers who spend billions on busting unions in the U.S. are not in the business of defending workers rights *anywhere*. They are engaged in a ruthless struggle to improve their 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. This struggle is the natural outgrowth of the capitalist system and its need for ever-increasing profits gained through the conquest of new markets. Far from being an all-

powerful transnational grouping, as V.I. Lenin noted in his book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, bodies like the WTO "are *inevitably* nothing more than a 'truce' in periods between wars." In the pursuit of its interests, the ruthless American ruling class has driven down wages at home, spearheaded the brutal terror bombing of Serbia, and regularly unleashes its cops to mete out its "justice" to blacks, immigrants and workers, such as the execution of Amadou Diallo in a hail of 41 bullets. Imperialist war, racist repression and cop terror are endemic to the capitalist system and cannot be eradicated short of sweeping the whole rotten system away through a workers revolution.

During last year's Socialist Scholars Conference, Bogdan Denitch, honorary chairman of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), chicken-baited the U.S. imperialists and NATO for only raining bombs on Serbia, screaming for imperialist ground troops to go in to wage all-out war. This was the day after armchair liberal "anarchist" Noam Chomsky and other "socialist scholars" decided to squelch any discussion about the U.S. terror bombing of Serbia during the opening plenary of the conference. The Spartacist League (SL) and SYC rained on this little parade of fake-socialist warmongers, interjecting from the floor and raising signs demanding "Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!" and "Defend Serbia Against U.S./NATO Attack!"

Denitch's backing of U.S. imperialism

in the Balkans is hardly surprising. The DSA has a long and sordid history of service to U.S. imperialism from DSA founder Michael Harrington's support to the Vietnam War to their backing of counterrevolutionary movements like the bloody *mujahedin* Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan. But the DSA hardly stands alone. The rest of the so-called left are just as firmly in the camp of their "own" imperialist rulers. The International Socialist Organization, Socialist Action and others were well prepared to embrace the chauvinism and anti-Communism of the WTO protests by their years of standing with the imperialists in backing every and any counterrevolutionary movement aimed at destroying the former Soviet degenerated workers state.

Groups like the tiny Bolshevik Tendency, who tried to give something of a "left" gloss to these same politics during Cold War II, openly hail the WTO protests, denying that these had anything to do with the counterrevolutionary drive against the Chinese deformed workers state. Then there's the Internationalist Group (IG) whose first statement on the WTO protests said not a word in opposition to the Seattle mobilization. Only after being challenged by members of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club did the IG come out in cyberspace with a statement opposing the chauvinism of the WTO protests. But these are mere words to cover for the IG's opportunist politics which are defined by despair in the revolutionary capacity of the working class and corresponding capitulation

before other class forces.

The call for this conference of renegade "socialist" scholars agonizes over whether to "organize to our right or consolidate the Left." That was already answered in Seattle where the "left" was allied with the likes of the Reform Party and incipient clerical fascist Pat Buchanan who saluted the "economic and political patriotism of those who rallied in Seattle."

The SL/SYC is the only organization around that fights uncompromisingly in opposition to the bloody U.S. imperialist rulers. We fight to build the revolutionary multiracial workers party committed to the struggle for socialist revolution, much like the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky which led the working people of Russia to power in October 1917. The microcosm of such a party in action was seen in New York City on October 23 in the 8,000-strong mobilization—initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and actively built by the SL/SYC—which ran the KKK off the streets. In contrast to Seattle where the working people and youth were lined up behind the aims of their "own" imperialist rulers, the October 23 anti-Klan mobilization was built in *opposition* to the Democratic Party and all the agencies of capitalist class rule. If you're interested in an organization of socialist revolutionaries rather than being sold some pro-imperialist, pro-Democratic Party snake oil by a gaggle of "socialist" scholars, check us out.

—New York Spartacus Youth Club
31 March 2000

Defend Cuba...

(continued from page 1)

kidnappers. As we go to press, the case is still tied up in the courts, while Elián’s father is forced to extend his stay in the U.S., where he has been targeted by anti-Communist mobs. As counterrevolutionary exiles continue to stage anti-Communist rallies in Miami, up to two million people have demonstrated in Havana and other cities in Cuba, demanding that Elián be reunited with his father. We say: Return Elián now!

