

**For a Workers Party to  
Fight for Socialist Revolution!**

## Democrats, Republicans: Enemies of Labor, Blacks

This summer's Republican National Convention in Philadelphia and Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Los Angeles, although separated geographically by thousands of miles, were virtually identical political circuses. Both capitalist parties converged on a right-wing "center" of welfare-slashing, the death penalty, fundamentalist "morality" and increased police repression at home and imperialist war and intervention abroad.

The Republican ticket consists of the nation's leading executioner, Texas governor George W. Bush, and former Pentagon war chief Richard Cheney, who as a Congressman opposed freedom for imprisoned South African black leader Nelson Mandela in the 1980s. The Republican leaders tried to give this "compassionate conservatism" an aura of ethnic "diversity" and "outreach" by staging what was rightly perceived by minorities as a humiliating "minstrel show."

The Democratic Party shifted further toward the right than the Clinton/Gore candidacies in 1992 and 1996. Gore even moved to play down the one significant policy difference between the two parties—the Democrats' support to abortion rights—by inviting Los Angeles archbishop Roger Mahoney to give an invocation in which he predictably condemned abortion.

It would have been difficult for Gore to pick a running mate more insulting to labor and blacks, the party's core constituencies, than Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman. A cofounder along with Clinton and Gore of the "moderate" Democratic Leadership Council which dumped the party's cynical posture toward "special interests"—i.e., trade unions and minorities—Lieberman is an ally of right-wing Republican William Bennett in the crusade against "sex and violence" in the media, has repeatedly opposed affirmative action for blacks and Latinos, supports school voucher programs aimed at gutting public education and was the most prominent Democrat at the head of the pack howling over Clinton's consensual sexual affair with a White House intern.

Even more so than in the past, the recent conventions graphically demonstrate the true nature of bourgeois elec-



LAPD rampage against protesters outside Democratic National Convention gave taste of terror meted out by cops in ghettos and barrios every day. Reuters

### Break with All Capitalist Parties! Nader: Shill for the Democrats

toral politics as expressed over 80 years ago by V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian October Revolution of 1917, in *The State and Revolution*:

"To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—that is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarianism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics."

The wealth of this country is overwhelmingly concentrated in less than 1

percent of the population, whose property and profits derive from the exploitation of those who labor. This capitalist class runs the Republican and Democratic parties, whose main difference is not *what* they do but *how* they do it. The Republicans make no bones about being the party of "big business" in viciously going after the working class, blacks, immigrants and the poor. The Democrats lie and do the same thing. America is ruled by the dictatorship of a single class, the bourgeoisie. The façade of democracy is designed to

obscure the fact that the capitalist state is an instrument of organized force and violence—consisting at its core of the cops, the military, the courts and the prisons—for maintaining capitalist property and profits through the suppression of the working class and the oppressed.

Outside the DNC, the few thousand predominantly white, middle-class protesters got something of a taste of the cop terror which is the daily reality in the inner cities. The notorious LAPD, which was caught on videotape beating black motorist Rodney King to within an inch of his life in 1991 and is now under investigation for running a systematic frame-up and assassination machine, buzzed the protesters with helicopters, sprayed them with pepper gas and fired rubber bullets at them. Praising the work of the LAPD, a top Gore aide said, "We knew what they were doing, and we supported them." In Philadelphia, only weeks before the Republican convention opened, cops were videotaped pummeling a black man who they shot five times. Protesters swept off by the police dragnet outside the convention were thrown into jail, some held on bail of up to **\$1 million** for exercising their First Amendment rights of assembly and free expression.

The massive cop mobilizations against the relatively small protests in Philly and L.A. are a measure of the bourgeoisie's fear that any eruption of social discontent could get out of hand. Having accrued fabulous wealth over the past two decades through slashing the living standards of working people and dismantling social

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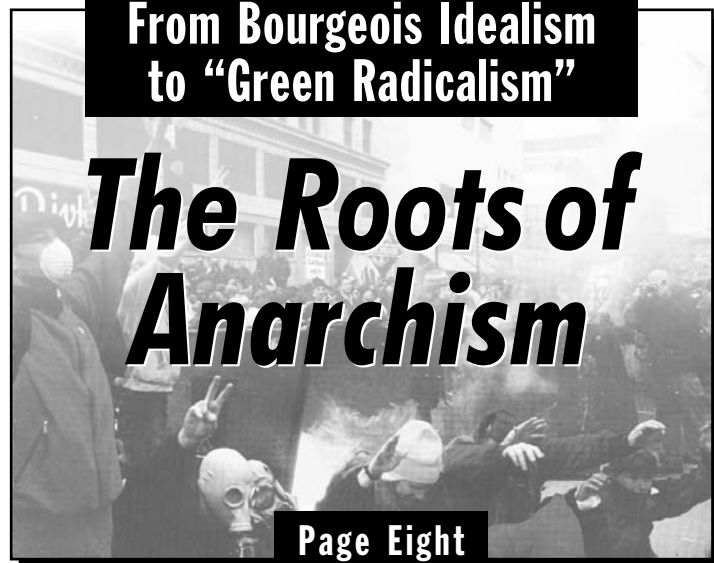
**Near East, 1950s**



**Permanent Revolution  
vs.  
Bourgeois Nationalism**

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**From Bourgeois Idealism  
to "Green Radicalism"**



**The Roots of  
Anarchism**

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# Down With U.S./UN Blockade!

## Starving Iraq for Ten Years

In the decade that Iraq has suffered under a starvation blockade, imposed by the U.S. imperialists in August 1990 under the auspices of the United Nations, that country has been reduced to an impoverished and disease-ravaged hell. Essential foods and medicines are unavailable or priced out of reach, the country's infrastructure—already largely destroyed in the U.S.-led Persian Gulf War in 1991—is almost nonfunctional, and health care is practically unavailable for lack of medicines and equipment. The imperialists are carrying out a deliberate policy of mass murder that hits hardest the most vulnerable sectors of the population: children, the aged and the poor. In addition to the tens of thousands of Iraqis massacred in the 1991 “Desert Slaughter,” some 1.5 million people have perished from disease and

malnutrition. This includes, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), approximately *half a million children under the age of five*.

The devastation of Iraq has been compounded by repeated imperialist terror-bombing campaigns carried out since 1991. Targeting heavily populated areas supposedly containing military sites, these raids have destroyed schools, hospitals and housing. Since December 1998, when the U.S. and its British ally under Labour prime minister Tony Blair stepped up the savage aerial war, some 300 civilians have been killed and 900 wounded. After a pause this summer, the almost daily bombing raids were renewed this month as U.S. and British warplanes destroyed, among other targets, a warehouse used for storing food obtained under the UN's extortionate

“oil for food” program.

The London *Economist* (8 April) described the deadly effects of the sanctions against Iraq:

“The tap-water causes diarrhoea, but few can afford the bottled sort. Because the sewers have broken down, pools of stinking muck have leached through to the surface all over town....

“Iraq's health services, like its schools, were once the best in the region. Now most hospital lifts have ceased to function, so trauma patients have to be carried up and down the stairs.... Whole wards of children with leukaemia go unattended, since the different drugs needed to treat them are rarely available at the same time. The senior gynaecologist explains that 90% of the pregnant women he cares for are anaemic because of malnutrition. Diseases such as cholera and typhoid, which had been eradicated before 1990, have reappeared.”

The consequences of the sanctions are so harsh that several senior UN officials responsible for implementing them have resigned, including former Assistant Secretary-General Denis Halliday who quit last year as relief coordinator in Iraq and labeled the blockade “a policy that satisfies the definition of genocide” (see “Down With Starvation Blockade and Bombing of Iraq!” WV No. 735, 5 May). The death and destruction rained on

the Iraqi population over the past decade are aimed at asserting U.S. imperialism's dominance in the Near East and controlling the region's oil supplies at the expense of America's imperialist rivals. During the Gulf War and the subsequent attacks against Iraq, the Spartacist League forthrightly called for the defeat of U.S. imperialism and for military defense of Iraq while giving not one iota of political support to the bloody capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein. From the outset, we have opposed the imperialist starvation blockade of Iraq. ***U.S./Britain: Hands off Iraq! All U.S./UN troops out of the Persian Gulf! Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution!***

A growing number of liberals in the U.S. are now pushing for an end to the embargo, arguing that the sanctions “haven't worked” in getting rid of the Saddam Hussein regime. Liberal academic Noam Chomsky, who postures as an “anarchist” opponent of imperialism, today decries the murderous effects of the UN blockade. But in 1991 he was calling for sanctions against Iraq as “the peaceful means prescribed by international law” (*Z Magazine*, February 1991). Liberals like Chomsky agreed with the rulers in Washington on deploying the power of U.S. imperialism to make Hussein bend to their dictates; they simply wanted an imperialism “with a human face.”

Today, American left organizations universally denounce the sanctions against Iraq. But in 1990-91, most self-avowed “socialist” groups tailed liberal bourgeois public opinion by giving

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TROTSKY

### The Fraud of Bourgeois “Democracy”

*Every four years, the American working class is offered the chance to vote for which representative of the capitalist class, Democratic or Republican, will preside over this system of wage slavery and oppression. Tailoring the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, the reformist left acts to reinforce illusions in bourgeois “democracy” and electoralism, acting as pressure groups on the Democratic Party. Bolshevik leader*

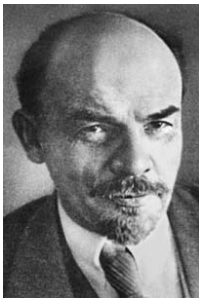
*Leon Trotsky exposed the fraud of bourgeois democracy in his polemic in defense of the Russian October Revolution of 1917 against German revisionist Karl Kautsky, Terrorism and Communism. We fight for new October Revolutions to overthrow the capitalist order and usher in a regime of proletarian democracy based on workers soviets (councils).*

Natural law, which developed into the theory of democracy, said to the worker: “all men are equal before the law, independently of their origin, their property, and their position; every man has an equal right in determining the fate of the people.” This ideal criterion revolutionized the consciousness of the masses in so far as it was a condemnation of absolutism, aristocratic privileges, and the property qualification. But the longer it went on, the more it sent the consciousness to sleep, legalizing poverty, slavery and degradation: for how could one revolt against slavery when every man has an equal right in determining the fate of the nation?

Rothschild, who has coined the blood and tears of the world into the gold napoleons of his income, has one vote at the parliamentary elections. The ignorant tiller of the soil who cannot sign his name, sleeps all his life without taking his clothes off, and wanders through society like an underground mole, plays his part, however, as a trustee of the nation's sovereignty, and is equal to Rothschild in the courts and at the elections. In the real conditions of life, in the economic process, in social relations, in their way of life, people became more and more unequal; dazzling luxury was accumulated at one pole, poverty and hopelessness at the other.... For the ignorant day-labourer, who all his life remains a beast of burden in the service of the bourgeoisie, the ideal right to influence the fate of the nations by means of the parliamentary elections remained little more real than the palace which he was promised in the kingdom of heaven....

The root problem of the party, at all periods of its struggle, was to create the conditions for real, economic, living equality for mankind as members of a united human commonwealth. It was just for this reason that the theoreticians of the proletariat had to expose the metaphysics of democracy as a philosophic mask for political mystification.

—Leon Trotsky, *Terrorism and Communism* (1920)



LENIN

**From outset, Spartacist League opposed imperialist embargo which has killed some 1.5 million Iraqis, mainly children and the aged, since 1990.**



Rick Reinhard/Impact Visuals



## Spartacist/SYC Events

### The Brouhaha Over “Globalization” The Main Enemy Is the U.S. Imperialist State!

**No Vote to Nader—Protectionist, China-Basher, Union-Buster!  
For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!**

Wednesday, August 30, 6:30 p.m.

YWCA at UC Berkeley  
2600 Bancroft Way (at Bowditch)  
For more information:  
(510) 839-0851 or (415) 395-9520

**BAY AREA**

Saturday, September 16, 3 p.m.

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

**BOSTON**

Saturday, August 26, 4 p.m.

Mt. Hollywood Congregational Church  
4607 Prospect Ave., Hollywood  
For more information: (213) 380-8239

**LOS ANGELES**

### Ralph Nader: Protectionist, China-Basher, Union-Buster! Elections 2000 in Racist America

Saturday, August 26, 7 p.m.

University of Illinois, Chicago  
CCC Building, Room 713  
750 S. Halsted  
For more information: (312) 454-4930

**CHICAGO**

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Anna Woodman

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

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25 August 2000

# Labor Reformists Scramble IGs

Like much of the fake left, the tiny Internationalist Group (IG) wants to exploit widespread support for the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and growing opposition to the death penalty in order to further its own brand of opportunist politics. Thus, in a July election supplement of its *Internationalist*, the IG advises the mainly white petty-bourgeois youth who turned out for the “anti-globalization” protests in Seattle and Washington, D.C.: “The fight for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal can powerfully cut across this racial divide, but only if it is fought on a clear *class* basis.” But here the IGlets have a big problem. Later in the same article, the IG intones:

“The fight to free Mumia directly intersects the struggle for working-class political independence from the capitalist parties. Labor reformists at a May 12 conference in Oakland initiated by the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal called on unions to pressure their delegates at the Democratic convention to ask for a ‘new trial’ for Jamal and to oppose former Philadelphia D.A. and mayor Rendell as Democratic National Committee chairman! How grotesque!”

How grotesque indeed! The Labor Action Committee (LAC) is a motley crew of enemies of revolutionary Marxism, including the “International Bolshevik Tendency” (IBT, whose founders quit the Spartacist League over our hard Soviet-defensism during the Reagan years) and Bay Area International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 “left” bureaucrat Jack Heyman. When we nailed Heyman and his LACkeys for providing “left” cover for the “new trial” slogan at the center of last year’s April 24 “Millions for Mumia” demonstration in San Francisco (see “Labor Opportunism, the Democratic Party and the Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal,” *WV* No. 714, 28 May 1999), we noted that the LAC “obscures the class nature of the capitalist state” and “deep-sixes any mention of the Democratic Party.” The IG then appointed itself the lead attorney for Heyman and the IBT took up the general defense for the LAC opportunists.

As its first act, the LAC sought to discredit the long, honorable history of the SL and the Partisan Defense Committee in struggling to mobilize the power of the international workers movement for Mumia’s freedom. Time and again, the PDC has sought and won the support of the ILWU for that cause. The LAC demanded that the PDC turn over a list of trade-union endorsers of PDC-initiated united-front efforts to free Mumia to their hitherto unheard-of group, as if it were a direct marketing mailing list for sale to

the next shyster. We wouldn’t, so they tried to slander the PDC as “sectarian.” They were in the tow of the fake left reaching out to the “mainstream” (i.e., the Democratic Party) by begging for a “new trial” for Mumia instead of demanding his immediate freedom.

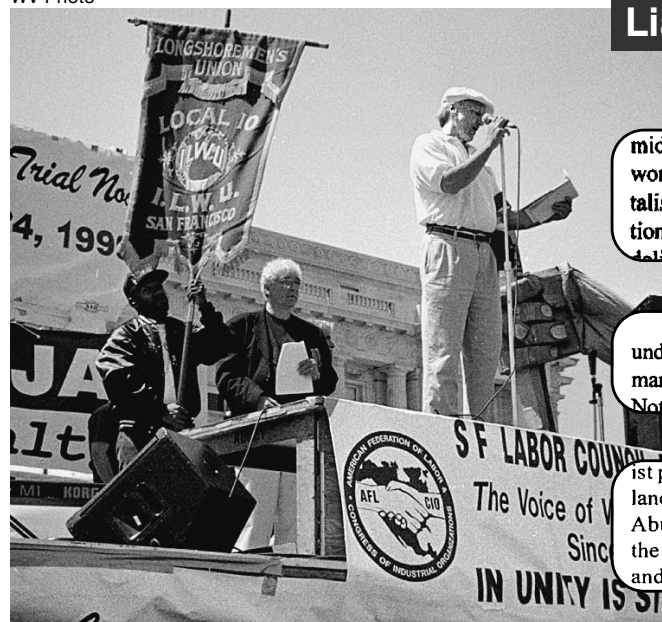
Reflecting support at the base of the union for Jamal’s cause, the ILWU called stop-work meetings in his defense last April 24. Heyman hoped to deceive

liquidationist conclusion by LAC’s “grotesque” resolution begging delegates at the DNC to give their party—and the bourgeois state apparatus—a facelift by appointing a new DNC chairman. (This went a little too far for the IBT, which had supported an earlier motion just to “condemn Rendell’s appointment”—i.e., the IBT only wanted a facial.)

