

NATO Allies Seethe over “Axis of Evil” Diatribe

U.S. Nuclear Madmen on a Rampage

U.S. Imperialists Hands Off Iraq!

MARCH 18—Only days before Vice President Richard Cheney departed for a Near East tour aimed at lining up Arab support for an invasion of Iraq, international headlines were dominated by a new Pentagon report outlining “contingency plans” for a possible nuclear first strike. Among the potential targets specified in the “Nuclear Posture Review” is Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, one of the three countries branded as part of an “axis of evil” by George W. Bush in his State of the Union address in late January.

Ludicrously invoking the World War II Germany-Japan-Italy Axis, Bush conjured up an “axis” of two small, mutually hostile Near Eastern capitalist states, Iraq and Iran, and the North Korean deformed workers state. He ranted that these were “the world’s most dangerous regimes,” which “threaten us with the world’s most dangerous weapons.” In fact, about the only thing the three countries have in common is that they do *not* have nuclear weapons but are deemed insubordinate by America’s rulers; that’s what qualifies them as “rogue states.” But U.S. imperialism, truly the world’s most dangerous regime, does have nuclear weapons—many times more than enough to blow up the whole world.

While the U.S. rails against putative “weapons of mass destruction” in the hands of the Iraqi regime, Israel (which has its own nuclear arsenal) is currently using the very real weapons supplied by its American quartermaster to wreak mass destruction against the Palestinian Arab people. With consummate cynicism, on the eve of Cheney’s trip Washington shuttered the green light it had given Israeli leader Ariel Sharon to indiscriminately slaughter Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and announced that U.S. “peace” envoy Anthony Zinni would be returning to the region. In the week between that announcement and Zinni’s arrival, Sharon unleashed the bloodiest offensive yet against the 18-month-long *Intifada*. Israeli troops and tanks stormed into crowded refugee camps and towns, virtually flattening entire areas, killing dozens a day and rounding up every Palestinian man they could grab in door-to-door raids reminiscent of Gestapo sweeps through the ghettos of East Europe. The Zionist storm-troopers even imprinted ID numbers on the arms of Palestinian captives.



AP

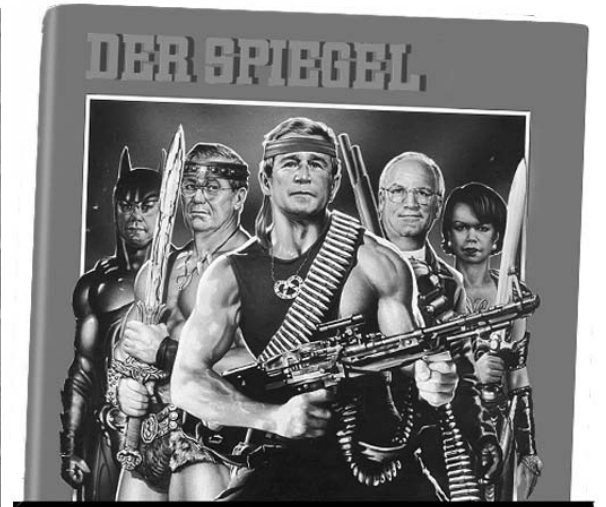
There is an urgent need for international protest action drawing on the power of the proletariat, from the heavily Arab and black auto workers in the Detroit area to the multiethnic industrial working class of France with its strategic Maghreb (North African) component, to demand: *Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of all the Occupied Territories now!*

Not surprisingly, Cheney’s efforts to strong-arm “friendly” Muslim countries have met with little visible success, with even loyal U.S. partners like Mubarak’s Egypt, the Saudi monarchy and NATO bulwark Turkey opposing an attack on Iraq for fear it would destabilize the entire Near East. Though gratified by Bush’s latest “peace” moves in Israel, all the major European powers but for the slavishly pro-U.S. Blair Labour government in Britain (the only European stop on Cheney’s tour) likewise oppose an

invasion of Iraq.

Since the end of the 1991 Gulf War, the U.S. imperialists—including the Democratic Clinton administration—have been relentlessly pummeling the Iraqi population with bombing sorties and missile assaults. Some 1.5 million people, mainly children and the elderly, have died as a result of the starvation blockade imposed under the aegis of the United Nations in 1990. Last year, Washington used its veto power in the UN Security Council to block at least half of the food and medical imports Iraq was allowed under the UN sanctions’ “oil for food” provision.

Now, in “phase two” of their “global war on terrorism,” the White House cabal are intent on “finishing the job” they began under Bush Sr. in 1991, when they slaughtered tens of thousands of Iraqis. According to the London *Guardian* (14 February), the Pentagon is preparing for a ground assault involving up to 200,000



German news magazine lashes out at “The Bush Warriors.”
Left: South Koreans protest Bush visit to Seoul in February.

U.S. troops. Installing a pliant regime in Baghdad will not be as easy as overthrowing the Taliban. The anti-Saddam Iraqi National Congress is dismissed even by its CIA patrons as a bunch of incompetent losers with no popular support. But with or without NATO support or Arab “coalition” partners, Washington seems bound and determined to smash Saddam Hussein.

The international working class has a vital interest in the *military defense of Iraq* in the face of an American attack, while not giving an iota of political support to the anti-working-class regime of Saddam Hussein. A victory for American militarism anywhere will mean further death and destruction around the world, and further misery for working people and minorities in the U.S. *Down with the starvation blockade! U.S. hands off Iraq!*

Down With U.S. Imperialists’ “National Unity”!

The Bush gang came to power with a minority of the popular vote, determined nevertheless to screw the ghetto poor, immigrants and labor and to enrich their cronies, like Enron. Internationally, they wanted mainly to tighten the military squeeze on the People’s Republic of China, to further the drive for capitalist counterrevolution there. But with the indiscriminate terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, Bush and his cohorts got a lock on power. Riding a tide of flag-waving “national unity” unseen in decades, the Republican administration—with overwhelming Democratic support—declared an indefinite “war on terror” against all perceived enemies, pushing through a massive assault on civil liberties at home and lashing out at Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as “phase one” of its war abroad.

Its easy win over backward, impoverished Afghanistan stimulated the appetites of the government for further military

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AFP

Buildings reduced to rubble in 1999 U.S. bombing of Iraq under Democrat Clinton. Now Bush threatens new “Desert Slaughter.”



NYC Transit

Union Jobs at Union Wages for “Workfare” Laborers!

In December, Bill Clinton’s vow to “end welfare as we know it” was cruelly visited upon some 30,000 New York City residents whose meager benefits were cut off as they reached the five-year time limit imposed by his 1996 “welfare reform” law. Many of the welfare recipients had been forced into the slave-labor “Work Experience Program” (WEP), or “workfare,” where they toiled for city agencies in return for their benefits. The sop that Clinton’s “reform” would lead to real jobs was always a lie. But now the desperately impoverished welfare recipients have been cut off at a time when even many minimum-wage jobs have disappeared due to the economic recession.

With the last shreds of any social “safety net” eliminated, the multitude being thrown off welfare face eviction, starvation, sickness and death. At welfare offices around the city, signs referring to the five-year limit taunt people with messages like “Your Clock Is Ticking.” The capitalist rulers’ war against the poor can be gauged by the fact that by 2000, fully one-third of the city’s residents were living below the poverty level. Conditions continue to get worse, with homeless shelters turning away record numbers of people.

The U.S. economy was already in a nose-dive well before the September 11 criminal attack on the World Trade Center added tens of thousands to the unemployment lines. The “war on terror” that has rained death and destruction on impoverished Afghanistan is also a drive to regiment the working class at home. The capitalists want to “rebuild New York City” on the backs of workers, immigrants and black people, who are called on to “sacrifice” in the name of “national unity.” Fanning the flames of patriotic bigotry, the racist rulers are carrying out an anti-immigrant witchhunt whose ultimate aim is to further drive down the wages and living standards of the entire working class.

NYC mayor Bloomberg is now demanding 20 percent cuts in city agency budgets, threatening the heavily minority public employees unions with further job cuts and lower wages. Schools and libraries are on the chopping block, and even the recycling program that allows the homeless to collect five-cent deposits on cans and bottles is being eliminated. It’s time to fight back!

When the Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 bureaucracy, then led by Willie James, hatched a sellout contract in 1996 providing for nearly 600 transit cleaning jobs to be slashed and



Franco/NY Times

NYC “workfare” laborer cleaning subway, job formerly done by unionized worker. Defense of ghetto poor is integral to defense of unions themselves.

replaced by WEP laborers, we wrote in “NYC Transit ‘Workfare’ Deal: Enslaving the Poor, Busting the Unions” (WV No. 652, 27 September 1996):

“What is required is a fight for *jobs for all*—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay—and full cost-of-living escalator clauses in union contracts. New York needs a *massive program of public works at union wages*—for quality, integrated housing and schools, for free quality health care for all, for massive reconstruction of roads, bridges and tunnels, for everything we need for a decent life. It is necessary to demand *equal pay for equal work*. The city wants to bring in hundreds of poor people to clean the filthy subway stations? Fine. They should be hired at *union wages with full union protection!* The TWU should lead a fight to *organize the unorganized!*”

“Workfare” and Union-Busting

It was obvious from the get-go that “workfare” was a union-busting move to replace thousands of unionized jobs with cheap labor. City University students on welfare and people in work training programs were forced to abandon their studies and training and enroll in “workfare.” In the Parks Department, whose regular staff has been cut by nearly two-thirds over the past 15 years, “workfare” laborers outnumbered unionized employees three to one by 1999. Out of 4,400 WEP workers who have reported for assignments in the transit system, some 1,000 were assigned to clean subway trains

and platforms. Often the avenue to better-paying, skilled positions for women and for younger black and immigrant workers, unionized cleaners jobs were cut by a whopping 22 percent between 1995 and 1999 even as ridership boomed.

The WEP cleaners, having been told that after performing their work they could be “processed for hire,” were informed in November that the Transit Authority (TA) had imposed a hiring freeze due to impending budget cuts. In the Parks Department, on December 31 more than 3,500 former welfare recipients were laid off from government-subsidized jobs (which, although unionized, paid less than \$10 per hour). In addition, 1,200 people on “workfare” who were about to be thrown off the rolls were told they would be denied the Parks jobs they had been promised. Instead, they were referred to a subcontractor paying \$1.43 per hour less for the very same work.

