

Defend China! Imperialists Hands Off!



Hong Kong



AP photos

No to Counterrevolutionary Rampage!

SEPTEMBER 2—For three months, anti-Communist mobs have rampaged through Hong Kong. They have blocked roads and stopped public transport, beaten opponents and Chinese mainlanders and bombarded police with bricks and Molotov cocktails. Protesters have raised mass-distributed placards with the appeal, “President Trump: Please Liberate Hong Kong” while singing the U.S. national anthem and waving American flags. Anti-China demonstrators have vandalized the Legislative Council building and raised the British flag, demanding the return of Hong Kong’s former colonial master. Aiming to end China’s control over its capitalist Hong Kong enclave, protesters are openly calling for imperialist intervention.

The U.S. State Department has repeatedly declared its support to the counter-revolutionary protests, as have the British and Canadian foreign offices. Democratic Congressional leader Nancy Pelosi joined with an array of Republicans in demanding U.S. intervention and pushing punitive legislation against Beijing. The U.S. rulers have funded, advised and helped organize the protesters as part of their strategic goal of overturning the 1949 Revolution and returning China to capitalist enslavement, with themselves as the chief robber barons.

China is not a capitalist country but a workers state. However, the workers state has been deformed from its inception by the rule of a parasitic bureaucratic caste that politically suppresses the working class. Since taking power through peasant-based guerrilla war, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has followed the Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country” and its corollary, “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism. The CCP regime from Mao Zedong’s time to today has opposed the revolutionary internationalist program of Marxism. But despite bureaucratic mismanagement and corruption, the overthrow of capitalism led to historic social advances. While four decades of “market reforms” have led to large-scale foreign

Hong Kong protests are directed against Chinese deformed workers state. Left: Anti-Communists demand U.S. imperialist intervention, July 21. Right: Rioter on August 31, part of rabble that has besieged government offices, transportation hubs and police stations.

investment and the emergence of individual capitalists on the mainland, the economy remains controlled by Beijing, with the most important sectors collectivized and owned by the state.

Today in Hong Kong, we have a military side with the forces of the Chinese deformed workers state, including the police, against the anti-Communist mobilizations. This position stems from our unconditional military defense of China

life-style” would remain unchanged.

Since 1997, Hong Kong has been integrated into the People’s Republic of China as a capitalist Special Administrative Region, where every decisive aspect of the government is under Beijing’s control. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA), garrisoned in the enclave, guarantees that Hong Kong’s Basic Law was established by China’s National People’s Congress, and the territory’s principal executive

sweeps away the Stalinist bureaucracy and puts power in the hands of workers, peasants and soldiers councils. Such a regime would be based on a perspective of international proletarian revolution, preparing the groundwork for eliminating scarcity in a world socialist order.

Imperialist Machinations

Who pays the piper calls the tune, as the saying goes. The U.S. government’s National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has poured millions of dollars into organizations behind the protests, from the Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor and the parties of the “pan-democratic” camp to the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, affiliate of the anti-Communist International Trade Union Confederation. Such organizations are the main components of the Civil Human Rights Front, the chief organizer of the current protests.

Joshua Wong, the Western media’s poster boy for anti-China protests, is also tied to the NED.

As journalist Dan Cohen described in a useful *Grayzone* (17 August) exposé, a key fixture at (and bank-roller of) the protests is Hong Kong tycoon Jimmy Lai. Known as the Rupert Murdoch of Asia, Lai built a media empire based on scandalmongering, celebrity gossip, anti-Communism and anti-China bigotry. His press is notorious for waging a chauvinist campaign against “anchor babies” from mainland China, depicting mainlanders as hordes of locusts descending to devour Hong Kong’s resources. In July, Lai traveled to the U.S. for meetings with National Security Advisor John Bolton, Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, among others, requesting continued U.S. assistance for “resisting” Beijing. He later declared: “We in Hong Kong are fighting for the shared values of the U.S. against China. We are fighting their war in the enemy camp” (CNN, 28 August).

The U.S. and other imperialist powers pursue a multipronged strategy for capitalist counterrevolution in China. One approach is financing and promoting reactionary mobilizations like the Hong Kong protests. Washington also seeks to use its economic might like a battering ram, as in the current tariff war through which the

continued on page 6

Expropriate the Tycoons!

against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution. Such defense does not imply the least political support to the Beijing bureaucracy, whose backing of capitalism in Hong Kong under its “one country, two systems” rubric bears no small responsibility for the current crisis. As Trotskyists who seek to make the working class conscious of its historic task to bring about a socialist future, our perspective is the mobilization of the working people of Hong Kong and mainland China to stop the counterrevolutionary forces.

In 1997, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) joined in cheering as the British imperialists relinquished their Hong Kong colony. At the same time, we warned that the CCP’s pledge to maintain capitalism there was a dagger aimed at the Chinese workers state (see “British Colonialist Rulers Leave, Finally—Beijing Stalinists Embrace Hong Kong Financiers,” WV No. 671, 11 July 1997). In 1984, Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping explicitly promised British prime minister Margaret Thatcher that the “previous capitalist system and

officers are appointed by the central government in Beijing. The members of its highest court are in turn appointed by the Beijing-approved chief executive. The CCP has made itself directly responsible for maintaining capitalism in Hong Kong, where the capitalist class is politically organized, with its own parties, newspapers and other media. Beijing’s policy has nurtured Hong Kong as a breeding ground for counterrevolution and an outpost for imperialist spying and intrigue. Upholding the interests of the Hong Kong bourgeoisie against those they exploit and oppress is a massive betrayal by the CCP of the working people there and on the mainland itself. We say: *Expropriate the tycoons!*

The fight against the filthy rich capitalists in Hong Kong is directly linked to the struggle of the proletariat throughout China against the corruption and inequality fostered by the Stalinist bureaucracy, which acts as a transmission belt for the pressures of the capitalist world market onto the workers state. What’s needed is a proletarian political revolution that



Government Hands Off UAW!

On August 28, the FBI raided the homes of United Auto Workers (UAW) president Gary Jones and his predecessor, Dennis Williams, intensifying the government’s attack on the union and its top leadership. The timing was no accident. The UAW contract with the Big Three automakers (GM, Fiat Chrysler and Ford) is due to expire on September 14. Over 150,000 autoworkers, fed up with the multi-tier wage system, cuts to benefits and the proliferation of temp work, just voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike. The government, under the pretext of rooting out corruption, is attempting to intimidate the membership and launching a pre-emptive assault against any potential struggle.

The job of the capitalist state, including its courts and cops, is to defend the profits, property and rule of the bosses. Any and all state intervention into the internal affairs of the UAW poses a threat to the entire labor movement and must be unequivocally opposed by all union members.

The government campaign against the UAW is aimed at tightening its grip on this major industrial union. The probe began under the Obama administration, shortly after the 2015 contract sellout. The Feds say they are investigating alleged collu-

sion between some UAW officials and auto executives involving stolen funds, bribes and kickbacks. Agents from the Justice, Labor and Treasury Departments have pried deep into the union’s finances and got their hands on hundreds of thousands of union documents and other material. The recent raids, as the *Detroit News* (28 August) noted, raise the prospect that the Feds “could assume oversight of the union under anti-racketeering statutes,” namely RICO, the government’s weapon of choice for assuming sweeping powers over the unions.

Already, several former UAW officials have been convicted, including Norwood Jewell, who headed negotiations with Chrysler four years ago. Last month, Jewell was sentenced to 15 months after pleading guilty to taking money from employers in violation of the Taft-Hartley Act. The primary purpose of that 1947 anti-labor legislation was to purge the reds from the unions and ban militant union tactics like hot cargoing (refusing to handle scab goods). A number of UAW local officials assisted the prosecution against Jewell. Such cooperation only gives aid



WV Photo
Spartacist literature table at Detroit Labor Day rally, days after UAW members voted overwhelmingly to authorize strike.

and comfort to the class enemy as it seeks to cripple the union.