The Spartacist League has always opposed U.S. imperialism’s four-decade-long embargo against Cuba, a blatant act of war. We demand that the U.S. Navy get out of Guantánamo Bay, the military base on Cuba’s eastern tip where over 2,000 U.S. troops are stationed. This is part of our *unconditional military defense* of Cuba against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. In other words, our military defense of Cuba with its collectivized economy does not have as a prior condition the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

At the same time, we emphasize that the Cuban workers state has been bureaucratically deformed from its inception, when pervasive nationalizations of capitalist property in the summer and fall of 1960 liquidated the Cuban bourgeoisie as a class. The rebel army under Castro—a former supporter of the liberal bourgeois Ortodoxo party—which occupied Havana on 1 January 1959 was a politically heterogeneous petty-bourgeois formation. The guerrilla war it had waged was militarily marginal but it was the last straw for the Batista regime, which was hated by the masses, increasingly isolated from the upper layers of Cuban society and finally abandoned by its U.S. imperialist patrons. Explaining how Castro’s petty-bourgeois government presided over the expropriation of the Cuban bourgeoisie, the Spartacist League wrote in the 1973 preface to “Cuba and Marxist Theory” (*Marxist Bulletin* No. 8):

“Its initial coalition government with authentic liberal-bourgeois politicians took place in the context of a shattered old bourgeois state apparatus. In the course of the earlier guerrilla struggle—a species of civil war—the commanders of that rebel army had had their previous direct connections with oppositional bourgeois-liberal elements broken and had become episodically autonomous from their class (and in many cases biological) fathers, the Cuban bourgeoisie. After taking power, they were confronted by U.S. imperialism’s clumsy and mounting attempts to bring them to heel through brute economic pressure upon Cuba without corresponding attempts by the contemptuous Eisenhower administration to create the conditions and connections to rekindle the new rulers to the old social fabric in order to facilitate accommodation to the brutal demands of the imperialists. “No less crucial than the estrangement created by the civil war conditions between the petty-bourgeois guerrilla fighters and the bourgeois order was the absence of a class-conscious combative proletariat which would invariably have polarized these petty-bourgeois militants, drawing some to the workers’ side and repelling others back into the arms of the bourgeois order. Hence the exceptional latitude available to this petty-bourgeois government in the face of the escalating tit-for-tat economic struggle with the American government in that period and under the enormous popular, patriotic upsurge of the undifferentiated Cuban masses.”



Wide World

Cuban militiaman guards U.S. oil refinery expropriated in 1960. Democratic president John F. Kennedy received *gusano* flag from survivor of 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion which was routed by Cuban soldiers and workers.



AP

The seizure and nationalization of all U.S. property and finally the economic liquidation of the Cuban bourgeoisie by this petty-bourgeois government demonstrated that even under these most favorable conditions it was unable to find a third way between labor and capital to organize society. By virtue of its newly acquired social position—holding a monopoly of political power at the head of a nationalized economy—the Castro regime was compelled to embrace that ersatz Marxism which is the necessary ideological reflection of a Stalinist bureaucracy, centrally the nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country.” The decisive section of the Castroites could make the transition to the leadership of a deformed workers state because in the absence of the egalitarianism and proletarian democracy of a state directly won by the working people, they never had to transcend or fundamentally alter their own radical petty-bourgeois social appetites, but only to transform and redirect them.

The Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy, as a petty-bourgeois stratum, is necessarily hostile to the perspective of proletarian revolutionary internationalism as well as to workers democracy, i.e., the rule of the proletariat through workers councils (soviets). To place the proletariat in power and open the road to extending the revolution internationally requires a subsequent *political* revolution. To this end, it is necessary to forge an internationalist, Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party in Cuba. This is inextricably tied to our fight for a workers party in the imperialist “belly of the beast” which can sweep away bloody U.S. capitalism through proletarian revolution.

Defend Cuba Against U.S. Imperialism!

With the destruction of the Soviet Union, and with the Castro regime having long abandoned its early pretense of promoting national liberation struggles and peasant-based guerrilla war, saber rattling against tiny Cuba isn’t quite the cause it used to be. Recent polls show that 67 percent of the U.S. population opposes the embargo.

American capitalists are also increasingly voicing opposition to the embargo, with an eye toward their bottom line. *Time* magazine (17 January) noted how “at the State Department, in the business community and even in Congress, sentiment is growing to abandon the 40-year-

old embargo that has failed to dislodge Castro. Farmers, businessmen and tourists are clamoring for greater access to the island, as other countries usurp a natural U.S. market.” Prominent politicians such as Republican Illinois governor George Ryan have made highly publicized trips to Cuba, while right-wing Missouri Senator John Ashcroft swung the vote in the Senate to end the embargo on food shipments last year. When Elián’s two grandmothers came to Washington in January to demand their grandson’s return, 77 Congressmen met with them.

Despite the current ambivalence of a section of the ruling class toward them, the *gusanos* still have a powerful and well-connected political machine, as demonstrated by the months-long standoff in Miami. In addition to funneling millions to American politicians, the CIA-connected Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) funds terrorist attacks like the murderous bombings of several Cuban hotels by a Salvadoran hitman in 1997. Yet even among the Cuban population of Miami, a growing segment regards the CANF types as dinosaurs and thinks the best way to overthrow Castro is not through invasion or terrorism but through the Yankee dollar.