The latest *Internationalist* (June 2000) contains yet another paean to the 24 April

ILWU’s endorsement of the principled, united-front slogans for the rally: “Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!” SL and PDC speakers presented our revolutionary Marxist program, including the need to break the labor movement from the partner parties of capital, especially the Democrats, and to forge a party like the Bolsheviks which will emancipate all the oppressed by leading the working class to power.

WV Photo



## Liars in the Service of Labor Opportunism

### The Internationalist

middle of its article, *WV* charges the initiators of the ILWU work stoppage with “concealing the true nature of the capitalist state.” An unaware reader would deduce that the action or its initiators are calling for a new trial. Not so. *WV* deliberately omits the fact that the call was for a new trial. April-May 1999

The ILWU motion’s call to “support” the April 24 demo undercut the impact of the first-ever union work stoppage demanding his freedom, not least by aiding *WV*’s slander-mongers. Not only was the call to free Mumia, but it was also a call to free the political parties. June 2000

ist parties. Labor reformists at a May 12 conference in Oakland initiated by the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal called on unions to pressure their delegates at the Democratic convention to ask for a “new trial” for Jamal and to oppose former Philadelphia D.A. and mayor Rendell July 2000 Supplement

ILWU Local 10 bureaucrat Jack Heyman speaking at 24 April 1999 San Francisco “Millions for Mumia” rally. IG centrists lied to cover up Heyman’s support for class-collaborationist “new trial” demand.

ILWU workers by tacking the “free Mumia” slogan onto the union resolution endorsing the pro-Democratic Party April 24 demonstration for a “new trial,” which Heyman personally, the LACkeys and the ILWU all officially endorsed. IG chief Jan Norden flew out to the West Coast to march with Heyman and the small ILWU contingent. The IG then wrote a long and passionate lawyer’s brief for Heyman in which his endorsement of the pro-Democratic Party mobilization was simply denied. But, as we wrote in our exchange last year:

“Tacking the slogan ‘Free Mumia’ onto the call for a ‘new trial’ is not warning the workers about illusions of justice in the capitalist courts, it is *deceiving the workers* with such illusions in the service of the Democratic Party. It is just a cover for endorsing a demonstration organized on the basis of *deliberately opposing* calls to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty, instead substituting the appeal for a ‘new trial’ in an expression of *political confidence in the capitalist courts*.”

Now all the IG’s efforts to white-wash Heyman and the LAC have blown up in its face. On the eve of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in L.A., the class-collaborationist “new trial” maneuver is carried to its inevitable,

1999 ILWU work stoppage that “Showed Labor’s Power in Fight to Free Mumia.” But now, a year later, the IG admits, albeit whiningly, what it had hitherto categorically and vehemently denied: “The ILWU motion’s call to ‘support’ the April 24 demo undercut the impact of the first-ever union work stoppage demanding his freedom, not least by aiding *WV*’s slander-mongers.” Alas, ye inveterate liars of the IG: Truth may be blamed, but can never be shamed.

Noting that the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club organized a “Revolutionary Contingent” for this year’s May 13 demonstration for Jamal, whose central slogan was also for a “new trial,” the IG claims: “By the Spartacist League’s 1999 standards, the SL 2000 is a bunch of opportunist capitulators, effectively ‘endorsing’ the ‘new trial’ demonstration (‘All out on May 13!’), its claims to call for Mumia’s freedom being nothing but a ‘fig leaf’ and ‘camouflage!’” We did not and do not endorse the “new trial” demand. But the ILWU bureaucracy including Heyman and its LACkeys *did* endorse last year’s “new trial” demo. Our SYC contingent—marching behind the banner “There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!”—was instead simply another tactic to augment the same politics with which we intervened last year. It was built to win a new generation of left-wing youth to our revolutionary proletarian program in direct *counterposition* to those who, by demanding a new trial, try to chain Mumia’s cause to refurbishing the racist Democratic Party and the imperialist state apparatus of repression it administers.

According to the IG: “Both when they’re zigging and zagging, the SL is *politically capitulating to the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy*. In the case of the ILWU, the SL has been notable for its kid-gloves treatment of ILWU International president Brian McWilliams. *WV* No. 714 baldly declared that ‘Heyman is a lot worse than McWilliams,’ because Heyman ‘pretends to be something different, a left-talking friend of the workers who is more radical than McWilliams.’” As “evidence,” the IG notes that McWilliams spoke at a June 1995 PDC-initiated united-front emergency protest when Mumia faced the threat of imminent execution.

When McWilliams spoke at that labor-centered protest, it was on the basis of the

At the April 24 “Millions for Mumia” demonstration McWilliams made a speech lauding the ILWU’s refusal to load scrap iron to Japan in 1938, and Norden’s man Heyman, speaking later from the same platform, said nothing about this chauvinism. Instead he praised the ILWU’s “long history of taking stands for social justice.” Of course, Heyman uttered not one word in criticism of labor’s ties to the Democrats and absolutely nothing critical of his pro-Democratic Party “new trial” fake-socialist hosts. Norden and the IG, in turn, deep-sixed any mention of McWilliams’ and Heyman’s speeches.

Dumping Japanese iron in 1938 was a chauvinist act of support for American imperialism’s war mobilization to dominate the Pacific. It began with trade war and economic boycotts, and ended only with the nuclear annihilation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Let’s be clear about this: McWilliams, in the service of his capitalist masters and aided by his “leftist” LACkeys and Norden, obscenely used the Mumia mobilization to support the bloody wars of U.S. imperialism.

In their efforts to defend their favorite American “class struggle” union fraud, Norden & Co. may not have noticed Heyman’s overt support for McWilliams in the recent ILWU elections. In a June 15 letter Heyman wrote to the *Journal of Commerce* and posted on the Internet, he declares: “Defend ILWU’s Proud Record—Vote for McWilliams.”

As we wrote last year:

“In Heyman, Norden sees a kindred spirit. Norden and his clot broke with us when we moved to break fraternal relations with a group in Brazil which proved to be more interested in holding onto union office in a cop-riddled union than in building the revolutionary party. Why shouldn’t the IG alibi appeals by trade-union opportunists to the justice of the capitalist courts? The IG has spent much of the last three years trying to cover up for the fact that this Brazilian group which is now its affiliate, the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil (LQB), has dragged the SFPMBR municipal workers union in Volta Redonda through the capitalist courts three times as part of a squalid fight for control of the union against an equally unprincipled bureaucratic faction.”

In its own furtive way, the IG has confirmed our basic point that the LAC’s strategy is to rely on the bourgeois state and the Democrats—and that the IGlets abandoned the Trotskyist program in order to be lawyers for opportunism. ■

## SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. Local Directory and Public Offices

**National Office:** Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 • (212) 732-7860  
**Web site:** www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

### Boston

Box 390840, Central Sta.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 666-9453

### Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO  
Chicago, IL 60680  
(312) 454-4930

### Public Office:

Tues. 5-9 p.m.  
and Sat. 12-3 p.m.  
328 S. Jefferson St.  
Suite 904

### Los Angeles

Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.  
Los Angeles, CA 90029  
(213) 380-8239

### Public Office:

Sat. 2-5 p.m.  
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

### New York

Box 3381, Church St. Sta.  
New York, NY 10008  
(212) 267-1025

### Public Office:

Tues. 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
and Sat. 1-5 p.m.  
299 Broadway, Suite 318

### Oakland

Box 29497  
Oakland, CA 94604  
(510) 839-0851

### Public Office:

Sat. 1-5 p.m.  
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor

### San Francisco

Box 77494  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
(415) 395-9520

### Public Office:

Tues. 6-8 p.m.  
564 Market St., Suite 718

## TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

### Toronto

Box 7198, Station A  
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8  
(416) 593-4138

### Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2  
(604) 687-0353



## Near East, 1950s

# Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism

The Near East is marked by abject poverty, benighted enslavement of women, the dispossession of the Palestinian people by Israel and the oppression of numerous other national minorities by Arab and Iranian nationalist regimes. This legacy of social backwardness and oppression is reinforced by the domination of the region by the imperialist powers. Ongoing imperialist intrigues and depredations like the U.S./British terror bombing of Iraq are impelled by a strategic concern: control of the supply of oil, the source of more than 40 percent of the world's energy. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the sheikdoms of the Arabian peninsula hold three-quarters of the world's proven

### — Part One —

oil reserves. Ever since the 1920s, control over the Persian Gulf oil fields has given American and British imperialism an enormous strategic advantage over their main rivals, Germany and Japan.

The development of the oil industry has also led to the creation of a proletariat in the region in whose hands lies the power to lead all of the oppressed in revolutionary struggle against imperialist subjugation. Repeatedly betrayed by left-talking petty-bourgeois nationalists and Stalinists and chafing under brutal bourgeois regimes, many anti-imperialist youth and the most downtrodden layers of the masses have turned to the fool's gold of Islamic fundamentalism. But in the 1950s, this region was a hotbed of revolutionary working-class struggles which offered a real prospect for ending imperialist subjugation, social reaction and brutal exploitation.

A few months ago, the *New York Times* (16 April) ran a lengthy piece on the CIA-organized coup in Iran in 1953, at the height of U.S. imperialism's Cold War against the Soviet Union. Nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil monopoly had impelled the country on a collision course with the imperialists, leading to a deepening revolutionary crisis. The *Times* wrote, "Anti-Communism had risen to a fever pitch in Washington, and officials were worried that Iran might fall under the sway of the Soviet Union," and with



Teheran, 1953: Revolutionary working-class upsurge which swept Iran was channeled by Stalinists into support for "progressive" bourgeoisie, then crushed by Iranian military backed by CIA.

### For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

it the country's vast oil reserves. Tudeh (Masses), the pro-Moscow Communist Party, exercised political hegemony over the proletariat and had a broad following among the urban petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals. Then CIA chief Allen Dulles insisted that the U.S. had to install a government in Teheran "which would reach an equitable oil settlement...and which would vigorously prosecute the dangerously strong Communist Party."

A year earlier in Egypt, a popular uprising had led to the toppling of the British puppet, King Farouk, and the rise to power of the Free Officers Movement of Gamal Abdel Nasser. There, too, the dominant and most militant sections of the working class looked to the Communists for leadership. A few years later in Iraq, as a 1958 coup by left-wing military officers ousted the British-installed Hashemite monarchy, U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower warned that leftist revolu-

tions could "result in the complete elimination of Western influence in the Middle East." In the ensuing period of revolutionary turbulence, the Iraqi Communist Party, with its solid base among the Arab and Kurdish oil workers and substantial support within the military itself, could indeed have taken state power.

Throughout the Near East, the Communist parties attracted the most class-conscious workers and radical intellectuals. In this patchwork of myriad national, ethnic and religious minorities, the CPs were about the only organizations with a base which cut across national and religious lines: Jews played a major role in the Egyptian Communist movement, Kurds in the Iraqi. The Communist militants sought to identify with the proletarian internationalism of the Bolshevik Revolution (albeit refracted and perverted by Stalinism). They saw in the Soviet Union a beacon of liberation from imperialist subjugation and a model for economic development. As a result of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, the Muslim regions of the former tsarist empire—Central Asia and Azerbaijan in the Caucasus—had advanced from conditions even more socially and economically backward than the Near East to modern societies in which women were no longer enslaved by the veil and education and medical care were available to all.

Yet revolutionary upheavals in Iran and Iraq did not result in new October Revolutions. Instead, these opportunities were sacrificed on the altar of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy's futile and treacherous pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. The leaderships of the Communist parties in the region were extremely loyal to and pretty tightly controlled by Moscow, both ideologically and through financial support. Despite the revolutionary aspirations of their ranks

and supporters, the Communist parties of the Near East helped install bourgeois-nationalist regimes which then crushed the left and workers movement and persecuted national and ethnic minorities. How and why did this come about?

At root, the explanation lies in the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet workers state and the replacement of Bolshevik internationalism with the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" and its corollary, class collaboration. The Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the October Revolution, fought down the line against the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union and the Communist International. Stalinist bureaucratic rule ultimately opened up the floodgates to capitalist counterrevolution, which destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92. As part of our struggle to reforge the Trotskyist Fourth International, the International Communist League seeks to win a new generation of revolutionary proletarian militants in the Near East to the banner of authentic Leninism.

### "Two-Stage Revolution": Road to Defeat

The history of the Near East in the second half of the 20th century demonstrates that even the most "left" bourgeois-nationalist regimes—"socialist" pretensions and "anti-imperialist" rhetoric notwithstanding—act as agents of imperialist domination and therefore perpetuate the social and economic backwardness of their countries. As Trotsky wrote following the defeat of the Second Chinese Revolution in 1927, when the "left" nationalist Guomindang drowned the Communist-led working class in blood:

"Everything that brings the oppressed and exploited masses of the toilers to their feet inevitably pushes the national bourgeoisie into an open bloc with the imperialists. The class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the masses of workers and peasants is not weakened, but, on the contrary, it is sharpened by imperialist oppression, to the point of bloody civil war at every serious conflict."

—"The Chinese Revolution and the Theses of Comrade Stalin," in *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* (1932); reprinted in *Leon Trotsky on China* (1976)

When the USSR existed, Soviet financial and military aid gave the Arab bourgeois-nationalist regimes a certain room to maneuver vis-à-vis the Western and Japanese imperialist states. But the room in which they maneuvered was dominated by Wall Street, the City of London, the Deutsche Bank and the Japanese *keiritsu*.

Despite limited land reform carried out in the 1950s and early 1960s by nationalist regimes in Egypt, Syria and Iraq, the pattern of land ownership still resembles what it was a century ago. Wealthy landowners possess large tracts of the best land while millions of desperate peasants, unable to scratch out a living on tiny plots of arid land, have moved into the vast shantytowns that ring Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad.

Many of these countries are riven by national, religious and ethnic antagonisms, including sharp divisions between



National Geographic

British troops march into Baghdad in 1919, as British and French imperialists carve up Near East after World War I.

Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims. In Algeria, the predominantly Arab ruling class lords it over the Berber national minority; in mainly Muslim Egypt, the Coptic Christian minority is hounded and persecuted, particularly by Islamic fundamentalists. The Kurdish nation is carved up among and oppressed by four capitalist states—Syria, Iraq, Iran and Turkey. The oppression of women, symbolized by the veil, remains deeply rooted in Iran and throughout the Arab world. Laws governing personal status are largely based on the *sharia* (Islamic law), which sanctions polygamy, grants husbands the right to divorce almost at will and subjects women to the “authority” of their fathers and husbands. Especially in rural areas, the condition of women remains one of medieval backwardness. In Egypt, fully 60 percent of all women are illiterate.

At the same time, cellular phones and computers are commonplace items for Cairo professionals, while large numbers of Egyptian workers are concentrated in modern, foreign-owned auto assembly plants. Meanwhile, barefoot villagers in the Nile valley till their fields with tools that have scarcely evolved since the age of the pharaohs. Highly trained Iranian and Iraqi oil workers, with decades of trade-union and communist traditions behind them, coexist with medieval prejudices and social backwardness.

Such conditions of combined and uneven development, in which modern

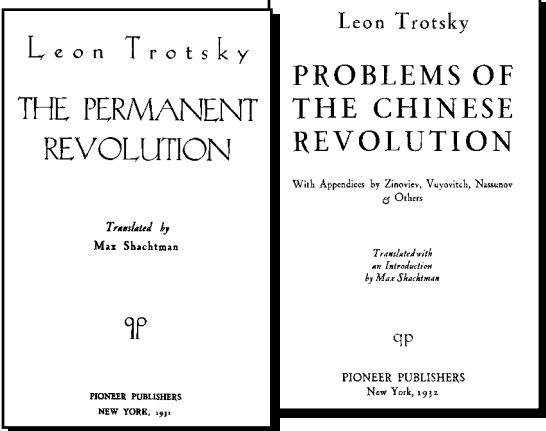


Soviet Export

**Aswan High Dam in Egypt. Modern industry coexists in the Near East with economic and social backwardness.**

industry and a powerful industrial proletariat have been superimposed on largely peasant-based societies, prevailed in Russia as well on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution. Though itself an imperialist power, Russia, unlike the more advanced capitalist countries of West Europe, had not had a bourgeois-democratic revolution and remained mired in social and economic backwardness. Emerging late in the capitalist era, the Russian bourgeoisie was dependent on Western capital and all the more venal for its weakness. The tsarist autocracy ruled over a vast prison house of peoples and a mass of impoverished peasants. At the same time, capitalist investment had given rise to a small but combative industrial working class, concentrated in modern large-scale industry, which showed its power in the 1905 Revolution.