As we wrote in our article on the transit “workfare” sellout: “This betrayal by the Local 100 tops is not only a vicious attack on overwhelmingly minority wel-

fare recipients but is a dagger pointed straight at the heart of the TWU—and all NYC municipal unions.” The imposition of “workfare” helped soften up the TWU for the pivotal 1999 contract fight. Transit workers were poised to strike but were shackled by the widely despised Local 100 bureaucracy under James, as well as by the “New Directions” (ND) group under Roger Toussaint that has since taken office. Mass meetings of thousands of workers voted to strike in defiance of court injunctions that criminalized even uttering the word “strike.” But both wings of the bureaucracy worked to enforce the government’s anti-strike dictates to the letter, with ND calling to extend contract negotiations indefinitely. During his election campaign against James, Toussaint assured transit bosses that ND wasn’t “strike happy.”

Since the TWU tops rolled over in that contract battle, TA management has been walking all over the workforce, exemplified by the racist abuse and firing of union cleaners at Bronx and upper Manhattan stations two years ago (who eventually won their jobs back). Already hit by increased random drug testing, transit workers face a myriad of imminent attacks, from productivity drives to token booth closings and the expansion of one-person train operation (OPTO), a deadly danger to workers and riders alike.

Meanwhile, “workfare” crews are forced to endure the kind of miserable working conditions that unions fought to end years ago. Mostly black and Hispanic women, they do the dirtiest cleaning jobs with no protection from health and safety hazards. They have to use dangerous chemicals and dispose of hazardous materials like syringes without even the minimal training that union cleaners receive. Describing a WEP worker who “became the Coney Island terminal’s designated cleaner,” the *New York Times* (17 December 2001) wrote, “He was called to dispose of bodily waste in subway cars, to heave garbage from the dank station below the tracks, to scour an employee bathroom that he was not allowed to use.” Those on WEP get no sick leave, no vacation, no holidays, no pension—only welfare benefits that cost the city \$1.80 per

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WV Photo

Mass TWU strike rally, December 1999. Local 100 tops knuckled under to government anti-strike injunctions, paving way for further anti-union attacks.

Spartacist League/SYC Forum

Capitalist Rulers’ Attack on Welfare Targets Women, Blacks, Immigrants

Women’s Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Saturday, March 30, 5 p.m.

University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)
Circle Center (CCC), Room 509, 750 S. Halsted St.

CHICAGO

For more information: (312) 563-0441

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

Mass Protests Shake Argentina

Saturday, March 23, 7:30 p.m.

Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor Street West (one block west of Spadina)

TORONTO

For more information: (416) 593-4138

Young Spartacus

From Korea Through the Vietnam War

The U.S. Left and the “American Century”

We print below the third part of an educational on the American left given over two days by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour to a gathering of Spartacus Youth Club members and youth from throughout the International Communist League in New York last summer. The first two parts were published in WV Nos. 773 and 775 (25 January and 22 February).

In retrospect, the year 1965 marks a watershed in the history of the American left in the period from the Korean War through the end of the Vietnam War. In February of that year, Lyndon Johnson ordered U.S. warplanes to bomb North Vietnam for the first time. This provoked the first major antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C. organized by the Students for a Democratic Society, which was then not that widely known.

A few months later, the arrest of a black motorist in the Watts ghetto of L.A. sparked the biggest civil conflagration in recent American history. In early 1965, it was still possible for black civil rights militants to consider themselves revolutionaries, in the vanguard of the black struggle, using the tactics of nonviolent resistance. After Watts that was no longer possible. Thus, American society in general, and the American left in particular, was very different at the end of 1965 than at its beginning.

To understand the political significance of Watts, we have to backtrack a little and consider the civil rights movement in the North. In the early '60s, an effort was made to extend the civil rights movement from the South to the North. The main organization involved in this effort was the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). In 1963-64, for example, there were a couple of boycotts of public schools in Harlem and other black neighborhoods in New York City, principally demanding the integration of the city's school system.

However, to speak of a civil rights movement in the North is actually a misnomer. The main demands of this move-

Part Three: The Rise and Decline of “Revolutionary” Black Nationalism

ment were overcoming de facto—not legalized—segregated schools and housing, eliminating poverty and mass unemployment in the ghettos and ending racist police brutality. These demands go beyond bourgeois-democratic rights.

The concentration of blacks in impoverished inner-city ghettos in the North was the result of the atomized working of the American capitalist economy. Even if realtors could have been compelled by law to sell homes in affluent white suburbs to black families from Harlem or Chicago's South Side, how many black families could afford to buy such homes? In effect, the civil rights movement in the North was asking for the radical restructuring of the American economy and a massive redistribution of wealth, something the white American ruling class was *not* going to do.

The civil rights movement in the South could and did succeed in achieving its narrowly defined aims. Slowly and unevenly, blacks in the South acquired democratic rights and freedoms that they did not previously have. As a consequence, Martin Luther King Jr. and the Baptist preachers maintained their political authority over the Southern black populace.

The North was a whole different ballgame. The civil rights movement in the North did not and, by its very nature, could not improve the conditions of the black masses. Consequently, civil rights agitation generated a rapidly rising level of frustrated expectations, especially among lumpenized black youth, which exploded in what came to be called the ghetto rebellions of the mid-late '60s—Harlem, Watts, Chicago, Newark, Detroit, Washington, D.C. At the time, in “Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom,” we noted:

“For the last three summers ghettos across the country have been rocked by elemental, spontaneous, non-political upheavals against the prevailing property relations and against the forces of the state which protect these relations.... As the struggle against the police expands, the black street-fighters turn on the merchants and shopkeepers, the visible representatives of the oppressive class society, and smash whatever cannot be carried off. Yet despite the vast energies expended and the casualties suffered, these outbreaks have changed nothing. This is a reflection of the urgent need for organizations of real struggle, which can organize and direct these energies toward conscious political objectives. It is the duty of a revolutionary organization to intervene where possible to give these outbursts political direction.”

—Spartacist No. 10,
May-June 1967

Although Harlem in 1964 was the first of the ghetto rebellions, it was Watts the following year that had a decisive political impact on the civil rights movement. Under great pressure from the Johnson White House and white liberal establishment, King not only condemned the black protesters but endorsed their murderous repression at the hands of the LAPD. Watts thus cost King whatever moral and political authority he still had—and he had some—among young black radicals.

The Northern ghetto rebellions opened up a new and very wide gulf between the right and left wings of the civil rights movement, one which was not easily bridged through compromise. You could

support the police repression of the rebellious black youth, or you could defend the black street-fighters against the cops. Neutrality was not a viable option. In Mississippi, Stokely Carmichael and King could and did collaborate in opposing institutionalized racism. But in Watts, Harlem and the Chicago South Side, they were on opposite sides of the barricades.

To better understand the dynamics of the civil rights movement in 1965-66, I'll use an analogy from sports. The young civil rights militants, mainly college-educated intellectuals, were jogging along moving to the left of where they had started. Then, all of a sudden, this mass of black ghetto youth races past them. So they start running all out to catch up and again place themselves at the head of the black struggle.

Furor Over the “Black Power” Slogan

In the spring-summer of 1966, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael, publicized the slogan of “Black Power,” which infuriated and was intended to infuriate the Northern liberal establishment and official civil rights leadership. The slogan polarized the civil rights movement and became the target of liberal as well as right-wing racist reaction.

There was a significant difference within our own tendency as to how to respond to the furor over the “Black Power” slogan. This difference is documented in two pieces—“Black Power and the Fascists” and “Black Power—Class Power”—reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised): “What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism.” Due to problems in publishing a regular *Spartacist*, the comrades in the California Bay Area, under the leadership of Geoff White, put out their own newsletter-type publication called *Spartacist West*. We were less centralized in those days so that the line in *Spartacist West* didn't necessarily express the line of the national leadership as codified in prior motions. Apparently, the Bay Area local was not all that centralized either.

As it turned out, our first public comment on the “Black Power” slogan was a piece in the August 1966 *Spartacist West* written by one of our leading young comrades at the time, named Chris. He wrote:

“The black workers must seek allies among the rest of the working class. To do this, they must drop the slogan Black Power...because as a slogan for struggle it says nothing to workers of other races about the oppression—and the interests—that black and white have in common.”

This piece also put forward the especially bad argument that the fascists had “rallied the racism of thousands of whites in reaction to Black Power.” We do *not* deter-



Wide World



SPARTACIST SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT MAY-JUNE 1967

BLACK AND RED— Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom

I. INTRODUCTION

The struggle of the Negro people for freedom and equality has been the most dynamic struggle going on in the United States in the past ten years. It has taken place in the context of, and has been conditioned by, the general movement of the organized labor movement.

of their living standards by the inflationary pressure generated by the war on a booming economy, and to their routine to fight for real gains. Black workers, bearing an even greater disproportionate share of the burden of the war, would be the most militant and could for greater struggle.

Chicago, 1968:
Spartacists fought to win growing militant left wing of civil rights movement to class-struggle program of revolutionary integrationism.

Spartacist

mine our political line and slogans so as not to offend backward workers.

Geoff White objected to and opposed the line of the piece by Chris and wrote a corrective for the next *Spartacist West*. He argued that the slogan of “Black Power” expressed a significant leftward shift in the civil rights movement under the pressure of the impoverished black masses. For most black militants, the slogan was primarily an expression of hostility to the pro-Democratic Party liberalism of King and a declaration of solidarity with the rebellious ghetto youth in Harlem, Watts and elsewhere. White recognized, as we all did, that the slogan “can be used by petty bourgeois black nationalist elements who want to slice the social cake along color rather than class lines and to promote reactionary color mysticism.” However, he argued that, at that particular conjuncture, we should use the slogan of “Black Power” and invest it with a revolutionary proletarian programmatic content. This position was accepted and implemented by the rest of the organization.

There is an important general lesson to draw from this episode on the internal functioning of a Leninist vanguard party. Geoff White was a rightist within the tendency. In 1968, he would resign from the Spartacist League and openly repudiate Marxism. The immediate cause of his resignation was his support to the petty-bourgeois radical Peace and Freedom Party. His line that we should seek to appropriate rather than oppose the “Black Power” slogan was consistent with his general softness toward “the movement,” as it was called. But, in this case, he was right. This was the smart, as well as principled, initial response to the “Black Power” slogan. So when a known party rightist makes a proposal or advances a position on a new development, do not automatically dismiss it as an expression of opportunism toward petty-bourgeois radicalism, social democracy or whatever. Judge every question on its own objective merits.

