

25 Million Walk Out Against Austerity



La Stampa

General Strike Rocks Italy

MILANO—Twenty-five million people joined the nationwide general strike on October 14. More than 3 million, possibly 5 million, protested in the streets of 97 cities. This massive strike was the largest in decades, perhaps the largest since the immediate postwar period. Eighty percent participated around the country, 90 percent in industry and the public sector, almost 100 percent in the "red belt" of central Italy. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi had doubted that the strike would be general; speaking before 200,000 in the Piazza San Carlo in the Northern industrial bastion of Torino, home of Fiat, a leader of the CISL union federation declared, "This was not a general strike, it was a total strike." Even in the South, in Catania and Palermo (Sicily), the walkout was complete.

This massively successful display of proletarian power was preceded by weeks of explosive and largely spontaneous workers protest strikes by hundreds of thousands against the government's pension-slashing austerity budget. From Berlusconi, who had gone off on a junket to Moscow in order to be out of the country on the 14th, came the arrogant response that "not one, not ten, not 100 general strikes can change the budget." The prime minister spent the day swilling



Top: 350,000 protesting workers in Milano during October 14 general strike. Above: Unemployed workers protested outside Prime Minister Berlusconi's office in Roma.

vodka with would-be Tsar Yeltsin and lamenting that economic "reform" was so much harder in Italy because of parliamentary constraints. The aspirations of the leader of the right-wing coalition government (which for the first time since WW II includes fascist ministers)

to become a new strongman are patently clear: one protester's sign declared, "Mussolini had the balconies, Berlusconi isn't satisfied with six TV chains," referring to the three channels owned by the media magnate's Fininvest chain, and the three "public" channels he now controls

as head of the government.

Commenting on the general strike and Berlusconi's high-handed response, Massimo D'Alema, head of the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS), remarked: "A democratic government cannot refuse to take this into account." In the same vein, Eugenio Scalfari, editor of the liberal bourgeois daily *La Repubblica* (15 October) wrote in a front-page editorial, "The people protest in the streets, but then they return to their houses and to work. Fortunately. If they remained in the streets to protest not four hours like yesterday but for two whole days, any government would fall like a house of cards." Scalfari and D'Alema are imagining a parliamentary shuffle bringing in a popular-front cabinet.

Yet scarcely two years ago, in October 1992, the PDS reformists were being chased from speakers' platforms under a hail of coins and bolts from their own members, enraged by the sellout of hard-won union gains. *La Stampa* (15 October), house organ of Fiat boss Giovanni Agnelli, commented on the "miracle in Milano," that this time "the coins (and bolts)" against the union tops were "no longer in fashion." A real, unlimited general strike would pose the question of *continued on page 14*

U.S. Troops Out Now!

Yankee Occupation Props Up Haiti Elite

On October 15, U.S. Black Hawk helicopters delivered exiled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide back to Haiti's National Palace, where tens of thou-

sands cheered the populist priest. Thousands of Haitian soldiers, police and paramilitary *attachés*—the present-day version of the Tontons Macoutes thugs of the Duvalier dictatorship—began to flee as their victims sought retribution. But Aristide has returned as a front man for the U.S. colonial occupation of Haiti, which is intended to install a "professionalized" apparatus of oppression.

While many liberals and leftists in both Haiti and the U.S. openly or backhandedly support Clinton's "humanitarian" occupation, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs have from the beginning called for "U.S. out of Haiti!" The main reasons Washington launched its invasion were to stop the flow of desperate black Haitian refugees to the U.S., reinforce imperial domination over its

Caribbean "backyard" and tighten the screws on the Cuban deformed workers state.

Aristide's speech at the National Palace (inside a bulletproof glass box, in front of a Haitian honor guard whose rifles' firing pins had been removed) hailed the U.S. armed forces. Echoing his October 4 speech to the United Nations, in which he stressed "reconciliation" as the way to get Haiti "from misery to poverty in dignity," Aristide threw a dove into the air and advised the crowd, "If you see an attaché with his gun, bring him to the American military, who will give you security."

But the "security" the U.S. Army troops are providing is for the property rights of the despised local bourgeois elite, who have always depended on the army and paramilitary killers to defend their privileges from the impoverished masses. Now U.S. Army APCs are lined up in front of the food *continued on page 10*



Hands Off the International Socialists!

Free South Korean Leftists, Trade Unionists!

Seizing on U.S. imperialism's onslaught of threats against the North Korean-deformed workers state, in recent months the Kim Young Sam government in South Korea has sharply escalated its police-state crackdown on the left and workers movement. Hundreds of militant trade unionists were arrested during a strike wave this summer, as thousands of riot cops repeatedly charged into workers' rallies and stormed union offices. At the same time, the regime launched a witchhunt against pro-reunification student groups, arresting at least 300 leftist activists and placing 90 leaders of Hanchongnyon (National Federation of University Student Councils) on its "most wanted" list.

Now the Seoul regime has widened its anti-left crackdown, arresting 23 supporters of the International Socialists (I.S.) in mid-October under the draconian

National Security Law. Dozens of others are being sought or are under investigation. Among those imprisoned was socialist publisher Choi Il Bung, a founder of the Korean I.S., who was released from prison only last December following an earlier arrest (see "Free Choi Il Bung and All South Korean Class-War Prisoners!" WV No. 574, 23 April 1993). The I.S. is politically aligned with Tony Cliff's British Socialist Workers Party and the U.S. International Socialist Organization. Notably, unlike many of the student leftists rounded up over the summer, who were denounced as sympathetic to the North, the "third camp" Cliffites are virulently hostile to North Korea and refuse to defend it against imperialism and counterrevolution.

The National Security Law, which is so severe that even Washington calls for its modification or repeal, has been used

repeatedly to try to smash leftist organizations. In May 1992, this law was used to go after the Socialist Workers League (SWL), reportedly the largest socialist group in South Korea, for "seeking a proletariat revolution" (*Korea Times*, 16 May 1992). SWL leader Paek Tae Woong and 39 other activists were arrested, and several months earlier, poet Park Ki Pyong had been sentenced to life imprisonment for his role in organizing the SWL. In January 1992, labor militants were seized on suspicion of trying to organize a workers party (see "Mobilize Against Anti-Labor Repression in Mexico, South Korea," WV No. 545, 21 February 1992).

The recent arrests fully demonstrate that South Korea remains a police state, despite the "democratic" pretensions of Kim Young Sam, a bourgeois oppositionist to the former military dictatorship who was put in office two years ago as a civilian "alternative" to direct military rule. Leftists and trade unionists internationally must demand the release

of the imprisoned Korean leftists and trade unionists! We print below a protest letter issued by the Partisan Defense Committee.

23 October 1994

Ambassador of South Korea
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

We are writing to protest the arrests of at least 23 socialists and union activists, including Choi Il Bung and other supporters of the International Socialists. We demand they be immediately released and all charges be dropped.

Choi Il Bung is no stranger to Korean prisons. Last December he was released after a year in prison for publishing Marxist and other political books available in countries around the world. He and the others recently arrested are charged with "forming an organization benefitting the enemy" under the National Security Law. The "enemy" of the

continued on page 11

Letter

Shelly Weltman

October 4, 1994

Editor
Workers Vanguard

Dear Comrades:

This is to inform you of the death at age 53 of an old personal friend of mine and long-time political radical, Shelly Weltman. Shelly passed away of a heart attack on September 24th.