Marx and Engels first raised the “revolution in permanence” in an 1850 “Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League,” after the bourgeoisie had gone over to the side of the old reactionary classes against the revolutionary young proletariat in the failed German democratic revolution of 1848. It was this document that inspired Leon Trotsky, writing at the time of the 1905 Revolution, to advance the theory and program of permanent revolution, stressing that the agrarian revolution, political democracy and the other tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia could not be realized by the weak and dependent bourgeoisie, which feared the proletariat far too much to mobilize the worker and peasant masses for an



**Leon Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution was confirmed by Russian October Revolution. Stalin’s “stagist” strategy in 1925-27 Chinese Revolution led to bloody defeat.**

onslaught against the autocracy. Rather, as Trotsky later summarized in generalizing the perspective of permanent revolution to all dependent capitalist countries:

“With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leaders of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.... “Without an alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be solved, nor even seriously posed. But the alliance of



Wide World

usurped political power in the Soviet Union in a political counterrevolution in 1924 repudiated the Bolshevik program of international socialist revolution in favor of the nationalist dogma of “socialism in one country,” a flat denial of the Marxist understanding that a socialist society could only be built on an international basis, through the destruction of capitalist imperialism as a world system and the establishment of a world socialist division of labor. The Communist International was transformed from an instrument for world proletarian revolution into an agency for Soviet diplomatic maneuvers with the capitalist countries, leading to the adoption of a *program and strategy of class collaborationism*.

In the Near East and other backward countries, this took the form of the old Menshevik schema of “two-stage revolution,” postponing the socialist revolution to an indefinite future while in the “democratic stage” subordinating the proletariat to an allegedly “progressive” or “anti-imperialist” national bourgeoisie, which inevitably turns on its former Communist allies and their working-class base. History shows that the “second stage” consists of killing the reds and massacring the workers! From the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 and Spain in 1936-37 to Iran and Iraq in the 1950s and Indonesia in 1965-66, two-stage revolution has been a recipe for bloody defeats for the proletariat.

Today, gutted by the consequences of their own betrayals and the demise of the Soviet Union, the Communist parties of the Near East are mere shadows of what they once were. Meanwhile, imperialist ideologues acclaim the supposed “death of communism” following the restoration of capitalism in East Europe and the former Soviet Union. But just as the Indonesian proletariat reawakened to social struggle in the 1990s after three decades of bloody, anti-Communist military dictatorship, the workers of the Near East will again embark on revolutionary struggle against their imperialist overlords and domestic capitalist exploiters. The key task is the construction of Leninist-Trotskyist parties committed to the principles of proletarian internationalism and the program of permanent revolution. To achieve this task it is necessary that the young generation of worker militants and left-wing intellectuals in the Near East learn the lessons of past

revolutionary struggles which were betrayed by Stalinism and crushed by Arab bourgeois nationalism.

**Stalinist Degeneration of the Communist International**

The Russian October Revolution of 1917 had an enormous impact on the Near East. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and its defeat in World War I, the region was carved up between the British and French imperialists. The Bolshevik Revolution, and its extension to largely Muslim Central Asia in the course of the bloody three-year Civil War against the imperialist-backed counterrevolutionary White armies, triggered a series of national revolts and popular uprisings in the broad swath occupied by British military forces from Egypt through the Fertile Crescent to Iran. An Egyptian observer reported at the time that “news of success or victory by the Bolsheviks” in the Russian Civil War “seems to produce a pang of joy and content among all classes of Egyptians” (quoted in Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* [1978]).

In this climate of social upheaval, Communist parties were formed in Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Persia (Iran). However, as throughout the colonial world, the working class in the Near East was as yet small and undeveloped, and the Communist parties were politically ungelled and inexperienced. As a result of internal weaknesses and external repression, most of these parties had effectively disappeared by the late 1920s.

By the time Communist parties re-emerged in those countries beginning in the mid-1930s, the Communist International had long since ceased to be an instrument for world socialist revolution. The smashing of the Trotskyist Left Opposition at the rigged 13th Party Conference in January 1924, coinciding with Lenin’s death, marked the beginning of the Soviet Thermidor, in which political power was usurped from the proletarian vanguard by a conservative bureaucratic caste whose chief spokesman was Stalin. By 1935, the Stalinized Comintern had passed over to outright reformism, adopting a program of class collaboration under the rubric of “the people’s front against fascism.” In the colonial world, this meant that the Stalinists were transformed into open supporters of the “democratic” imperialists who lorded it over the worker and peasant masses.

When the Soviet Union entered into an alliance with the Allied powers following Nazi Germany’s invasion of the USSR in June 1941, the Communist parties in the U.S., Britain and France became the most slavishly social-patriotic supporters of their own imperialist ruling classes. The British and French Stalinists *opposed* the struggle for independence in British-ruled India, French Indochina and other colonies, while the Syrian CP leadership volunteered to fight for “democratic” France. After the defeat of Nazi Germany—at the cost of 27 million Soviet lives—Stalin honored his commitments to his imperialist allies, helping to quell revolutionary opportunities from Greece to Italy and France and thus immeasurably

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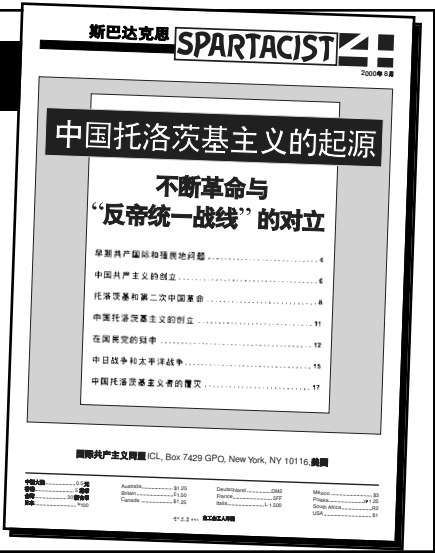
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# Near East...

(continued from page 5)

helping to restabilize the shattered bourgeois order in West Europe. In Yugoslavia, and then in China in 1949, the victory of indigenous Stalinist-led peasant-based guerrilla forces led to the creation of bureaucratically deformed workers states, like those formed under Soviet occupation in East Europe (see “Yugoslavia, East Europe and the Fourth International: The Evolution of Pabloist Liquidationism,” *Prometheus Research Series* No. 4 [March 1993]).

It was only the Trotskyist Fourth International that pursued the proletarian internationalist line carried out by Lenin’s Bolsheviks in World War I: revolutionary defeatism against all the imperialist combatants. For Britain, France and the U.S. no less than for Germany, Italy and Japan, World War II was a conflict for redivision of the world’s markets, sources of raw materials and cheap labor, as had been the case in World War I. The Trotskyists continued to fight for liberation of the colonies from imperialism. Recognizing that the Soviet Union, though bureaucratically degenerated, remained a workers state based on collectivized property, the Trotskyists called for unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. At the same time, we did not cease fighting to oust the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy through proletarian political revolution.

## The 1948 War

World War II radically altered the face of the Near East. The U.S., emerging as the hegemonic imperialist power, moved to replace British and French domination in the region. The weakening of the West European imperialist powers, combined with the radicalization of the colonial masses, led to the creation of a series of nominally independent states. The working class, enormously strengthened by the development of regional industry to support the British war machine, now confronted indigenous bourgeois state powers. The Soviet victory over Nazi Germany, and the Kremlin’s more militant posture in response to the onset of the imperialist Cold War, greatly enhanced



Humbert-Droz Archives

**Turkish delegate addresses 1920 Baku Congress of Peoples of the East. October Revolution led to enormous advance for women of traditionally Muslim East, including university education.**



Planeta

the right of both the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab peoples to national self-determination, the RCL resolutely opposed the imperialist partition and took a revolutionary defeatist position on the war:

“This war can on neither side be said to bear a progressive character.... *It weakens the proletariat and strengthens imperialism in both camps.... The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps!*” [emphasis in original]  
—“Against the Stream,” *Fourth International*, May 1948

This is the internationalist position upheld by the International Communist League today. We defend the national rights of the dispossessed Palestinian people, oppose Zionist repression and demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli troops and fascistic “settler” auxiliaries from the Occupied Territories. But we do not thereby deny the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. When national populations are geographically interpenetrated, under capitalism the right of self-determination can be exercised only by the stronger national grouping driving out or destroying the weaker one. In such cases, the only possibility of a democratic solution lies in overturning capitalist rule and instituting the dictatorship of the proletariat, the only class that has no interest in perpetuating national antagonisms. The Hebrew-speaking workers must be

Arab defeat thoroughly discredited the traditionalist Arab regimes, whose incompetence and corruption were sharply revealed, and led to the fall of governments and monarchies throughout the region, helping pave the way for a series of Arab nationalist regimes to come to power. Meanwhile, Israel served the Arab nationalists as an “external” enemy, directing the masses’ anger and frustrations away from their capitalist oppressors.

## Egyptian Communists and the Rise of Nasser

The impact of these developments was particularly evident in postwar Egypt. Historically the political and cultural center of the Arab world, the land of the Nile is by far the most populous of all Arab countries. Egypt was also militarily the strongest state directly confronting Zionist Israel. Consequently, Egyptian strongman Colonel Nasser was the dominant figure of Arab nationalism in the 1950s and ’60s, intervening in and influencing developments in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere in the Near East.

Two generations ago, Nasser was widely viewed as embodying a mythical “Arab Revolution” and a non-Communist “socialist” alternative for so-called “non-aligned” countries of the Near East, Asia and Africa. He burnished his “anti-imperialist” credentials through the 1956 Suez War in which he stood up to Israel, Britain and France. Yet the fact that

British rule. As a mass upsurge against British occupation swept the country and workers increasingly asserted their power in strikes, the Communists were able to steadily displace the Wafd as the principal leadership of the labor movement, especially in textile, the country’s main industry.

In February 1946, a police attack on student demonstrators in Cairo resulted in the deaths of a number of students. On February 21, the Communist-led National Committee of Workers and Students called a strike, completely shutting down the country, in which several more demonstrators were shot dead. As the country erupted in strikes and demonstrations, a strike on March 4 again shut down the entire country. In Alexandria, British forces in league with Egyptian cops fired on the demonstrators, killing 28. Desperate to put a stop to the upsurge, the British announced they would withdraw their troops to the Suez Canal Zone. The government then launched a wave of repression, especially targeting Communist leaders.

Following the 1948 War, the discredited regime declared a state of siege, while mobs incited by the fascistic Muslim Brotherhood pillaged Jewish businesses, burned synagogues and slaughtered dozens of Jews. In at least one case, Communists organized the defense of a Jewish-owned store against the pogromists. As the mass expulsions and emigration of Jews began, among the first targeted were Henri Curiel and other founders and leaders of Egyptian Communism.

A wave of popular agitation against the British military occupation again erupted in October 1951 when the British ignored an edict by the Wafd government to withdraw from the Canal Zone. With the Egyptian government exposed as powerless, the Communists put themselves at the head of the tide of anti-British sentiment that swept the country. As government repression proved incapable of stemming the mounting strike wave, the Communists continued to extend their influence in the Greater Cairo textile union, the Cairo transport unions and elsewhere. By late 1951, the EMNL’s successor, the Democratic Movement for National Liberation (DMNL), had become the leading political force in the Egyptian labor movement.

In January 1952, an armed clash between British and Egyptian forces in the Canal Zone touched off rioting in Cairo in which much of the downtown commercial district was burned down. With the government totally discredited and virtually paralyzed, the country was increasingly polarized between the rapidly growing Muslim Brotherhood and the Communists. Student members of the Muslim Brotherhood carried out military training at the universities, driving around campuses in military jeeps and spraying machine-gun fire in the air to intimidate their opponents.

The DMNL also had a military section, but its work consisted of providing support for Nasser’s Free Officers Movement, a heterogeneous coalition in the military including Muslim Brothers,

continued on page 14



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**Armed workers militia in Shanghai, 1927 (left). Slaughter of Communists by Chiang Kai-shek’s nationalist forces following defeat of revolution. Second stage of “two-stage revolution” is massacre of workers.**

the authority of the Communist parties in Iran and the Arab countries.

A postwar development of particular importance to the region was the creation of the Zionist state of Israel with the British withdrawal from Palestine. Having conciliated and promoted Arab nationalism for nearly two decades, the Soviet bureaucracy did an about-face and supported the imperialist partition of Palestine and the emergence of the Zionist state. Designed as a maneuver against British imperialism, the Kremlin’s short-lived support to Israel sowed massive disorientation among the Communist parties of the region. The position of revolutionary internationalism in the 1948 War between Israel and the Arab states was upheld only by the small Palestinian Trotskyist group, the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL). While recognizing

broken from the poison of Zionist chauvinism and the Arab workers from the sway of petty-bourgeois nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism to join in a common struggle for socialist revolution against the murderous Israeli capitalist rulers and all the Arab regimes. While Zionist Israel has a particularly close relationship with U.S. imperialism, the Arab bourgeois states are no less an enemy of Palestinian liberation.

The 1948 War had a profound and continuing impact. The expulsion of nearly a million Arabs from Palestine—most of them to squalid refugee camps where they and their descendants live to this day—was accompanied by a mass migration of the so-called Oriental or Sephardic Jewish population from the Arab countries to Israel, encouraged by both the Arab regimes and the Zionists. The

enthusiasm for Nasser was so widespread was in no small part due to the Stalinists themselves helping to foster illusions in Nasser’s “Arab socialism.” In reality, Nasser came to power largely with the aim of crushing the combative Egyptian working class, which was mainly under the leadership of the Communists.

The upsurge of class struggle in Egypt at the close of World War II, while not reaching the levels of Iran and Iraq, nevertheless allowed the young Communist groupings, the most prominent being the Egyptian Movement for National Liberation (EMNL) founded by Jewish intellectual Henri Curiel, to achieve a measure of mass influence. The traditional Egyptian nationalist organization, the Wafd, had been widely discredited by its corrupt and oppressive rule during the war years, when it served as undisguised flunkies for

# Young Spartacus

## SYC Protests Exclusion

# “Whites Only” at L.A. Rad-Lib Workshop

The following leaflet was issued by the Los Angeles Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club on August 12 and distributed at the protests during the Democratic National Convention.

“Whites Only.” “Coloreds Only.” These were the watchwords of the hideous oppression of blacks in the Jim Crow South—a racist society of “separate and unequal” which was enforced by systematic police repression backed up by lynch mob terror. Grotesquely such segregationist practices have appeared at the Convergence Center run by the Direct Action Network and the D2KLA Network, which are organizing the protests at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Los Angeles.

On August 10, a dark-skinned comrade of the Spartacus Youth Club, youth group of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League, was told to leave an “Anti-Racist Workshop” because the meeting was “for white people.” We spoke to people throughout the Center, condemning the Jim Crow policy of segregating whites and “people of color.” We learned that a white woman from South Africa, recalling her experience with racist apartheid, felt uncomfortable and left the meeting. And at the previous night’s “people of color only” workshop, Latino youth were angry at the segregationist policy. Now, D2KLA organizers have banned us Spartacists from the Convergence Center altogether for agitating against this disgusting policy of racial exclusion.

The liberal organizers of the DNC protests look to pressure the Democratic Party (the party which administered Jim Crow in the South) to be more “humane” to the peoples of the Third World and to put “people before profits” at home. Since they promote the view that U.S. imperialism and its parties can be the agency for “justice” and “human rights,” they not only can’t challenge racist American capitalism but end up mimicking the racial and ethnic divisions in society. Thus our comrade was told that he couldn’t attend their workshop because white people needed a “safe place” to discuss racism! Is it any wonder that the “spirit of Seattle” protests have maintained a mainly white, middle-class composition?