Returning to the civil rights movement, for a year or so we used the slogan of “Black Power” according to the line of Geoff White’s article. For example, when the Newark ghetto exploded in the summer of 1967, Jim Robertson wrote a short—very short—agitational leaflet titled “Organize Black Power!” that is included in the first bound volume of *Spartacist*.

Incidentally, about this time Hollywood reissued the popular and quite left-wing film *Spartacus* starring Kirk Douglas. This movie was about the great slave revolt in ancient Rome from which our name originally derives, via Rosa Luxemburg. The film helped us a bit because it made our name less obscure. When we told black youth we were from the Spartacist League, they would say, “Oh, you’re the Kirk Douglas group. You guys

kicked the asses of the Romans.” To which we’d respond, “Yeah, that’s our historic tradition.”

The Influence of Black Nationalism

By 1968, the “Black Power” slogan had become universally identified with black nationalism which, in turn, had become hegemonic among young black radicals. In October 1966, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was founded in Oakland, California. The next year Stokely Carmichael published an anti-Marxist tract under the title *Black Power*. One consequence of the hegemony of black nationalism is that by 1968 we lost our half dozen or so black members—all of them. We did not recruit any blacks again until late 1971-early ’72 in the aftermath of the split in the Black Panthers.

I earlier indicated the main negative factors that contributed to the rise of black nationalism. First and foremost was the absence of any significant left opposition in the labor movement opposing the racist practices of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy and racial oppression in American society at large. From the standpoint of a black college student or lumpenized ghetto youth, the white population was one racist mass. As one of the black separatists in SNCC put it: there were “in reality 180 million white racists” in the U.S. The second negative factor was that no revolutionary Marxist organization intervened early in the civil rights movement when the overwhelming majority of young black activists still adhered to liberal integrationism.

There were other important factors that conditioned the rise of black nationalism in the mid 1960s. One was the international context. The civil rights movement coincided with and was influenced by the anti-colonial struggles then taking place in Africa, Asia and Latin America. I have already discussed the impact of the Cuban Revolution on the American left. There was also the Algerian war of independence against French colonial rule. In the late 1950s-early 1960s, most of the British, French and other European colonies in sub-Saharan Africa gained their formal political independence. In some cases, these countries were now governed by left-talking bourgeois nationalists like Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana and Sékou Touré in Guinea, who claimed adherence to “African socialism.”

It became commonplace among black radicals to see the black struggle in the U.S. as a part of a broader struggle of black or nonwhite oppressed peoples against Western imperialism, as a form of internal anti-colonial struggle. Here again Malcolm X, though wrong, well expressed the views of young black radicals:

“The black revolution is world-wide in scope and in nature. The black revolution is sweeping Asia, is sweeping Africa, is rearing its head in Latin America....

“The revolt of the American Negro is part of the rebellion against the oppression and colonialism which has characterized this era.”

—*Malcolm X Speaks*, edited by George Breitman (1965)

It’s easy to understand why Malcolm X thought this way. When he went to the newly independent states of black Africa and also Algeria, he was treated by their governments as an honored guest. Had Malcolm X tried to attend a convention of the United Auto Workers (UAW), United Steelworkers of America or some other big AFL-CIO union, he probably would have been threatened with violence by the bureaucratic white union leaders.

In its own way, the Sino-Soviet split also contributed to the rise of black nationalism in the U.S. For earlier generations of black leftist radicals—like Harry Haywood in the 1920s and Ben Davis in the 1930s—Soviet Russia was the unchallenged leader of world Communism because it was the only Communist country in the world. But that was no

longer the case in the 1960s. When the future Panther leaders Huey Newton and David Hilliard came on the scene, there were several different Communist countries and two competing rival Communist powers: Russia and China.

Furthermore, the nonwhite, non-European Communist power, China, *appeared* to be a lot more revolutionary than the white European Communist power, Russia. Mao’s China denounced the Kremlin leaders for “revisionism” and collaboration with U.S. imperialism. Young black radicals like Newton and Hilliard interpreted the Sino-Soviet split in racial and national, as well as doctrinal, terms. As they saw it, just as white American workers were collaborating with the American capitalists to keep black people down, so the Russian Communists were no longer revolutionary but were collaborating with the American imperialists to keep the nonwhite peoples of the world down. The Black Panther Party labeled itself “Marxist-Leninist” *and* “revolutionary black nationalist,” a combination that would have been inconceivable to earlier generations of black American leftists.

I want to discuss a very important aspect of 1960s black nationalism, one which decisively influenced the subsequent development of the Latino left—Chicano and Puerto Rican—as well as radical feminists. This was the central importance attached to racial organizational exclusivity. Organizational separatism became a psychological compensation for the manifest impossibility in the U.S. of acquiring a separate state. In this sense, the term black nationalism is actually a misnomer. Black separatism is a more accurate description of this political current.

The main central demand of Basque nationalists in Spain is for the creation



Adelman/Magnum

Malcolm X inspired a generation of black militants in the 1960s.

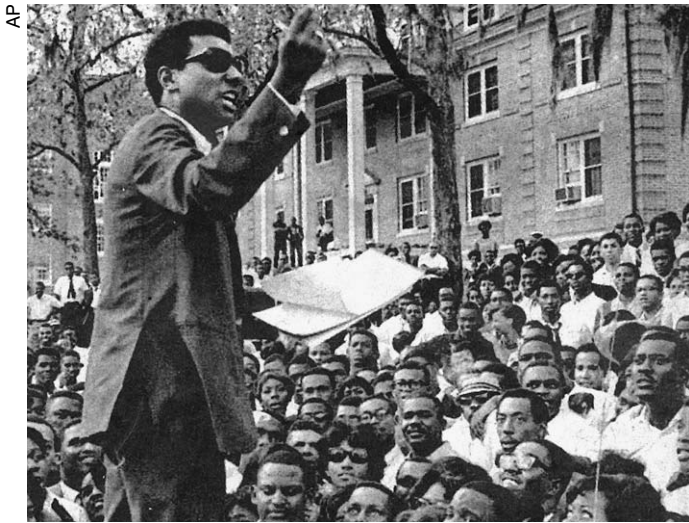
communists. White was white, even if it also happened to be red.

In his book on SNCC (*In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* [1981]), Clayborne Carson quotes and summarizes the views of the black separatists who demanded the exclusion of whites from that organization:

“The authors asserted that many blacks were ‘intimidated by the presence of whites, because of their knowledge of the power that whites have over their lives.’ A single white person who participated in a meeting of black people could change the tone of that meeting: ‘People would immediately start talking about “brotherhood,” “love,” etc.; race would not be discussed.’... On a deeper level, the Atlanta separatists argued that white people were inherently incapable of understanding the black experience. Despite this, whites had shaped blacks’ views of themselves. ‘Too long have we allowed white people to interpret the importance and meaning of the cultural aspects of our society.’”

If you replace black and white in this passage with Latino and Anglo or with women and men, it accurately expresses the outlook of Chicano nationalists and

SNCC’s Stokely Carmichael speaking to hundreds of students at a historically black Florida college in 1967. His “Black Power” slogan incensed liberal white bourgeoisie.



of an independent Basque state. The main central demand of Kosovar Albanian nationalists is secession from Serbia and the incorporation of Kosovo into a greater Albanian state. But none of the major black nationalist organizations in this period—the post-1966 SNCC and CORE, the Panthers, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers—called for a separate black state carved out of the territory of the United States, because this demand was manifestly fantastical. No one would have taken them seriously. What differentiated these groups from liberal black groups and from racially integrated leftist groups was that they were exclusively black and sought to build exclusively black institutions but within the framework of the existing American capitalist state.

The black nationalist current originated as a minority opposition in the main civil rights organizations—SNCC in the South and CORE in the North. Its main immediate demand was the expulsion and exclusion of whites from these organizations. To justify this demand, the separatists put forward a socio-psychological theory of black oppression. Blacks, they argued, were conditioned to defer to white authority and to accept white leadership and white-derived political doctrines. It didn’t matter whether the whites in question were right-wingers, liberals or

radical feminists a few years later, in this regard modeling themselves after the black nationalists. The late ’60s was the heyday of what we called sectoralism or multivanguardism, the doctrine that every oppressed group—whether defined by race, ethnicity, sex or sexual orientation—had to have their own exclusive “liberation” organization. Only such organizations, it was argued, could truly express the interests of these groups and psychologically empower their members to fight against their oppression.

In its own way, sectoralism was an acceptance of and adaptation to white supremacy and male chauvinism. Its basic underlying premise was that while whites could lead and influence blacks, blacks could not lead and influence whites; while men could lead and influence women, women could not lead and influence men. All of you in the Spartacus Youth Clubs know from your own experience in our tendency that this premise is definitely not true.

The heyday of sectoralism on the American left did not last all that long. By 1972, the large majority of former black and Latino nationalists and radical feminists were operating within the framework of pro-Democratic Party liberalism. At the same time, a significant number of radicals who once were in

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Marxist Bulletin 5
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WHAT STRATEGY FOR BLACK LIBERATION?

Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism

Key documents and articles 1955-1978

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U.S. Left...

(continued from page 5)

these movements and milieus were now in racially integrated groups claiming to be or to be building the “Marxist-Leninist” vanguard of the American proletariat.

The Rise and Fall of the Black Panthers

To better understand this development, we have to consider the history of the Black Panthers, by far the best-known expression of radical black nationalism in this period. The Panthers don’t fit into the standard political categories. They were a short-lived phenomenon shaped by a unique historical conjuncture both within the U.S. and internationally.

As previously noted, the Panthers considered themselves a “Marxist-Leninist” organization of the Maoist persuasion. The writings of Chairman Mao were displayed in Panther offices, and not just for show. Some of the leaders and cadre took the writings seriously. However, the Panthers differed radically from the other Maoist groups in the U.S. at the time: first, they were exclusively black; secondly, they didn’t even pay lip service to the working class but openly espoused a form of lumpen vanguardism; thirdly, they were a paramilitary organization and mainly attracted recruits on that basis.

However, the Black Panthers were not like any other left-wing paramilitary organization I know. In both their public pronouncements and internal communications, they compared themselves to Mao’s peasant-based guerrilla army in the Chinese civil war and to the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front. However, they did *not* actually engage in insurrectionary activity. In Latin America in this period there were left-wing urban guerrilla groups. But the Panthers were not urban guerrillas. Nor did they engage in individual terrorism.