The bureaucrats sitting atop the UAW and other unions are craven and pro-capitalist, and many siphon off union

dues for personal gain. But their corruption is rooted in their program: the union tops sell out the working class every day by pushing a partnership with the bosses and throw away far more dues money to fill the election coffers of capitalist politicians, particularly the Democrats. There needs to be a struggle *within* the unions against the class collaborationism of the labor officialdom.

The betrayals of UAW misleaders have for decades resulted in one defeat after another. The Obama administration’s 2009 bailout of the auto industry, aided and abetted by the UAW brass, was a major blow against the union, opening the door to massive layoffs and forced retirements so the auto giants could take maximum advantage of the low-wage tier for new hires. With many union members itching to walk out in 2015 when the no-strike pledge imposed in the bailout was up, the UAW tops rammed through rotten deals that added more tiers; Chrysler workers were forced to vote a second time after the initial offer was rejected by a two-to-one margin.

For the unions to become instruments of militant struggle against the bosses requires a fight to oust the pro-capitalist union tops and replace them with a new, class-struggle leadership based on the complete independence of the working class from the bosses’ state and its political parties. ***Labor must clean its own house! Feds, get your dirty hands off the UAW! ■***

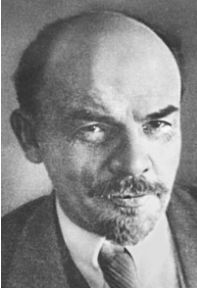


TROTSKY

Trotskyist Defense of the Workers States

Writing at the outbreak of World War II, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky underlined how revolutionary Marxists must strive to win the international proletariat to defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state. Such defense, based on the collectivized property forms in the Soviet Union, did not constitute political support to the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy, which had renounced the struggle for workers revolution interna-

tionally. The Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense against imperialism and counterrevolution and for proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucracy today applies to China and the other remaining deformed workers states of Cuba, North Korea, Laos and Vietnam.



LENIN

Mistakes on the question of defense of the USSR most frequently flow from an incorrect understanding of the methods of “defense.” Defense of the USSR does not at all mean rapprochement with the Kremlin bureaucracy, the acceptance of its politics, or a conciliation with the politics of her allies. In this question, as in all others, we remain completely on the ground of the international class struggle....

We are not a government party; we are the party of irreconcilable opposition, not only in capitalist countries but also in the USSR. Our tasks, among them the “defense of the USSR,” we realize not through the medium of bourgeois governments and not even through the government of the USSR, but exclusively through the education of the masses through agitation, through explaining to the workers what they should defend and what they should overthrow. Such a “defense” cannot give immediate miraculous results. But we do not even pretend to be miracle workers. As things stand, we are a revolutionary minority. Our work must be directed so that the workers on whom we have influence should correctly appraise events, not permit themselves to be caught unawares, and prepare the general sentiment of their own class for the revolutionary solution of the tasks confronting us.

The defense of the USSR coincides for us with the preparation of world revolution. Only those methods are permissible which do not conflict with the interests of the revolution. The defense of the USSR is related to the world socialist revolution as a tactical task is related to a strategic one. A tactic is subordinated to a strategic goal and in no case can be in contradiction to the latter.

—Leon Trotsky, “The USSR in War” (September 1939), published in *In Defense of Marxism* (1942)

Workers Vanguard Subscription Drive

August 15 to October 9			
Local	Quota (in points)	Week 2 (Aug. 23-29)	%
Bay Area	300	126	42%
Chicago	200	77	39%
Los Angeles	200	21	11%
New York	700	87	12%
National Total	1,400	311	22%



Subscribe Now!

☐ \$10/21 issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*) International rate: \$25/21 issues

☐ \$2/6 introductory issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)

☐ \$2/4 issues of *Espartaco* (en español) (includes Spanish-language *Spartacist* and, in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, *suplementos en español de Workers Vanguard*)

☐ I would like to contribute \$_____ to the production of *Workers Vanguard*.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

1160

Make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

Purchase *Workers Vanguard* subscriptions online at: icl-fi.org/subscribe/wv

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Liz Gordon

EDITOR: Michael Davisson

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

EDITORIAL BOARD: Jeanne Mitchell (managing editor), François Donau (production manager), Edie Goldberg (letters editor), Mónica Mora (Spanish-language editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Paul Cone, Walter Jennings, Michael Joyce, Jane Kerrigan, Alan Wilde, Laura Zamora

The Spartacist League is the U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) is published biweekly, except skipping issues in January, June, July, August and December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 1618, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. Email address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscription: \$10/21 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is September 3.

No. 1160

6 September 2019

Spartacist League/SYC Forum

No Illusions in the Democratic Party!

For Free, Quality, Integrated Public Education for All!

School Segregation and the Legacy of Slavery

NEW YORK CITY

Saturday, October 5, 3 p.m.

Brooklyn Friends Meeting House • 110 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn
(2, 3, 4, 5 to Borough Hall Station or A,C,F,R to Jay St./Metrotech)

For information: (212) 267-1025 • nysl@tiac.net

Mexico: Lessons of the Maquiladora Strike Wave



Julia Le Duc

Striking workers block entrance at Mecalux plant in Matamoros to keep out scabs and management, February 20.

The following article is an edited translation of a presentation by a comrade of the Grupo Espartaquista de México at Spartacist League/U.S. forums in Los Angeles and Oakland in June. It was delivered in Spanish and translated into English at the events.

The 20/32 strike movement in Matamoros from January to April was the most important working-class rebellion in decades in Mexico. Its name comes from its demands for a 20 percent wage increase and a bonus of 32,000 pesos [about \$1,600]. Matamoros is a municipality of Tamaulipas, a state that shares a 230-mile border with the United States, one of the most important borders in Latin America for trade with the U.S.

In Matamoros, which is across from Brownsville, Texas, the maquiladoras represent 70 percent of the city's economy. There are around 110 maquiladora plants, grouped in four gigantic industrial parks. Outrageously, more than 70 percent of its residents live in poverty.

Before the 20/32 Movement, Mexican president Andres Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) had issued a decree doubling the daily minimum wage in the border zone, to about 180 pesos. The decree did not benefit these workers, since many already earned that amount. But the bosses used it as a way to avoid paying a bonus and negotiating an annual wage raise. This dirty maneuver by the bosses had the support of Juan Villafuerte, the leader of the Sindicato de Jornaleros y Obreros Industriales de la Industria Maquiladora (SJOIIM), part of the Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM).

On January 12, the workers began wild-cat strikes in 45 maquiladoras organized by the SJOIIM as well as three other unions, all part of the CTM. These strikes were in defiance of bourgeois legality and the union leaderships.

The victorious 20/32 strike wave brought the bosses to their knees. It spread to around 70 plants, to the workers of Coca-Cola, to retail stores, to garbage collectors and even to three steel mills whose workers are part of the miners and metal workers union. Demonstrating their social power by stopping production, the workers not only brought to a standstill a section of the Mexican economy but also threatened the profits of U.S. imperialist titans. They forced the owners of the maquiladoras to accept their demands in the majority of the factories, despite the mobilization of scabs by the bosses. In the case of the miners and metal workers union, its members won a bonus of 40,000 pesos in addition to a wage increase.

Nevertheless, the bourgeois parasites have not let this proletarian victory pass without consequences: the state government under the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) unleashed repression against four ongoing strikes. In addition, close to 5,000 workers have been fired and black-listed. We say: Rehire all those fired now! We stand for union control of hiring and training, for a sliding scale of wages proportional to prices and for a sliding scale

For a Class-Struggle Leadership of the Unions!

of work hours to distribute the available work. Similarly, we call for an extensive program of public works to combat massive chronic unemployment.

The GEM sent a team to intervene in the strikes in Matamoros with the revolutionary program of the International Communist League, insisting on the need for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist state and

repress the strikes." But AMLO upholds and defends private property and the bourgeois order. He is an enemy of the working class: as mayor of Mexico City, he went after the public workers union and the metro workers.