The bipartisan abolition of welfare, the gunning down of Amadou Diallo in a hail of 41 bullets, the hundreds of thousands of black men consigned to prison hellholes are the bitter daily expression of the fact that black oppression is rooted in the very foundation of American capitalism. Racism is produced not by the white population of all social classes as the liberals claim, but centrally through the policies of the ruling class forcibly segregating blacks at the bottom of society. But the oppression of black people as a race-color caste also makes the struggle for black equality a powerful potential lever for social revolution. That fight must be linked to the social power of the working class, of which blacks are a strategic component, through a multiracial revolution-

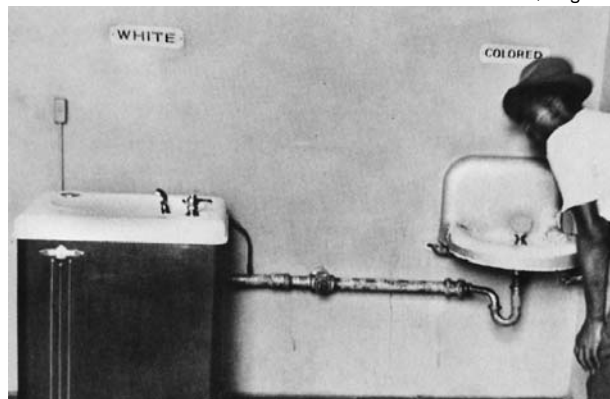
ary workers party fighting to sweep away the entire system in which racial oppression is rooted. This program of *revolutionary integrationism* is the only road forward. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution!

We Spartacists aren’t here to beg the capitalist Democratic Party to be “more responsive” to the needs of working people and the oppressed. Nor are we here to hustle the vote for Ralph Nader, whose candidacy for the *capitalist* Green Party is, by Nader’s own admission, simply aimed at strengthening the Democrats. Rather, we want to win those youth who want to fight against racism, exploitation and war to the perspective of socialist revolution. The exclusion of our comrade by the liberal “anti-racists” organizing the workshop and our exclusion from the Convergence Center altogether flow from the politics of the “spirit of Seattle,” which combined protectionism, China-bashing and the revolting promotion of U.S. imperialism as a vehicle for bringing aid to the world’s downtrodden. The oppression of the world’s masses is not caused by “supranational” agencies



Young Spartacus Poster for “anti-racist” workshop “for white people” at L.A. Convergence Center recalls racist Jim Crow segregation in the South. In the name of fighting racism, liberal organizers exclude non-whites, accepting racial divisions of American society.

Elliott Erwit/Magnum



like the WTO or IMF but by imperialism, which is the highest stage of capitalism where imperialist powers compete against each other over who gets to loot the rest of the world. The myth of “globalism” is designed to obscure the central role of U.S. imperialism as the primary source of poverty, war and oppression around the globe. The struggle against exploitation and racial oppression requires the destruction of capitalist rule through international socialist revolution. Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! ■

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# The Roots of Anarchism

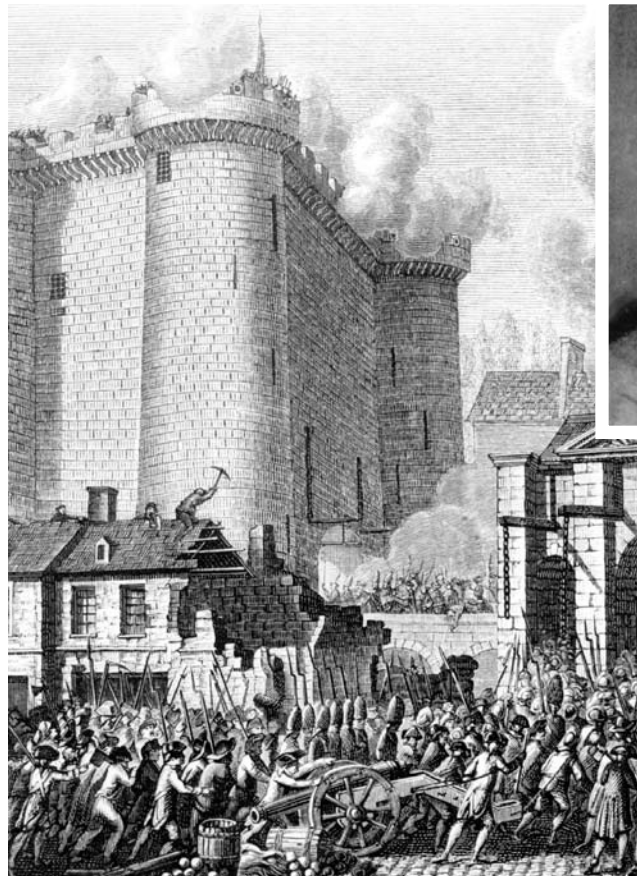
The following is an edited transcript of a class given by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour to the New York Spartacus Youth Club on July 22.

What I want to try to do here is discuss those ideas and attitudes of classical anarchism which we encounter among American radical youth today, not only those who call themselves anarchists, but the Green radicals and left-liberals; that is, the kind of people who were at the Seattle and D.C. protests, many of whom are now around the Nader campaign. As we shall see, the youth who demanded that the directors of the World Bank cancel the debts of poor Third World countries were expressing an attitude and a position entirely compatible with the doctrines of Peter Kropotkin, the foremost anarchist spokesman and theoretician in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

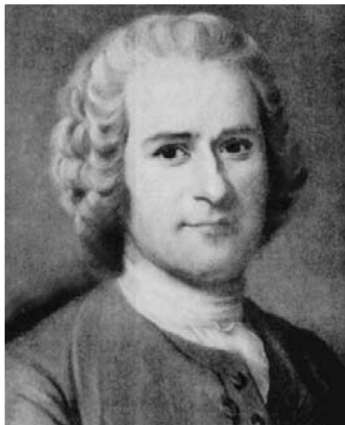
Basically, anarchism is part of a family—one might call it the slightly nutso second cousin in this family—of radical democratic idealism. Now all forms of radical democratic idealism derive in an intellectual sense from the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries, or more precisely its left wing, and they achieved organized expression as a result of the French Revolution of 1789, which attempted to translate the ideals of the left wing of the Enlightenment into reality. In the early 19th century, the various schools of socialism which Marx and Engels later called utopian socialism were a form of radical democratic idealism. In our day, Green radicalism is a form of radical democratic idealism, which, as we'll see, has a close family resemblance to classical anarchism in some ways. Mainstream liberalism also draws from this same intellectual tradition.

The central premise of radical democratic idealism is that the world can be more or less instantaneously restructured so as to conform to the ideals of the classic bourgeois-democratic revolution—expressed, for example, as “the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” in the American Declaration of Independence or the more radical expression “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” of the far more radical French Revolution. How these are interpreted varies, but they all stem from the same basic premise. By their nature, all forms of radical democratic idealism

Mansell Collection



**Storming of Bastille in July 1789 sparked Great French Revolution, which gave organized expression to democratic idealism of thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Anarchist conception of “revolution” as moral regeneration of all classes is based on Rousseau’s trans-class doctrines.**



Maurice Quentin de La Tour

## From Bourgeois Idealism to “Green Radicalism”



Butow/SABA

**Anti-WTO demonstrators in Seattle last winter. Self-described anarchists joined with liberal activists in reformist appeals to “humanitarian” sentiments against “globalization.”**

are trans-class doctrines. That is, they appeal to all men of all social classes, including the “progressive” or “enlightened” elements of the propertied and ruling class, to carry out these principles which many of them claim to uphold—to practice what they preach.

That anarchism is really a form of and derives from radical democratic idealism is very clear in the career of the most historically important figure of the anarchist movement, the man who actually founded the movement, Mikhail Bakunin. While Bakunin is mostly known only as an anarchist, he was actually an anarchist only for the last decade of his career as a leftist radical, which lasted from the mid-1840s to his death in the mid-1870s. He began as a student radical at the University of Berlin, as a left Hegelian. Interest-

ingly enough, he and Friedrich Engels were sort of like chums, they were sort of the “big reds on campus.” They were part of a left Hegelian circle which called themselves “the Free.”

Bakunin came to prominence during the European bourgeois-democratic revolutions of 1848 as an exponent of what was called “democratic pan-Slavism,” which was a form of extreme left-wing national liberationism. At this point, all of the Slavic peoples (except for the Russians) were subjugated and oppressed by other peoples. The South Slavs—the Serbs and the Bulgars—were part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The western Slavs—the Czechs and the Slovaks—were part of the German-dominated Hapsburg Empire. Poland, which was the biggest Slavic country besides Russia, was divided at that time between the Hapsburg Empire, Prussia and the fellow Slavic empire of tsarist Russia.

Bakunin put out what he called an “Appeal to the Slavs,” to unite and liberate all of the Slavic peoples and establish a radical democratic federation of the Slavic peoples. This was not an appeal to the Slavic peasantry or the oppressed and exploited masses. It was literally an appeal to the Slavs, all of them. Engels subjected Bakunin’s manifesto to a scathing criticism. What’s significant is that he went beyond the specifics of the Slavic national question to the underlying world-view expressed in this appeal, which today still has much influence. Engels wrote:

“There is not a word about the actually existing obstacles to such a universal liberation, or about the very diverse degrees of civilization and the consequent equally diverse political needs of the individual peoples. The word ‘freedom’ replaces all that. There is not a word about the actual state of things, or, insofar as it does receive attention, it is described as absolutely reprehensible, arbitrarily established by ‘congresses of despots’ and ‘diplomats.’”

If you replace “congresses of despots” and “diplomats” with “multinational corporations,” this passage should sound

very familiar to you. To this bad reality is counterposed the alleged will of the people with its categorical imperative, the absolute demand for freedom. Engels goes on: “‘Justice,’ ‘humanity,’ ‘freedom,’ ‘equality,’ ‘fraternity,’ ‘independence’—so far we have found nothing in the pan-Slavist manifesto but these more or less ethical categories, which sound very fine, it is true, but *prove absolutely nothing* in historical and political questions. ‘Justice,’ ‘humanity,’ ‘freedom,’ etc. may demand this or that a thousand times over; but if the thing is impossible it does not take place and in spite of everything, remains an ‘empty fragment of a dream’” [emphasis in original].

I believe that this passage contains the crux of 90 percent of the discussions and arguments that we have with American radical youth today. In the name of justice and humanity, they call upon the World Bank to forgive the debts of poor countries, they call upon the Clinton administration to promote an international code of labor and environmental standards, they call upon NATO to liberate the Albanian Kosovars from the oppressive yoke of Serbia.

### Rousseau and “Human Nature”

The dominant intellectual influence on the left prior to Marx was Jean Jacques Rousseau, who summed up his political philosophy as “man is naturally good; it is only by institutions that men become evil.” This discourse on the origin and foundations of inequality among men was the single most important intellectual influence on generations of revolutionaries, from the Jacobins of the French Revolution through the various radicals of early 19th-century Europe to most of the “Red ’48ers” in the 1848 Revolution. The central premise of Rousseau is that there is in the human species a natural—not socially and historically conditioned but a natural—instinct for sympathy and empathy with the sufferings of other members of that species.

The most ambitious attempt to provide a sort of scientific substantiation for this view—which could be called “species solidarity”—was that of the anarchist Kropotkin, in a book called *Mutual Aid*, which was considered the authoritative statement of anarchist doctrine in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The first two chapters are devoted to mutual aid among animals, that is, non-human animals. To give you a flavor of the argument (I am not making this up; I am not that creative):

“As to the big Molucca crab (*Limulus*), I was struck (in 1882, at the Brighton Aquarium) with the extent of mutual assistance which these clumsy animals are capable of bestowing upon a comrade in case of need. One of them had fallen upon its back in a corner of the tank, and its heavy saucepan-like carapace prevented it from returning to its natural position.... Its comrades came to the rescue, and for one hour’s time I watched how they endeavoured to help their fellow-prisoner.”

Now I think, just by reading that, one can easily see the connection with Green radicalism.

The very close family resemblance between classical anarchism, especially in its Kropotkinite version, and Green radicalism is personified by the career of Murray Bookchin. In the 1960s and ’70s, Bookchin was the pre-eminent anarchist intellectual in the U.S. That is, his role in American left politics and the intelligentsia was very similar to that of Noam Chomsky today. In fact, Bookchin was even more aggressively anti-Marxist than Chomsky, because “Marxism-Leninism”



was then fashionable. But at some point, Bookchin shifted over to the more fashionable doctrine of Green radicalism, which he called social ecology. But he didn't change his worldview. It's the same worldview, just expressed slightly differently.

Implicit in all forms of Green radicalism is that all people should basically govern their social and political behavior by the perceived future interests of the human species. In other words, if you could convince people that automobiles are harmful to the environment and harmful to the future of humanity and other species, they'll presumably give up automobiles. It doesn't matter that modern industrial society is built around the automobile, that you can't get to work without it most of the time.

If man is naturally good, naturally empathetic, as Rousseau argued, how do we then get into the mess we are in? How come we get war, slavery, the conquest and subjugation of one people by another, class exploitation, torture, murder, the whole kit and caboodle? Well, Rousseau's answer is that this comes from the institution of private property, which was for Rousseau basically "a bad



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**Peter Kropotkin, foremost anarchist spokesman and theoretician of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.**

idea." In his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, he writes:

"The first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, thought of saying 'This is mine' and found people simple enough to believe him, was the true founder of civil society. How many crimes, wars, murders; how much misery and horror the human race would have been spared if someone had pulled up the stakes and filled in the ditch and cried out to his fellow men: 'Beware of listening to this impostor. You are lost if you forget that the fruits of the earth belong to everyone and that the earth itself belongs to no one!'"

And Rousseau goes on to attribute all malignant and ignoble emotions and attitudes to property and resulting inequality:

"Insatiable ambition, the thirst of raising their respective fortunes, not so much from real want as from the desire to surpass others, inspired all men with a vile propensity to injure one another, and with a secret jealousy, which is the more dangerous, as it puts on the mask of benevolence, to carry its point with greater security.... All these evils were the first effects of property, and the inseparable attendants of its growing inequality."

Those of you who are blessed or cursed with a Catholic school background, or are otherwise familiar with Christian doctrine, may immediately recognize a close similarity between Rousseau's conception of private property and the Augustinian doctrine of original sin. This is the point where paradise was lost, where man's natural innocence was lost, and where sin and evil enter the world of men. The parallel is actually quite exact, because Rousseau himself was not a revolutionary. He was not even a reformer. He was a historical pessimist. He was a moralistic critic of civilization. He considered that man in society had become so corrupted and so depraved that there was no hope for general moral regeneration.

But it sometimes happens that the ideas of powerful, original and unorthodox

thinkers, especially those who denounce the existing state of society, are radically reinterpreted by subsequent generations in light of their own very different experiences. And that's what happened to Rousseau during the French Revolution. Here was a revolution which in the space of a few years not only radically changed all of the political and social institutions but brought about a change in mass psychology that would have been inconceivable even a year or two before the revolution. So the leftist intellectuals at the time concluded that Rousseau had been too pessimistic. Man was not so corrupted and depraved; the moral regeneration of society was in fact possible through revolutionary action. Rousseau's historical pessimism was sort of inverted into a naive historical optimism, that the paradise that was lost with private property could instantaneously be regained.

The first work which contains a doctrine that is distinctly anarchist was written in 1793, the same year as the radical climax of the French Revolution under the Jacobin regime. It was written by an Englishman called William Godwin. It was called *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. And Godwin in this book advocated, in his words, "a well conceived form of society without government." Godwin was part of a circle of English radicals who were both profoundly influenced by the French Revolution and in turn became defenders of the French Revolution, propagandists for the ideals of the French Revolution, in the English-speaking world. The best-known representatives of this circle were Tom Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft, the pioneer advocate of women's rights. Interestingly, Mary Wollstonecraft married William Godwin. They had a daughter, also named Mary, who later married another famous English radical, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley is also famous in her own right, as the author of the novel *Frankenstein*.