What the founding Panther leaders—Newton, Hilliard, Bobby Seale—attempted to do was to build a black paramilitary organization in the ghettos that



Black Panthers were targeted by FBI, local police for picking up guns. To broaden their support base, the Panthers launched a series of ghetto social work programs, such as “breakfast for children.”

avoid arrest and took refuge in Algeria. The government also effectively incited more right-wing, rival black nationalist groups to engage in murderous attacks on the Panthers.

I believe that Newton and the other Panther leaders were genuinely shocked that the black community did not rally to their defense even at the level of large protest demonstrations and fund-raising. In order to broaden their base of support, the Panthers moved right at two levels, that of the black community and that of the white liberal community.

Despite their “Marxist-Leninist” posture, the Panthers had no concrete program to mobilize the black working class and ghetto poor in struggle against the capitalist order. In seeking to become more attractive to black working people, they resorted to social work. Much of the Panthers’ organizing energy was now expended on its “free breakfast for children” program. In 1967-68, the Panthers publicized themselves with pictures of guys with bandoleers across their chests carrying rifles in military formation. In 1969-70, they publicized themselves

Of course, it is in no way unprincipled for a radical left group to seek liberal support against state repression. We’ve done this in the past and will do so in the future. However, the Panthers adapted their politics so as to make themselves more acceptable and attractive to white liberals. For example, in 1969, they teamed up with the CP in a typical popular-frontist lash-up called the United Front Against Fascism, the main demand of which was “community control of the police on a national scale.”

In 1970-71, the Panthers underwent a violent faction fight and split between the Algiers group around Eldridge Cleaver and the old central leadership around Huey Newton. The Algiers group accused Newton & Co. of abandoning the group’s original “revolutionary” nationalist politics and paramilitary activity in favor of common work with white liberals. Of course, it was a lot easier to advocate a return to anti-cop confrontations from Algiers than from Oakland. This faction fight effectively destroyed the Panthers.

One important consequence was that several hundred black radicals, who, after all, had been in an organization which called itself “Marxist-Leninist,” were now in a state of political disarray and organizational homelessness. Some of these moved leftward into racially integrated organizations claiming to be or to be building the “Marxist-Leninist” vanguard of the American working class. Our first black recruits in this period came from a group of ex-Panthers in Los Angeles around Joe Johnson (“Li’l Joe”). We cited Johnson’s capsule analysis of the Panthers in the piece we did at the time of the split (reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 [Revised]).

Whereas the Panthers have since entered the realm of popular political mythology with Hollywood films made about them, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit is today a little-known chapter in the mass black radicalism of the 1960s. Yet the League was a significant organization because it was the main expression of “revolutionary” black nationalism within the unionized industrial proletariat, in a union—the UAW—in which the left historically had influence. Furthermore, the underlying trajectory of the Panthers and the League, despite their different social bases, was similar.

Formed and led by a circle of radical nationalist intellectuals, the League attracted a layer of young auto workers, the slightly older brothers of the “brothers on the block” who elsewhere rallied to the Panthers. In 1968-69, League supporters organized and led a number of successful wildcat strikes in Detroit’s Chrysler plants. While most of the League’s immediate concrete demands were supportable (such as more upgrading of and apprenticeship openings for blacks), there were also elements of nationalist class collaboration, as in seeking the hiring of more black foremen.

Although in practice the League sometimes operated within the organizational structure of the UAW, its stated goal was the formation of a separate black dual union opposed to the UAW. As such, the League was indifferent or hostile toward white workers, which obviously played into the hands of the Reutherite bureaucracy and the companies in victimizing League supporters.

No less decisive was that the large majority of older black workers did *not* support the League’s nationalist politics, although many involved themselves in its shop-floor actions. While these older black workers generally did not support the Reutherite bureaucracy, they did support the UAW as an institution. They recognized, as many younger black workers did not, the value of a racially integrated industrial union, despite the racist practices of its bureaucratic leadership, in defending their own material interests against the auto bosses.

Thus, the League, like the Panthers, was impelled to broaden its base of support among the black populace because most blacks, including workers, did not support its original nationalist program. Whereas the Panthers turned to social work, the League engaged in community organizing around such demands as “community control of the school system.”

In early 1971, the League experienced a major faction fight and split, which paralleled that of the Panthers politically as well as chronologically. One faction, personified by Ken Cockrel, stood for popular-frontist black community politics whose trajectory was clearly in the direction of the Democratic Party. A few years later, Cockrel would give backhanded support to the black Democrat Coleman Young in his successful bid for mayor of Detroit.

The opposing faction stood for a return to the League’s original shop-floor oriented, semi-syndicalist nationalist politics. However, after the split, a number of leading figures in this group, such as General Baker, joined a hard-line but racially integrated Stalinist-Maoist organization, the Communist League. The leader of the Communist League was a veteran black ex-CP cadre, Nelson Peery, who was very much an orthodox old-line Stalinist. We have a few comrades in the tendency today who were originally in Peery’s California Communist League in the early 1970s.

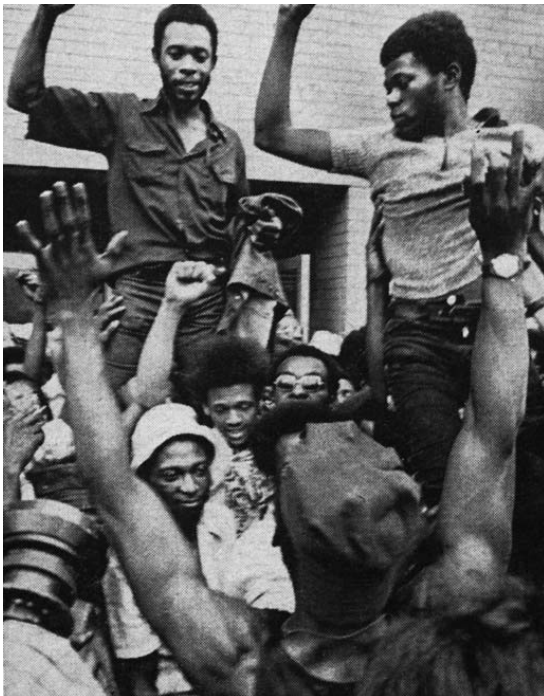
I have discussed the rise and decline of “revolutionary” black nationalism primarily in terms of American domestic social struggle. However, the formation and subsequent history of the Black Panthers and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers was also decisively conditioned by the Vietnam War, in which American imperialism was defeated by a state and a movement whose leadership claimed to stand for the principles of “Marxism-Leninism.”

[TO BE CONTINUED]

WORKERS VANGUARD



In the late 1960s-early '70s, radical black auto workers in Detroit-area plant Revolutionary Union Movements (RUMs), affiliated into the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, led successful wildcat strikes. 1973: Organizers of victorious Detroit auto sit-down strike being carried from plant.



Rosenberg/Detroit Free Press

would coexist with and restrain the police—sort of an armed version of “community control of the cops.” And for a short time they actually got away with it, especially in Oakland, their original and strongest base. The authorities were not certain how much support they had and were concerned that the killing or arrest of some Panther leaders might set off a major ghetto conflagration.

But by 1968 the FBI and local police forces had launched a concerted campaign to destroy the Black Panther Party. Thirty-eight Panther militants were killed outright, including the top leaders of the Chicago branch, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. Practically the entire central leadership was imprisoned on capital charges. A few of the other leaders, notably Eldridge Cleaver, fled the country to

with pictures of guys and also young women serving cereal to black school-children.

At the same time, the Panthers came under the political influence of the Communist Party (CP), especially through its legal defense apparatus. Over the decades, the CP had acquired proficiency in working the left-liberal milieu in which they had a layer of sympathizers and contacts. Furthermore, the conditions of the late 1960s had also radicalized this milieu. Thus, defense of the Panthers became a major cause in rad-lib circles as well as among leftists. Celebrities like Hollywood actress Shirley MacLaine and Leonard Bernstein, conductor of the New York Philharmonic, organized well-publicized fundraising benefits for the Panthers.

Spartacus Youth Say Down With Anti-Sex, Anti-Left Witchhunt at Berkeley!

When students from the Male Sexuality De-Cal class (student-run classes taken for credit) were reported to have participated in an orgy, the UC Berkeley administration and its right-wing lackeys in the campus *Daily Californian* launched an anti-sex witchhunt to try to eliminate the entire De-Cal program. The Bay Area SYC called a March 7 speakout against the witchhunt. Famous left-wing porn star Nina Hartley endorsed the demo and sent a statement: “Sexual literacy is essential for sexual liberation to occur—keep the de-cal classes!”

Unsurprisingly, the Stalinist Progressive Labor and the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party—organizations that grotesquely debate whether or not homosexuals are degenerate products of bourgeois society—did not come out. Though the International Socialist Organization normally excludes us communists from their meetings, one member invited the SYC to give a quick presentation to motivate the protest. We explained how necessary it was to oppose such conservative regimentation and right-wing filth. Yet the “fight the right” ISO still chose to impotently abstain! We print below the SYC statement for the demo.

* * *

MARCH 3—The *Daily PuritaniCal* is at it again. To carry on its journalistic mission, which traditionally consists of publishing the most racist and jingoistic ads and cartoons for the sake of “presenting different views,” the *Daily Cal* has spearheaded the latest anti-left witchhunt and anti-sex hysteria on campus. The Male Sexuality De-Cal class was suspended for two weeks based on supposed “illicit activities,” which in reality amounted to consensual sex outside the classroom. Soon after, seizing on the anonymous theft of copies of the right-wing *California Patriot* (February 2002), the *Daily Cal* launched the newest round of cynical “free-speech” hysteria, painting leftists as anti-free-speech “marauders” worthy of prosecution and repression at the hands of the administration and police. Taken together, these incidents contribute to an atmosphere of social regi-

mentation ripe for the administration to clamp down on this university’s feeble “academic freedom” and drive all “deviants,” sexual or political, out of UC Berkeley. This is an attempt to roll things back to the McCarthyite 1950s, when communists, leftists and even liberals were witchhunted off campuses. We say: **“Down With the Anti-Left Witchhunt!”**

The Male Sexuality De-Cal has been reinstated on a “probationary basis,” while the administration still investigates “wrongdoings” and prohibits any “outside activities.” This is not an isolated incident. Last semester the revolutionary communists of the Spartacus Youth Club held an Introduction to Marxism De-Cal class which was targeted by right-wingers, who lobbied the History Department to cancel it. But we have the right to present our revolutionary program on this campus, and we will fight for it. The *Daily Cal*’s dramatic demands that De-Cals be given “clearer academic standards and better faculty supervision” (19 February) only embolden the state’s efforts to shut down these student-run classes; the administration’s new De-Cal task force is an effort to enforce conservative codes of conduct and suppress leftist ideas from higher education. While the administration wants all discussions about sex off-limits, UC Regent Ward Connerly, the man whose name is synonymous with the abolition of affirmative action in California, now wants the entire De-Cal program eliminated, calling it “degeneracy.” Meanwhile, ROTC, the training corps of American imperialism’s next generation of mass murderers, has free rein in recruiting on this campus. **That is degeneracy! UC Administration: Hands off De-Cal!**

What really twists the panties of the administration is not the question of violating “the sanctity of democratic education” but of violating bourgeois morality. For them, all sex that threatens the bourgeois conception of “one man on one woman for life blessed by god” needs to be stamped out in order to protect the institution of the family, which serves to oppress women as child-bearers and youth as future wage slaves and soldiers,

and to ensure social conservatism. The anti-gay nature of this latest outcry is thinly veiled, as the *Daily PuritaniCal* titillatingly whispers of field trips to gay strip clubs and sex clubs as some of the supposedly more outrageous “illicit activities” of the Male Sexuality class. This is no surprise in the “democratic” United States, where gays and lesbians lack access to basic democratic rights.