Enraged by the threat to their status as the Cuban ruling class in exile, the *gusanos* have fought back with hysterical accusations of Cuban spying and drug trafficking, even outrageously accusing Elián’s grandmothers of abusing him sexually while they were in the U.S. Four years ago, in a provocation aimed at forestalling talk of ending the embargo, the paramilitary *gusano* outfit “Brothers to the Rescue” sent two planes into Cuban airspace in a brazen challenge to the country’s air defenses. After the planes were shot down just outside Havana, Washington passed the Helms-Burton Act, which tightened the embargo by mandating retaliation against other countries profiting from trade or investment in Cuba. This was after the embargo had already been strengthened under legislation pushed through by Democratic New Jersey Senator Robert Torricelli.

For more than 30 years, Washington kept the borders open to Cuban “refugees,” according them privileged treatment and automatic asylum in an effort to destabilize Cuba by encouraging a mass exodus. But in 1994, Clinton enacted the so-called “wet feet, dry feet” law under which Cubans have to make it to shore before getting asylum. Of course, improv-

erished black immigrants from U.S. neocolonies like Haiti have never been welcome on U.S. shores. In early January, while Elián’s case was being hotly debated, the U.S. quietly deported 437 Haitian refugees who came to Florida on rafts. We demand: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Stop the deportations!

Castro Bureaucracy Undermines Gains of Cuban Revolution

The elimination of capitalist class rule in Cuba in 1960 meant enormous gains for its working people which, even while increasingly attenuated, remain tangible today. Prior to the revolution, the immensely corrupt and brutal U.S. puppet Batista and his cronies ruled over a society marked by mass unemployment and illiteracy, with sprawling, miserable urban slums and a destitute rural population squeaking by through seasonal employment. On top of this was the systematic and brutal oppression of black people—indeed, heavily black Santiago province was a center of guerrilla struggle against Batista. Such was the Cuban “democracy” upheld by the anti-Communist rabble in Miami—including singer and *gusano* darling Gloria Estefan, whose father was one of Batista’s bodyguards and a veteran of the Bay of Pigs.

Following the overthrow of capitalism, the resources of Cuban society, with heavy Soviet aid, were invested in a centralized, planned economy, with everyone guaranteed a job, decent housing, food and education. The free health care system, despite the crippling effects of the U.S. blockade, is still far and away the best among “Third World” countries, and Cuban medical schools train doctors from countries like Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Cubans now enjoy one of the highest literacy rates in the world, and nearly one in eleven hold university degrees. The island has more doctors and teachers per capita than just about any country in the world.

The revolution especially benefited women. The domination of the Catholic church was broken. Abortion is a free health service, and the birthrate is only 1.5 per woman, more typical of rich countries. Prenatal care is a high priority, which has contributed to an infant mortality rate lower than in parts of the “First World.” One of the first acts of the Castro regime was to outlaw racist discrimination—one reason why black Cubans are especially hostile to the predominantly white *gusanos* in Miami, who since fleeing Cuba have been a bulwark of racist bourgeois politics in South Florida. And black people in South Florida know this, too!

These gains are all results of a planned economy based on the elimination of private ownership and of production for profit. But as Karl Marx pointed out over 150 years ago, the attainment of socialism—a society of such material abundance for all that classes no longer exist—requires the victory of proletarian revolution in at least several advanced capitalist countries in order to create an international planned economy based on the highest material and technological development. As the experience of the former

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AP



“Dollar store” in Havana for those holding greenbacks; state pharmacy with empty shelves as result of imperialist trade embargo. Castro bureaucracy’s introduction of trade in dollars has sharply increased social inequality in Cuba.

Canadian Press



(continued from page 9)

The Stalinist bureaucracy which seized political power in the Soviet Union in 1923-24 represented a conservative, nationalist reaction to the failure to extend the 1917 workers revolution in Russia through socialist revolution in Germany and other advanced capitalist countries. The outlook of the bureaucracy was captured in the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country," which meant in practice conciliating the imperialist powers. But if this nationalist dogma was a lie in the Soviet Union—a vast country covering one-sixth of the globe—"socialism" on one small, impoverished Caribbean island is far more so. Facing economic disaster following the Soviet aid cutoff initiated by the Gorbachev regime in 1989-90, the Cuban bureaucracy has instituted a series of "market reforms," leading to a sharp increase in inequality among the population. In 1990, Castro announced a "Special Period in Time of Peace," a harsh economic restructuring which slowed the pace of industrialization, put an emphasis on agriculture and tourism, and decreed mass layoffs of workers. Foreshadowing the current differences in the U.S. bourgeoisie, a series of reports issued by the U.S. Army War College, the RAND Institute and others around that time advocated ending the blockade and negotiating with Castro.