Shelly was in the 1960s for a time a supporter of the Spartacist League. Then later on, he became for want of a better phrase what I could only term a kind of iconoclastic Trotskyist freelancer politically. He was one of the smartest guys I ever met, an entirely self-educated working class guy of Jewish origins who had grown up in a neighborhood where he had to learn to fight back early on because of taunts about his Jewish heritage from anti-Semitic religious bigots. Shelly told me years later that the fact he was always called an atheist when he was a kid made him seriously turn to investigating atheism and materialism later on, and he was a self-conscious atheist and materialist throughout his entire later life.

Shelly was particularly fascinated by science and its implications in philosophy, and he avidly read books on science and philosophy. He was also an avid music collector, self-employed in his own business which involved finding and distributing old classics in rock

music, and he himself had a fine collection.

Later in his life, he again was, I believe, a political supporter of the Spartacist League, and more recently he helped another radical party, the Trotskyist League, build an anti-Klan demonstration in the Midwest where he then lived.

My fondest memories of Shelly, however, are of the interminably often exasperating arguments and wrangles over politics he, a mutual friend and I had over dinner or coffee in New York City where the three of us lived. Unfortunately, these fascinating discussions were too few and far between, and I missed having more of them, but I shall especially feel the void in this sort of enormously mentally stimulating food for thought in my life now, with Shelly having passed away.

Shelly had a son, André, who I believe was associated with the SL, and a little girl, Nikki. His wife, Lisa, informed me over the phone she was putting together a booklet of memories about him, as well as putting an article about him in the paper of her party, the Trotskyist League. I thought it was fitting in light of Shelly's long-time sympathies with the Spartacist League for me to inform the comrades of his passing. I shall miss him.

Comradely,
Al Greene



TROTSKY

For Workers Revolution in Italy!

Confronted with the growth of fascism and the bourgeoisie's drive for a "strong state," the reformist misleaders of the Italian working class pursue a program of (bourgeois) democracy based on the class-collaborationist popular front. Eight years after Mussolini's 1922 rise to power, Leon Trotsky, in a letter to Italian supporters, addressed illusions in a "democratic revolution" as the answer to fascism, emphasizing that only workers revolution could sweep

away the rule of capital which was the basis for the regime of the fascist blackshirts. Trotsky's warning that the restoration of bourgeois democracy in Mussolini's Italy would be the result not of a "democratic revolution" but rather of a counterrevolutionary suppression of proletarian uprising was confirmed in the Stalinists' derailing of workers revolution in 1943-45 in the wake of Mussolini's downfall.

You deny the possibility of a bourgeois revolution in Italy. You are perfectly right. History cannot turn back a considerable number of pages, each of which is equivalent to half a decade. The Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party already tried once to duck the question by proclaiming that the revolution would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "popular."...

Does this mean that Italy cannot, for a certain time, again become a parliamentary state or become a "democratic republic"? I consider—in perfect agreement with you, I think—that this eventuality is not excluded. But then it will not be the fruit of a bourgeois revolution, but the abortion of an insufficiently matured and premature proletarian revolution. In the event of a profound revolutionary crisis and mass battles in the course of which the proletarian vanguard will not have been in a position to take power, it may be that the bourgeoisie will restore its rule on "democratic" bases....

But does this mean that we communists reject in advance all democratic slogans, all transitional or preparatory slogans, limiting ourselves strictly to the proletarian dictatorship? That would be a display of sterile, doctrinaire sectarianism. We do not believe for one moment that a single revolutionary leap suffices to cross what separates the fascist regime from the proletarian dictatorship. In no way do we deny a transitional period with its transitional demands, including democratic demands. But it is precisely with the aid of these transitional slogans, which are always the starting point on the road to the proletarian dictatorship, that the communist vanguard will have to win the whole working class and that the latter will have to unite around itself all the oppressed masses of the nation.

—Leon Trotsky, "Problems of the Italian Revolution" (May 1930)



LENIN

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28 October 1994

Debate

"The Struggle for World Socialist Revolution Today"

- Ernest Mandel
Spokesman for the United Secretariat of the Fourth International
- Joseph Seymour
Central Committee, Spartacist League/U.S., International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

11 November 1994

7:30 p.m. at P.S. 41, 116 W. 11th Street (at 6th Avenue)
For more information call: (212) 732-7860

New York City

For Mass Pickets to Shut Down CAT, Staley, Rubber!

Midwest Labor Rallies in Decatur

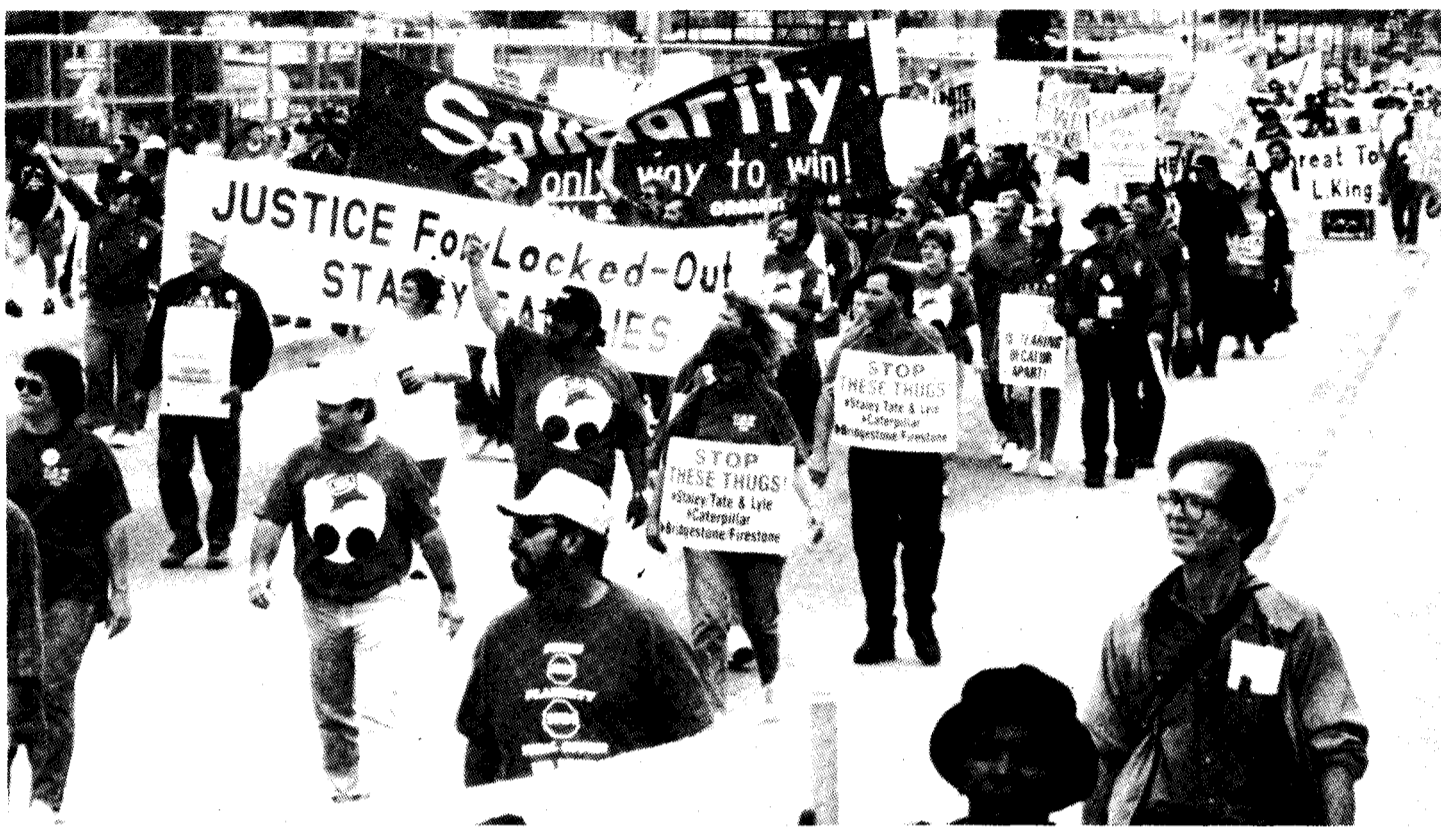
DECATUR, Illinois—Five thousand workers from all over the Midwest came out October 15 in solidarity with striking workers at Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone rubber, and with workers at the Staley corn processing plant who have been locked out for the last 15 months. Decatur is strike city, and workers around the country are coming to identify with the fight by workers here for the very existence of their unions. All three companies have brought in strikebreakers and scabs to run production. Unionists have traveled for hundreds of miles to make a real show of solidarity, but there has been no program to mobilize the power of Midwest labor to stop the scabbing and shut the plants down tight.