Another example of illusions in the state is to conceive of it as a neutral arbiter between social classes. In fact, the bourgeois state is the machinery of repression



AFP

Ciudad Juárez, 2017: Maquiladora operated by Delphi (now Aptiv), the former parts division of General Motors.

all capitalist parties—the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), PAN, Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) and Movimiento Regeneración Nacional (Morena). This perspective is counterposed to that of our reformist opponents, the union bureaucracy and Susana Prieto Terrazas, a lawyer from Ciudad Juárez who emerged as an alternative to the reviled CTM leadership. We seek to dispel any illusions among workers and the oppressed that the bourgeois regime of López Obrador will serve their interests.

Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Populism

The illusions in AMLO and the capitalist state headed by him are linked to the ideology of nationalism and are obstacles to raising the consciousness of the working class. The workers of Matamoros see AMLO as an ally in the fight against the bosses, but he is a bourgeois politician and his Morena party is a capitalist party like the PRI, PAN and PRD. Some even thought that AMLO had decreed the 20 percent wage increase won by the strikers. They told us, "It is a presidential order that has to be fulfilled." Others argued that AMLO was combating "corruption," helping the workers or at least "would not

Prieto, who has begged AMLO to become the president she always dreamed of, announced she will sue the CTM and demands government audits of the unions—a grotesque call for the state to intervene in working-class organizations. When the state intervenes in the unions, it does not do so in order to make them more "transparent" or "democratic" but rather to tighten its control, or to destroy them outright. Workers must oppose any and every interference by the courts into the unions. We are opposed to binding arbitration, to the *toma de nota* by which the government validates new union officials and to state control of union dues collection. Similarly, we oppose AMLO's new "labor reform," which seeks to tighten the state's grip on the unions, their leadership and their finances.

López Obrador's establishment of a *Guardia Nacional*, a national police force under military command, reinforces the state and the militarization of the country. AMLO also continues the infamous "war on drugs," a repressive assault pushed by the U.S. to increase control of its "backyard." AMLO's actions have further undermined the rights of the population and are a threat in particular against social activists and union militants.

We are for the decriminalization of drugs, which will eliminate the enormous profits derived from the illegal and clandestine nature of drug trafficking. It would reduce crime and other social pathologies associated with the drug trade. We are also opposed to gun control, which assures the state and criminals a monopoly on arms. Down with the militarization of Mexico!

In underdeveloped capitalist countries, such as Mexico, the weak national bourgeoisie is subordinated to imperialism and is unable to break free. Occasionally, the bourgeoisie leans on the proletariat when it seeks to renegotiate the terms of its subordination. However, they fear the proletariat most of all, because it is the only force that can end bourgeois rule and throw off the imperialist yoke. Thus, AMLO supports deepening the pillage of Mexico by the NAFTA/USMCA "free trade" agreement, and at the same time offers crumbs to keep the workers in line.

continued on page 4

Memorial gathering in honor of our comrade

James Robertson

1928-2019



Bay Area, CA • Sunday, November 3

For more information, call (212) 732-7861
or email vanguard@tiac.net

(continued from page 3)

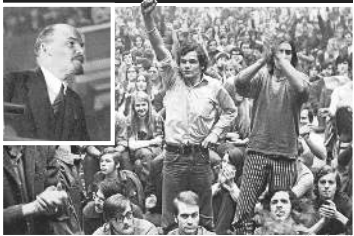
The only real allies of the Mexican proletariat are the workers of the rest of the world, in particular the multiracial U.S. working class. The Matamoros strikes demonstrated the need for joint struggle on both sides of the border. It would have given a powerful impetus to the labor movement in both countries if American workers in factories that belong to the same integrated production chains had struck in solidarity with the Mexican workers.

Matamoros, Imperialism and Exploitation

NAFTA was signed by the Democrat Bill Clinton. The Democratic Party is a party of U.S. imperialism just like the Republican Party. This agreement was part of a capitalist offensive on a world scale detonated by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92, a gigantic defeat for the workers of the world. As Lenin taught us, imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism, characterized by the formation of monopolies, the export of finance capital and the division and re-division of the world among a handful of powers with armies and navies to enforce their interests.

SPARTACIST 
NÚMERO 40 SEPTIEMBRE DE 2017 EDICIÓN EN ESPAÑOL

La lucha por el leninismo sobre la cuestión nacional



La batalla contra la hidra chovinista
Documento de la VII Conferencia Internacional de la LCI

Spanish edition

No. 40, September 2017

\$1 (32 pages)

Spanish-language *Spartacist* is sent to all *Espartaco* subscribers.

Make checks payable/mail to:
Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377
GPO, New York, NY 10116

Together with our comrades of the SL/U.S. and the Ligue trotskyste/Trotskyist League in Quebec and Canada, the GEM has opposed NAFTA from the beginning, and we also oppose the USMCA, which Trump wants to use to increase imperialist plunder. Down with NAFTA/USMCA!

in areas far from the furnace! Workers regularly become dehydrated and faint. During aluminum casting, red-hot drops of molten metal fall on their bodies, burning them. In addition, they handle toxic substances, and the hated bosses only give them dust masks. We say: For union control of safety!

For a Class-Struggle Union Leadership!

In addition, while the union bureaucrats were “negotiating,” they tried to persuade the workers to abandon the strike. In fact, they outright threatened the workers. However, the strikers, without hesitation, forced the false union leaders to present their demands to the bosses, and in some cases, even appointed committees to ensure they did so.

Some workers equate the company with the union, so they prefer not to be members. But trade unions are the defense organizations of the working class. They must not be thrown out because they have a sellout leadership. What is necessary is a political fight to forge class-struggle union leaderships that understand that the interests of the proletariat and of the bourgeoisie cannot be reconciled. The workers must clean their own house! Organize the unorganized!

The main crimes of the union bureaucrats—whether corporatist or “independent,” whether tied to the PRI, the PRD or Morena—are abject class collaboration and subordination of the working class to the capitalists. In order to break the corporatist shackles, it is necessary to fight against all measures that subordinate the unions to the bourgeois state.

The struggle for internal democracy in the unions and for their independence from the state and the bourgeois parties cannot be separated from the struggle for revolutionary leadership. As Trotsky himself explained: "In the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can be really independent only to the extent that they are conscious of being, in action, the organs of proletarian revolution."

Internationalist Group: Pseudo-Trotskyist Union Busters

During the GEM's intervention in Matamoros, we sought to raise the consciousness of workers. In contrast, the Internationalist Group (IG) stands on the side of the bosses, dismissing powerful unions because of the violent methods and party affiliation of their false leaderships. Sharing the union-busting line that is widespread among the pseudo-left, the IG considers corporatist unions to be state institutions and labor police agencies and has criminally refused to defend them when under state attack. Such was the case with the miners and metal workers union and its leader, Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, in 2006.

According to these opportunists, the PRI's corporatist unions, such as the SJOIIM, are not workers organizations but the "class enemy." The IG capitulates to nationalist populism through the "independent" union bureaucracies, as can clearly be seen in its years-long tailing of the CNTE teachers union leadership.

Denigrating the struggle of the Matamoros workers, the IG says that the owners “told the SJOIM and its general secretary, Villafuerte, to call an official strike in order to better control it” (*Internationalist*, Winter 2019). It was the union members who imposed their will on the leadership, forcing it to declare a strike. If

To justify its despicable union-busting line, this pseudo-Trotskyist outfit abuses the authority of Trotsky, quoting him: “In Mexico the trade unions have been transformed by law into semistate institutions and have, in the nature of things, assumed a semitotalitarian character.”

But it does not follow from the above that the unions have changed their class nature. On the contrary, the same article, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" (1940), states:

"From the foregoing it seems, at first sight, easy to draw the conclusion that the trade unions cease to be trade unions in the imperialist epoch. They leave almost no room at all for workers' democracy. . . . "In the absence of workers' democracy there cannot be any free struggle for influence over the trade union membership. And because of this, the chief arena of work for revolutionists within the trade unions disappears. Such a position, however, would be false to the core. . . . "The matter at issue is essentially the struggle for influence over the working class. Every organization, every party, every faction which permits itself an ultimistic position in relation to the trade union, i.e., in essence turns its back upon the working class, merely because of displeasure with its organization, every such organization is destined to perish. And it must be said it deserves to perish."