The growth of inequality and the danger of the growing free market to the planned economy can be seen in the tourist industry, which has surpassed sugar exports as the primary source of foreign exchange. In 1998, the Cuban government invested over \$500 million in tourism as opposed to \$49 million for the foodstuffs industry and \$37 million in the steel and metals sector. Though paid in pesos, those who work in tourism (as did both Elián González' parents) get most of their income in dollars through tips, giving them access to luxuries and even basic necessities which most Cubans

The toll of the U.S. embargo, particularly after the destruction of the USSR, was captured in a report by a comrade of the Trotskyist League of Canada who visited Havana in 1997 (see “Eyewitness Report from Havana Youth Festival,” *WV* No. 674, 19 September 1997). He noted that the fuel shortage has led to the collapse of the public transit system and caused daily power outages lasting two to three hours. Most meat and fruit are only available at expensive private markets, while those without access to dollars have to subsist on meager rations. Describing the burgeoning income disparity, our comrade added:

A black and white photograph showing two men in military uniforms saluting. The man on the left is Joseph Stalin, wearing a dark cap and a high-collared jacket. The man on the right is Nikita Khrushchev, wearing a peaked cap with a star emblem and a similar jacket. They are standing in front of a multi-story building with many windows.

Meanwhile, desperate women trying to feed their families have been forced into prostitution at the edges of the booming tourist industry, and increasing poverty has led to a rise in crime.

Trotskyism and the Cuban Revolution

In its first few months, the new Cuban government implemented a series of reforms culled straight from the program of the bourgeois Ortodoxo party, such as limited land reform and cuts in rent for the poor. But the land redistribution and the revolutionary justice meted out to

"Movements of this sort can under certain conditions, i.e., the extreme disorganization of the capitalist class in the colonial country and the absence of the working class contending in its own right for social power, smash capitalist property relations; however, they cannot bring the working class to *political* power. Rather, they create bureaucratic anti-working-class regimes which suppress any further development of these revolutions towards socialism."

This galloping revisionism on fundamental tenets of Marxism was fought by the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) within the SWP. The RT, precursor of the Spartacist League, characterized Cuba as a bureaucratically deformed workers state and showed how the *fidelistas* guerrillas in power had embraced the nationalist Stalinist model of the USSR after its degeneration and of the deformed workers states of China and East Europe, suppressing any semblance of independent working-class politics. The RT's resolution for the 1963 SWP Convention, titled "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," stated:

While the Cuban bureaucracy availed itself of more militant rhetoric than the stodgy Kremlin Stalinists, Castro's regime in practice emulated the Kremlin's policy of selling out revolutionary opportunities internationally to jockey for diplomatic advantage. Addressing the UN General Assembly in 1964, Che Guevara stated that for Cuba the most important problem was "peaceful co-existence between states with different economic and social systems." This meant support to some of the bloodiest capitalist regimes in the Americas, like Brazil under President Janio Quadros, who repressed unions, sent troops to crush hunger protesters and imprisoned students.

In the early 1970s, Castro called on



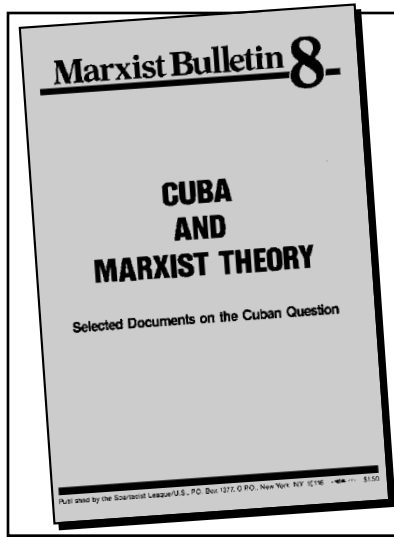
Sigma

In 1971 visit to Chile, Castro stood with “constitutionalist” general Augusto Pinochet, armed forces chief in Allende’s popular-front government. Pinochet was architect of bloody 1973 coup which led to deaths of tens of thousands of workers and leftists.

When Eisenhower asked Congress in January 1960 for authorization to cut the Cuban sugar quota, Castro signed an agreement with Soviet deputy prime minister Mikoyan for the USSR to purchase a million tons of sugar yearly from Cuba. When Cuba's imperialist-owned oil refineries refused to handle Russian crude in June, Cuban authorities intervened to prevent this. Eisenhower then eliminated the sugar quota, and Castro responded by nationalizing U.S.-owned properties in Cuba: 36 sugar mills, three oil companies, the power company and the telephone company.