Hours before the march, hundreds of workers assembled at the UAW Local 751 hall of the CAT strikers. Rubber Workers members came from as far away as Nashville and Oklahoma City. SEIU Local 73 (Illinois state workers) sent delegations from Chicago and Springfield. Auto workers came on buses from Flint Local 599 at Buick City, site of last month's strike against GM, and other locals in Michigan and Ohio. The stage and sound system came on a tractor-trailer brought by the Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters.

Decatur is the center of what strikers call the Illinois "war zone," including Peoria and Aurora, where hard union battles have been going on constantly for the last three years. But it's been pretty much a *one-sided* war against labor. For a decade and a half, workers across the Midwest have seen their unions ravaged by mass layoffs, givebacks and strike-breaking. The plant closings and massive concessions in auto which decimated labor/black Detroit were followed by the defeat of two Greyhound strikes, the betrayal of Hormel meatpackers by their own union tops, and the busting of *Chicago Tribune* printers unions.

Decatur must not become, in the words of one demonstrator's sign, "Scab Town USA." How can the workers win? The bosses have their mercenary strikebreakers like Vance International, their cops and courts, their Democratic and Republican politicians and the media who do their bidding. What does labor have? Above all its numbers, organization and the social power to stop production and cut off capitalists' profits. But it takes a *leadership* that is conscious of this power and willing to use it.

A common strike front of area unions should be built, appealing to labor and minorities from Chicago to St. Louis to join their fight and employ the class-



Decatur, Illinois, October 15: 5,000 workers march in support of unionists at Caterpillar, Bridgestone/Firestone and Staley. WV Photo

struggle weapons that forged the industrial unions. Then we could start talking about some *two-sided* class war, and some union victories for a change. The companies are bringing in scabs? Then ring the struck plants with real *mass pickets* that *nobody* crosses! Unions must refuse to handle ("hot-cargo") scab products: Teamsters and rail workers move nothing in or out of the plants, no Firestone tires mounted on cars in Detroit, no Caterpillar engines installed in GM trucks, no Staley corn sweetener used in bottling plants.

Sacrificing the Union for "Right to Work" Clinton

Caterpillar workers struck in 1991. With record profits and domination of the world market for construction and earth-moving equipment, Caterpillar has relentlessly gone after the union. Following the five-month-long partial strike, where the UAW International refused to call out all 13,000 CAT workers, the company announced plans to hire scabs in April 1992. In an abject capitulation, the UAW bureaucracy ordered picket lines taken down, and sent workers back under the CAT's "final offer." The strike was called off immediately after the AFL-CIO voted to back Clinton for president. Fearing that scenes of labor battling scabs would stand in the

way of the election of their "right to work" Democrat, the union tops engineered a bitter defeat.

Caterpillar workers have been paying for that piece of treachery ever since. They have had to fight a daily battle for their jobs against a steady barrage of firings, harassment and attacks on the union. Workers have been fired for wearing union T-shirts, having UAW stickers on their lunch boxes, daring to talk back to abusive foremen. The union responded with a series of short walkouts. In recovering from a defeat, such skirmishes can be used to muster labor's forces. But the UAW tops argued that strikes can't win, and pushed their "inside game" of slowdowns and appeals to the "corporate consciences" of CAT's bankers. To no avail.

As Caterpillar responded with steadily escalating reprisals, smoldering rage in the plants burst into a national strike on June 21. CAT management is playing hardball, using thousands of office workers, lower-level management, UAW defectors and newly hired scabs to continue production. Some Caterpillar plants, especially the crucial Mossville engine facility, are producing heavily with scab labor. The company is also relying heavily on imports of key parts and finished equipment. Engine blocks are coming in from Brazil, fuel pumps and excavators from Belgium. Other work is being farmed out to non-union, low-wage outfits.

In Decatur, the number of craft workers entering the CAT plant has more than quadrupled since the strike began. Illinois AFL-CIO head Don Johnson alibied this *scabbing*, claiming it was a "jurisdictional dispute." Over the summer, increasing numbers of demoralized UAW members began crossing the picket lines. Caterpillar claims that 4,000 UAW members are scabbing may be inflated, but a UAW International rep admitted at a Decatur picnic in August that over 2,000 union members are crossing the lines (*Labor Notes*, October 1994). Detroit UAW tops responded by tripling strike pay to \$300 a week. With their hidebound bureaucratic logic, they figured that shelling out a few bucks could stop scabbing.

They talk about a war zone, but these giveback artists don't even know how

to wage a real strike, and wouldn't do it even if they could. They refuse to call out mass pickets to shut down the plants, or anything else it would take to win the strike. In Decatur, the need for international workers solidarity is concretely posed. But instead of appealing to British, Japanese and Brazilian workers employed by the same bosses to aid their struggles, the union tops whip up a flag-waving frenzy. Signs at the Decatur Labor Day march declared, "World War II, Part II: Japan's Bridgestone Attack on American Economy."

The *Wall Street Journal* (4 October) crows that Caterpillar's "success in operating without its biggest, strongest union could refute the conventional wisdom that both sides always suffer in a long strike." The *Journal* reports how the UAW tops themselves are directly stabbing CAT strikers in the back:

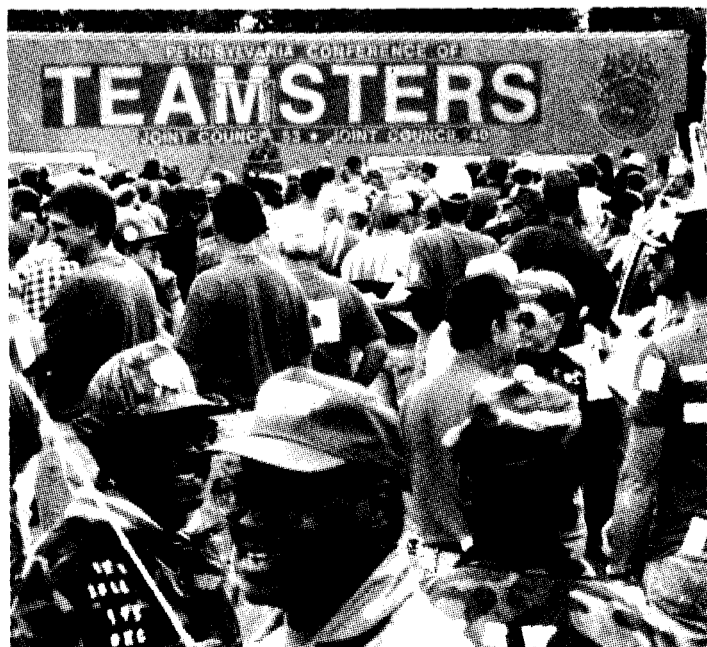
"At plants operated by GM, Ford and Navistar International Corp., UAW members continue to install Cat diesel engines in medium or heavy-duty trucks. James Lee, the UAW shop chairman at GM's truck plant in Janesville, Wisconsin, says he didn't even know Cat's [engine-producing] Mossville factory was on strike."