A few years ago the Spartacus Youth Club launched a campaign to defend San Francisco State University professor John De Cecco, who was under fire for sitting on the editorial board of a “Journal of Paedophilia,” which researched issues of child sexuality. We have also always vigorously defended the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), perennially under attack by right-wing bigots and liberals alike for its opposition to age-of-consent laws between male lovers. We also defended Nina Hartley—an X-rated film star whose guest lectures at Male and Female Sexuality De-Cals have been cited as proof that they’re no longer acceptable—when she faced 12 years in prison for “felony lesbianism.” Consenting individuals, regardless of age, gender or particular kink, should be free to engage in whatever sexual relations they choose, without interference from the state, church, school or right-wing busybodies. We don’t accord the racist capitalist state—whether run by Democrats or Republicans—the right to decree a sexual “norm.” Do you want the people who framed up Mumia Abu-Jamal, who kill Afghans and terrorize immigrants and blacks, who are trying to do away with the democratic right to abortion, to decide what you do in your bedroom?

It is no coincidence that this state-sponsored right-wing backlash is happening while the American bourgeoisie still drops bombs on Afghanistan, prepares further massacres in Iraq and the Philippines, and beefs up the Zionist state of Israel for the “final solution” against the Palestinian people. To carry out its imperialist adventures, the bourgeoisie needs to regiment the population to accept authority without question. College students, who under capitalism are trained to be the future technocrats and manag-



Young Spartacus

ers of the bourgeoisie’s affairs, must be kept in check so they can better serve the capitalist masters. And now, with token gains of the civil rights movement like affirmative action abolished, tuition fees escalating exponentially, and U.S. imperialists pillaging the world, the elite campuses have been overwhelmingly purged of blacks and Latinos so that racists and other retrogrades think they can act with impunity.

If anyone is trying to censor “free speech” it is these neo-McCarthyite demagogues shutting up anyone who opposes them while advancing the capitalists’ “anti-terror” crackdown that targets immigrants, blacks, labor, and antiwar youth. The *California Patriot*’s current issue baits the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition as the “John Walker Lindh Fan Club,” (February 2002) and viciously equates Chicano student group MEChA with the fascist Third Reich. Their demonizations of the antiwar milieu—from accusing a member of the International Socialist Organization of stealing campus newspapers to basically calling anyone to the left of Jesse Helms an “authoritarian Communist”—are serious provocations and part of a nationwide drive to purge left-wing dissent from campuses. Just last year we had to fight for our right to protest the racist, slavery-apologist David Horowitz, who has been crusading for the elimination of leftists and antiwar activists from campuses while on break from his usual intellectual cross burnings.

This outrageous campaign of intimidation and repression calls for the biggest possible protest. We call on all students and organizations who agree with the following demands, regardless of other political differences, to join us in organizing a united-front protest: **Down With the Anti-Left Witchhunt! Down With Anti-Sex Hysteria! UC Administration: Hands Off De-Cal!** ■

No More Mr. “Naked Guy”

The following is an excerpted version of the satirical “UC Berkeley’s Sexual Code of Conduct” issued by the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club and distributed on campus leading up to and at their March 7 speakout.

The administration of the Center of All Life (CAL) proposes the following Code of Conduct. Recent behavior by students and facilitators of the soon-to-be-abolished (God willing!) De-Cal classes has forced us to act at once to better protect our hallowed reputation as a place where nothing “funny” happens.

1. Enrolling in a De-Cal class requires that one refrain from engaging in any and all sexual acts, inside or outside the classroom.
2. Discussion of male sexuality is henceforth forbidden. The discussion of female sexuality is also forbidden, unless it refrains from discussing women’s sexual freedom, right to abortion or any deviance from women’s established role as cooks, baby-bearers and underpaid secretaries.
3. Strip clubs are off-limits to any UC student who wishes to graduate from this institution.
4. All parties and private social gatherings by students must be attended by a UC Berkeley police officer, so as to guarantee that no “illicit” activities take place at them.
5. Being gay is no crime, but be gay somewhere else. UC Berkeley must enforce the highest possible standards for its student body.
6. To uphold the highest academic standards, De-Cal classes must be taught by individuals who hold at least a double PhD and who have been cleared by the Legislature’s Commission on Education.
7. It is unacceptable for the student body to engage in general naughtiness. The General Guardians of Decency, also known as the Board of Regents, shall decide on the definition of naughtiness.

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

March 23: **The Capitalist State: Reform vs. Revolution**

1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor, Oakland
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851

BOSTON

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.

March 28: **The Formation of the Deformed Workers States**

Boston University
College of Arts and Sciences
725 Commonwealth Ave., Room 426
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

March 30: **The Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Suite 215
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
slsycla@cs.com

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

March 26: **Defend Deformed Workers States—China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—Against Imperialism, Counterrevolution! For Workers Political Revolution!**

University of Illinois at Chicago
104 Stevenson Hall
701 South Morgan Street
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
spartacist@iname.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

March 26: **The Working Class, the Revolutionary Party and the Fight for New Octobers**

Columbia University (116th and Broadway)
Hamilton Hall, Room 306
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

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“Axis of Evil”...

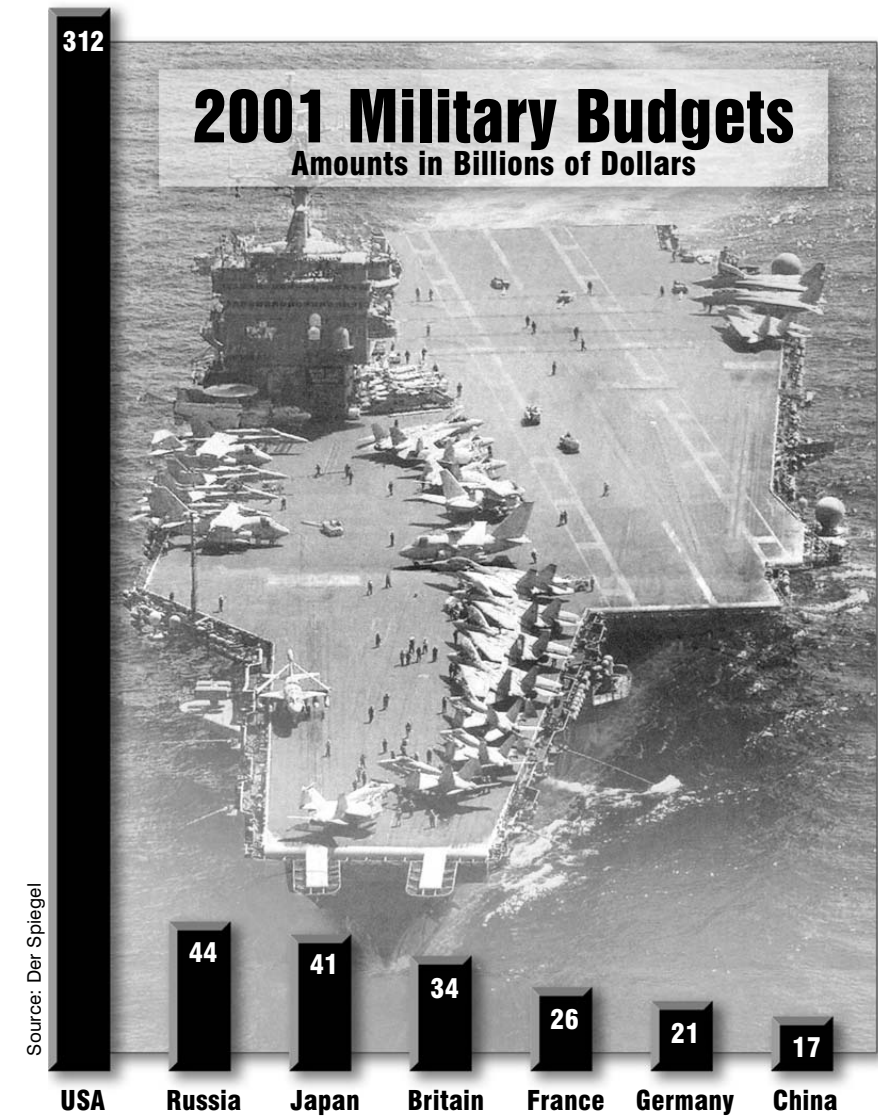
(continued from page 1)

adventures. Barely a week has gone by without the announcement of a new American military deployment, from the Philippines to Yemen to the former Soviet republic of Georgia. Now Washington wants to send more U.S. “advisers” to Colombia as the decades-long counterinsurgency war by the death squad military intensifies.

In December, Congress—with bipartisan support—approved a huge package of high-tech arms for capitalist Taiwan, a counterrevolutionary dagger aimed at the Chinese deformed workers state and the gains of the 1949 Revolution (and the U.S. now has or is planning a military presence in former Soviet Central Asian republics on China’s western flank). Simultaneously, Bush unilaterally tore up the 30-year-old ABM treaty outlawing the development of anti-missile systems, which had been an obstacle to U.S. plans for a “national missile defense.” Even if it can be built, such a missile defense would be useless against an all-out nuclear attack. But it could be used to neutralize a relatively small nuclear arsenal, like China’s, in the event of an American nuclear first strike. Not coincidentally, China is among the seven countries listed as potential targets in the Nuclear Posture Review. *For unconditional military defense of China, as well as North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution!*

Commenting on the international furor that met the Pentagon paper, the *New York Times* (11 March) wrote of “making the unthinkable thinkable.” In the minds of America’s imperialist rulers—Democrats and Republicans—a nuclear attack has been thinkable from the moment they first got their hands on the A-bomb. The first two bombs developed by the U.S. were immediately used to incinerate the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Washington repeatedly considered the use of nuclear weapons against North Korea in 1950-53, and later against Vietnam in the 1960s and early ’70s, as the recently released tapes of Richard Nixon’s Oval Office rantings confirm. The American rulers were held back only by fear of Soviet nuclear retaliation. But today the Soviet Union no longer exists, destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92.