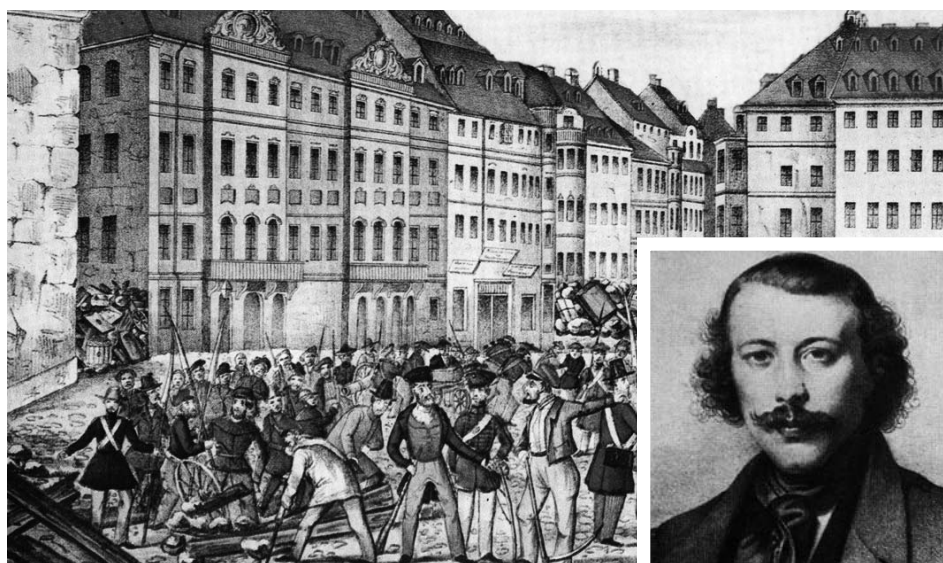
Godwin made it very clear that his conception of anarchism was simply a shifting of what Rousseau had placed in the distant past, in the Golden Age, into the immediate future. Thus he wrote:

"It was however by a very slight mistake that he missed the opposite opinion which it is the business of the present enquiry to establish. He only substituted as the topic of his eulogium, the period that preceded government and laws instead of the period that may possibly follow upon their abolition."

## Marxism vs. Anarchism

Now at this point I want to elaborate on an aspect of anarchism that is not generally appreciated, including among people who call themselves anarchists, because it shares a fundamental point of convergence with liberalism in opposition to Marxism. Anarchism really is a doctrine of class collaboration. In the first part of the anarchism series ("Marxism vs. Anarchism: The Origins of Anarchism," WV No. 640, 1 March 1996), I quoted from the then-Trotskyist Felix Morrow who explained that when the Spanish anarchists entered the capitalist Popular Front government during the Spanish Civil War of the late 1930s, at one level this seemed to be a violent violation of their principles, and many anarchists denounced them for it. But at a higher level, it was consistent with their principles, because they had always believed that following the revolution the capitalists too would undergo a moral regeneration and work for the betterment of humanity.

Bakunin today has a posthumous reputation as some kind of revolutionary wild man. Turn him loose and he's trying to overthrow the state and abolish it forever. But that reputation is undeserved. Most of Bakunin's career was actually spent in liberal and liberal-nationalist circles. In the late 1860s, there were two competing left-wing international organ-



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**May 1849 Dresden uprising (above). Mikhail Bakunin first gained prominence as a left-wing, pan-Slavic nationalist in the European democratic revolutions of 1848.**



History Today

izations. There was, of course, the International Workingmen's Association, the First International, dominated by Marx. But there was a rival, liberal body called the League for Peace and Freedom, which was led by liberal politicians and intellectuals like John Stuart Mill in England and the novelist Victor Hugo in France. At first, Bakunin didn't join the workers international, he joined the bourgeois-liberal international, and only when he couldn't convince the bourgeois liberals to embrace anarchism did he go over to the workers international.

But even more so than Bakunin, Kropotkin was very explicit in appealing to capitalists. And here the difference between anarchism and syndicalism actually is of some importance. In the 1890s, the anarchist movement split into two rival competing tendencies. Generally the syndicalists denounced the anarchists as woolly-headed idealists and ivory tower intellectuals. The American syndicalists said, "The anarchists deny the class struggle and we fight it." In turn, the anarchists condemned the syndicalists for what we later would call "economism," for reducing the noble goals of the anarchist revolution to the small change of trade-union struggle for higher wages and better working conditions. They denounced some anarcho-syndicalist leaders, not without justification, as aspiring trade-union bureaucrats, although the term was not yet in vogue. But the important point is that like the Marxists, the syndicalists maintained that consciousness was

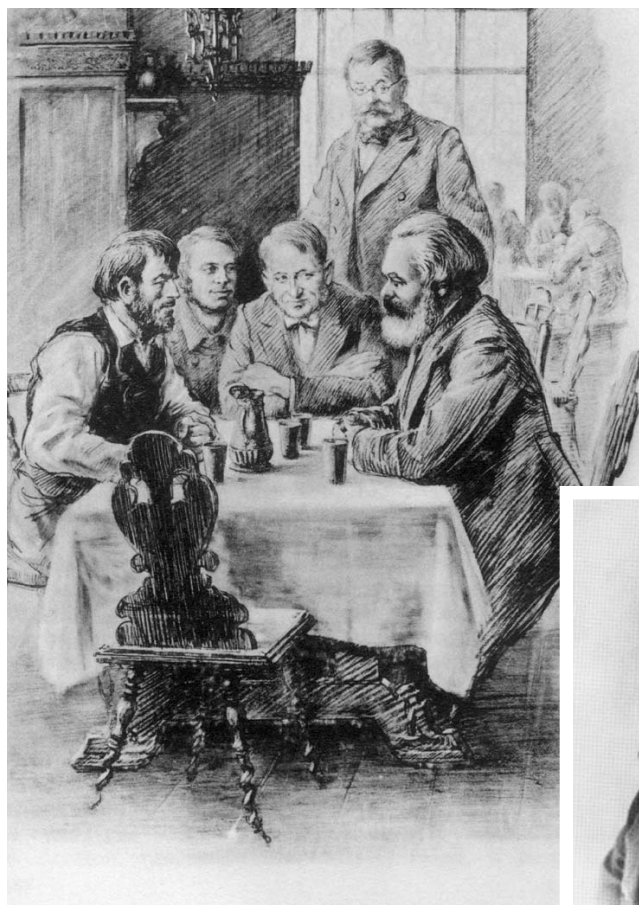
socially determined. They maintained that it was the workers, by their role in society and their experience, who would be uniquely attracted to and disposed to accept the program of anarcho-communism; they had an interest in this program. The capitalists, by their role in society, had become so selfish and egotistical that they were hostile to the program of anarcho-communism. And of course the classic anarchists, of which Kropotkin was the dominant figure, had to answer this challenge. So in *Mutual Aid* he writes:

"Men who have acquired wealth very often do not find in it the expected satisfaction.... The conscience of human solidarity begins to tell; and, although society life is so arranged as to stifle that feeling by thousands of artful means, it often gets the upper hand; and then they try to find an outcome for that deeply human need by giving their fortune; or their forces, to something which, in their opinion, will promote general welfare."

So as I said at the beginning of this talk, the youth who called upon the directors of the World Bank to forgive the debt of poor Third World countries were entirely consistent with the doctrines of Kropotkin, expressed through human solidarity.

Let's deal with another aspect of the question. In the Spartacist pamphlet "Enlightenment Rationalism and the Origins of Marxism," I noted that in some ways Rousseau and Adam Smith represented the poles of Enlightenment

*continued on page 10*



N.N. Zhukova

**Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (inset). Marx and Engels counterposed the revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat against capitalism to the class-collaborationist doctrines of anarchism.**

G. Lester



## Anarchism...

(continued from page 9)

thought. Adam Smith argued that social and economic inequality is a necessary overhead cost for technological progress, raising the general standards of living, increasing what he called *The Wealth of Nations*. Rousseau accepted that argument, but drew the reverse conclusion: equality and social harmony and communal values could exist only with a static and relatively primitive economy. Consistent with his entire doctrine, he maintained that man was happiest, indeed he was only happy, at the most primal level of economic existence:

"As long as men remained satisfied with their rustic huts; as long as they were content with clothes made of the skins of animals, sewn with thorns and fish bones; as long as they continued to consider feathers and shells as sufficient ornaments, and to paint their bodies different colors, to improve or ornament their bows and arrows, to fashion with sharp-edged stones...they lived free, healthy, honest and happy as much as their nature would admit, and continued to enjoy with each other all the pleasures of an independent intercourse."

Now, Marx maintained that such subjective attitudes as ambition, selfishness, envy of people who were wealthier or more successful were ultimately the product of economic scarcity. Rousseau inverted this. For Rousseau, economic scarcity derived from the fact that people wanted to be better than their fellows.

A conventional understanding of socialism and communism, of what motivates us, is that we are hostile to capitalism because of the extremes of economic and social inequality. There are people who work hard and are destitute, especially in but not limited to Third World countries. And then there are people who do nothing, who are strictly parasitic, and live in the lap of luxury. Well, certainly an important goal of communism is to eliminate that. But that is not the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal lies in a whole other sphere of human activity, the sphere outside of consumption, and it is precisely this sphere that requires a much higher level of labor productivity than exists even in the most advanced capitalism. In other words, if our goal were simply to provide everybody in this country with a decent standard of living, say, equivalent to \$80,000 or \$100,000 for a family of four, we could do that with the existing American economy just by a little rearranging. That is not what we're ultimately about. What we're ultimately about is providing all members of society, here and elsewhere, with the capacity to do creative work, what Marx called free or unalienated labor. We are not basically in the business of equality of consumption.

Now precisely because of this aspect, Marxism, the concept of communism, is fundamentally different from both the earlier socialists and the anarchists. For the pre-Marxian socialists, the ultimate goal was equality. The first revolutionary communist organization, derived in the last stages of the French Revolution, was called the "Conspiracy of Equals." If you ask an anarchist what his ultimate goal is, he would say "freedom." When Kropotkin formed a journal in England in the late 19th century, he called it *Freedom*. Although we recognize that

equality and freedom have value in themselves, ultimately for us these are a means to an end. What does equality mean under communism? It certainly doesn't mean that people have the same living standards, or consume or utilize the same material resources. Equality simply means equal access. There'll be a huge range of lifestyles, consuming very differently.

People will be free to do what they want. It's not merely that there won't be a coercive state, but most time will be what is now called "free time." The question for Marx was, how will people uti-

anarchists as such. We are interested in anarchist youth only because they are involved, even if wrong-headedly, in struggles on behalf of the oppressed and exploited. We are interested in the anarchist youth who are involved in the Mumia campaign and even in the "anti-globalization" campaign. In a number of West European countries, the anarchists or the anarchoids are sort of the most militant defenders of the rights of immigrants against the attacks of fascists and the government. Well, so are we.

So, presumably a lot of anarchists really want to overcome the vast differ-

tion to a classless, communist society.

Let me give you a concrete example. Parts of the Persian Gulf area have two-thirds of the world's oil reserves, and you can extract oil from this region at a mere fraction of the cost pretty much anywhere else. But let's say that you have a Bakunite world in which you have these self-governing regions in the oil-rich areas of the Persian Gulf. What's to prevent the inhabitants of these regions from taking advantage of their oil monopoly just like the Saudi monarchy and the oil companies do today and charging the rest of the world extortionate prices? Now of course the Bakunites never answer that question, but one can answer it from their logic. They would say, "After the anarchist revolution, everybody will undergo a moral regeneration. They will identify their interests themselves with the rest of humanity and therefore they will provide the oil which they extract, because of uneven natural resources, to the rest of the world, gratis."

At bottom, anarchism is the Rousseauian version of an essentially benevolent human nature and the "revolution" therefore is essentially close to religion. And in the U.S. today, there's a lot of religiosity in left circles. The revolution is basically seen as a change in subjectivity, and in institutions only insofar as they follow from that change in subjectivity, where people give up their individual selfishness and identify with the interests of humanity.

### The Workers State and Bureaucratism

The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party, made a very important point. He said that military strategy is based on attacking the weak points of your enemy and avoiding the strong points. In political and polemical struggle, you do just the opposite. You want to attack and polemicize against the strongest arguments of your opponent, presented by the most intelligent and coherent representatives. If you're writing a polemic against somebody, you don't single out some indefensible formulation which everybody knows they don't really mean. That's not going to convince them. Now, the strongest arguments for Bakunite anarchism are actually provided retrospectively by the phenomenon of Stalinism. This is Bakunin against Marx on the workers state:

"So the result is the control of the vast majority of the people by a privileged minority. But this minority, the Marxists say, will consist of workers. Yes, quite possibly of former workers, but, as soon as they have become the representatives or rulers of the people, *they cease to be workers* and will gaze down upon the whole world of the common workers from the eminence of 'statehood'; they will no longer represent the people, but only themselves and their 'claims' to govern the people. Anyone who can doubt this knows nothing of human nature."

Now wouldn't a typical American liberal see in this that Bakunin was predicting the rise of a Stalinist bureaucracy,



**Soldiers march in Moscow after October 1917 Revolution with banner reading "Communism." The Bolshevik Revolution won the best of the anarchists to communism.**

Novosti

lize that free time? Will they do it like they do now, which is mainly entertainment, sports, games, socializing, vegging out, hanging out, you know, not working? Marx envisioned most people spending their free time in "free labor," that is, creative, artistic, scientific or related work, which he described in this way:

"Really free labour, the composing of music for example, is at the same time damned serious and demands the greatest effort. The labour concerned with material production can only have this character if (1) it is of a social nature, (2) it has a scientific character and at the same time is general work, i.e. if it ceases to be human effort as a definite, trained natural force, gives up its purely natural, primitive aspects and becomes the activity of a subject controlling all the forces of nature in the production process."

Well, to control all the forces of nature in the productive process involves the expenditure of very considerable material resources. First, there is the question of acquiring the knowledge of the forces of nature. Consider the vast resources necessary to acquire a PhD in physics or chemistry or biology—not for the privileged few, but for anybody who wants to. Also, many spheres of scientific research require vast expenditures of material resources—space exploration, genetic engineering, robotics, paleontology, on and on. The point basically is that Marx's conception of communism is one in which all the progressive achievements of civilization are fully utilized, made accessible to all members of society and vastly expanded. It's a concept quite alien to the Rousseauian idea of some kind of primitive economic harmony or communal values.

### The Workers State and the Anarcho-Commune

I want to discuss a couple of aspects of Marx's conflict with Bakunin, or Bakuninist doctrine, which bear very much on our current work with anarcho-liberal-Green-radical youth. We are not interested in anarchist youth because they are

ence between the Third World and the First World. That is, they are opposed to and want to overcome the impoverishment of much of humanity, which is entirely consistent with anarchist doctrine as a goal. The problem is that it contradicts anarchist program and means. If you read, for example, Bakunin's *Revolutionary Catechism*, in which he spells out in great detail the organization of the future anarcho-communist society, it is based on extreme economic as well as political decentralization. You have these little local anarcho-communes which get together to form regional anarcho-communes, which are basically economically self-sufficient, though they may trade with one another. But the problem is, an anarcho-commune in upper Manhattan and one in a peasant village in India are going to be very different kinds of anarcho-communes. That's not equality. Freedom maybe, equality no. How do you get equality? Well, the one way you're going to get that is the Marxist program, which is an internationally planned, socialized economy with a central political government, at least during the transi-

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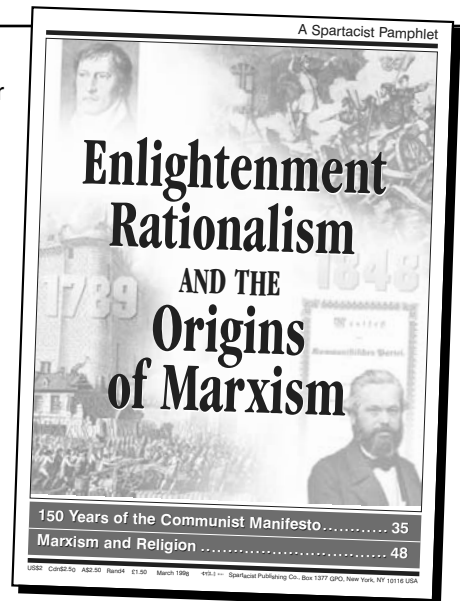
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which ruled in its own interest while claiming to be Marxist and to represent the interests of the working class? And in fact a number of left-wing writers who in general reject and oppose anarchism have argued that Bakunin on this question was more prescient, more realistic, less utopian than Marx, because he worried about the bureaucracy of a post-revolutionary society. How does one answer that argument?