At the struck Firestone plant, Teamsters and railroad workers are handing off freight to their supervisors, who then take it on into the plant. Union leaders alibi their sabotage by hiding behind the Taft-Hartley Act, which makes "secondary" boycotts "illegal." But no decisive gain of labor has ever been won playing by the bosses' rules.

Now the contract has expired at John Deere, and Case and Navistar are coming up next year. There is "the shadow of Caterpillar falling on the rest of the industry," as one auto analyst put it. Deere is demanding a two-tier contract, with new workers to start with a 30 percent wage cut. Last week, 11,000 Deere workers rejected the company's "final offer" by 90 percent. An industrywide strike is a real and immediate possibility, but the UAW International is begging Deere for a one-year contract extension to prevent a strike!

Mobilize Labor's Power

The October 15 rally and march drew thousands of workers who want to see *continued on page 5*



Pennsylvania Teamsters, Oklahoma rubber workers came to Decatur in solidarity. Mobilize Midwest labor to stop the scabs!

Russian Ruble Crash

MOSCOW—As news of “Black Tuesday,” October 11, spread like wildfire on the streets of Moscow, tremors convulsed Russia from the capital to the Siberian Far East. After several months of steady devaluation, the ruble had suddenly crashed straight through the floor. In a matter of hours, from the opening bell of the Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange to noontime, the Russian currency lost 27 percent of its value, plummeting from around 3,000 to the U.S. dollar to 3,926. (It was 2,000 to the dollar as recently as July.) On the streets, black-market exchange rates went as low as 6,000 and, in Vladivostok, even 7,000.

In the long-suffering population of

vacation during the ruble crisis, Yeltsin sacked acting finance minister Sergei Dubinin and finally managed to get rid of his longtime nemesis, Central Bank head Viktor Gerashchenko. The Russian Orthodox Metropolitan of St. Petersburg (Leningrad) looked to the traditional scapegoat of Russian reaction—Jews—ranting: “We must stop Zionists from taking over the world. It is their single goal.”

While Yeltsin was searching for conspiracies, his own commission suggested in a preliminary report that the backdrop to “Black Tuesday” lay in the government’s own policies. Stringent austerity measures were imposed this year, includ-

trillion rubles (roughly \$2.7 billion)!

But beyond the particular economic factors, the collapse of the ruble put a spotlight on the chaos of trying to establish capitalism without capital. “This is the downside of joining the international financial world, Boris,” editorialized the London *Guardian* (13 October). “Welcome to the capitalist club!” Industrial production in Russia plummeted by 56.7 percent between January 1990 and June 1994. Domestic industrialists prefer to earn interest on short-term loans rather than investing in production—or paying their workforce. It is estimated that \$30 billion in short-term Russian deposits is money diverted from enterprise salary funds; recent figures show that workers at 35,000 enterprises had not been paid for months.

At the same time, foreign capital has been flowing into Russia at an unprecedented pace—\$600 million a month—more than quadrupling since the beginning of the year, according to the Ministry of Privatization (*New York Times*, 11 October).

Russia’s Rulers Seek Bonapartist Regime

Significant sections of the nascent Russian bourgeoisie and their Western advisers have long understood that to consolidate a stable, functioning capitalist economy, to beat down social explosions which loom in the face of threatened massive layoffs, to arbitrate the looting by the embryonic exploiters and tame the “wild capitalism” of fly-by-night speculators and mafia gangsters, Russia needs a Pinochet-style strongman dictatorship. Getting this is another matter.

Yeltsin’s bloody assault on the Russian parliament in October 1993, in which hundreds were killed, was the opening shot in his attempt to consolidate such a bonapartist “strong state.” This was immediately followed by an escalation of terror and repression directed primarily against national minorities from Central Asia and the Caucasus, in the guise of “fighting crime.” But elections in December for the new parliament turned out to be a humiliating setback for would-be Tsar Boris, with the victors being the Russian nationalist opposition, ranging from the fascist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy to the Stalinist “patriots.” While this parliament has little power in a legal constitutional sense, it nonetheless voices the interests and aspirations of influential elements of the new Russian elite, including enterprise managers and military officers.

In June, Yeltsin decreed an “anti-crime” ukase—allowing for detention without charges for up to a month and

searches without warrants—which was so draconian that even his own supporters turned against him. Yeltsinite “democrats” in the Duma joined the “red-brown” coalition of the Communist Party-Russian Federation (KP-RF) and the nationalists in an overwhelming 279-10 vote against the anti-crime measure, though this parliament has no power to overturn presidential decrees.

Outright opposition to Yeltsin as the aspiring Russian Bonaparte has spread to those who represented his strongest



Der Spiegel

Would-be “Tsar Boris” Yeltsin.

and most influential supporters, like former finance minister Boris Fyodorov. The IMF similarly is having doubts that Yeltsin can effectively impose order and enforce austerity. Russia’s capitalists, whose image is that of mafia toughs in shades lolling in the back of white stretch limos, are hardly a cohesive bunch, and a drunken buffoon as president has certain drawbacks as the “man on the white horse.”

Indeed, what is generally notable about the recent period is that Yeltsin has been facing opposition from his former base of support. When *Moskovsky Komsomolets* journalist Dmitry Kholodov was assassinated by a briefcase bomb last week while investigating corruption in the military, his funeral turned into a political rally, with formerly Yeltsinite “reformers” calling for the resignation of the government.

Russia’s weak bourgeoisie, beset by mounting economic devastation and social chaos, can only stabilize its rule by a bonapartist dictatorship. At the same time, the new mafia-type capitalists don’t want a strong government capable in any way of interfering with their own money-making operations. Hence, Yeltsin’s bonapartist moves have encountered opposition ranging from pro-Western “free marketeers” like Fyodorov to aspiring nationalist strongman Aleksandr Rutskoi to the Stalinist “patriots.” However, much of this opposition is limited to a shared desire to keep options open for their own bonapartist bids.

Russian workers had better beware being sucked into the racist “anti-crime” crusade buttressing the bonapartist drive. The ultimate and real target is the working class. Only weeks after St. Petersburg mayor Sobchak was given control over Russian Army units last spring for a “war on crime and preserving social order,” the giant Kirov works laid off tens of thousands of workers. Even *Commerzant* (16 April), the leading voice of Russian *biznez*, had to note that Sobchak’s move was “minimally useful” against criminals, but could prove useful for fighting “with demonstrators, picketers and strikers.” Meanwhile, Moscow mayor Luzhkov yearns to draw in “popular” reinforcements for the anti-crime campaign through the formation of the racist vigilante “Narodnaya Druzhina” (people’s guards).

As in the West, such fascistic outfits are aimed at terrorizing minorities and immigrant workers, including the millions of unemployed Ukrainians and other workers from the “near abroad”



Le Segretain/Syigma

Desperation mounts as economy collapses: Homeless woman with child in the shadow of the Kremlin. Thousand-ruble note now worth about 33 cents.



Russia, faces went white with shock and fear. The London *Financial Times* (12 October) reported: “The reaction of ordinary Russians was one of stunned incomprehension.” After three years of capitalist counterrevolution, most people live hand-to-mouth on the paper-thin margin of their ruble salaries—if they get a salary at all. Virtually rent-free state apartments are fast disappearing, while subsidies on food have long since been eliminated. With half of all consumer goods now imported, world prices based on “hard currency” like the dollar are becoming the norm.