The liberal Democratic Party administration of John F. Kennedy surpassed even Eisenhower/Dulles in its virulence toward Cuba. One of Kennedy's first acts as president was to authorize the Bay of Pigs invasion. A year later, Kennedy brought the world to the brink of thermonuclear war by threatening to interdict Soviet ships—an act of war—to search for missile parts intended for Cuba.

While relentlessly besieged by U.S. imperialism, the Stalinist bureaucracy led by Castro has itself been an impediment to the defense of the Cuban deformed workers state through the spread of socialist revolution throughout the Americas. In the Spartacist League's Declaration of Principles adopted in 1966, we emphasized our political opposition to the



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the workers of Chile to give political support to the Unidad Popular regime led by the Socialist Party's Salvador Allende. This capitalist popular-front government—a coalition including the reformist Socialist, Communist and bourgeois parties—politically disarmed the proletariat by preaching faith in the “constitutionalist” officer corps and “democratic” bourgeoisie. It thereby paved the way for the bloody 1973 coup led by the officer corps under Pinochet, ushering in the massacre of more than 30,000 workers and leftists. Six years later, when the radical-nationalist Sandinista guerrillas took power in Nicaragua and established a petty-bourgeois government similar to Cuba's in 1959-60, the Castro bureaucracy explicitly counseled them *not* to take “the Cuban road” of expropriating the bourgeoisie. This policy culminated in the drawn-out defeat of the Nicaraguan Revolution in the 1980s, as the Sandinistas eventually handed power back to the capitalist *contras*.

For Socialist Revolution Throughout the Americas!

Genuine defense of the Cuban Revolution against imperialism requires a program for workers revolution throughout the Americas—and above all here in the United States, the most powerful and rapacious capitalist country on earth. In sharp contrast, the various reformist pseudo-socialists who call for “solidarity with Cuba” seek at most to *pressure* the imperialists to “end the embargo.” In seeking a lash-up with liberal Democrats and “progressive” capitalists—who today oppose the embargo as counterproductive and prefer to undermine the deformed workers state through greater economic penetration—these reformists objectively lend themselves to the service of capitalist counterrevolution. Aside from their occasional enthusing over Castro's “socialist” credentials, the fake leftists raise demands which are indistinguishable from those raised by mainstream sections of the U.S. bourgeoisie. Thus the reformists sow illusions in U.S. imperialism and in particular the capitalist Democratic Party—the class enemy of the Cuban workers state and of the American proletariat.

A perfect example is the Workers World Party (WWP) and its affiliated groups, the International Action Center (IAC) and the “National Committee to Send Elián Home to His Father.” The WWP has organized demonstrations demanding Clinton and Reno “do the right thing”—i.e., “stop stalling and send Elián home without delay” (*Workers World*, 17 February). The WWP grotesquely appeals to the “family values” of Janet

Reno, who burned babies alive in the 1993 Waco massacre. At its January 20 demonstration in New York City, the WWP chanted, “Bill Clinton/Janet Reno/Jesse Helms: You know better!” A *New York Times* (30 January) report on these protests described the IAC as “a liberal organization founded by former Attorney General Ramsey Clark.” Clark, a long-time WWP/IAC favorite, certainly knows about U.S. policy toward Cuba: as U.S. Attorney General under Lyndon Johnson, he used to personally enforce the embargo on trade with Cuba. Now he works



Spartacist contingent at 1994 NYC demonstration calls for defense of Cuba against internal counterrevolution and imperialist attack.

with Pastors for Peace, which wants to end the blockade so they can flood Cuba with Bibles!

Today's eccentrically reformist SWP under Jack Barnes still seeks to attract radical-minded youth by proclaiming itself the most consistent defender of the Cuban Revolution. Yet when defense of the Soviet Union, Cuba's main economic lifeline, was posed pointblank in 1991, the SWP backed the forces of counterrevolution led by Boris Yeltsin, exclaiming “Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup” (*Militant*, 6 September 1991). In contrast, we called for proletarian political revolution to sweep away Yeltsin and his counterrevolutionary rabble.

As its support to Yeltsin's counterrevolution makes clear, the SWP's politics are counterposed to genuine defense of the Cuban deformed workers state. When Pope John Paul II visited Cuba in 1998 explicitly for the purpose of fomenting counterrevolution, the *Militant* (9 February 1998) fatuously headlined, “Confident Revolutionary Gov't Hosts Pope in Cuba.” This is the Pope Wojtyla who was

the godfather of the Solidarność movement which oversaw the restoration of capitalism in Poland. Indeed, the few times the SWP has differed with Castro was when they stood to his right, capitulating to the U.S. ruling class by championing anti-Soviet counterrevolutionaries like Solidarność and Yeltsin.