That world-historic defeat for the international proletariat shapes today’s world. While rivalries among the major capitalist powers are no longer held in check by a U.S.-led anti-Soviet consensus, the U.S. has simultaneously asserted its unchallenged supremacy as the “world’s only superpower.” In a 12 March editorial, the rational-posturing *Times* warned that Bush would turn the U.S. into a “nuclear rogue” by threatening non-nuclear states with a nuclear attack. But that “rogue” policy was earlier enunciated by Clinton’s Pentagon chief William Perry in 1996. What has changed is that the Republican administration dispenses with even the window-dressing of “multilateralism.” Little wonder, then, that Bush’s “axis of evil” tirade provoked an outcry not only



from its intended targets but also from Washington’s NATO allies. Even the “soft cop” in the Bush administration, Secretary of State Colin Powell, warned the Europeans that whatever their differences they would have to accept the “principled leadership” of the American behemoth.

The unrestrained militarism signaled by Bush’s speech demonstrates even more clearly than before that American imperialism is truly the main enemy of the world’s peoples. The Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League, is dedicated to the forging of the revolutionary workers party needed to lead the multiracial working class in a socialist revolution that sweeps away the capitalist order in the bastion of world imperialism. That purpose animated the labor-centered rally in the San Francisco Bay Area on February 9 in defense of immigrants and against the USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act. As the Spartacist speaker stated:

“This is the first effort to mobilize the power of the working class independently, against ‘national unity’ here in the belly of the American imperialist beast....

“The attacks on immigrants and the working class that we are addressing at the rally today cannot be separated from the broader aims of the ruling class. The American colossus, waving the criminal destruction of the World Trade Center on 9/11 like a bloody shirt, lashed out at Afghanistan to assert its unchallenged supremacy as the world’s nuclear cowboy. Now the American imperialists are plotting their next moves in an open-ended ‘war on terrorism’—be it attacks on Iraq, Iran or North Korea. We defended Iraq and then Afghanistan when they were attacked by the imperialist war machine, and we will do so again....

“In fighting every injustice and every oppression, we in the Spartacist League have the aim of making the working class as a whole conscious of its historic tasks: bringing down this whole system of greed, exploitation and war that is capitalism.”

EU Imperialists: Economic Powers, Military Pygmies

On one level, European fury over Bush’s “axis of evil” speech reflected the growing conflict of interests in the Persian Gulf and Near East between the U.S. and the European Union (EU) powers. Even during the Cold War era, the European bourgeoisies attempted to develop their own client states in the oil-rich Gulf region. Before the 1991 war, France did a thriving oil-for-arms trade with Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. In recent years, France has consistently voted to soften the UN embargo and expanded its trade with Iraq—within the limits set by the sanctions and, more fundamentally, by what the U.S. will tolerate. The French oil company TotalFinaElf has also been negotiating with Baghdad over investing in the huge Majnoon and Nahr bin Omar oil fields.

The European capitalists also have a strong interest in investment in Iran, another oil-rich country. Following the U.S.-backed Shah’s ouster by the 1979 “Islamic Revolution” and the ensuing “hostage crisis,” Washington has not even had formal diplomatic relations with Iran. Meanwhile, the EU pursues a policy of “constructive engagement,” seeking in particular to cultivate the “moderate” wing of the Islamic theocracy around President Mohammad Khatami. Bush’s “axis of evil” speech was, of course, quite the opposite of “constructive engagement.” Even the generally pro-American London *Economist* (9 February) took Bush to task for having “made things harder” for Khatami while strengthening “Iranian hardliners.”

But differences over Iran or Iraq did not alone account for the firestorm of denunciation against Bush’s speech by spokesmen from all parts of the European political spectrum. German Green Joschka Fischer, foreign minister under Social Democratic (SPD) chancellor Gerhard Schröder, fumed that “alliance partners are not satellites,” harking back to the Cold War line that the East European deformed workers states were mere “satellites” of the Soviet Union. Right-wing French president Jacques Chirac, preferring an analogy from the era of feudalism, accused Washington of treating its NATO

partners like “vassal states.” Even British Conservative Chris Patten, current EU commissioner of external affairs, warned Washington of “dangerous instincts,” including “that allies may be useful as an optional extra but that the U.S. is big enough to manage without them if it must.”

The major German newsweekly *Der Spiegel* (18 February) dispensed with such diplomatic language, running a caricature of “The Bush Warriors” on its cover. An article titled “Masters of the World” grouched, “Not even a half year after West European politicians and media declared that we are now all Americans, one sees that the much ballyhooed change of the U.S. president from a grinning deputy sheriff to a team player... was pure wishful thinking.” Fulminating against an “imperial America” that is reviving “the old great power arrogance,” *Der Spiegel* warned, “Rambo is on the loose again.” The article declaimed that in Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld’s view, “war, doubtless even with nuclear weapons, remains a self-evident means of American foreign policy in the 21st century.” It pointedly concluded: “The most important argument that the Americans can advance for their martial stance is their unassailable military superiority.”

The Bush administration’s bellicose “unilateralism” drives home with a vengeance that the European imperialists cannot pursue their own national ambitions when those come into conflict with U.S. interests anywhere in the world so long as they remain, relatively speaking, economic powers but military pygmies. They may hate the punishing tariff on steel imports Bush just imposed in violation of international agreements, but there is little they can do except complain and threaten some retaliatory economic measures. *Der Spiegel* may believe that in response to Washington’s provocations the “Europeans have found a common voice.” But the formation of a European “superstate” as a counterweight to the U.S. is blocked, as it always has been, by Europe’s division into rival and potentially mutually hostile capitalist nation-states. Despite the launch of the Euro and a certain degree of economic integration, the core of state power, the military, remains strictly national, not pan-European.

In the ICL’s “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program,” we assert, “Looking back retrospectively to the pre-World War I period, today’s ‘post-Cold War world’ presents many parallels” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998). In broad political terms, this is true: the Soviet workers state that issued out of the first proletarian revolution in history, the October Revolution of 1917, no longer exists, while rivalries among the major capitalist countries have increasingly come to the fore.

But on the military plane, relations among the competing imperialists are vastly different than they were before World War I or World War II. Though Britain and France already have substantial nuclear arsenals, and Germany and the rest could assemble their own in short order, the gulf between these countries and the U.S. is vast. As British left-liberal Seumas Milne observed in the London *Guardian* (14 February), referring to Bush’s request for a \$48 billion increase in the U.S. military budget this year: “The latest increases will take its military spending to 40% of the worldwide total, larger than the arms budgets of the next 19 states put together. No previous military empire—from the Roman to the British—had anything like this preponderance, let alone America’s global reach.”

Already in the mid 19th century, the perceptive French intellectual Alexis de Tocqueville predicted that the U.S.—because of its size, natural resources and economic dynamism—would one day surpass Europe. By the end of World War I, Wall Street had displaced the City of London as the world’s financial center, as the European imperialists emerged from four years of carnage economically and

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Left: Immigrants join in Rome protest against bombing of Afghanistan last November. Over 100,000 trade unionists and others demonstrate against EU summit in Barcelona, March 14.



AP photos

“Axis of Evil”...

(continued from page 9)

Bombardier railway car builders carried out a plant occupation against threatened closure, and were joined by other workers. Hamburg longshoremen have protested further privatization of the port. In Berlin, public service workers have staged almost daily protests against the massive attacks by the new coalition government under the SPD and the “left” social-democratic Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS).

Italy has been convulsed by a wave of strikes and mass protests against the war in Afghanistan, in defense of immigrants and against attacks on the unions. On March 9, some 100,000 demonstrated in Rome in solidarity with the Palestinians. A week earlier, there was a demonstration in Naples demanding “citizenship rights for all,” and the week before that a huge protest in Brescia involving many immigrant workers. The CGIL trade-union federation has called for a general strike in April against government attacks on existing measures defending workers rights, including protection against arbitrary firings. The CSIL and UIL federation tops have also endorsed the general strike call, after their initial refusal led to a protest strike that brought out 10,000 workers in Torino province alone.

The labor tops and “left” social democrats like the British Socialist Alliance (which includes the SWP), the PDS in Germany and Rifondazione Comunista in Italy will adjust their rhetoric in an attempt to keep pace with the workers’ militancy, but only in order to contain the struggles of the proletariat and channel them into the confines of bourgeois parliamentarism. The current upsurge in class struggle poses an opportunity for Marxists fighting to break workers from their pro-capitalist misleaders and win them to a revolutionary, internationalist workers party. That requires a sharp struggle against the illusions promoted by the pseudo-revolutionary tails of the social democracy that imperialism can be rendered “peaceful” and that a new “left” government at the head of the capitalist state will somehow satisfy the aspirations of the working class.

For Workers Revolution Against U.S. Imperialism!

In the U.S., where there is no mass social-democratic party, the fake left’s faith in its “own” bourgeoisie is expressed in attempts to pressure the Democratic Party to render U.S. imperialism more “just.” The first demand of an anti-war march planned for April 20 in Washington, D.C., endorsed by a slew of reformist groups including the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the

Socialist Workers Organization and the Young Communist League, begs for “a U.S. foreign policy based upon social and economic justice, not military and corporate oppression.” The International ANSWER coalition created by the Stalinoid Workers World Party (WWP) demands in a similar vein (of George W. Bush, no less), “money for jobs and education not war!” The WWP and ISO occasionally mention the Democrats’ support for the war machine, but they relegate that to the small print while their headlines scream about *Bush’s* war.