“I will never get enough dollars to pay my rent,” said one Moscow working woman. An old-age pensioner who had just seen the dollar value of her monthly income of \$37 drop by more than \$10 summed up her situation simply: “Ruin.” Those who had any savings left bought whatever they could, from televisions to sacks of sugar, just to unload their rubles. Street kiosks immediately slapped new labels on their goods, raising prices by up to 100 percent. Stores in Moscow shut down out of fear of looting, recalling that price rises in Tadzhikistan the previous week resulted in two women being killed in bread-line shootings. By the end of the week, the ruble had returned to just under 3,000 to the dollar, but by and large the price hikes remained.

The wild gyrations of the ruble exposed as a lie the “stabilization of the economy” so often touted over the summer. Recriminations and rumors of dark plots and conspiracies abounded. Denouncing a “threat to national security,” President Boris Yeltsin set up a high-level commission of military and intelligence officers to investigate “sabotage.” In what was also seen as a direct snub to Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, who was on

ing high interest rates and massive cuts in Central Bank lending, enabling the regime to meet the draconian financial targets set by the International Monetary Fund. But as fresh subsidies were channeled into agriculture and industry over the summer and inflation picked up in September, speculators flocked to rid themselves of rubles. Indeed, the Yeltsin regime wanted to weaken the ruble in order to ease the budget deficit and outstanding credits, including a backlog of unpaid salaries. A few days after the crash, it was revealed that among the winners on the currency exchange was the government itself, which by holding off buying rubles until they bottomed out actually made a profit of some eight



Spartacist

Zil auto workers demonstrate outside Moscow White House last April. Sign on right reads, “We want to work, our children want to eat.”

Decatur...

(continued from page 3)

a sharp fight against Caterpillar, Firestone and Staley. While the heavy-handed UAW International deadens fighting spirit among the strikers, "labor consultant" Ray Rogers, who is advising the Staley union, postures as a real crusader against the "corporate thugs." But what his "Corporate Campaign Inc." offers is calls for a consumer boycott of banks, insurance companies and other capitalists, in order to pressure Staley, Firestone and Caterpillar to make the thugs "act right." This is the same "Cram Your Spam" strategy that Rogers pushed during the Hormel strike of 1985-86. It was a disastrous diversion from Local P-9's fight to shut down Hormel's scab plants, using such techniques as flying pickets.

At his most "militant," Rogers calls for "civil disobedience," which produces lots of arrests without stopping any scabs. Decatur strikers got a taste of this no-win strategy on June 25, when they were made into sitting ducks as cops brutally sprayed pepper gas at dozens of locked-out workers and their supporters who blocked the street at the entrance of the Staley factory. Following these same liberal protest politics, on the march through Decatur the International Socialist Organization (with Rogers' blessing) sat down in the street and waited in vain to be arrested.

While union officials promote "non-violence" against the scabherding companies and their cops, they freely threaten violence against anyone they perceive as getting in their way. At an earlier Decatur rally, on October 1, the UAW sergeant

at arms threatened *Workers Vanguard* salesmen and supporters of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) with being gooned out of the rally and turned over for arrest to the same cops who had gassed strikers just weeks beforehand. While the RWL writes on paper of mass pickets, they have made a practice of waltzing across picket lines on university campuses, and then made a principle of defending this scabbing.

If the union bureaucrats refuse to mobilize labor's power, the fake socialist groups don't believe it's possible. For all of them, our simple statement "picket lines mean don't cross" is considered something we invented. Yet it's on this basic principle that the industrial unions were built, from the Mine Workers to the CIO. To win this crucial labor battle, we need elected strike committees to mobilize the power of labor all around the Midwest in action to shut down the struck plants tight. And if we are going to see some hard-fought labor struggle here, it means that labor must champion the rights of all the oppressed. As Karl Marx wrote at the time of the struggle against the Confederate slavocracy, "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

Recently there has been an ominous rise of fascist provocations in the Midwest. The Klan and Nazis feed off labor's defeats—they are poison to organizing integrated workers' struggle. But the same Illinois AFL-CIO misleaders who are alibiing scabbing at Caterpillar have tried to sabotage the mobilization of labor/black power to stop the fascists. Last January, the Partisan Defense Committee and the Spartacist League fought for such a mobilization at the Illinois

(former Soviet republics) flocking to Russia's big cities. Yet the KP-RF and the other Stalinist "patriots" nourish this racist vendetta with their Great Russian chauvinist appeals in tandem with monarchists and fascists in the "red-brown coalition." And the social democrats who publish *Rabochaya Demokratia* (January-February 1994), affiliated with the British Militant group, provide a "left" gloss for Yeltsin's "war on crime" and Luzhkov's vigilante formation with their reformist-utopian call for "democratic control over law enforcement organs" of the capitalist state.

In the absence of working-class resistance, capitalist counterrevolution has devastated the former Soviet Union. The incidence of cholera, tuberculosis and other treatable diseases is climbing to epidemic proportions as public health care is slashed. In the last year alone, the average life expectancy dropped by 2 years for women and 3.6 years for men, while the birthrate has declined by almost half since 1987 (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 16 July). Now the regime is preparing to implement the last stage of its IMF-mandated "reform" program, vastly cutting industrial subsidies and shutting down "unprofitable" enterprises. This will mean many millions of workers thrown onto the streets and consigned to slow starvation.

Workers Under the Gun

The new capitalist class recently gave the workers of Russia a taste of what it has in store for them. When 2,000 workers at the huge AvtoVAZ auto complex in the city of Togliatti on the central Volga shut down the production line to demand payment of back wages on September 27, management locked out almost the entire workforce of over 100,000 for a week and fired several dozen "ringleaders." Since the introduction of capitalist market "reforms," many of Russia's workers have been lulled by illusions in a supposed commonality of interests with the enterprise managers, particularly around demands for government subsidies. This lie, fostered especially by the Stalinists, was exposed by the brutal management crackdown and the treachery of the former official

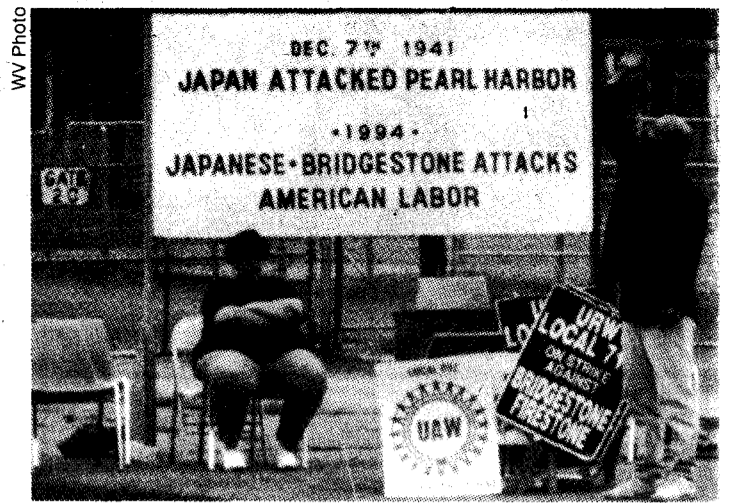
FNPR trade-union federation leaders, who marched in lockstep in breaking the strike. AvtoVAZ has recently entered into a joint venture with General Motors to build a new plant in Togliatti capable of turning out 300,000 cars a year.