For its part, the social-democratic International Socialist Organization (ISO) opposes the Castro regime from the standpoint of virulent anti-communist hostility to Cuba. But because of Cuba's continued popularity among leftists and youth—and

especially now that Clinton is leaning toward “constructive engagement”—these opportunists today denounce politicians who “only want to meddle in [Elián's] life to whip up more hysteria against Cuba” (*Socialist Worker*, 4 February). This “hysteria” is the rage of the imperialist masters over having Cuba ripped out of their grasp through social revolution. Yet the ISO has scabbed on the Cuban Revolution from day one, refusing to defend this deformed workers state against imperialism and calling Cuba a “state capitalist” regime not qualitatively different from impoverished Haiti!

The ISO's British mentor Tony Cliff (who just died) broke from Trotskyism at the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 by refusing to defend the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states against imperialist attack. The ISO's American historical forebear, Max Shachtman, repudiated the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union at the start of World War II and later went on to support the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, earning himself the epithet “State Department socialist.” With regard

to Cuba, the ISO has openly allied with forces who seek to destroy the revolution from within. Several years ago, the ISO's Canadian cothinkers hailed a counterrevolutionary riot in Havana as a sign that “Cuban workers and peasants have begun to break the hold of a repressive regime” (*Socialist Worker* [Canada], September 1994). In practice, the Cliffites' “third camp” position equating the workers states with capitalist imperialism always leads them into bed with the “democratic” imperialists.

With the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state, there has been a qualitative increase in imperialist exploitation of the Third World. Faced with intensifying interimperialist rivalries over natural resources and cheap labor, the U.S. has tightened its hold on its “backyard”—the Caribbean, Central and South America. This is reflected in trade agreements like NAFTA, which has meant the imperialist rape of Mexico, and the linking of currencies in Argentina and Ecuador (and maybe El Salvador soon) directly to the U.S. dollar. As the U.S.-dominated IMF and World Bank tighten the screws on Latin American governments to implement austerity measures, the working class and peasantry face increasing immiseration. There have been and will be opportunities for proletarian revolution in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America. The key requirement for victory in the struggles that lie ahead is the forging of Leninist-Trotskyist parties built in irreconcilable opposition to all variants of petty-bourgeois nationalism, fighting for a proletarian, revolutionary, internationalist perspective.

In the backward and impoverished countries of the Third World, even the achievement of basic democratic rights like health care, education, housing and land redistribution requires a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the bloody bourgeoisies, who act as junior partners to the rapacious imperialists. In the neo-colonial countries, the only road to the resolution of the burning democratic tasks is the conquest of power by the working class, at the head of the peasantry and all the oppressed, and the extension of the revolution to the imperialist heartlands of North America and beyond. This is the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution. The International Communist League is dedicated to reforging Trotsky's Fourth International in order to lead these struggles to victory. As the U.S. section of the ICL, the Spartacist League is fighting to build a multi-racial workers party which will smash U.S. imperialism from within, through proletarian revolution. ■

Los Angeles...

(continued from page 12)

other in order to prevent integrated class struggle. SEIU Local 399, from which Local 1877 was formed in a 1995 split, has made some real efforts to take up the defense of black rights. In 1992, the local marched against police repression in the aftermath of the L.A. upheaval. In 1994, Locals 399 and 347 organized a demonstration in front of the L.A. district attorney's office demanding freedom for black political prisoner Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), a former Black Panther Party leader in L.A.

Strikes are a test of strength, persistence and endurance. Against the vast resources and power of the capitalists, the SEIU strikers must draw on their own powerful forces—the capacity of the workers for struggle, the solidarity of the entire labor movement, the popularity of the strike among the working people. This requires a fight inside the unions against the misleaders who chain that power to the parties and agencies of the capitalist class enemy. The working people need a party that fights for *their* interests—a workers party committed to the fight for a workers government which overturns this whole system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression. ■

UNAM...

(continued from page 2)

Community College, the primarily working-class students contributed almost \$60. A student co-op in Berkeley donated \$50. In Australia, generous contributions were made by students and striking university teachers at the March 22 “National Day of Action” calling for “Public Education NOT Privatisation” held in both Sydney and Canberra.

In France, comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France collected funds at demonstrations defending “*sans-papiers*” (undocumented immigrants) against government deportation threats and at a rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal. In Japan, more than \$500 was collected at, among other events, a meeting of striking airline pilots, a gathering of the oppressed Korean minority, sit-down protests by fired railway workers in front of the Diet (parliament) building, and a mass labor rally. The largest amount was collected at a protest demonstration against U.S. military bases in Okinawa.