While the level of social struggle in the U.S. is currently far lower than in West Europe, even amid the intense chauvinist hysteria following September 11 there were a number of strikes around the country. And once the U.S.-backed Afghan warlords of the Northern Alliance took Kabul, the Enron scandal displaced the “war on terrorism” as the top news story. Contributing to the American public’s fascination with the evildoings of Kenneth Lay and his fellow corporate con men are the hardships wrought by the economic recession. A public opinion survey conducted the week before Bush’s State of the Union address showed that the economy had now become the number one concern. One of those surveyed, a retired home-furnishings salesman, explained: “Everybody was waving the flag for the first month or two. But if you

don’t have insurance and you can’t get to the doctor, the war is pretty far away” (*New York Times*, 27 January).

The key to unlocking labor struggle in this country lies in breaking the class-collaborationist “national unity” pushed by the bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. And that means, first and foremost, breaking the chains forged by the labor tops and the black politicians and preachers that bind the proletariat and the ghetto masses to the “lesser evil” Democratic Party of American imperialism. If there is to be an end to imperialist war, to racist oppression and all-sided, grinding misery, the multiracial U.S. working class must be won, through Marxist education and its own experience in struggle, to the fight for a revolutionary workers party. That is our perspective, and on its outcome hinges the fate of the whole world. As we wrote in the ICL Declaration of Principles:

“The road forward for all of humanity is for the presently small forces adhering to the revolutionary program of Lenin and Trotsky to forge parties with the experience, willpower and authority among the masses to lead successful proletarian revolutions. Yet as we seek to bring this program to bear among the world’s workers and oppressed, we must recognize that the possession of the technology of nuclear holocaust by an irrational imperialist ruling class foreshortens the possibilities: we don’t have a lot of time.”■

Immigrants...

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an average of six months.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, where close to three-fourths of screeners are Filipino immigrants, nearly a thousand are threatened with firing. Filipinos have long seethed under the indignities resulting from their country’s brutal, decades-long colonization by U.S. imperialism, and U.S. forces are once more in action there. Filipino veterans who fought for their colonial masters in World War II were even denied equal benefits. Now Filipino screeners are outraged to be told they will be fired based solely on their citizenship.

Union organizing campaigns have recently recruited screeners along with food service workers, baggage handlers and others at the three major Bay Area airports (San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose). One of the key arguments in a lawsuit challenging the new legislation launched by the ACLU and the Service Employees International Union, which has organized screeners in the Bay Area and Los Angeles, is that citizenship is not required to serve in the capitalist armed forces. “If I get fired because of this new law, I could enroll in the National Guard and be back in the airport two weeks later, standing behind the screeners holding a rifle,” said one screener quoted in a January 17 ACLU press release.

This graphically illustrates that screeners are an auxiliary of the armed forces of the capitalist state, albeit on the bottom rung. The screeners’ job is to defend the airlines’ property, identifying “suspicious” passengers and turning them over to the armed agents of the capitalist state—cops, National Guardsmen, etc. As Marxists, we understand that the state

is not neutral but an organization for maintaining the class rule of the capitalists and defending their private property. At its core are special bodies of armed men—the army, cops and prison guards, supplemented by private security guards and strikebreaking outfits like the Pinkertons—whose purpose is to violently repress the working class.

Therefore, while we support union campaigns to organize food service workers, cabin cleaners, baggage handlers and ramp workers, we *oppose* union organizing of screeners and security guards, just as we have fought against organizing cops and prison guards into unions such as the SEIU, Teamsters and AFSCME. Unions cannot defend workers if they have in their ranks those whose job is to serve the strikebreaking forces of the capitalist state. At the same time, we oppose making citizenship a requirement of employment for anyone.

Class Struggle vs. Class Collaboration

The labor bureaucracy puts forward not the mobilization of union power in defense of immigrant rights but an appeal to the bosses and the Democratic Party “friends of labor” to reverse the Security Act in the name of better airport security. Thus they seek to make themselves an organic part of the “war on terrorism,” pleading with the capitalists to moderate their attacks on workers. An article in SEIU Local 790’s *United Worker* (November-December 2001) called for “stringent background checks” on all screeners before they are hired and declared: “The government should impose strict airport oversight but recognize that legal immigrants are just as capable working as screeners as they have been serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.”

This class-collaborationist program

dominated rally/press conferences at the three Bay Area airports on February 19, organized by the SEIU and other groups, such as Filipinos for Affirmative Action and the Filipino Workers Association, to protest the new law under the slogan: “Justice for Immigrant Airport Workers, Safety for Passengers!” At these events, the bureaucrats were aided and abetted by fake-left reformists. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) acted as foot soldiers for the labor tops, carrying the same placards and circulating an SEIU Local 790 petition which appeals to the bosses’ “federal, state and local governments and courts to stop implementation of this law.”

An article in the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (4 January) posted on the Web even embraced the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, but for the citizens-only provision, as a great gain, declaring it “will nationalize airport screening, creating 28,000 new federal jobs with annual salaries of up to \$35,000 plus benefits. But because of the anti-immigrant hysteria whipped up by Congress and the Bush administration, you’ll have to be a U.S. citizen to get one.” In 1996, the ISO’s Canadian co-thinkers championed a “work action” by Toronto prison guards, while the ISO itself supported a “strike” by New York City security guards. One month earlier, those security guards had acted as strikebreakers during an SEIU building maintenance workers strike (see “ISO: Looking for a Few Good Cops,” WV No. 664, 21 March 1997).

The power of the working class can only be mobilized *in complete independence* from the capitalist class, its state and parties. This understanding was key to mobilizing organized labor in defense of immigrants in Oakland on February 9, a united-front rally initiated by the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social

Defense and the Partisan Defense Committee—which the ISO flatly refused to endorse or participate in. As the Spartacist League speaker at the rally declared, “It is not the job of the workers to enforce the laws, ‘security’ or otherwise, that will be used against them.” While the capitalist rulers push “national unity” in order to divide the working class along national, ethnic and racial lines, the aim of this mobilization was to break through the lie that workers and their exploiters have a common interest and to pose united, multiracial class struggle. The interests of workers, immigrants and black people will either go forward together or fall back separately.

This rally represented on a small scale what’s needed: a revolutionary workers party that acts as a “tribune of the people” to defend all the oppressed, which is possible only with the understanding that we need to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery. The trade-union bureaucracy acts instead to subordinate the workers to an alliance with the Democratic Party wing of the capitalist class enemy and promotes the interests of America’s imperialist rulers abroad.

Those who look to pressure the capitalist government can’t mobilize workers to defend immigrants against state repression because they regard the “security” of that state as a legitimate interest. A *revolutionary workers party*, embodying in its program and actions the highest interests of the international working class as a whole, must be forged through a political struggle against the unions’ pro-capitalist misleadership. Only such a party will enable the working class to transform defensive struggles into a victorious fight to sweep away the capitalist state and build a workers state capable of creating a society free from racism, exploitation and war.■

Red Army...

(continued from page 2)

“The Afghans are our neighbors. Where there is poverty and backwardness it is our duty to help.”

But for Schreiber, it was Ayatollah Khomeini’s Iran that was a beacon of liberation at the time and the real target of the U.S.: “I would suggest that an even stronger concern of the U.S. administration was that mass revolutionary sentiment in Iran (which had already been partially diverted by the Islamic clergy) might spread to other countries in the region, providing a severe threat to capitalist interests.” Far from it. In fact, the U.S. rulers openly appealed to the Khomeini regime—in Brzezinski’s words, to “every sober-headed Iranian, even the most anti-American ones”—to join in the “holy war” against “godless communism” in Afghanistan. The February 1979 “Iranian Revolution” that *brought the Islamic clergy to power* was carried out under the battle cry “Death or the veil!” And once in power, the mullahs staged a bloody rampage against the Iranian leftists who had criminally supported that “revolution.” Second to none among those leftists internationally who cheered Khomeini on was Socialist Action’s forebear, the American Socialist Workers Party.

Schreiber asserts that we “liken the Soviet forces in the 1980s to the Bolshevik Red Army of the 1920s.” As we wrote in 1980: “We recognize that the Red Army of Lenin and Trotsky is separated



Central Museum of the Revolution, Moscow

Bolshevik Revolution led to enormous advances for women of traditionally Muslim East. Left: Women in Soviet Central Asia learning to read, 1924. University students in Soviet Kalmyk republic in early '80s.



Planeta

from the Red Army of Brezhnev by a bureaucratic counterrevolution under Stalin. Only a proletarian political revolution in the USSR can truly restore the Red Army and the Soviet state to their internationalist and revolutionary mission” (“The Bolsheviks and the ‘Export of Revolution,’” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 29, Summer 1980). Commanded by a parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy which had usurped political power from the Soviet workers, the Soviet Army was also deployed for reactionary purposes, such as the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian workers political revolution. But in Schreiber’s eyes the Soviet Army under Stalinist command could only be a

reactionary force. This view mandates a *defeatist* position toward the Soviet Army in any conflict. Thus Schreiber denies the class basis for unconditional military defense: the collectivized property forms on which the Soviet workers state was based.

Schreiber sneers at our “boasting” that we stood on the red side in Afghanistan. But the fact that other self-proclaimed “Marxists” found themselves in the camp of imperialist-inspired counterrevolution provides a measure of the falseness of any claims they might make to offer leadership to the proletariat’s struggle for the liberation of humanity. As a former member of Socialist Action’s youth group, the Young Socialist Alliance, at UCLA wrote

in her membership application to the Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club, quoting Leon Trotsky’s *In Defense of Marxism*: “It is the duty of revolutionists to defend every conquest of the working class even though it may be distorted by the pressure of hostile forces. Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones.” She continued, “Furthermore, if you are not actively defending the gains of the past, you are supporting defeats of the working class in the future. Such was the realization I had to make, that my problems with the YSA were not just a difference of opinion or ‘ideas’ but the difference between revolution and counterrevolution.” ■

NYC Transit...

(continued from page 3)

hour. They can be thrown off the welfare rolls completely if they even miss a single day of work to care for a sick child.

The 36,000-strong TWU Local 100 is potentially one of the most powerful unions in the country, with the ability to shut down New York City and bring the financial capital of America to a grinding halt. A small taste of this power was seen earlier this month at the East New York TA facility, where just the threat of a walkout was enough to win back the jobs of four bus maintainers who had been disciplined by management for not working fast enough. With a heavily black and immigrant membership, Local 100 is in a strategic position not only to fight for its own members but to lead all the city labor unions and the millions of unorganized working people and minorities who are hit the hardest by the widening recession and axing of social services.

But a direct obstacle to wielding this enormous social power is the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, which “demands” only what is acceptable to the racist ruling class. Even to defend the most basic right of the working class—the right to a job at decent pay—leads directly to challenging the capitalist profit system. As revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Program (1938) during the devastation of the Great Depression: “The question is one of life or death of the only creative and progressive class, and by that token, of the future of mankind. If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish.”