The fact that the AvtoVAZ strikers, led by a small independent union, did not win active support from other sections of the working class, or even from the rest of the workforce at this key plant, is indicative of the difficulties in organizing working-class resistance against the hammer blows of capitalist restoration. The conditions they were protesting are indeed rife throughout the Russian economy. In a 14 October article on the strike, Australian journalist Renfrey Clarke suggests that militants could win broad support among workers facing non-payment of wages by demanding "full disclosure of enterprise accounts." But management will not "open the books" without a struggle, and this poses the need for factory occupations—also key in defeating lockouts and other attempts at strikebreaking.

Moreover, widespread managerial looting, the smuggling of hard currency into Western bank accounts, etc., are symptoms, not the fundamental causes of the economic devastation unleashed by the capitalist counterrevolution and breakup of the Soviet Union. The Soviet industrial economy, despite its bureaucratic deformations, was built on a planned, collectivized basis as an integrated whole aimed at maximizing output and maintaining full employment. A huge fraction of Russia's industrial enterprises cannot operate profitably in the new capitalist environment, much less compete in world markets, without, at the minimum, massive layoffs and retrenchment. In short, what is posed is not just piecemeal demands for wages but a confrontation with the nascent capitalist order. Hence the need for a *transitional program*, as elaborated by Trotsky's Fourth International, to serve as a bridge between the defensive demands of the proletariat and the struggle for state power.

To wage such a struggle successfully requires forging a genuine proletarian vanguard on a revolutionary program-

UAW bureaucrats push racist anti-Japanese protectionism, poison to international labor solidarity.



state capitol in Springfield to spike the Klan's provocation against the Martin Luther King holiday. State AFL-CIO chief Johnson tried to undermine this effort by ordering labor to stay away.

To Save the Unions

To protect their profits and property, the capitalists and their government will not hesitate to use all their power. That is an ABC of the class struggle. If you want to know who owns the government, just look at the Decatur police, whose "Emergency Response Team" is brought out on the command of Staley to gas and beat peaceful pickets. The Vance gun thugs and professional strikebreakers are given the run of the town, while court injunctions rain down on striking workers.

Years of union-busting assaults by the bosses have been aided and abetted by their labor lieutenants, from the destruction of PATCO to today. To hammer out victories for the working class will take above all the forging of a leadership

fighting to break the chains that tie labor to the capitalist parties and to build a class-struggle workers party. As James P. Cannon, a founder of American Communism, wrote during the bosses' drive to destroy the unions in favor of the "open shop" in 1921:

"The working class has the power not only to defeat the effort to destroy the unions, but to end the system of exploitation altogether...."

"Let the labor unions put aside their illusions; let them face the issue squarely and fight it out on the basis of the class struggle. Instead of seeking peace when there is no peace, and 'understanding' with those who do not want to understand, let them declare war on the whole capitalist regime. That is the way to save the unions and to make them grow in the face of adversity and become powerful war engines for the destruction of capitalism and the reorganization of society on the foundation of working class control in industry and government."

— "Who Can Save the Unions?" in *James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism* (Prometheus Research Library, 1992) ■

matic basis, through assiduous propaganda and political struggle. If the working class is to defend its livelihood and, indeed, its very existence, it must reappropriate the class consciousness of its forebears in championing the cause of all the oppressed. A revolutionary workers party would seek to mobilize the proletariat to resist the drive toward a bonapartist "strong state," for example, in defense of the parliament against Yel-

tsin's onslaught in October 1993. An internationalist vanguard party is needed to lead the still multinational proletariat of Russia in struggle against the pogromist assaults on non-Slavic minorities. This can only be part of a fight for socialist revolution to sweep away the ravages of capitalist restoration and forge an authentically voluntary federation of soviet republics in which all nationalities will have an equal place. ■

Spartacist Events

Spartacist League Forum

BERKELEY

Republicans/Democrats—Twin Parties of Racist Reaction! For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Anti-Immigrant Racism and Fascist Terror! No to Proposition 187!
Wednesday, November 2, 7 p.m.
10 Evans Hall, UC Berkeley
For more information: (510) 839-0851

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

ATLANTA

Alternate Thursdays, 5:30 p.m.
November 3: *Imperialism: The Death Agony of Capitalism*; Georgia State University, University Center, Room 204
For more information: (404) 521-9338

BERKELEY

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
November 9: *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*; 204 Dwinelle, UC Berkeley
For more information: (510) 839-0851

BOSTON

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.
November 5: *The Revolution Betrayed: How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*; Sever Hall, Room 101, Harvard University, Harvard Yard, Cambridge
For more information: (617) 492-3928

CHICAGO

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
November 3: *Imperialism: The Death Agony of Capitalism*; Spartacist Public Office, 161 W. Harrison, 10th floor
For more information: (312) 663-0715

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
November 1: *Imperialism: The Death Agony of Capitalism*; November 15: *The Russian Revolution of 1917*; Rolfe Hall, Room 3118, UCLA
For more information: (213) 380-8239

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.
November 5: *The Russian Revolution of 1917*; November 19: *The Revolution Betrayed*; Spartacist Public Office, 41 Warren St., between Church St. and West Broadway
For more information: (212) 267-1025

SAN FRANCISCO

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
November 3: *The Russian Revolution of 1917*; November 17: *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*; Room B112, Student Union, San Francisco State University
For more information: (415) 777-9367

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.
October 29: *The Imperialist Epoch and the Struggle for Socialism*; November 12: *The Russian Revolution*; Howard University
For more information: (202) 872-8240

Trotskyist League Forum

TORONTO

Repression and Resistance in Racist America, Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Also PDC video: "From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal"
Saturday, November 5, 7:30 p.m., International Student Center, 33 St. George, University of Toronto
For more information: (416) 593-4138