When Bakunin asked, "Will perhaps the entire proletariat stand at the head of the government?" Marx replied, "In a trades union, for example, does the entire union form its executive committee?" But in point of fact, in the unions of Marx's day—and he was fully aware of this—the leaders did not represent the interests of the ranks. The only mass unions at the time when Marx said this were the British trade unions. The leaders were political liberals. They were openly pro-capitalist. Moreover, Marx just a few years earlier had engaged in a factional struggle against them in the First International. (Ironically, the liberal leaders of the unions blocked with the anarchists against Marx. So Bakunin was not in a position to denounce Marx on that score.

in order to have a workers revolution in the first place, the workers would have to have a much higher level of political consciousness and a different leadership. That is, as long as the British workers supported the openly pro-capitalist union leaders, supported the British Empire, there could be no workers revolution. So it's not that somehow you go from what exists to a workers state with no change in leadership and consciousness on the part of the working class. As long as the American working class more or less subscribes to the politics of AFL-CIO leader John Sweeney, there's not going to be a proletarian revolution in this country. So that's part of the answer.

The second part, which is more fundamental, is that Marx and Lenin, when they were talking about a workers state, were not talking about Soviet Russia in the early 1920s. They were talking about a workers state in an advanced capitalist country, an advanced industrial country. Moreover, they were talking about it in an international context in which proletarian revolution had triumphed in the major capitalist countries. Obviously there can be no "withering away" of the state even in an advanced capitalist country if you

**Seattle anti-WTO protest, 1999. Utopian idea that capitalism can simply be "resisted" by "the people" ignores basic class division of society and revolutionary role that the proletariat must play against U.S. imperialism.**

Reuters



bers of left-wing organizations who thought of themselves as reds. But they went into the union officialdom, and gradually they lost their belief in revolution and acquired certain material and social privileges.

I suppose the most extreme case would be South Africa, because there the existence of a labor bureaucracy is so recent and the result of such a rapid change in the political situation. Consider that 15 years ago all of the trade-union leaders and Communist Party government officials in South Africa were either in prison, underground or in exile. And if these people 15 years ago could have looked into the future and seen what they had become, they would be horrified. But the difference, especially in South Africa, between the life you can live as a union official and the life of a rank-and-file worker is vast.

Ultimately of course, as Marx and Engels wrote, the withering away of the state is premised on a rapid rise in the level of labor productivity, making it higher than the advanced capitalist countries.

## Anarchism and Stalinism

In reality, Stalinism as a doctrine is actually closer to Bakuninism than it is to Marxism. Stalin maintained that you could build socialism in one country, Russia, but at least he thought you could raise the level of productivity. Bakunin thought you could have anarcho-communism in a Russia that was basically on a primitive peasant base. In both cases there's a divorcing of what could be called social psychology from the economic basis. In other words, there's a denial of the fundamental premise of Marx that right cannot stand higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural level conditioned thereby. And that's the real answer. Ultimately the Stalinist bureaucracy is a product of the continued world domination of capitalism, which prevents the raising of the general level of productivity in deformed workers states, like China. The more intellectually honest anarchists actually recognize the

similarity between certain strands of Stalinism and Bakuninism, so that anarchist intellectual Paul Avrich argues that Maoism and Guevarism—which really maintain that socialism is basically a change in psychology in the masses with no relation to the level of production—were actually closer to Bakuninism than Marxism, and he was right.

If you read some of the old Stalinist propaganda about the "new Soviet man," it's very much consistent with the Bakuninist notion of a moral regeneration. The Marxist scholar Isaac Deutscher, for example, characterized the "socialist man" Stalin presented to the world as working 12 hours a day under conditions that no American worker would accept.

In his *Revolutionary Catechism*, Bakunin in many ways paints a very attractive society. But he maintained that society could exist, and was in fact even more likely to exist, in the most backward, rural regions of Europe—Italy and Russia. It is no coincidence that anarchism as a doctrine and a movement took hold in backward European countries like Spain and Italy; tsarist Russia, which never had a mass anarchist movement, produced some of the most influential anarchist thinkers.

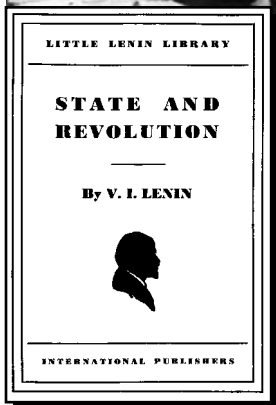
Bakunin was an advocate of, by the very nature of his doctrine, socialism in one country, or even in one region of one country. For Bakunin, consistent with the whole Rousseauian tradition, the main effect of the revolution was not a reorganization of production to a higher level but a change in the political consciousness, so that people identified their own personal interests with humanity in general.

Marxists, on the other hand, reject the spurious arguments of both the Stalinists and the anarchists that classless communism is simply the product of a psychological regeneration. We fight to overthrow the capitalist system in order to reorganize production so as to raise it to such a high level that scarcity will no longer exist. Only then can we lay the material basis for the emancipation of humanity from exploitation, war and poverty. ■



M.S. Nappelbaum

**Lenin during founding congress of the Communist International, March 1919. In opposition to nationalist dogmas of anarchism and Stalinism, communists fight for revolutionary internationalism. Lenin's *State and Revolution* explained that socialism can only be built in the context of international workers revolution.**



But that's *Realpolitik*, not ideas.)

You get the same apparent contradiction in Lenin. By the time you get to Lenin, you have mass workers parties as well as unions, but these are thoroughly bureaucratized. And in 1916, Lenin wrote *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and a central aspect of that book is an analysis of and attack on the pro-capitalist bureaucracy of the workers movement. But the next year, when he wrote *State and Revolution*, there was an implicit assumption that there would be no bureaucracy in a workers state after the overthrow of capitalism. Thus he writes:

"It is quite possible, after the overthrow of the capitalists and the bureaucrats, to proceed immediately, overnight, to replace them in the *control* over production and distribution, in the work of *keeping account* of labour and products, by the armed workers, by the whole of the armed population. (The question of control and accounting should not be confused with the question of the scientifically trained staff of engineers, agronomists and so on. These gentlemen are working today in obedience to the wishes of the capitalists, and will work even better tomorrow in obedience to the wishes of the armed workers.)"

So how does one account for this apparent contradiction? Why did Marx and Lenin recognize the role of bureaucracy in the workers organizations under capitalism but implicitly assume this would not be a problem in a workers state following the overthrow of capitalism?

First, Marx and Lenin recognized that

are involved in a cold and maybe hot war against another equally or more powerful capitalist state, like the U.S. So if we take power in Japan, believe me, the state is not going to wither away as long as a capitalist U.S. is there.

So again, one comes back to the fundamental question of economic scarcity. Why is there a labor bureaucracy, ultimately? Is it, as Bakunin would argue, because of a natural desire on the part of men to lord it over and dominate other men? Well, if that's true, that's an inconsistent argument even on his part, because then how do you get anarchism? No. Ultimately a labor bureaucracy has the same cause as classes in general. It arises from conditions of economic scarcity. As Leon Trotsky explained in his classic work on Stalinism, *The Revolution Betrayed*:

"The basis of bureaucratic rule is the poverty of society in objects of consumption, with the resulting struggle of each against all. Where there is enough goods in a store, the purchasers can come whenever they want to. When there is little goods, the purchasers are compelled to stand in line. When the lines are very long, it is necessary to appoint a policeman to keep order. Such is the starting point of the power of the Soviet bureaucracy. It 'knows' who is to get something and who has to wait."

Now in the U.S. today, the labor bureaucracy is pretty much petty-bourgeois careerists from the get-go. But in the 1930s and '40s in this country, and in other countries today, many of the labor bureaucrats were people who began as militant young workers, mem-

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# Democrats, Republicans...

(continued from page 1)

programs benefiting minorities and the poor, America’s rulers are quite aware that they are sitting on a powder keg of discontent. Yet even as they vastly augment the forces of state repression, they are concerned to maintain illusions in the “democracy” of capitalist class rule in the U.S.

Less than half the electorate now votes in the presidential elections—an all-time low—while, for the first time since before the Civil War, third parties got more than 10 percent of the votes in the last two elections. Bourgeois Green Party candidate Ralph Nader seeks to capitalize on this disaffection by offering a refurbished version of Democratic Party liberalism which doesn’t even make a nod to black people. Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy and the middle-class black Democrats are hitting the hustings to get out the vote for Gore.

Fully 30 percent of DNC delegates were trade unionists. The ties to the Democratic Party forged by the labor bureaucrats, which bind the working class to the class enemy, are a strategic obstacle to pursuing the class struggle against capital.



**Left:** Ralph Nader, protectionist China-basher. **Right:** Teamsters head James Hoffa Jr. carries sign against trade relations with China at anti-Communist protest in Washington, April 12.

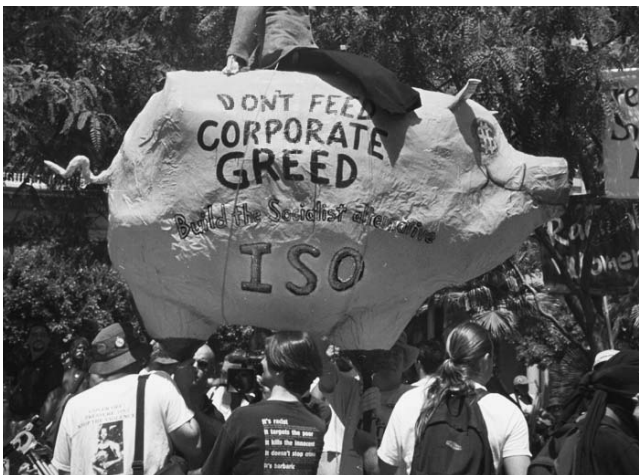
For the working class to be mobilized in its own interests and in the interests of all the oppressed, it must stand independent of the capitalist class, its parties and its state apparatus. Break with the Democrats—Forge a workers party to fight for a workers government!

## Jackson, Sharpton: Front Men for White Racist Rulers

The Democrats’ overt appeals to the Republican “mainstream” risk even further alienating organized labor, blacks and liberal intellectuals. Yet it is the trade unionists manning the campaign phone banks and the black politicians and preachers who are critical to a Democratic victory. One delegate, a retired auto worker, shrugged: “Can we get our people to turn out on election day? I don’t know.”

The black Democrats are working overtime to bring out the vote for Gore/Lieberman come November. The Congressional Black Caucus was trotted out for a photo-op with Lieberman. The second day of the convention was devoted to “liberals’ night,” as Ted Kennedy joined with Jesse Jackson in spouting off about a “new frontier” and “diversity” (i.e., tokenism). Meanwhile, Al Sharpton is working the streets to hustle the black vote, organizing an August 26 demonstration in Washington, D.C. on the anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington. While nominally a protest against police brutality, racial profiling and the death penalty, the real message of Sharpton’s march is on his mobilizing flyer: “Vote in November to ensure justice for all!”

The politics of “lesser evilism” perpetuate the racist hellhole that American society is for black people. For all the talk from the DNC platform about an “economic miracle” and unprecedented prosperity, by every measure—education, housing, job prospects, wages for those who can get work—the mass of the black population is materially worse off than before the struggles of the 1960s.



**Reformists push bourgeois electoral politics: ISO at L.A. convention protest promotes “anti-corporate” façade of capitalist Greens’ Nader, shill for Democrats; Communist Party in Philadelphia stumps for Gore with “fight the right” line.**

While the level of black unemployment has dropped, most of those jobs are subsistence-level, minimum-wage positions with no benefits and no future. Meanwhile, the axing of welfare and Medicaid benefits has consigned millions of women and children to even deeper destitution, homelessness, disease and malnutrition. The percentage of black people covered by any form of medical insurance has continued to decline in recent years. And for every young black male attending an elite university, dozens are serving time in prison. The U.S. prison population—

of racist American capitalism. There is no road to eliminating the special oppression of black people other than the working-class conquest of power, and there will be no proletarian revolution to end class exploitation unless the working class actively takes up the fight for black rights.

“The working class has the numbers, the organization and the power to win all those things that the ruling class appropriates for itself—health care, education, decent housing, abortion rights. What is lacking is the kind of leadership necessary to fight—a leadership of the unions that doesn’t bow down to the bosses’ laws, parties and state agencies, a workers party that doesn’t respect the prop-

why so many black leaders, centrally the Democratic Party politicians, today in effect accept de facto segregation. That’s because genuine social and economic integration would require a massive redistribution of wealth, a total and radical restructuring of the American economy which can only come about with the destruction of the capitalist system. There is no other possible way to provide for quality, integrated housing and medical care, to ensure that children in the inner-city ghettos receive an education in any sense comparable to that available in affluent, largely white suburbs.

The liberal-led civil rights movement of the 1960s could do nothing to fundamentally change the economic and social conditions of black people. Demands for voting rights, an end to Jim Crow segregation and legal equality could be achieved under capitalist democracy. But the forcible subjugation and segregation of the black population at the bottom of this society cannot be eradicated through new civil rights laws.

While younger blacks may view the 1963 March on Washington as the culmination of the militant struggle for civil rights, the reality was very different. The fight for black equality profoundly shook the American bourgeois order. However, the liberal black leadership represented by Martin Luther King sought to contain the civil rights struggles within the framework of “respectable” bourgeois politics, in particular tying the movement to the Democratic Party Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

This was especially clear during the 1963 march, which was marked by growing tensions between the younger black militants and the King leadership and his sponsors in the white liberal establishment, particularly the Walter Reuther wing of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. John Lewis, then head of the militant Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), drafted a speech denouncing the Democratic Party, saying “the party of Kennedy is the party of Eastland.” Mississippi’s Dixiecrat senator. March leaders, particularly Reuther and black social-democratic union leader A. Philip Randolph, pressured Lewis into deleting this section of the speech.

With millions taking to the streets and battling the racist cops from Birmingham, Alabama to Los Angeles and Detroit, the fight for black equality intersected growing popular opposition to U.S. imperialism’s dirty colonial war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. However, the ruling class was able to restabilize society through a combination of murderous repression, particularly directed at the Black Panther Party and other radicals, and the co-optation of a layer of black leaders and activists. Today, the core of the black wing of the Democratic Party—from King’s one-time lieutenant Jesse Jackson to former SNCC leader John Lewis—derives from this period.

It is these black Democrats, based on the middle class, who help tie the mass of black workers and poor to the capitalist system of exploitation, impoverishment and racial oppression. Yet the entire network of government programs upon which the black middle class is largely based—as bureaucrats in various federal,



WV Photos



Teamster

heavily black and Hispanic—has now reached two million.

Fed up with being pushed around in the one-sided class war against labor and the poor, seething with anger over rampant cop terror like the death-squad-style killing of Amadou Diallo, thousands came out last October 23 in response to the Partisan Defense Committee call to stop the KKK terrorists from riding in New York City. Running point for the entire state Democratic Party machine and working in collusion with Republican mayor Giuliani, Sharpton pulled out all the stops to try and prevent this mass labor/black mobilization. But the Democrats, who went so far as to offer a platform for the Klan in a grotesque demonstration of “tolerance,” failed. On that day, the working people and minorities of NYC repudiated the Democrats and ensured that *they* would prevail. As we wrote in our WV supplement (1 November 1999) titled “Labor/Black Mobilization Rides KKK Out of NYC”:

“The successful labor/black mobilization brought to life the connection between labor’s fight and the fight for black freedom. Black oppression is the cornerstone

erty ‘rights’ of the bourgeoisie. We need a workers party that fights for a workers government to rip the means of production from the capitalist class and institute a planned socialist economy that operates not for the profit of a few greedy exploiters but for the working people who produce the wealth of society. That is the kind of workers party that we communists of the Spartacist League are fighting to build.”

## Bankrupt Liberalism vs. the Fight for Black Freedom

Official black leaders no longer even talk about reforms which would radically improve the conditions of the black masses. A recent op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (6 August) by liberal black academic Orlando Patterson criticizes the Congressional Black Caucus and a number of black Democratic mayors for being “committed to a conception of inclusiveness that eschews genuine social and cultural integration.” He notes, “While most African-Americans and the middle classes generally still say they favor integration, some prominent black political leaders have given up on this strategy.”

However, Patterson does not explain



**UAW president Stephen Yokich (left) fêtes Democrat Gore at August 11 union rally.**

state and local government agencies—has been steadily under bipartisan attack. This is a direct product of the sharp shift to the right throughout the bourgeois political spectrum. As we explained when the Republicans moved to impeach Clinton over the Monica Lewinsky affair:

“The shape of bourgeois politics in America was fundamentally altered in the wake of the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The ‘New Deal’ Democratic Party alliance between labor, Northern liberals and the Southern segregationists cemented by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the 1930s was blown apart. Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater—who voted against the Civil Rights Act—authored the Republican Party’s ‘Southern Strategy,’ persuading racist Southern Democrats—the Dixiecrats—to defect. For the past 35 years, every presidential election has centered on race, with the Democrats desperately working to reverse the perception that they were beholden to ‘special interests’ like blacks and labor.”