The funds collected for the defense of the UNAM strikers by the sections of the ICL are a modest expression of our principled defense of all whose struggles are in the interest of the international working class. The PDC has added imprisoned

strike leaders Alejandro Echevarria Zarco (“El Mosh”) and Alberto Pacheco Guizar (“El Diablo”) to its class-war prisoners stipend program. The monthly stipend of US\$25 alleviates some of the hardships of imprisonment and represents a living link between the activists behind bars and the international workers movement which champions the struggle for their release.

In struggling for such basic democratic rights as the right to education, the militants of the UNAM strike have faced brutal repression from the police thugs sent by both the PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) administration of Mexico City and the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) national government. Now, lagging in the polls, the PRD's candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas claims to oppose the federal police siege of the campus. This is nothing but a crass maneuver for votes based on the hope that strikers will forget the attacks by the PRD's riot police earlier in the strike. The GEM says: “The PRD is a capitalist party—no illusions!”

The urgent demands and needs of Mexico's impoverished workers and peasants—for agrarian revolution, education, health care, etc.—cannot be fulfilled by the corrupt and venal Mexican capitalist class, beholden to U.S. imperialism. Even the most minimal reforms, like the ones the UNAM students are seeking,

demand the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. The Trotskyists of the GEM fight to build a Leninist vanguard party that can lead the workers and peasants of Mexico to power, smashing the capitalist system of oppression and poverty and opening the way to proletarian revolution throughout the Americas. ■

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Victory to the Janitors Strike!

Los Angeles

APRIL 17—Ever since an April 3 mass meeting of 3,000 janitors voted virtually unanimously to strike, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1877 has been waging a hugely popular strike against maintenance contractors in Los Angeles. On April 9, janitors in SEIU Local 2028 in San Diego also went on strike. Significantly for Los Angeles, an “open shop” city with a history of vicious anti-labor repression, Teamsters Local 396, representing garbage collectors and UPS drivers, has called for its members to honor the SEIU picket lines. The Los Angeles Building Trades Council and Operating Engineers Local 501 have said they would defend their members who honor the picket lines. On April 14, 700 janitors at L.A. International Airport held a one-day sympathy strike.

Local 1877 has led regular marches of thousands throughout the city, with strikers chanting “We’re on strike! Let the rich do the cleaning!” The union has staged a “rolling strike,” pulling out janitors one building after another. Describing the strike’s impact, the big-business *Los Angeles Times* (13 April) has called the red-shirted strikers a “nagging presence, inserting themselves into the consciousness of workaday Los Angeles.” Republican mayor Richard Riordan has set the notorious LAPD—currently in the spotlight for the murder and torture practiced by its Rampart Division in the cops’ relentless war against the ghetto and barrio poor—against the striking janitors, arresting at least 50. All labor must demand: Drop all the charges!

The janitors—98 percent of whom are Latino immigrants, over half of them women—make a paltry \$6.80 to \$7.90 an hour, less than it costs to park a car in many of the skyscrapers they clean. With another 250,000 Southern California workers—including teachers, county government workers and transit workers—facing their own contract battles in the next months, a victory for the janitors could set the stage for a hot summer of class struggle in L.A. Support from the entire L.A. labor movement is critical for the strike’s success. In some cases, the contractors have been able to bring scabs in, a grave danger to the strike. Backed by the other unions, the SEIU must enforce the basic labor principle: Picket lines mean don’t cross! This underscores the need for *one industrial union* of all building maintenance workers, from stationary engineers to cleaners.

As the L.A. strike heads into its third week, the contracts of tens of thousands of other SEIU maintenance workers across the country are also expiring. In New York City, the contract for the 30,000 SEIU Local 32B-32J doormen and apartment maintenance workers, whose ranks include many immigrants from Latin America, the Caribbean and East Europe, is set to expire on April 20. More than 10,000 turned out for a rally on April 12 in support of Local 32B-32J. The ABM Corporation, one of the chief contractors for maintenance workers in L.A., also employs 15,000 janitors in New York City, including 1,500 at the World Trade Center. One Local 1877 official told the *L.A. Weekly* (7 April), “If one of our members shows up outside with



Almeida/NY Times

a sign ‘Local 1877 On Strike Against ABM’ none of those 1,500 will cross the line.”

Union Tops Push Democratic Party Electoral Con Game

Democratic Party politicians like mayoral candidate Antonio Villaraigosa are trying to sucker workers’ votes by cynically “supporting” the janitors strike. They see this strike as part of the so-called “Latino resurgence” which will catapult them into political office. While the union leadership openly brags about its role in getting Democrats elected, the Democratic Party and the L.A. city administration are intent on maintaining labor peace as the city gears up for the Democratic National Convention (DNC) this summer. DNC planners are pressuring local labor leaders to rule out strikes or picket lines at convention sites—like the deal the Republicans already have for their convention site in Philadelphia. As an SEIU Local 660 (L.A. county

employees) leader declared, “We have an interest in helping to elect Al Gore, and we would be careful not to take actions that would hurt his candidacy.”