In many maquiladoras in Matamoros, courageous women workers were the vanguard of the leadership and defense of the strikes. Like all other proletarian women, they suffer double oppression, because of their class and their sex. After exhausting shifts in the factory, they have to take care of their kids and complete domestic chores. Women's wages are 30 percent lower than men's, which are already meager.

To get hired, women are asked for pregnancy tests; and to keep the job, they have to undergo humiliating checkups. If they become pregnant, doctors lie about the due date in order to make them work as long as possible. As a result, some women end up giving birth in the factories. Harassment and sexual abuse by the bosses and their minions are the rule.

We Spartacists fight for full equality for women, for their total integration into the workforce and for equal pay for equal work. Also, for free abortion on demand for those who request it and for quality medical services for all. We oppose the threats made by AMLO to hold a referendum on the right to an abortion. In deeply male chauvinist and Catholic Mexico, such a referendum would result in a ban on this medical procedure.

As Marxists, we understand that the special oppression of women developed with class-divided society and the patriarchal monogamous family as a means of ensuring the inheritance of private property. Under capitalism, the family functions as the economic unit of society and is the basis for women's oppression, along with the bourgeois state and religion. The fight for women's emancipation is strategic to proletarian revolution. The family cannot be abolished, it must be replaced under socialism.

A society of material abundance, with an internationally planned and collectivized economy, would make possible the socialization of childcare and domestic tasks, including by providing childcare centers, public kitchens and collective laundries. Women would be able to participate fully in social and political life.

The liberation of women and of all the exploited and oppressed requires a socialist revolution and its international extension. To this end, the proletariat must cease to be a class in itself—one defined simply by its relation to the means of production—and instead become a class for itself, conscious that it must take power and begin to create a socialist society. The indispensable instrument to instill this consciousness within the working class is a Leninist-Trotskyist party. The objective of the GEM, the SL/U.S. and the rest of the ICL, is to build revolutionary parties, the national sections of a reformed Fourth International, that are capable of leading the working class to power. ■

Internationalist Group: Anglo-Chauvinist Trash Hate Quebec Independence, Hate the ICL

The following article is translated from an August 2019 supplement of *République ouvrière*, French-language newspaper of our comrades of the *Ligue trotskyste/Trotskyist League in Quebec and Canada*. The translation originally appeared in *Workers Tribune No. 2 (Summer/Fall 2019)*, the *TLQC's English-language press*.

A lying and defamatory polemic against the *République ouvrière* article “Down With Racist Attacks on Muslims!” (No. 3, Winter/Spring 2019) was published in June by the U.S. Internationalist Group (IG), an organization well versed in slanders against the International Communist League (ICL), of which we are the section in Quebec and Canada. Written in “English only,” for an audience unfamiliar with Quebec or outright hostile to its national liberation struggle, this screed titled “The ICL Against Asylum for Refugees in Quebec” (*Internationalist*, May-June 2019) accuses us of being racists who supposedly support deportations of refugees. This is a grotesque accusation, an evident lie for anyone who reads the *RO* article which affirmed: “*Down with the deportations! Full citizenship rights for everyone here!*” In fact, the IG’s smear serves to hide (very poorly) their liberal, pro-Trudeau and anti-Québécois positions and to vilify the real communists as racists among leftists and in the workers movement, seeking to provoke censorship and ultimately violence against us.

The IG attacks the following statement in the *RO* article [reprinted in *WV* No. 1156, 31 May]:

“[Quebec premier François] Legault’s anti-immigrant measures, including the recent cancellation of 18,000 immigration applications, are an integral part of his racist attacks to divide workers. This poison must be fought in the working class. However, the struggle for Quebec to have its independent state cannot be separated from the struggle to control its borders. Thus, Legault’s current demand that immigration, which is now under federal jurisdiction, be brought back under the jurisdiction of Quebec is legitimate from this standpoint.”

According to the IG, this means that “the ICL openly supports the ‘legitimate’ right of a bourgeois government to turn back refugees in order to control the borders of an independent state, which, moreover, does not even exist!” (in bold in original)—adding that we are “aligning with the most retrograde elements of the bourgeoisie, including fascists and racists” and lumping us together “with the Trumps and Legaults of the world.” What repugnant slanders! It is the IG, driven by their Anglo chauvinism and “fight the right” appetites, which falsely introduces this equation between defending Quebec’s right to control its borders and support for the immigration policies of a bourgeois government.

Border control is one of the essential attributes of sovereignty; so if Quebec can wrest concessions from the federal government in this sense it is indeed legitimate, even if partial and reversible. That’s what enrages the IG: our position flows from our struggle for the national liberation of Quebec, an integral part of the Leninist goal of being a tribune of all the oppressed in the general fight against capitalist exploitation. For their part, the IG opposes the liberation of Quebec, no matter what statements they may occasionally make on paper. (In fact, their odious polemic doesn’t even mention Quebec’s right to self-determination...much less independence.) For the IG, *any* consistent

defense of nations oppressed in multinational states amounts to “bourgeois nationalism.” It is in this same framework that they also oppose independence for Catalonia.

By denying Quebec the right to control its borders, even partially, the IG lines up in the camp of [Canadian prime minister Justin] Trudeau and supports the lie that the immigration policies of “united Canada” are fundamentally more humanitarian and less racist. This is shown in their polemic, with its thinly veiled salute to

The IG likes to give advice to these racist bourgeois imperialists about a more “humane” migration policy, the logic of which is a liberal position of “opening the borders,” a utopian and reactionary program. An example of this is their accusation, repeated in their lying article, that the ICL is indifferent to the fate of refugees in Europe because we do not specifically call for the abolition of Dublin III (an agreement on migratory flows within the EU). In fact, by selecting particular EU regulations to oppose, the IG prop-



Steve Liss

Montreal, 1990: Over a quarter-million people march for Quebec independence.

Trudeau and his pretensions to be helping refugees. The IG all but praises him for having temporarily suspended some deportations to Haiti and Syria, only complaining that this was done for “diplomatic” reasons, without mentioning or condemning the fact that he had already deported hundreds of Haitians, among others!

The IG’s abject slanders are simply an echo of the English Canadian bourgeoisie. The latter always seek to use ethnic minorities, who they oppress horribly, to condemn any expression of Quebec sovereignty under the cover of “multiculturalism.” In other words, they peddle the hackneyed lie that the Québécois are just a “tribal” band of backward racists who must be brought into line through anglophone imperialist “fair play,” which is oh-so-“civilized” (and covered with blood).

Such positions aren’t fundamentally new for the IG. Founded by defectors from our organization in the 1990s, and in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union, this group is mainly characterized by a rejection of the struggle for a Leninist vanguard, and by its capitulations to imperialism and various reformist or populist forces. Regarding the national question, the IG upholds retrograde positions with which we ourselves have broken—and for which Jan Norden, today the IG’s *líder maximo*, was in large part responsible (see “The Struggle Against the Chauvinist Hydra,” *Spartacist* [English edition] No. 65, Summer 2017). The IG’s real program is the forced assimilation of small nations and support for “liberal” representatives of imperialism, of which Trudeau is the most honeyed and hypocritical expression, but which also includes the U.S. Democratic Party and imperialists of the European Union (EU) like [Emmanuel] Macron and [Angela] Merkel.

the countries they oppress, the better to exploit them. The British colonialists, for instance, took care of this from Ireland to India, not to mention French Canada. For their descendants in the Canadian bourgeoisie, “opening the borders” of Quebec has always aimed at drowning the Québécois in a tide of English-speaking immigrants (or those who would integrate in English). Hence the hysteria against Law 101, which the IG also opposes.

Only the independence of Quebec can really solve the language question, but we support Law 101 [which makes French the official language of Quebec] as a partial expression of self-determination and a defensive measure by the oppressed nation. We support the fact that immigrants who arrive in Quebec integrate through learning French, and demand free, quality bilingual programs as a rational method to help immigrant students make the transition from their mother tongue to French. The IG’s starting point is great-power chauvinism: while they oppose in practice the national rights, including language rights, of the oppressed Québécois nation, they demand the imposition of French...in *Algeria*, with the same status as Arabic and Tamazight (see *Internationalist*, May-June 2019)!