Young Spartacus

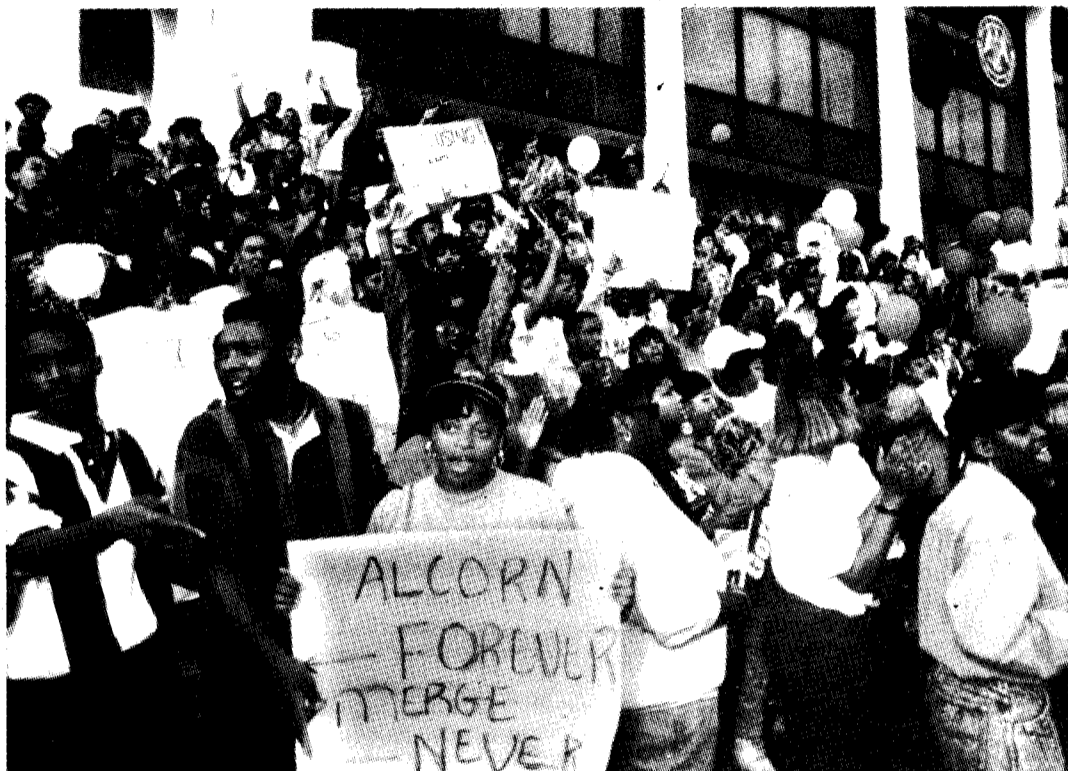
Mississippi

Racist "Desegregation" Scheme Threatens Black Colleges

Forty years since *Brown v. Board of Education* struck down *de jure* segregation in public grade schools, nationally *de facto* segregation is the norm, with separate and unequal schools for blacks. In the spirit of what *Brown* was meant to do for secondary education, a black father in Mississippi, James Ayers, sued the state in 1975, charging that his son and other black students didn't receive equal opportunities at state-run black colleges. Ayers, who died in 1986, challenged the disparity in financing between black colleges and white ones. The Supreme Court eventually backed Ayers' claims, ruling that Mississippi operates a dual system of education in underfunding historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Last February, the Mississippi state college board announced its response at a closed meeting to which only the white college presidents had been invited (*Commercial Appeal* [Memphis], 22 February 1993). Cynically talking about "equal treatment for all" and "evenhandedness" in arguments that sound very much like David Duke and the KKK, the board proposed to liquidate two of the state's three black colleges—shutting down Mississippi Valley State and Alcorn State, while creating a merged "Delta Valley University" and an "enhanced" black Jackson State.

This racist attack on the right to an education for black youth should be met with widespread protest to keep the schools open! What's needed is a fight for integrated, free, quality education for all. Even a cursory look at the campuses gives the lie to the state's claims that different "missions" are behind its annual allocations per student: \$3,038 at black colleges; at white colleges, \$4,489. The outcome in Mississippi is likely to affect 18 other segregated state systems



Thousands demonstrated last spring outside Mississippi supreme court against state's plan to shut down black college.

from Texas to Pennsylvania. Several protests against the racist Mississippi "desegregation" scheme, including a thousands-strong mobilization in Jackson on April 30, highlight the fact that black students see these schools as an opportunity to escape centuries-old degradation and racism. Across the country, "Save the HBCUs" has become a rallying cry in the fight against this latest effort to slam shut the school doors on black youth.

Without these schools, many black youth would never see the inside of a college classroom. Nearly 65 percent of Jackson State freshmen would be ineligible for automatic acceptance if Mississippi goes ahead with its plan to "standardize" admissions requirements

as part of its scheme. This is the result of conditions for black and minority youth in a segregated and inferior public education system where schools function more as holding pens than institutions of learning. Literacy rates are abominable. Across the country, intensified racist oppression, cutbacks in funding for minority scholarships, an escalation of attacks on black youth attending majority-white campuses and more restrictive admissions standards have increasingly made a college education even more a privilege for a select few, not a right for all.

Coming of Age in Mississippi

Mississippi Valley State serves blacks in the Mississippi Delta, the poorest section of the poorest state in the country. Mississippi is home to the highest percentage of black people nationally. Among black students, 13,000 of 17,000 attend historically black institutions, where admissions requirements are more open. Nationwide, black colleges enroll less than 18 percent of the 1.3 million blacks attending college, yet they award 34 percent of undergraduate degrees. Black colleges were the source for nearly 50 percent of black doctoral students from 1986 to 1992, according to the United Negro College Fund (*Emerge*, September 1993).

Attacks on black people in Mississippi have always been brazen and vicious. This is the state where black student James Meredith integrated the campus of Ole Miss in 1962, dodging bullets as federal troops and racist mobs lined his route to school. At Jackson State in

1970, two black students were murdered by cops on the campus in the wake of the U.S. intervention into Cambodia. In Neshoba County, three civil rights workers—Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner and James Chaney—were murdered by the KKK and local cops during the 1964 Freedom Summer. In 1990, a black man who had been dating a white woman died suspiciously in the Neshoba County jail (*Nation*, 15 August). After the deaths of 47 inmates, characterized as "suicides" by Klan-infested prison authorities, even the Justice Department found Mississippi prisons despicable for their conditions.

At the predominantly white Ole Miss campus, amid a sea of Confederate flags, there are air-conditioned facilities, a golf course and tennis courts, along with a 43,000-seat football stadium. Jackson State, which is overwhelmingly black, has buildings in poor repair and suffers chronic underfunding and neglect. As black author Margaret Alexander Walker testified in court battles over the state scheme: "All you have to do is visit the schools. You don't have to have a child's intelligence to see the difference" (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 18 May). The 79-year-old Walker, who wrote the novel *Jubilee*, taught at Jackson State for 30 years until she retired as a full professor, never earning as much as \$25,000 a year.

Rise of Separate and Unequal

When schools and colleges for the education of blacks were first established in the South in the wake of the Civil War, the founders envisioned integrated institutions. For example, Howard University, founded by the white Union Army general Oliver Otis Howard, was integrated from its inception. Fighters against slavery recognized that education was a powerful weapon in the fight for liberation, as did their students. Teachers and their schools were main targets of the KKK and other racist marauders. In the period of reaction that followed the defeat of Reconstruction, the racist "Redeemer" governments took away the funding needed to run black schools.

By the beginning of the 1890s, the solidification of the so-called "Redeemer" governments led by Southern planters resulted in the passing of laws to codify segregation of schools, transport and virtually every other aspect of life. In 1896, these Jim Crow laws were upheld by the Supreme Court's *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling mandating "separate but equal" conditions. But there is no such thing as "separate and equal" under

continued on page 10



James Meredith, first black student at University of Mississippi, 1962, surrounded by U.S. marshals as he braved racist mobs to challenge Jim Crow segregation at "Ole Miss."

Hundreds Rout Nazis in Berkeley

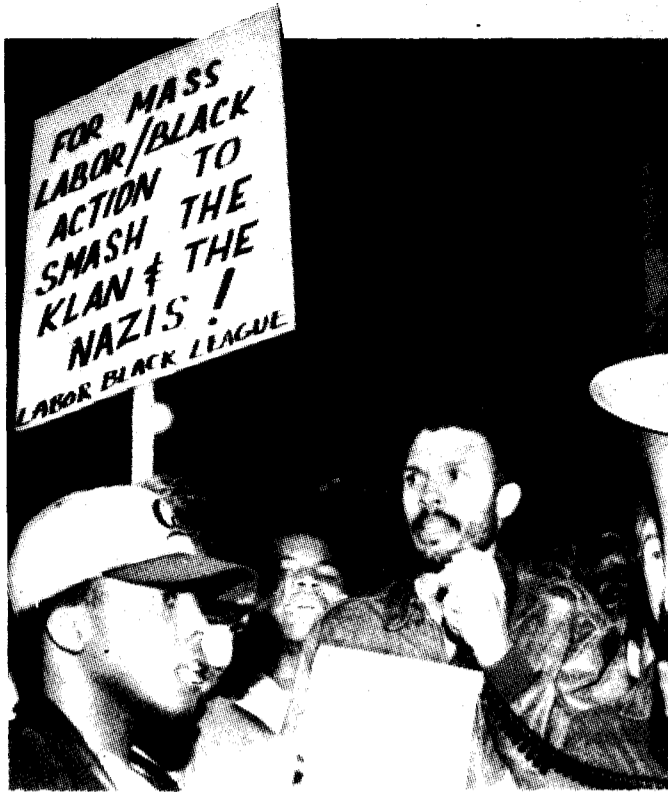
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Hitler-Lover David Irving—Smash Fascist Terror!” nearly 100 protesters gathered outside Alumni House. In addition to the SYC and the Spartacist League there were trade unionists from the Labor Black League for Social Defense; a contingent of the Jewish Student Union from Berkeley High School; numerous Cal students; some supporters of the International Socialist Organization, the Revolutionary Workers League and the Revolutionary Trotskyist League.