We oppose the destruction of welfare and other social programs benefiting the working class and poor. But our goal as Marxists is not simply to defend programs that were designed to sustain the unemployed in permanent poverty. Ours is the fight for proletarian revolution and the establishment of an egalitarian socialist economy where everyone will have a place in social and economic life.

Labor Tops: Overseers of “Workfare” Slavery

The capitalist rulers have not only deployed desperately impoverished welfare recipients as a source of cheap labor,

but in a modern-day version of the chain gang they are also bringing in prisoners on “work release” programs. The use of prisoners as a wedge against the unions has been seen in the Chicago transit system, where Amalgamated Transit Union officials agreed to having convicts on misdemeanor charges do “community service” clean-up work—under the watch of armed sheriff’s deputies—first at bus turn-arounds and later at terminals and repair shops.

In our 1996 article, we warned that the effect of “workfare” would be “to pit the union *against* predominantly black and Hispanic welfare recipients. This would inflame racist reaction, which the capitalist rulers have long used to divide the working class in order to drive down wages and increase the rate of exploitation of all workers.” In the Parks Department, Theresa Caldwell-Benjamin, a black woman, was terrorized on the first day of her WEP assignment when a racist caricature and a noose were hung up in her workplace. When she complained, her supervisor refused to have this filth removed. The unions must fight every manifestation of racism and bigotry!

Far from fighting against the bosses’ divide-and-rule schemes, the TWU tops agreed in the 1996 contract to a provision barring WEP laborers from “comingling” with regular TA workers. Forced to work in separate areas from unionized cleaners and barred from crew rooms, WEP cleaners are made to wear green vests so they won’t be mistaken for TWU cleaners, who wear orange ones. The 1996 contract also called for promoting 150 union members to “lead cleaner” positions in which they act as straw bosses supervising WEP crews.

Before taking over the Local 100 leadership, New Directions, which occasionally likes to posture as “militants,” produced a flyer stating “We demand Union wages with Union rights for WEPs.” But what kind of “fight” did ND wage? ND called for a provision in the 1999 contract not to organize “workfare” laborers as union brothers and sisters but to *exclude* them from the TA workforce. Now in power, the Toussaint regime has done nothing to organize the WEP crews but instead is in the position of having to oversee the bosses’ union-busting program.

Toussaint & Co. are against mobilizing the membership in struggle—the

only way to win. Instead, they beg capitalist politicians for concessions in exchange for their services in lining up the membership behind the capitalists’ war drive, repression and austerity. Making clear where their allegiance lies, the Local 100 tops hosted Democratic Senator Hillary Clinton at a mass union membership meeting in December. When Giuliani and Democratic state attorney general Eliot Spitzer hit transit workers with anti-strike injunctions in the 1999 contract fight, Clinton hailed New York State’s Taylor Law banning public workers strikes. At the December meeting, when a union member held up a sign reminding workers that “Hillary Supported Injunctions Against Us in 1999,” Local 100 officers quickly dispatched a goon squad to stop the “disruption.” And now, following the victimizations at East New York, Local 100 has issued a leaflet criticizing management for violating the anti-strike Taylor Law!

Class collaboration is nothing new for the fake militants who formed New Directions, which repeatedly dragged the union into the capitalist courts to settle disputes with the former James leader-

ship that should have remained internal affairs to be settled by the membership. Labor must clean its own house! The precondition for any real struggle against the bosses is the complete independence of the labor movement from the capitalist state. The union tops can’t and won’t wage a fight for the membership when they invite the class enemy into the house of labor, whether it’s the courts or the Democratic Party politicians whose role, along with the Republicans, is to enforce the rule of the racist capitalist class.

Every transit worker, every city worker has a stake in the fight to organize WEP laborers, linking the unions to the defense of the black and Hispanic inner-city masses and of immigrants caught in the cross hairs of the capitalists’ “national unity” drive. The bosses would like to impose on all workers the same degree of brutal exploitation and humiliation that those forced into WEP endure. We need a revolutionary workers party that leads all the exploited and oppressed in a struggle to overthrow this capitalist system of exploitation, racism and repression. Those who labor must rule! ■

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

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net

National Office

Box 1377 GPO,
New York, NY 10116
(212) 732-7860

Boston

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

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441

Public Office:

Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)

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 Street
Suite 718

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

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

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Box 2717, Main P.O.
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(604) 687-0353

WORKERS VANGUARD

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Down With Anti-Immigrant Purge of Airport Workers!

The domestic “war on terrorism” is a war against the working class. This reality is being driven home by a nationwide campaign of attacks on immigrant workers, coordinated by the Justice Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). As the chauvinist spectacle of the Winter Olympics was made a showcase of “security” repression, on December 11 hundreds of federal agents and state and local police swarmed through Salt Lake City. They rounded up 271 workers, mostly Latinos, jailing 69 who had worked in “secured” areas and getting all of them fired for the “crime” of being undocumented. “This has been an injustice of Olympic proportions,” declared Mark Alvarez, an attorney defending some of the workers.

Coming amid a deepening recession and the capitalists’ declining demand for labor, the raid sought to terrorize the entire Latino immigrant population in the area. In its wake, Latino workers in other industries have also faced victimization and firing. In a statement of solidarity to the February 9 labor-centered immigrant defense rally in Oakland, California, Alvarez said: “It is wrong for the government to give a wink and a nod to workers when they are needed only to give those same workers a smirk and a kick when labor is not in such high demand.”

The Salt Lake City raid was part of a federal campaign known variously as “Operation Tarmac” and “Operation Safe Travel.” Among the raids carried out at other airports across the country: 29 Mexican dishwashers and janitors arrested and deported in Denver on September 19; 30 detained in Portland, Oregon in late December; 20 arrested at Seattle’s Sea-Tac Airport in mid-January; 27 charged and 19 arrested, mostly Latinos, in Las Vegas; 20 seized at Boston’s Logan Air-



Salt Lake City, January 26: Demonstrators outside Utah state capitol call for unionizing immigrant workers after hundreds of undocumented immigrants were fired during Olympic “security” hysteria.

Rick Egan/Salt Lake Tribune

port on February 27. Similar operations are being prepared in Los Angeles and San Diego. We call upon workers and defenders of minority rights and the democratic rights of all to demand: **Drop the charges against the airport workers! No deportations!**

In Salt Lake City, the government initially imposed a \$5,000 cash-only bail bond, an amount many of those arrested could not possibly raise. Both parents of young children were often imprisoned at the same time. Furthermore, many airport companies refused to give the families of jailed workers the back pay owed them.

The heavily working-class Latino community, roughly 20 percent of the city’s population, responded with a strong sense of solidarity. Thanks in good part to their generous financial support, almost all of

the workers have since been released on bail. A series of defense rallies has been held in the downtown area. Some workers have pleaded guilty and face deportation; 23 have been faced with trial, while others are still being sought by police. The 202 other workers fired, while not now facing prosecution, are condemned to desperate economic straits with almost no chance of getting another job. We demand the immediate release of the imprisoned airport workers. We demand as well the release of all the prisoners, primarily of Near Eastern and South Asian origin, who have been swept up in the government’s anti-immigrant witchhunt!

However, Latino and other immigrant workers, including “illegals,” are not simply defenseless victims of the capitalist exploiters and their state. They are an

integral and increasingly important part of this country’s multiracial and multiethnic working class, and a precious link to workers in other countries. Anyone who has made it to this country should have the same rights as those born here. The labor movement must take up the fight for **full citizenship rights for all immigrants!**

Mobilizing labor’s social power in defense of all immigrants is not only a matter of urgent self-defense of the entire working class. By wielding their immense social power as the producers of wealth in this society in defense of all those ground down under the capitalist heel, the organized workers can place themselves at the head of all the oppressed in a struggle to sweep away the common class enemy and reorganize society on a socialist, egalitarian basis: **Those who labor must rule! Down with the anti-immigrant witchhunt!**

No Discrimination— Defend Immigrant Airport Screeners!

Alongside the airport raids, in December the Federal Aviation Administration mandated criminal background checks by the FBI, INS and other federal agencies for current and prospective employees requiring access to a “secure area.” This device to weed out immigrants, blacks and union activists comes on the heels of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, signed into law the previous month, which “federalizes” airport security. The law’s stipulation that airport security screeners have to be U.S. citizens is an open attack on basic democratic rights, threatening mass firings of thousands of immigrants from the Philippines, Latin America, South Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

This provision aims to extend to “legal” immigrants the kind of repression, like calling in the INS, already routinely used against the undocumented. Such discriminatory measures against non-citizens are of a piece with—and reinforce—the all-sided oppression of black people which is built into this society from the bottom up. Not least, the background checks will have an immediate impact on the many black workers who at some point in their lives were ensnared in the “war on drugs,” which is in reality a war on the ghetto masses.

Big airport subcontractors like Argencbright, Global, International Total Services and Haynes compete for lowest-bidder contracts to provide security and a range of other airport services. Just as black people are often compelled to take low-paying jobs as security guards, immigrants are often the only ones desperate enough to take jobs as screeners, which offer low pay and no benefits. With wages averaging little more than \$6 an hour nationally, turnover is predictably high, with airport screeners staying on the job

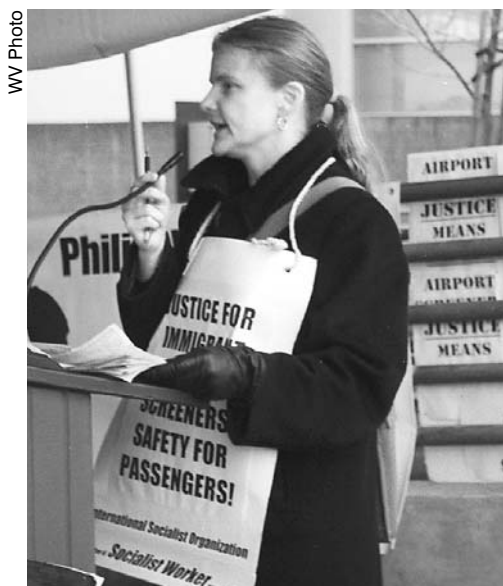
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Cops, Security Guards, Screeners Out of the Unions!



Wyatt Gallery

Airport “anti-terror” crackdown. ISO, shown addressing February 19 Oakland rally, hails union organizing of screeners who serve as auxiliaries of capitalist state.



WV Photo