The horrible situation faced by millions of refugees around the world flows precisely from imperialist oppression of the colonial and semicolonial countries. To ask these same imperialist bourgeoisies to be more welcoming to desperate refugees only sows illusions in the possibility of reforming the imperialist system. We seek to build a binational, multiethnic workers party, dedicated to world socialist revolution, which would seek to mobilize the social power of the working class to fight against deportations and for full citizenship rights for immigrants.

As we explained in an article published by our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. more than 40 years ago, “The Leninist Policy Toward Immigration/Emigration” (*Workers Vanguard* No. 36, 18 January 1974):

“What communists have to say to the impoverished masses of the backward countries is that the answer to their desperate social conditions does not lie in an individual ticket to the U.S. or Western Europe, but rather in an international socialist revolution which is the necessary precondition to the economic reorganization of human society through freeing the productive forces from the fetter of private ownership.”

As long as the capitalist state exists, it will control the flow of migration according to the interests of the capitalist class. Sowing illusions about this state of affairs, as does the IG, undermines the understanding that the capitalist state—the cops, army, prison and border guards—is the mortal enemy of the proletariat and that it must be overthrown through workers revolution. With their lying slanders that defend the imperialist oppressors, the right-wing centrists of the IG are a particularly repugnant obstacle to this perspective. ■

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

Website: www.icl-fi.org • Email address: vanguard@tiac.net

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

Chicago Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (312) 563-0441

Los Angeles Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029
slsycla@sbcglobal.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (213) 380-8239

New York Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008
nysl@tiac.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (212) 267-1025

Oakland Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604
slbayarea@fastmail.net
Public Office: by appointment, call (510) 839-0851

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE IN QUEBEC AND CANADA

Montréal CP 83 Succ. Place-d’Armes, Montréal, QC H2Y 3E9, (514) 728-7578
trotskyste.montreal@gmail.com

Toronto Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138
trotskyist.toronto@gmail.com

Vancouver Box 2717, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2, (604) 687-0353
tl.vancouver.bc@gmail.com

Hong Kong...

(continued from page 1)

Trump administration, with solid backing from the Democrats, aims to thwart China’s economic and technological development (see “U.S. Imperialists Ramp Up Trade/Tech War,” WV No. 1157, 21 June). At the same time, the U.S. is increasing military pressure on China, conducting regular military exercises near the Chinese coast, flying bombers over the South China Sea and repeatedly sending Navy warships through the Taiwan Strait. These moves are all part of a strategy of military encirclement of China by the U.S. and its allies.

The State Department recently approved Taiwan’s requests to buy \$2.2 billion dollars’ worth of tanks and missiles and \$8 billion in advanced fighter jets. From the time of the 1949 Revolution, when the Chinese capitalist regime fled to Taiwan, and the onset of the Korean War the following year, the U.S. has viewed the island as its “unsinkable aircraft carrier,” the front line in a future war. The ICL stands for the revolutionary reunification of Taiwan with China, through social revolution to overthrow capitalism in Taiwan and workers political revolution against the CCP bureaucracy on the mainland.

As revolutionaries in the world’s predominant imperialist power, the Spartacist League/U.S. is dedicated to forging a Leninist vanguard party that can lead the multiracial American working class in the struggle for a workers government that would expropriate the capitalist exploiters. Central to this perspective is winning



Civic Party

Washington, D.C., March 27: Anson Chan, former chief secretary of Hong Kong under British colonial rule, meets Democrat Nancy Pelosi. Her delegation plotted with imperialist politicians, spymasters against Beijing control of Hong Kong.

between Hong Kong and every country in the world that did not already have such an agreement. By treating mainland China like a foreign country, the law fell entirely within the CCP’s framework of maintaining a distinct capitalist administration in Hong Kong. The ICL has no position on this legislation because we do not seek to advise the Beijing bureaucracy on how best to administer capitalism in Hong Kong, since we oppose it remaining a capitalist enclave.

The Hong Kong demonstrators and their spin doctors in the bourgeois media have raised holy hell about supposed police violence. From the likes of the *New York Times*, this is sheer hypocrisy. In reality, the Hong Kong police have been highly restrained, focused on containing and dispersing protests rather than stopping them. Compare their conduct with the

the richest man in Hong Kong, as well as several real estate tycoons and some banking interests have recently called for calm. They worry that the chaos around the protests is harming business. More broadly, several bourgeois financial analysts have warned that intervention by the PLA—or by the People’s Armed Police stationed across the border in Shenzhen—to stop the unrest would cause capital flight and other damage to Hong Kong’s economy.

Hong Kong under the tycoons has well earned its reputation as a white-collar sweatshop, where office workers routinely slave away for 12 hours a day with eight hours’ pay. With the CCP’s blessing, a frenzy of land speculation has driven up rents to the extent that working adults are unable to leave their parents’ homes, often sharing tiny rooms with several people. In one of the most expensive cities in the world, full of designer shops and luxury hotels, a fifth of the population falls below the poverty line. “Immigrants” from the mainland constitute some of the most oppressed sectors of the population, while the plight of Hong Kong’s hundreds of thousands of domestic workers, overwhelmingly from the Philippines and Indonesia, shines an especially harsh light on the enclave’s class divide. Meanwhile, venal CCP bureaucrats and their cronies and relations use Hong Kong to park their money or channel it out of China, and also as a venue for shopping sprees.

Hong Kong’s toilers should be a natural ally of the powerful and combative proletariat on the mainland. An authentic communist party in China would mobilize the working class against the counter-revolutionary protests on the basis of the workers’ class interests, championing as well the interests of the oppressed petty bourgeoisie. Expropriating the tycoons and converting their property holdings into low-cost public housing would resonate deeply with the population, as would replacing the luxury shops and restaurants with canteens and cooperatives run by and for working people.

These demands cut against the CCP’s class collaboration with the Hong Kong bourgeoisie, which has been the political basis for the relatively small pro-China counterprotests that have taken place in Hong Kong and internationally. The counterprotests have been designed to be compatible with the interests of the tycoons, whose “patriotism” hinges on their ability to reap profits from their investments on the mainland. The CCP also appeals to patriotism in calling for an end to protests. The Stalinists do not call on the working class to act: As a brittle

ruling caste, the Beijing bureaucracy fears that workers’ mobilizations would represent a challenge to its rule.

For the CCP, maintaining capitalism in Hong Kong serves to promote foreign investment on the mainland by reassuring overseas capitalists that it’s safe to do business with China. Hong Kong remains a major hub connecting China with the global capitalist economy. Beijing’s policy toward Hong Kong is in keeping with its opening of whole areas of China to investment by the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie and the imperialist powers, including in the Special Economic Zones.

Any isolated workers state would need to seek foreign investment. Under revolutionary leadership, this would be done under the democratic control of the working class organized in soviets (councils), supported in countries like China by peasants councils. A revolutionary workers and peasants government in China would renegotiate the terms of foreign investment in the interests of working people. The domestic capitalists, on the other hand, would simply be expropriated and their property used in the interests of society as a whole. To defend and extend the gains of the 1949 Revolution, such a regime would strengthen central economic planning and re-establish a state monopoly of foreign trade.

Which Class Will Rule?

In Hong Kong, one of the most ardent champions of “democratic” counterrevolution is Socialist Action (SA), which fraudulently passes itself off as Trotskyist. (Along with the U.S. Socialist Alternative, SA is part of the self-declared majority of the recently split Committee for a Workers’ International, CWI.) Writing off China as capitalist, SA has issued a series of leaflets offering tactical advice to the protest organizers and calling “for united mass struggle of Hong Kong and China people against the CCP dictatorship” (chinaworker.info, 19 July). SA’s main “contribution” has been to agitate for a one-day general strike to bring down the Hong Kong government and defeat the CCP regime. Their program, in short, is to sell out the workers to their direct class enemies: the Hong Kong bourgeoisie and its imperialist godfathers.