Selling the Democrats as a “lesser evil” than the Republicans is the political expression of the labor bureaucracy’s role in promoting class collaboration, which ties the workers to the racist capitalist class enemy. Yesterday Gore, who received the AFL-CIO’s endorsement at its national convention last October, was the keynote speaker at a strike support rally where he declared, “I am with you in your fight.” This phony “friend” of immigrants and labor comes from an administration which signed the 1996 Illegal Immigrant and Immigrant Responsibility Act massively increasing the militarization of the U.S. border with Mexico; within two years almost 300,000 immigrants were deported. In 1998, Clinton/Gore’s INS immigration cops raided hotels and commercial buildings leading to the firing of some 500 members



Seib/L.A. Times

Strike by overwhelmingly Latino janitors has generated widespread support in historically “open shop” L.A. Right: Police attack on April 6 strike rally.

of Local 1877.

The AFL-CIO executive council passed a resolution in February calling for blanket amnesty for the estimated six million “illegal” immigrants in the U.S. and an end to most sanctions against employers who hire them. At the same time, the resolution called on the federal government to “maintain efforts to keep illegal immigrants out of the country.” Previously, the AFL-CIO tops openly colluded with the INS in the deportation of immigrant workers. Today, with the capitalists screaming about a labor shortage and looking to low-wage immigrant labor to keep down labor costs, the government has slowed down deportations. The Sweeney-led AFL-CIO recognizes that immigrants are a growing component of the U.S. labor force, and thus a source of new members and dues-payers.

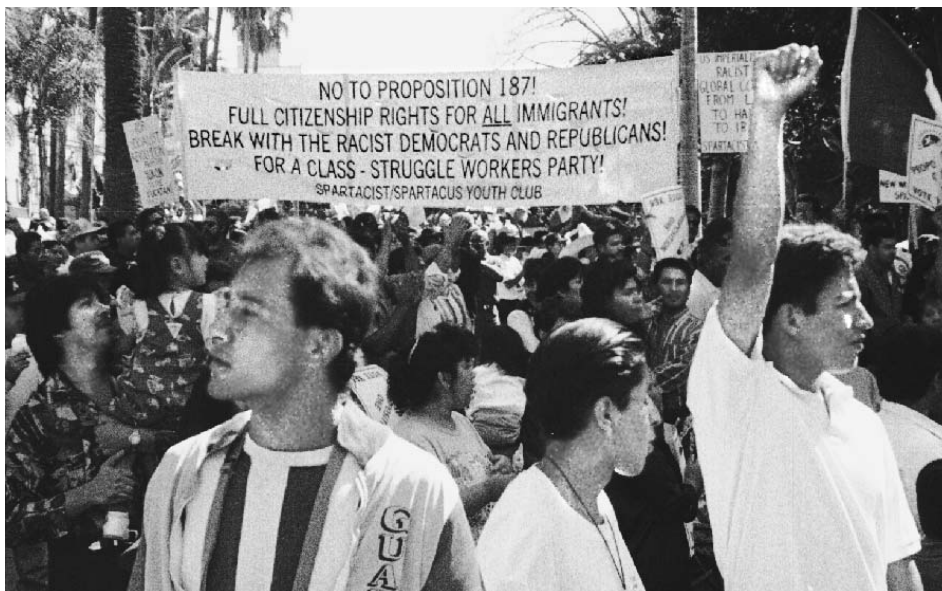
It is crucial that the labor movement use its power to defend immigrants and to aggressively recruit immigrant workers as part of the fight to organize the unorganized. Many immigrants from Latin America and elsewhere bring with them the experience of bitter struggles against U.S. imperialism and help to infuse the American labor movement with greater combativity and class consciousness. But from maintaining their chauvinist call for *strengthening* the militarization of the border to their poisonous protectionist campaigns against Chinese, Mexican and other foreign workers, the AFL-CIO tops line up on the side of U.S. imperialism against the working class in other countries. Down with racist protectionism! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

The “Justice for Janitors” organizing campaign in L.A. was launched after the janitors union was decimated in the mid-1980s by massive outsourcing to non-union cleaning firms who hired immigrant workers at minimum wages. The unionized workforce of the early ’80s in L.A., which was primarily black, lost out as wages plummeted. The virulent anti-immigrant policies of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy played into the bosses’ hands.

Especially since the multiracial L.A. upheaval in 1992 following the Rodney King verdict, the city’s rulers have tried to pit blacks and Latinos against each

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Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!



WV Photo

80,000 march in Los Angeles against anti-immigrant Prop 187, October 1994. Latin American immigrants have brought militant traditions to workers’ struggles in U.S., particularly Southern California.