—WV No. 704, 8 January 1999

Central to Clinton’s electoral strategy in 1992 was the Democrats’ own “Southern strategy,” aimed at recapturing some of the racist white vote which had gone Republican during the Reagan-Bush years of the 1980s.

As opposed to the dead end of support to “lesser evil” Democrats and the reactionary black nationalism of Louis Farrakhan, we stand for the perspective of *revolutionary integrationism*, fighting against every instance of discrimination and for the full integration of black people into an *egalitarian socialist society*. Black workers are a strategic component of the working class, in whose hands lies the power to break the chains of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression. Subjected to both class and racial oppression, black workers will be impelled to play a leading role in the socialist revolution in this country.

## Reformist Tails on Democratic Donkey

It is telling that even before the L.A. convention, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) decided not to endorse Gore, saying he “represents a centrist, neo-liberal politics.” Michael Harrington and other DSA founders were key Democratic Party advisers and authored the “war on poverty” programs which were used to co-opt a layer of black activists in the ’60s. Now the DSA contends, “It is inaccurate to describe DSA as primarily working within the ‘left-wing’ of the Democratic Party.” This is not because the DSA has moved to the left, but because the “New” Democratic leaders no longer want a social-democratic “left wing” in *their* party.

As communists, we seek to direct increasing disillusionment with bourgeois electoral politics into the struggle for working-class political independence from the parties of the capitalist class enemy. Our purpose is to make the working class conscious of its historic interest in fighting to abolish this entire racist profit system through proletarian socialist revolution. As a tactic in building the revolutionary workers party necessary to achieve this aim we will on occasion run

**Up to 10,000 turned out for PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization that rode Klan out of NYC last October 23, in opposition to Democrats’ grotesque call for “tolerance” for racist killers.**



in elections—as we have in the past—in order to bring our political program to new and wider audiences and to mobilize support for extraparlimentary social struggle in defense of labor and against racial oppression.

The reformist left, occasional lip service to socialism notwithstanding, offers a program of palliatives of capitalist exploitation and oppression. The reformists’ whole purpose is to reinforce the consummate shell game of bourgeois electoral politics, which means reinforcing the grip of the Democratic Party on working people and minorities. The vehicle some fake-socialist groups have seized on for doing this in the current elections is Ralph Nader’s Green Party campaign. While not receiving the big corporate bucks that fund the two main

into “Socialists for Nader.” The Solidarity outfit, which is also endorsing Dave McReynolds of the moribund, anti-communist Socialist Party, lauds Nader for “a powerful critique of the strangulation of democracy by corporate control of the political process.” The International Socialist Organization (ISO) enthuses, “A Left Wing Challenge to the Two Mainstream Parties.”

Only a few months ago, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* was filled with implicitly pro-Democratic Party “fight the right” attacks on Bush and paeans to Democratic politicians like Jesse Jackson Jr. who call for a moratorium on the death penalty. *Socialist Worker* (12 May) lambasted Nader for joining with right-winger Pat Buchanan in China-bashing, adding that “Nader has shied away

United Mine Workers with financial corruption. In 1972, he turned his attention to the powerful Teamsters union, helping set up an opposition group called PROD (Professional Drivers Council for Safety and Health) which served as a coordinating center for lawsuits against the union. PROD later fused with the ISO-supported Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), which wrote the blueprint for the government’s takeover of the Teamsters union in the late 1980s. Besides advising the government how best to take control of the unions, in 1984 Nader did his own union-busting, locking out the staff at his *Multinational Monitor* magazine after they tried to organize a union to improve their working conditions.

What the ISO means by Nader’s “pro-labor” stance is that he joins with the pro-imperialist AFL-CIO tops in anti-Communist China-bashing aimed at fomenting capitalist counterrevolution to destroy the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. In his support for trade protectionism, Nader pushes the most vile anti-Mexican chauvinism, ranting: “You are driving along in Maine or Minnesota or Illinois, looking in the rearview mirror and there’s a big Mexican truck bearing down on you with a driver who doesn’t have to meet the same standards...that U.S. truck drivers have to meet” (*Chicago Tribune*, 25 June). This diatribe is of a piece with Nader’s hostility to the struggle against the special oppression of black people, despite his proclaimed opposition to the death penalty and the “war on drugs.” During his 1996 presidential bid, Nader sneered that “to focus on discriminatory injustice”—i.e., racism—“you tend to divide the country” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 October 1996).

As for the Green Party’s environmentalism, this can equally well appeal to the right as to the left, seeing “over-consumption” and technology as the problem. At bottom, the Greens seek to hide the squalor of capitalist exploitation from the sensitive eyes of the middle class. Starting with the neo-Malthusian argument that there isn’t enough to go around, the logic is to decide who loses out. That logic was behind a 1998 proposal from a wing of the Sierra Club for immigration restrictions as a way to put an “end to U.S. population growth.” In Germany, Rudolph Bahro, a founder of the Green Party there, called for a “Green Adolf” to lead the Germans to “ecological salvation” after breaking with the Greens in 1985. In Britain, a wing of the fascist National Front issues the cry, “Racial preservation is green!”

## For a Workers Government!

In their own way, many poor and working people recognize that there is little to choose from between the Democrats and Republicans. In effect, they vote against both parties by not voting at all or by casting a protest vote. But while the Democratic and Republican leaders ritually complain about low voter turnout, the interests of the ruling class are also served by political passivity, apathy and even cynicism among the masses.

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**USWA Local 8888 waged four-month strike against Virginia’s Newport News shipyard in heart of racist, “open shop” South. Labor rights and black rights go hand in hand!**

capitalist parties, the Green Party is nevertheless a capitalist party, albeit with a petty-bourgeois base. Nader openly says that his aim is to bring out the vote for Democratic Congressional candidates. In short, Nader is a capitalist candidate in his own right and a shill for the Democrats.

Socialist Alternative (formerly Labor Militant) has virtually liquidated itself

from class issues” and that his “position on other issues is far from consistently progressive.” But now the ISO has discovered Nader’s “unexpected popularity,” particularly among the liberals it appeals to who feel homeless in the Democratic Party.

To cover for its craven opportunism, the ISO’s *International Socialist Review* (August/September 2000) claims that Nader’s campaign offers “the opportunity to fight for class solutions with a small but serious pro-labor alternative,” the justification echoed in one way or another by Nader’s other “socialist” cheerleaders. In fact, like Nader, the ISO sees his campaign as a tactic to pressure the Democrats, observing that “the Democrats are losing workers’ and students’ votes that might cost them the election” and arguing that as a result of his campaign the Democratic Party “will be pressured to move to the left to win elections or it will precipitate deeper splits that may allow for the formation of a new party independent of the corporations.”

Far from being a “pro-labor alternative,” Nader has a notorious history of serving the capitalist government against the unions (something the ISO might not notice because it has a similar history). In 1969, Nader testified before a Senate hearing to charge the leadership of the



**Martin Luther King Jr., A. Philip Randolph and other liberal civil rights leaders, seen here with President Kennedy following 1963 March on Washington, chained black struggle to Democratic Party.**



# Near East...

(continued from page 6)

Wafdists and the DMNL. Nasser looked to the DMNL to print the Free Officers' leaflets and perform other tasks. Meanwhile, the Free Officers provided military support to the Muslim Brotherhood for its "liberation battalions" in the Canal Zone. Central in this was Nasser's comrade-in-arms (and future Egyptian president) Anwar Sadat, who in a 1952 newspaper interview praised Adolf Hitler as a great patriot who worked for the good of his people.

In July 1952, the Free Officers seized power, sweeping away the despised monarchy. The DMNL supported the military coup as an expression of the "national democratic movement." The following month, when textile workers in Kafr Al-Dawwar near Alexandria went on strike, believing their leaders' assurances that the new regime was on their side, Nasser threw down the gauntlet to the organized workers movement. Two

strike leaders were arrested, condemned to death for "a grave crime against the state" and hanged on the factory grounds. The Communists were banned, strikes were outlawed and a corporatist regime of labor control was set up in which the trade unions were placed under effective control by the military regime.

Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956 and the subsequent invasion of Egypt by Britain, France and Israel was a milestone in the postwar history of the Near East. Washington's successful strong-arming of Britain and France to withdraw their troops confirmed U.S. imperialism as the top dog in the region. The U.S. was then intent on cohering the Baghdad Pact (CENTO), a regional anti-Soviet military alliance akin to NATO in West Europe. Standing at the head of a campaign against adherence by Arab governments to the Baghdad Pact, Nasser shifted to a pro-Soviet posture, while continuing his anti-Communist repression. Less than one month before nationalization of the Suez Canal, a military tribunal sentenced 40 Communists to

**French troops occupy Port Said as Britain, France and Israel invade Egypt over Nasser's nationalization of Suez Canal, 1956.**

Grimm/Magnum



prison terms of hard labor.

The establishment of closer relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt led to a Soviet reappraisal of Nasser, whose July 1952 coup was now described as an "anti-imperialist revolution." The various Communist groups in Egypt, united by their enthusiastic support for Nasser, moved to fuse their forces. In their desire to ingratiate themselves with the rising tide of Nasser's pan-Arab nationalism, the unified Communist Party of Egypt stipulated that Jews were prohibited from playing a leadership role in the party.

With the Egyptian Communists firmly under Nasser's thumb, the nationalists in power in Syria sought a merger with Egypt in order to stifle the growing influence of the Syrian Communist Party. As in Egypt, the Syrian Communists tied themselves politically to bourgeois nationalists who showed themselves to be the workers' worst enemies. The fiercely anti-Communist Syrian Ba'ath Party in power had adopted a "left" stance. Resisting Western pressure to join the Baghdad Pact, it made overtures to the Soviet Union and welcomed the Communists into the ruling coalition.

The Syrian Communist Party continued to grow spectacularly, leading the three trade-union federations by 1957. While objecting to the proposed union with Egypt, the Syrian CP continued

to hail Nasser as the "leader of the National Front of Arab Liberation." But the formation of the "United Arab Republic" under Nasser's leadership in 1958 led to the suppression of the powerful Syrian CP, then the largest in the Near East, and the arrest of its leaders and hundreds of members.

The next year, Nasser turned on his Egyptian Communist supporters with a vengeance, rounding up almost every known leftist in the country. The Communists in prison were humiliated, tortured and pressured to repudiate their political ideas. Yet even as their comrades were beaten to death or left to die for lack of medical aid, the Communists maintained their political support for Nasser.

During its diplomatic alliance with Nasser's military bonapartist regime, the Kremlin Stalinists showered Nasser's capitalist Egypt with more anti-aircraft missiles and other military equipment than they gave to North Vietnam as the Vietnamese workers and peasants waged a heroic—and ultimately victorious—struggle against U.S. imperialism. Not surprisingly, the bourgeois-nationalist Nasser ultimately turned against his Soviet patrons. In the 1970s, his hand-picked successor, Anwar Sadat, brought Egypt fully into the fold of American imperialism.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Paris Match

**Demonstrators acclaim Egyptian military strongman Gamal Abdel Nasser, hailed by Stalinists as leader of "anti-imperialist" struggle.**

# Democrats, Republicans...

(continued from page 13)

Certainly, many people rightly view government officials and legislators as corrupt and unprincipled, as political prostitutes on the corporate payroll. But as long as they perceive that nothing can be done about this, such an attitude does not threaten or challenge the capitalist order.

Every reform and gain for workers, minorities and women in this country—industrial unionism, Social Security and Medicare, public health, formal equality for black people, the right to abortion—has been won through hard-fought strug-

gles, and the role of the liberals and social democrats was to keep those struggles within the confines of electoral reformism. The New Deal reforms were instituted to head off the convulsive labor struggles of the 1930s that formed the industrial unions and shook the American bourgeois order. The 1960s "war on poverty" was aimed at buying social peace as the ghettos exploded across the U.S. Today, having achieved its decades-long goal in the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state, and having battered the trade unions at home for more than two decades, the American ruling class envisions a return to the unrestrained capitalism of the 1920s—trade unions decimated, no social safety

net, no regulatory agencies.

It is necessary to defend Social Security, public education, welfare and all social programs against the vicious government rollback schemes. But our goal is not simply to maintain the existing conditions of the working class and poor against the efforts of the capitalists to bring about an even greater degree of immiseration. The capitalist system itself must be overthrown and replaced by a planned socialist economy. For that, it is necessary to forge a workers party.

The best workers party in history was the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, which led the workers of Russia to power in the October Revolution. That party was composed of the vanguard layers of the proletariat and those revolutionary intellectuals who came over to the side of the workers. It steeled the working masses for the seizure of state power through political combat against the labor bureaucrats and opportunist "socialists" of the day. It was built by leading hard-fought strike battles against the employers and by acting as a tribune of the people in fighting for democratic rights for women, Jews and oppressed nationalities against the Russian tsarist autocracy. It used bourgeois elections as a platform for revolutionary propaganda and sent its elected representatives into the tsarist parliament (Duma) as spokesmen against the political parties of the capitalists and landowners.

Lenin's Bolsheviks also combatted illusions that the workers could come to power through parliamentary means. They fought for workers rule through elected workers councils (soviets), an aim which was realized by the October Revo-

lution. Like the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy in this country which undermines the gains that were won through hard class struggle, the Stalinist bureaucracy which came to power in 1924 betrayed the gains of the Russian Revolution and hijacked the exercise of political power by the workers. The Stalinists pursued class collaboration with the imperialist rulers, not the revolutionary internationalist program that animated Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. Ultimately, this led to the destruction of the Soviet Union by the forces of imperialism and domestic counterrevolution in 1991-92.

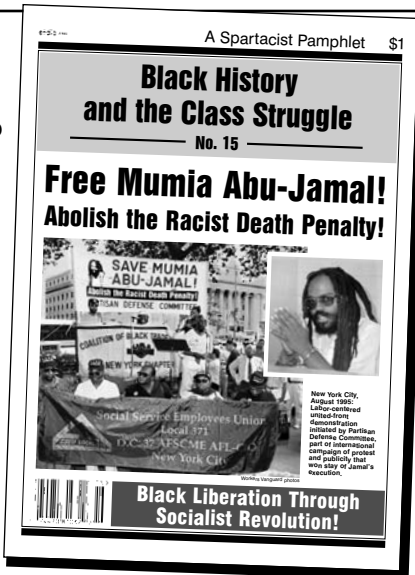
The Spartacist League is fighting to build a Bolshevik Party like that of Lenin and Trotsky to fight for new October Revolutions—a multiracial revolutionary workers party that will champion the fight for black freedom, linking the power of labor to the anger of the ghettos and barrios and wielding that power in defense of the rights of immigrants, women, gays and all the oppressed. In a socialist society, the surplus value which currently goes into the coffers of Wall Street tycoons would be used to rebuild the country's decaying infrastructure (such as mass transit); to provide free medical care and free, quality, racially integrated education for all; to provide decent, affordable housing for all; to help raise the living standards of the impoverished masses of the Third World. But to secure all these things requires breaking the power of the bourgeoisie and claiming the tremendous wealth that is now controlled by a tiny handful to be used in the interests of society as a whole. Forward to a workers revolution and a socialist egalitarian society internationally! ■

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# Verizon...

(continued from page 16)

decidedly not the policy of the CWA and IBEW bureaucrats.

Instead of calling a solid national strike of *all* Verizon workers to organize the wireless sector, the CWA and IBEW tops looked to contractual promises by management, including a “neutrality” clause supposedly assuring company non-interference in unionization efforts. According to the *Wall Street Journal* (21 August), “Verizon flatly rejected that approach.” Small wonder. The corporate owners are *never* neutral when it comes to their profits. The CWA *has* a “Neutrality and Consent Election” provision in its 1998 contract with AT&T. The company’s consistent flouting of that provision provoked a strike vote earlier this year over unfair labor practices.

The flying picket squads which have shut down NYC facilities in the past two days have not been seen in the American labor movement in years. The mass industrial unions were built in the 1930s using just such tactics, along with plant occupations, secondary labor boycotts, etc.—not by the mechanism of signing cards or scheduling NLRB elections. The labor officialdom’s faith in company “neutrality”—and in government agencies and “neutral arbitrators” to enforce such contractual promises—epitomizes its program of class collaboration, which sees “allies” in the government and political parties of the capitalist enemy. This policy goes all the way back to the 1935 Wagner Act, passed under Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “New Deal” administration, which was designed to subordinate union militancy to government labor boards and contain the tumultuous class battles that built the unions.