In fact, the counterrevolutionary protests have been overwhelmingly based on the petty bourgeoisie and hostile to the working class. The much-touted August 5 “general strike,” preceded by a “bankers strike” on August 1, was primarily a mobilization of students, lawyers, accountants, teachers and other professionals. Many employers encouraged their staff to take the day off and participate. The city was paralyzed as protesters blocked traffic and stopped public transport, threatening transport workers. Likewise, workers were attacked during the airport occupation of August 12-13, when hundreds of flights were stopped at one of the world’s busiest airports. Protesters have also vandalized the offices of the pro-Beijing Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions.

Embracing the call for free elections, which is aimed at toppling the Beijing-loyal local administration, SA is solidly in the camp of counterrevolution in Hong Kong. There it unites with people demanding that the enclave either become a protectorate of U.S. imperialism or return to the days of British rule, when the mass of the Chinese population lived in squalid slums and slaved away as dirt-poor labor-



Reuters

Hong Kong, June 30: People’s Liberation Army soldiers on Stonecutters Island naval base.

the most advanced layers of the proletariat to oppose its rulers’ machinations around the world, not least those directed against the Chinese deformed workers state. Workers can’t win new gains without defending those already won!

“One Country, Two Systems”: Danger to the Chinese Revolution

To launch the current wave of anti-China protests, organizers in late spring seized on an extradition bill being debated in Hong Kong’s Legislative Council, claiming that it would undermine the territory’s autonomy. The proposed law would have done no such thing. The measure, which was suspended in June, would have simply established an extradition process—not just between Hong Kong and the rest of China but also

brutal cop state of siege that descended on Ferguson, Missouri, after protests broke out over the racist police killing of Michael Brown in 2014!

In Hong Kong, the restraint of the police expresses the policy of the CCP bureaucracy. The organizers of the protests are aiming for the overthrow of the Chinese deformed workers state. But Beijing is at pains to respect Hong Kong’s formal autonomy, which is written into its “one country, two systems” pact with the enclave’s capitalists and their imperialist masters. However, rather than appeasing the protesters, the CCP bureaucrats’ concessions have only emboldened them.

The Hong Kong bourgeoisie is not of one mind concerning the protests. While Jimmy Lai and his ilk openly support the mobilizations, Li Ka-shing,

CORRECTION

In “NYC Schools: Separate and Unequal” (WV No. 1157, 21 June), we incorrectly stated, “It was once a crime punishable by death to teach a slave to read.” This statement is too sweeping. Punishments varied from state to state, ranging from heavy fines to imprisonment and whippings. For most of the period before the defeat of the slavocracy in the Civil War, the death penalty for promoting slave literacy was not on the books of any state. However, the 1831 Nat Turner rebellion, along with the spread of abolitionist literature that flooded the South, struck fear into the hearts of the slave masters. As a result, Virginia strengthened its anti-literacy laws so that the death penalty could be imposed.

In some cases, state statutes also mandated punishments for slaves caught reading or writing; however, the plantation owners often took matters into their own hands, meting out all manner of cruelties. Defiantly, many slaves like Frederick Douglass devised creative methods to learn how to read and write as an important step toward freedom. Douglass went on to become one of the most eloquent leaders of the abolitionist movement.

CLARIFICATION

The article “Quebec: Down With Anti-Muslim Headscarf Bill!” (WV No. 1156, 31 May), translated from *République ouvrière* No. 3 (Winter/Spring 2019), the French-language newspaper of the Ligue trotskyste/Trotskyist League in Quebec and Canada, denounced the push by the new Quebec government to “ban the wearing of religious symbols by teachers, judges and police officers.” It went on to identify the cops and courts as a core part of the capitalist state machinery of repression. However, as *Workers Tribune* (No. 2, Summer/Fall 2019), the TLQC’s English-language paper, noted: “The article bore a weakness in that it did not distinguish clearly between teachers on the one hand, and police officers and judges on the other, all of whom the now enacted Bill 21 falsely puts on the same plane as ‘state employees’ with the same ‘position of authority.’ We oppose this racist law regardless of who it applies to, but the false equation between teachers and those carrying out the repressive functions of the state only serves to cover for the true target: Muslim women teachers.”

ers while Communists and trade-union militants were systematically repressed. Only in the lead-up to the handover to China did the British rulers grant a modicum of democratic rights, to be used as a weapon against the Chinese workers state.

SA's program for Hong Kong and China is in line with the sordid history of the CWI, which avidly supported the imperialists' campaigns against the Soviet degenerated workers state. In August-September 1991, the CWI's forebears in the Militant tendency joined the capitalist restorationists on Boris Yeltsin's barricades in Moscow. In contrast, our Trotskyist international tendency fought in defense of the workers state, distributing tens of thousands of leaflets calling on Soviet workers to crush the counterrevolutionary forces led by Yeltsin and backed by the George H.W. Bush White House.

The question posed by the crisis in Hong Kong is not "dictatorship or democracy" but "which class will rule?" In their drive to destroy the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East and Central Europe, the imperialists promoted all manner of reactionary forces, including those who waved the banner of "democracy" against Stalinist "totalitarianism." The purpose was to overthrow the Communist regimes by one means or another, including using elections in which peasants and other petty-bourgeois layers as well as politically backward workers could be mobilized against the workers states.

A glimpse of what awaits China's toiling masses if the 1949 Revolution were to be overturned can be seen today in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, where living standards have been massively thrown back and where such "democracy" as exists is a paper-thin facade for the class dictatorship that defines all capitalist societies. A quarter-century after capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, China is the largest of the remaining countries where capitalist rule has been overthrown. Capitalist counterrevolution in China would be a further massive victory for world imperialism and a defeat for workers and the oppressed across the globe.

The call for bourgeois democracy is a call for counterrevolution. We are for proletarian democracy—a government of elected workers, peasants and soldiers councils that would make decisions about the development of the economy and the organization of society. Under the leadership of China's massive working class, non-proletarian sectors such as the peasants and Hong Kong's office workers would in fact have far more of a voice in how society is run than they do in any capitalist republic. As Lenin explained of the 1917 October Revolution that brought the working class to power in Russia:

"The bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been put in control of the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets have been authorised to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough



for all the oppressed classes to recognise that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic."
—*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918)

The True Legacy of Tiananmen

SA and the CIA-backed protesters as a whole falsely link their counterrevolutionary efforts with the specter of "June 4," the 1989 proletarian upheaval centered on Beijing's Tiananmen Square that was bloodily suppressed by the CCP regime of Deng Xiaoping. SA & Co. present the 1989 upheaval as a mass movement



Everett Collection
Communists march through streets of Guangzhou in southern China during 1949 Revolution. Banner reads: "Workers Celebrate Guangzhou's Liberation."

for (bourgeois) democracy. It was nothing of the kind! The events began with students demanding more political freedoms and protesting the corruption of top CCP bureaucrats. The protests were joined first by individual workers, then by contingents from factories and other workplaces. Workers were driven to act by the high inflation and growing inequality that accompanied the CCP's program of building "socialism" through market reforms. While some youth looked to Western-style capitalist democracy, the protests were dominated by the singing

of the "Internationale," the international working-class anthem, and other expressions of pro-socialist consciousness. Various workers organizations that appeared during the protests had the character of embryonic organs of working-class rule. "Workers picket corps" and factory-based "dare to die" groups, organized to protect the students against repression, defied Deng's declaration of martial law. Workers' groups began to take on responsibility for public safety after the Beijing government all but disappeared and the police vanished from the streets. It was the entry of the Chinese proletariat into the protests, in Beijing and around the coun-

try, that marked an incipient proletarian political revolution. After weeks of paralysis, the CCP regime launched a bloody crackdown on June 3-4 in Beijing, driven by fear not of the student protesters but of the mobilized working class. Even after the massacre, millions of workers across China continued to wage strikes and protests. The workers showed enormous bravery and willingness to fight, and they forged links with soldiers, who viewed themselves as the defenders of socialism. Seven senior PLA commanders signed a petition opposing the martial law mea-

for any capitalist politician but will fight on the picket lines. A leadership proceeding from the standpoint of class against class would break all union ties to the Democrats and launch important struggles, not least a concerted campaign from Wyoming to West Virginia to bring workers in the strip mines, the vast fracking fields and everywhere else into the unions. In the face of the catastrophe of joblessness, workers armed with a class-struggle program would fight for a sliding scale of hours to divide up the available work at no loss in pay, among other transitional demands aimed at uniting the proletariat and the unemployed in struggle to sweep away the capitalist exploiters. The Spartacist League/U.S., uniquely on the American left, has as its perspective the building of a revolutionary workers party to make a new society possible. ■



Reuters (left); Bloomberg
Left: PLA soldiers raise Chinese flag in Hong Kong, 1 July 1997. Above: Chinese president Xi Jinping (right) with Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing, 2017. Communist Party upholds capitalism in enclave.

tures that were ordered against the population. On their own, however, the working class could not come to understand the need for political revolution to overturn the deforming rule of the bureaucracy. To imbue the working class with such consciousness requires the intervention of a revolutionary Marxist vanguard party. We honor the memory of the proletarian heroes of 1989, whose struggle vividly demonstrated the revolutionary potential of the working class. SA and its ilk spit on the legacy of Tiananmen as they serve the imperialist drive for capitalist counterrevolution in China. Seventy years after its revolution, China is not the country it was in 1949—a desperately backward, overwhelmingly peasant society plundered by the imperialist powers and ravaged by decades of civil war. Yet despite China's enormous advances since then, it remains economically backward in many respects compared to the imperialist countries that dominate the world economy. With its program of appeasing the imperialists and the Chinese bourgeoisie and its political suppression of the proletariat, the CCP bureaucracy constantly undermines the gains of the 1949 Revolution. The achievement of socialism—a classless society based on material abundance—requires an international planned economy that harnesses and goes well beyond the technology and productive capacity of the most advanced capitalist countries today. The road to socialism lies in proletarian revolutions throughout the capitalist world, crucially including the imperialist centers of the U.S., Japan and West Europe. This perspective is necessarily linked to the fight to mobilize the Chinese proletariat to sweep away its bureaucratic misrulers. But revolutionary struggle needs revolutionary leadership. Our historic model is the Bolshevik Party that, under V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, led the October 1917 Russian Revolution as the opening shot of the fight for world proletarian revolution. The ICL is committed to reforging Trotsky's Fourth International to carry the Bolshevik banner forward. ■

Miners...

(continued from page 8)

provide miners with decent jobs outside the mining industry is ludicrous. Under successive Democratic and Republican administrations, coal communities have been totally impoverished. The anarchic and crisis-ridden capitalist system not only devastates the working masses but also is the main obstacle to addressing human-induced global warming on the necessary global scale. Only in the context of a world socialist economy that relegates poverty to the past can a rational plan be hammered out to modulate climate change and minimize its human toll. At the end of the day, those touting a "Green New Deal" are using the issue of global warming

to advance an anti-worker agenda. Its backers place themselves in the tradition of liberal hero Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose New Deal legislation was designed to restore capitalist profits and contain working-class struggles within bounds acceptable to the ruling class. The 1935 Wagner Act, which is hailed by labor officialdom to this day, set up a mechanism to put union organizing under the thumb of the capitalist state. In so doing, FDR was intent on keeping the new wave of unionization from falling under the sway of avowed Marxists. The year prior, three victorious citywide strikes led by communists and socialists—in Minneapolis, San Francisco and Toledo—had opened the door to the organization of the CIO industrial unions. The UMWA and other unions need a leadership that won't crawl on its knees

斯巴达克斯SPARTACIST

1998年1月

原则宣言和纲领要素

国际共产主义同盟

(第四国际主义者)

1. 世界社会主义革命和推翻资本主义制度(第四国际主义宣言).....3

2. 无产阶级专政的必要性.....4

3. 我们国际革命的策略.....4

4. 国际共产主义同盟(第四国际主义)的理论和历史渊源.....6

5. 国际共产主义同盟的纲领.....10

6. 工人阶级和建立无产阶级专政的斗争中的策略.....11

7. 修正主义和资产阶级改良.....12

8. 反对修正主义和资产阶级改良.....13

9. 国际共产主义同盟的纲领.....14

10. 国际共产主义同盟的纲领.....14

11. 国际共产主义同盟的纲领.....14

12. 国际共产主义同盟的纲领.....14

13. 国际共产主义同盟的纲领.....14

国际共产主义同盟(第四国际主义)的理论和历史渊源

1998年1月

Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Adopted in 1998 at the ICL Third International Conference.

\$1 (20 pages)

Make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Pub. Co., Box 1377 GPO New York, NY 10116

WORKERS VANGUARD

“No Pay, We Stay!” echoes across Harlan County, Kentucky, Appalachian coal country where heroes and martyrs of labor battles past lie buried. Since July 29, laid-off miners have occupied railroad tracks to stop coal from being sold off by non-union Blackjewel, the bankrupt mining company that axed 1,800 jobs without notice in Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming. Court documents show that management knew there was no money in its accounts when it cut pay-checks on June 28.

Now the determined former mine workers, who have no union to defend them, are being jacked around by the bosses’ bankruptcy courts and the bloodsucking banks, which heaped financial penalties on the miners when their checks bounced, forcing them to scramble to pay bills. Even unemployment claims have been held up because Blackjewel issued no pink slips. The company also failed to make proper reports to Social Security and payments to the health savings plan for its workforce. In Kentucky alone, miners are owed at least \$2.5 million. Kopper Glo Mining has since bought the Harlan mines, offering a pittance of \$450,000 to the miners and a paper promise to rehire some of them. ***Pay the miners now!***

While the new bosses seek to tamp down the anger of the miners by offering them a few crumbs, finance capitalists feast on the main course as Blackjewel assets are liquidated. Riverstone Holdings stands first in line, having declared itself “super-priority senior secured debtor-in-possession” when loaning the mining outfit \$32 million beginning two years ago. The very purpose of bankruptcy law and the courts that enforce it is to protect the interests of capital.

Bankruptcy proceedings have been used by the bosses in industry after industry to slash labor costs and gut unions, and coal mining is a prime example. In the 1970s, the coal barons hatched a plan to move production from the heavily unionized, labor-intensive coal fields of Appalachia and the Midwest to more efficient, high-profit strip mining in the West, far from the historic base of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Today, Wyoming is home to some 40 percent of U.S. coal production.