The corollary to this policy is the bureaucracy’s political strategy of seeking to elect “friend of labor” Democrats who, they argue, will enact laws in the interests of the workers. This lie has been

# ILA Victory...

(continued from page 16)

Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan has now announced plans to stage a race-hate provocation in North Charleston on September 2, only two days before the Labor Day picnic which in recent years has drawn thousands of black and working people. This would be the first Klan gathering in the area in years, a deadly threat to Charleston’s black population and all trade unionists. A massive outpouring of labor/black power would make short shrift of the Klan lynchers who wrap themselves in the Confederate flag of slavery.

As the Partisan Defense Committee, which is associated with the Spartacist League, wrote in a letter protesting the cop rampage against the ILA in January: “The cops who were mobilized from across the state to enforce the Nordana shipping bosses’ efforts to bust the ILA union brought home what this flag represents—the ‘open shop’ enforced through racist terror of the cops and their KKK auxiliaries.” Only three days before that attack, a Local 1422 contingent joined with 50,000 others in the huge protest against the Confederate flag atop the state Capitol in Columbia.

Any struggle to organize unions in the South will run head-on into the entrenched racism and extralegal terror which has long served to keep the South union-free and greatly profitable for the capitalist exploiters. That means directly confronting the cops and courts of the capitalist state and the capitalist politicians who enforce anti-union “right to work” laws, like Clinton did as governor of Arkansas. The support of the labor bureaucracy—from AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney and the ILA tops on down—to the Democratic Party serves to perpetuate violent racist oppression and brutal exploitation. It was Democratic governor Jim Hodges, elected with sub-

stantial labor support, along with Democratic Charleston mayor Joseph Riley, who endorsed the “compromise” which moved the Confederate battle flag from the top of the Capitol to an even more prominent location at the *front* of the building! And it was a segregationist Democratic Party state government that hoisted the Confederate flag atop the Capitol in the first place in 1962, in racist defiance of the mass civil rights struggles.

The entire history of Southern long-shore labor, going back to the first years after the smashing of the slavocracy in the Civil War, demonstrates that struggles for black rights and union rights are inseparable. It is necessary to fight for a new, class-struggle leadership of labor committed to the cause of black freedom and political independence from all the capitalist parties. Union-busting, racial oppression and the increasing immiseration of workers and the poor will only be eradicated through a victorious socialist revolution which smashes the capitalist state and places the multiracial working class in power. Break with the Democrats—For a workers party to fight for a workers government!

We urge all our readers to join the PDC and the many unions—most notably the West Coast ILWU, which donated \$105,000—that have already contributed to the Dockworkers Defense Fund. The courageous strikers arrested in January remain under virtual house arrest, subjected to a 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. curfew—allowed out only to work or attend union meetings. Their defense should become a rallying cry for unions throughout South Carolina, the entire South and across the country, linking this with the fight to organize unions and combat racial oppression, which is a cornerstone of the racist capitalist system. Send donations to: Dockworkers Defense Fund, c/o Robert J. Ford, Treasurer, 910 Morrison Drive, Charleston, SC 29403.■

key to chaining labor’s power. The CWA is one of the biggest contributors to Democrat Gore’s election campaign—along with Verizon itself. When 10,000 workers turned out for a strike rally in New York City on August 10, CWA officials paraded one Democratic Party politician after another onto the speakers’ platform while lauding the racist, union-busting cops patrolling the demonstration as an example of “good management”! The union tops also welcomed a photo-op appearance by New York Senatorial candidate Hillary Clinton on the picket lines. Last December, this “friend of labor” endorsed New York State’s strikebreaking Taylor Law when it was used to ban NYC transit workers not only from striking but even from using the word “strike”!

The Democratic and Republican parties represent the interests of the *capitalists*. The government is nothing other than the executive committee of the whole capitalist class. The job of the cops, courts and military which are at the core of the capitalist state is to protect the profits and rule of the American bourgeoisie. At least nine strikers were hit by scab management cars on the picket lines. But the cops went after striking workers, arresting two dozen in the course of 15 days. All of labor must demand: ***Drop all the charges! No victimizations—Full amnesty for all strikers!***

Labor can rely only on its numbers, organization and class solidarity. Summing up this class-struggle understanding, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon wrote at the time of a huge West Coast maritime strike in 1936: “A good deal is said about strike ‘strategy’—and that has its uses within certain clearly defined limits—but when you get down to cases this strike, like every other strike, is simply a bullheaded struggle between two forces whose interests are in constant and irreconcilable conflict. The partnership of capital and labor is a lie” (“The Maritime Strike,” November 1936, in *Notebook of an Agitator* [1958]). The Verizon workers demonstrated

their determination to use their power. Mass pickets in Philadelphia on the first day of the strike shut out management scabs. Today’s *New York Times* sneered, “When phone workers go on strike, life pretty much goes on. That is because modern networks are largely automated.” A 1981 strike by telephone workers in British Columbia, Canada showed how to beat that system. Instead of marching out, they occupied every major installation around the clock and held the company’s property hostage. If Verizon workers had occupied the buildings, they could have won millions of allies among working people with a flick of the switch, by providing free phone service.

But to carry out tactics like that, you need a union leadership that does not bow to the bosses’ property “rights” and the capitalist state’s anti-labor laws. When a Pennsylvania court imposed an injunction limiting picket lines to four strikers walking at least ten feet apart, with no other striker less than 200 feet away, the bureaucracy simply bowed to this strike-breaking measure, hiding behind it to avoid mobilizing mass, militant pickets to ensure no scab got in.

The union tops did not even bring out all unionized workers at Verizon, rushing to settle contracts in Kentucky, Indiana and elsewhere. There is a clear and crying need for ***industry-wide union organizing*** efforts and for ***one industrial union*** for all telecommunications workers.

The floodgates for attacks on unionized telephone workers were opened by the government-ordered “divestiture” of the AT&T monopoly in the early 1980s. Coming in the aftermath of a national strike in 1983, the breakup of “Ma Bell” was aimed at dismembering the union and eliminating over 200,000 union jobs. Since that time, telecommunications has seen a heavy influx of capital investment, with a mad race to recombine into new monopolies. The primary responsibility for the proliferation of non-union work lies with the union bureaucracy. Lying prostrate before the attacks on the unions, they did less than nothing to organize the raft of low-wage firms spawned in this period especially in the South.

Strikers told WV teams on the picket lines how they are threatened by the widespread transfer of union jobs to low-wage units of Verizon, particularly in its southern tier. Organizing the South means taking head-on the issue of racist discrimination—on and off the job—which has

# Iraq...

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backhanded support to the call for UN sanctions (or, in the case of the wretched Communist Party, openly supporting sanctions). The International Socialist Organization (ISO) initially declared that “in the case of the blockade and in the event of an actual war, we are on the side of Iraq” (*Socialist Worker* [U.S.], October 1990). But the ISO pointedly refused to call for the defense of Iraq against U.S. attack, deeming such a call a “sectarian error” because it would be unpopular. And at the outset of the war, the ISO scrapped its paper opposition to sanctions in order to endorse a 26 January 1991 “Campaign for Peace” march which ***explicitly called for*** UN sanctions as an “alternative” to war (see “ISO in the Antiwar Movement,” WV No. 520, 15 February 1991).

The Workers World Party (WWP) and Socialist Action (SA) also helped build the red-white-and-blue “sanctions not war” movement by organizing antiwar protests whose featured speakers called for sanctions. In September 1990, SA in Berkeley and the WWP in New York organized public meetings featuring, respectively, liberal “peace” activist Daniel Ellsberg and Ramsey Clark (the Democratic Party attorney general during the Vietnam War and the bloody COINTEL-PRO domestic war against the Black Panther Party). These liberal imperialist “doves” called for sanctions instead of war to force an Iraqi withdrawal from

long been wielded as a weapon to keep black people “in their place” and unions out, and rallying the black population behind labor against the cops and company goons and their KKK auxiliaries. The fight against racist discrimination is also key to forging one industrial union, which can only come about by breaking down the deep craft divisions—reinforced by racist and sexist bigotry—that separate higher-paid, overwhelmingly white male technicians from operators and clerks, largely minority women.

The CWA bureaucracy stands out as the starkest example of a labor misleadership that equates the interests of the working class with those of the racist imperialist rulers. The CWA was forged as a real union from a number of company unions only as the result of a hard-fought strike in the late 1940s. But the union misleaders have always remained loyal to the interests of the company and the American bourgeoisie as a whole. The CWA officialdom served for decades in the forefront of the AFL-CIO’s collusion with the CIA in building anti-communist “labor” fronts for U.S. imperialism around the world. Founding CWA president Joseph Beirne was instrumental in the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), which aided bloody death squad terror against leftists and union militants from Chile to El Salvador.

Defending management prerogatives, a Verizon spokesman told the *New York Times* (15 August): “This is about the workings of capitalism.” This capitalist mouthpiece baldly stated a basic truth: this society is divided between two hostile classes, the workers who are forced to sell their labor power in order to survive and the capitalists who reap fabulous profits from exploiting that labor. As we wrote following the 1998 Bell Atlantic strike (WV No. 695, 28 August 1998):

“The situation desperately cries out for a new class-struggle leadership of the labor movement, one rooted in the understanding that labor must be mobilized independently of the capitalist exploiters and their political parties—Democratic and Republican. Even so elementary a task as organizing the unorganized requires a leadership which, through such sharp class battles, can educate the working class in the understanding of its social power and its interests in fighting for the cause of black freedom and in defense of immigrant rights. Out of such struggles will come the proletarian leaders of a revolutionary workers party committed to the expropriation of the capitalist rulers through socialist revolution.”■

Kuwait, fully agreeing with Washington’s *aims* while favoring other *means*. But sanctions are enforced by a military blockade, itself an act of war, and are backed up by the threat—and reality—of military attack. Like the U.S./British terror bombing, the economic sanctions against Iraq aim to inflict suffering and death on the civilian population as a way of pressuring the country’s rulers to toe the line.

By helping to build support for the sanctions, the phony “socialists” share responsibility, to the extent their limited influence allows, for their deadly consequences, even if they oppose sanctions today. These fake leftists sow the reformist illusion that American imperialism can be pressured to adopt a more “humanitarian” posture. As we declared in December 1998 as the imperialists escalated their terror-bombing campaign (see “Defend Iraq! Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!” WV No. 704, 8 January 1999):

“The death and destruction being wreaked upon the people of Iraq right now show what imperialism is all about, a rapacious system based on the exploitation, subjugation and murder of the workers and semicolonial masses in order to expand the profits of a handful of filthy rich capitalists. “This system cannot be ‘reformed,’ as liberals and reformist ‘socialists’ would have it. It cannot be pressured into being more peaceful and humane.... Imperialism is, as Russian Bolshevik V.I. Lenin said, the highest stage of capitalism. And as Lenin’s Bolsheviks showed in leading the October Revolution of 1917, it can and must be defeated through workers revolution.”■

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Verizon Strike Rattles Wall Street

AUGUST 22—As we go to press, nearly half of the 87,000 workers who walked out against Verizon in 12 states from Virginia to Maine on August 6 remain on strike. The Communications Workers of America (CWA) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) reached a tentative settlement in the company's northern division two days ago and ordered its members there back to work, without even a vote on the contract. Teams of "flying squadrons" from Pennsylvania in Verizon's Mid-Atlantic division continue to hit facilities in the Northeast. In New York City, hundreds of workers are refusing to cross their picket lines.

A central issue in the Verizon strike was organizing the burgeoning non-union sector of the workforce. Faced with the prospect of low-wage, dead-end jobs with no security and no medical insurance, some 40 million unorganized workers in the U.S. today say they want a union as compared to half that number in 1984. The strike by Verizon workers to reverse the massive inroads on union power in telecommunications has been closely watched by workers around the country. It has also been very closely monitored by the bourgeoisie, which spends a billion dollars a year at least on keeping out unions and is particularly concerned about a strike in this high-tech industry that is crucial to the operations of banking and finance capital. The *New York Times* (21 August) was forced to admit that the strike showed that "organized labor still has a place in the New Economy."

Verizon was formed earlier this summer through a merger of Bell Atlantic

### For a Class-Struggle Fight to Organize the Unorganized!



Shannon Stapleton

**CWA Local 1106 pickets NYC Verizon facility in Queens. Solid strike was undermined by union tops' class-collaborationist strategy.**

and GTE, along with takeovers of a British wireless company and a non-union Internet provider. Its fastest-growing division—wireless—is virtually all non-union, with only **46 union members** in a workforce of 32,000. The Verizon

bosses—and the other telecommunications giants—have billions in profit riding on keeping unions out of the booming wireless and Internet data businesses. Non-union workers at Verizon make some \$10,000 a year less than

union members.

The strikers' determination was also fired by the hellish working conditions at the company. A worker in Woburn, Massachusetts who wants to be unionized said she was "tired of being treated like a second-class citizen." But even unionized workers are subject to the kind of totalitarian management practices which made the old Ma Bell monopoly notorious: up to 20 hours a week forced overtime, uprooting of workers and their families through forced transfers from one city to another, grueling working conditions. Service reps are allowed only two seconds between calls. One striker in New York City said, "These people will treat you like a slave, if you give in to them."

Taken aback by the union membership's determination *not* to give in, Verizon was forced to grant a number of concessions on mandatory overtime hours and unionized job categories. The company did not get the right to virtually unlimited transfers it wanted, but the proposed transfer rate of 0.7 percent of workers annually is still nearly three times higher than under the old contract (*Reuters*, 21 August). And the unions made some concessions on seniority. Mainly, the unions won a "card check" procedure that will allow organizing new locations simply by signing up 55 percent of the workers without going through the labyrinth of NLRB elections. This agreement covers only one-quarter of the non-union wireless workforce at Verizon. But to translate even this into a real drive to organize the unorganized requires a program of class struggle. And that is

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## Charleston, South Carolina

## ILA Victory Brings in New Union Members

At their annual Labor Day rally and picnic this year, Charleston, South Carolina longshoremen will be celebrating a major victory against union-busting attacks by the employers and the Democratic Party state and city govern-

ments. This past spring, International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Local 1422 beat back a five-month attempt by the Nordana Line and the Charleston Port Authority to use a non-union outfit to unload their ships. Beginning in May,

Nordana agreed to use only longshoremen hired out of the union hall at prevailing union wages and conditions, in line with the ILA master contract.

This victory was secured through a bitter struggle last January, as picketing longshoremen were confronted by some 600 cops—mobilized from police forces across the state—who fired tear gas, shock grenades and sand-filled projectiles at the workers (see "Charleston ILA Battles Racist Union-Busting Assault," WV No. 728, 28 January). Local 1422 president Kenneth Riley told WV that the support of the International Transport Workers' Federation was also crucial, as dockers in Spain, Australia and Nordana's home port in Denmark vowed not to handle scab cargo. Like all labor victories, this was hard-won: eight ILA members were arrested, five of whom face up to five years in prison on trumped-up "felony riot" charges. All of labor must demand: **Drop all charges against the ILA longshoremen!**

The capitalists aimed their fire at the ILA because it is a bulwark of black labor

power and a beacon to working people and the black masses in the region. In turn, Local 1422's victory was an inspiration to workers throughout this state in which barely 4 percent of the workforce is organized. Riley told WV: "I cannot begin to tell you the number of calls we have gotten since this incident, of groups of working people that want to organize.... We have public workers, warehouse workers, workers in the building supply industry." Fed up with grueling overtime and lousy wages, over 100 crane and equipment operators and other Port Authority workers recently joined the union. Riley observed that Local 1422's successful struggle has "served as a catalyst in this state to get folks fired up about unions and get other unions interested in organizing again."

This victory shows the potential for the massive unionization drive needed across the racist, "open shop" South. The forces arrayed against integrated labor struggle in the South include the racist, labor-hating Ku Klux Klan. Ominously, the

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Mic Smith/Post and Courier

**Battle on the waterfront: Charleston ILA Local 1422 prevailed against union-busting after facing down attack by hundreds of cops in January.**

## Down With the Confederate Flag of Slavery! Organize the South!