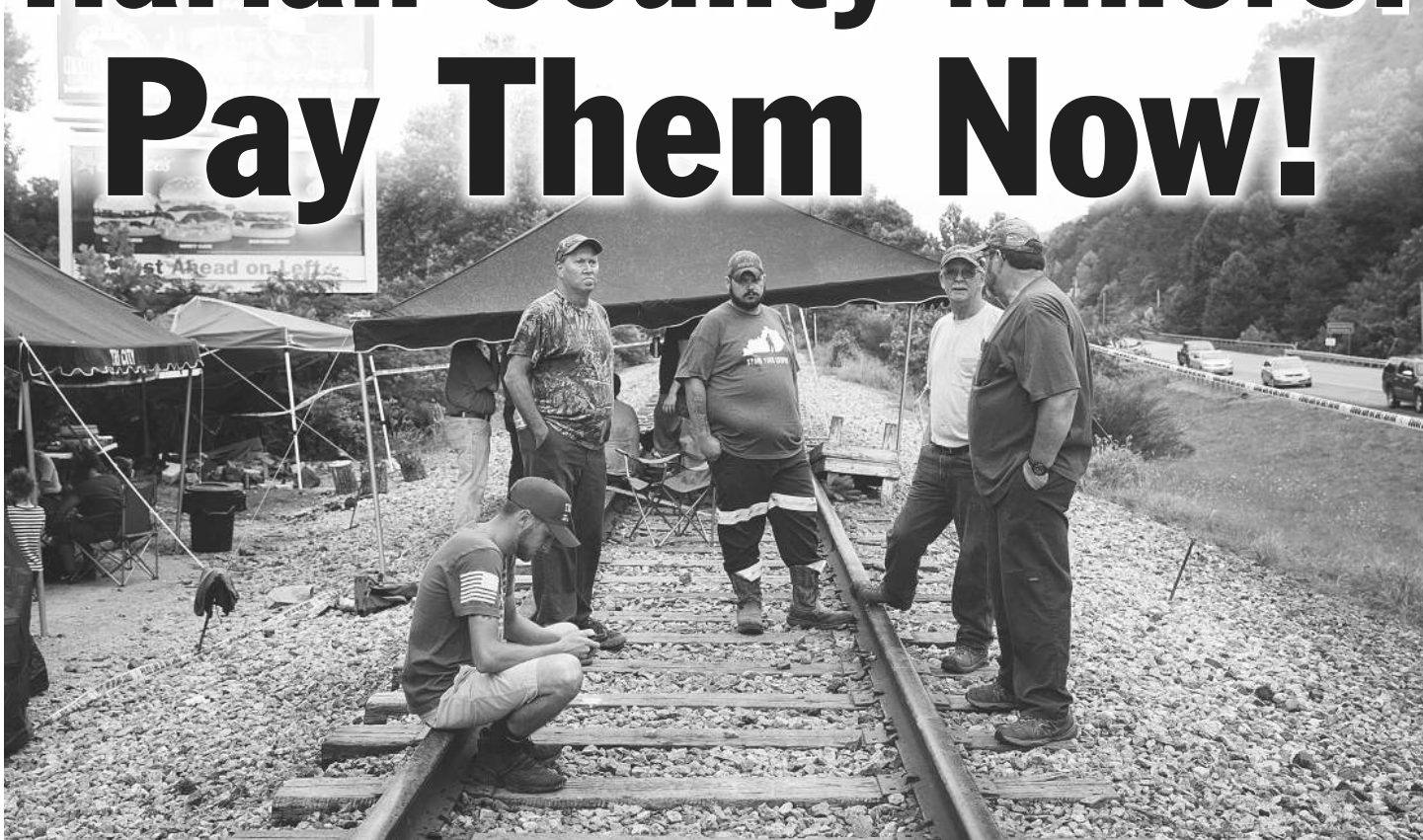
As the mine owners packed up and went west, bankruptcies became their favored weapon for busting the UMWA. Operations were reorganized under Chapter 11 to close union mines piecemeal and reopen them without union labor. This wave of bankruptcies, particularly over the past decade, goes some way toward explaining why the Blackjewel mines were non-union, including in Harlan County. “Bloody Harlan” was the site in the 1930s and again in the ’70s of pitched battles between miners fighting for union organization and the bosses’ armed attack dogs, both in and out of uniform. Immortalized in the 1976 documentary *Harlan County, U.S.A.*, the 1974 Brookside strike was won when the UMWA ranks engaged in a nationwide week-long memorial strike in response to the murder of a union supporter by one of the Duke Power Company’s gun thugs.

In the course of the 1930s, the UMWA became the largest and arguably most powerful union in the U.S., with 800,000 members. Today, it is a shadow of its former self, representing 20,000 active miners, less than half of the roughly 50,000 remaining. As the coal bosses shuttered mines and slashed jobs over the years, the UMWA bureaucracy facilitated the decline in union power, preaching reliance on the bosses’ political representatives, especially the Democrats but also Republicans.

In a sign of the times, there is not a single working UMWA member in all of Kentucky. The state’s last union mine, the Highland Mine, belonged to Patriot

Union Busting Coal Bosses, Sellout Labor Tops

Harlan County Miners: Pay Them Now!



August 2: Miners block tracks, preventing coal train from leaving closed Blackjewel mine in Cumberland, Kentucky. Bankrupt outfit has stiffed workers on weeks of back pay, benefits.

Coal. That company, spun off by Peabody Energy in 2007, had been “set up to fail” in a bid by the mine owners to purge their books of UMWA pension and health care liabilities. After Patriot declared bankruptcy in 2013, the UMWA tops pinned the union’s fortunes on its status as a creditor, as well as on the good graces of Democrat Jay Rockefeller, then U.S. Senator from West Virginia and great-grandson of oil magnate John D. Rockefeller. The Highland Mine closed two years later.

The plight of the Blackjewel miners is emblematic of the plight of coal miners throughout Appalachia and beyond. The industry has for years experienced job contraction, a trend fueled by capitalist market forces and technological development, including greater resort to strip mining. With the boom in hydraulic fracking, natural gas is now abundant and cheaper. Last year, the electricity-generating capacity of natural gas-fired power plants in the U.S. surpassed that of coal-fired plants for the first time. The accompanying devastation of laid-off mine workers and their communities is a testament to the irrational destructiveness of capitalist production for private profit. Miners who for decades put their lives and lungs at risk to perform backbreaking labor deep underground are now deemed expendable by the capitalists.

There is a burning need for a class-struggle fight to organize the unorganized, in the coal industry and throughout the entire energy sector, in order to bolster the fighting capacity of the workers against the bosses. Unions are vital to enforce safety standards on the job and to wrest real gains from the employers, like the cradle-to-grave health care miners once had. At the same time, though, trade-union struggle alone cannot stop the capitalist rulers from looting the wealth of society and discarding their wage slaves when operations are no longer profitable.

Such struggles must be linked to a fight

to expropriate the mines, gas and oil wells and other means of production through socialist revolution, which would lay the basis for a rational planned economy. Crucial to this perspective is the forging of a multiracial workers party, the necessary instrument to bring the working class to power. When those who labor rule, production will serve human need, and only then will everyone be provided for, with new technology serving to better the lives of all, rather than to pauperize whole swaths of the population.

For a Class-Struggle Union Leadership!

Earlier this year, the UMWA tops held a “30th Anniversary Pittston Strike Celebration.” Far from a “victory for the labor movement,” as was claimed there, the eleven-month strike was betrayed by the bureaucrats, especially then UMWA head and current AFL-CIO chief Richard Trumka and his lieutenant, Cecil Roberts, who is today the union president. With miners industrywide champing at the bit to fight the coal bosses and their government, UMWA leaders instead threw everything into a toothless “corporate campaign” that appealed to the supposed good conscience of the ruthless capitalist class. Among other things, union members were sent to beg the big banks not to lend money to the Pittston Coal Company. After wildcat strikes broke out in ten states and a coal-processing plant was occupied, Trumka & Co. herded the ranks back to work, bowing before court injunctions and bending over backward to appease the “friend of labor” Democrats they supported.

Over the decades, the combativity of the miners often ran up against the UMWA bureaucracy’s allegiance to the capitalist order. For example, a series of hard-fought strikes in the 1970s saw miners revolt against every wing of their union official-

dom, from the despotic Tony Boyle to the treacherous Arnold Miller, notorious for asking the Labor Department to intervene against his opponent in a union election. In fact, the Great Coal Strike of 1978 was waged in defiance of both Miller and a Taft-Hartley back-to-work order issued by Democrat Jimmy Carter. (For more, see WV pamphlet “The Great Coal Strike of 1978.”)

Pittston proved a turning point for the union, as Trumka was able to hogtie the historically militant UMWA membership by playing by the bosses’ rules. His successor, Roberts, has followed suit. In recent months, the UMWA president invited the 2020 Democratic presidential hopefuls to coal country to drum up support for candidates of that party of the class enemy, while also praising the Trump administration for its efforts boosting the coal companies. Truth is, as the Blackjewel bankruptcy attests, Trump’s claim to have “saved coal” is a cruel hoax. But so is the “just transition” offered the miners by Democratic Party politicians like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Bernie Sanders under the “Green New Deal.” The transition in question is the pie-in-the-sky promise of job retraining for workers in the fossil fuel industries that these Dems want to wipe out in the name of combating climate change.

The Democratic Socialists of America and other “progressive” Democrats advocate this scam, which is little more than a ploy to garner votes, especially from student youth, liberal environmentalists and select union bureaucrats, by putting a “worker friendly” spin on anti-carbon bourgeois energy policy. The reformists of Socialist Alternative peddle the same rubbish, calling their version of how best to power the capitalist economy a “Green New Deal for working people.” The proposition that the capitalist rulers will

continued on page 7