Nazis Disarmed—Swastikas Destroyed

When we confirmed that Irving and his Nazi rat pack were meeting at the YWCA (where they had secured a room by concealing their purpose) we marched straight there. Crossing campus the crowd swelled to some 300 protesters—blacks, Jews, Asians, whites, Latinos, students and workers! Chanting “Nazis Out!” we marched directly into the meeting room. Most of these would-be Hitlers scurried into the corners of the room, cowering like sewer rats. A couple of the fascists tried to attack demonstrators with chairs. Another was swinging a camera tripod. They were effectively disarmed.

Swastikas—the symbol of Nazi genocide—littered the floor. The anti-fascists made short shrift of them and the other Nazi insignia. Irving himself



Young Spartacus photos
Spartacus Youth Club initiated mobilization against Hitler-lover David Irving.

was an elementary act of self-defense and defense of all the intended victims of fascist terror.

No Reliance on the Capitalist State!

The SYC sought to bring together all those who agreed on the need to stop Irving's fascist provocation in a united action in which the diversity of political

views and strategies of all participating groups would be represented. The Berkeley High Jewish Student Union responded with their own leaflet as did the International Socialist Organization [ISO] and the Revolutionary Workers League [RWL].

Now the ISO is denouncing “violence.” Not fascist violence, not the violence of the club-swinging cops—no, the ISO is smearing the anti-fascist protesters! “It was a few bad apples acting in the heat of the moment,” ISO leader Brandon Rees told the *Daily Cal*. Obscene, but nothing new. In January 1993, members of the Canadian International Socialists linked arms to bolster a line of cops in Vancouver who were trying to force back anti-fascist militants.

The ISO's cringing desire to be respectable in the eyes of the powers that be flows from a belief that the capitalist state can either be pressured or reformed into stopping the fascists. Despite their sometimes more “radical” posture, such a view is also shared by the RWL. Both groups have herded militants into fenced-in police pens set up to contain anti-fascist demonstrations in the Midwest. The SYC has repeatedly warned that these pens are deadly traps, leaving protesters completely at the mercy of the racist cops with their guns, their tear gas, their nightsticks and their horses. This was seen last April in Lansing, Michigan where the cops maced the trapped anti-fascists and then arrested eight of them. By willfully going into these pens the RWL and the ISO demonstrate that they have no strategy for, or even commitment to, stopping the fascists.

At the anti-Irving protest, the Nazis were given police escort out of the building while demonstrators chanted, “Cops and the Klan work hand in hand!” Indeed here was a textbook lesson in the role of the capitalist state and their armed thugs in blue—not “neutral arbiters” but fascist protectors. The capitalist rulers keep the fascists in reserve, and will turn them loose when “normal” police repression no longer suffices to maintain their rule of exploitation and oppression of the many by the few.

To see whose interests the fascists serve one need only look at Eastern

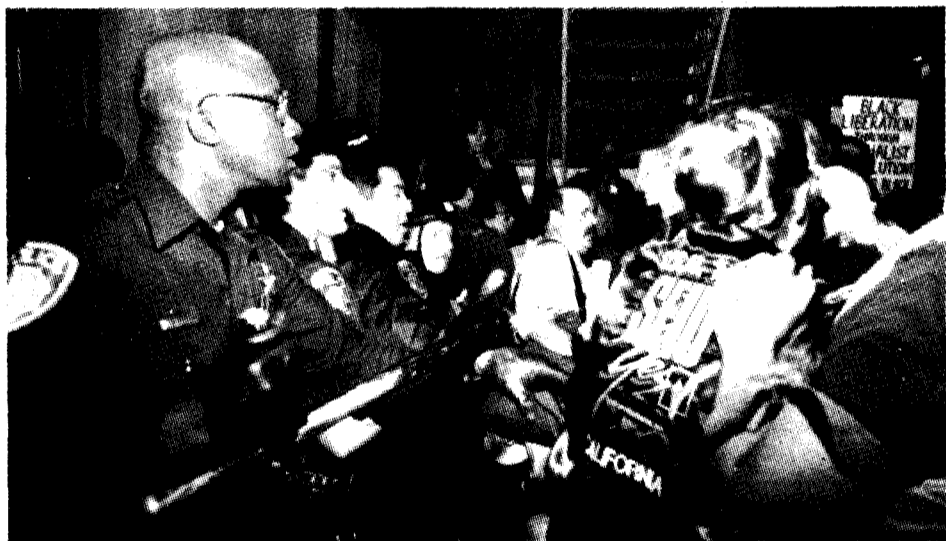
Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. The collapse of the former workers states in these countries (however deformed by the bureaucratic Stalinist regimes there) and the victory of the forces of capitalist counterrevolution has led directly to a rise in fascist terror attacks. As their bankrupt economies go down the tubes, the capitalists are taking aim at foreign-born workers and desperate refugees. The immigrant-bashing by both the Democrats and Republicans here in the U.S. gives the green light to the fascists.

For Labor/Minority Mobilizations to Stop Fascist Terror!

Our strategy is to mobilize the organized power of the multiracial working class, together with minorities and all the intended victims of racist terror, to crush the fascists in the egg. This strategy comes from Leon Trotsky—a leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution—who called for a workers united front to stop Hitler's Nazis from seizing power in Germany. Last January, the SYC helped mobilize to stop a KKK provocation on Martin Luther King Day in Springfield, Illinois. More than 500 protesters, the core of which were workers from the integrated unions in Chicago, braved state harassment and arctic weather to come out to confront the Klan terrorists.

The working class has the numbers, the organization and above all the social power to stop the fascists and to put an end to this decaying capitalist system which breeds them. The SYC, a school of action for young revolutionaries, is fighting to help build a revolutionary workers party which can do just that. Join us!

Spartacus Youth Club
17 October 1994



Young Spartacus
Berkeley riot cops protecting Nazis attack anti-fascist protesters.

was seen sprawled across a collapsed table amidst a pile of his videotapes and other fascist filth. One quaking Nazi dropped hundreds of swastika stickers.

Berkeley and UC cops arrived to defend the fascists. A supporter of the Spartacist League described the scene: “The cops went crazy. They were grabbing signs out of people's hands, they were jabbing people with billy clubs, they hit one woman really hard several times in the back. I tried to pull her out, I got hit in the stomach.” A young black woman who was videotaping the protest was savagely attacked and had to go to the hospital. A *Workers Vanguard* photographer had her glasses knocked off and stomped on by the cops. At least three other anti-fascist protesters were sent to the hospital, with head and body injuries.

In Berkeley, where you don't have the right to smoke a cigarette, there is now some bellyaching about the “right” of a gang of Nazis to organize for gas chambers! The fascists are not just right-wing ideologues with racist “ideas.” They are paramilitary action squads whose program is to kill, culminating in genocide. The murder of an Ethiopian youth in Portland, Oregon by Nazi skinheads, the charred body of a black man who was set on fire by Klan members in Florida—are not “free speech.” The hundreds of us who acted to stop the fascists on Thursday night understood that this

views and strategies of all participating groups would be represented. The Berkeley High Jewish Student Union responded with their own leaflet as did the International Socialist Organization [ISO] and the Revolutionary Workers League [RWL].

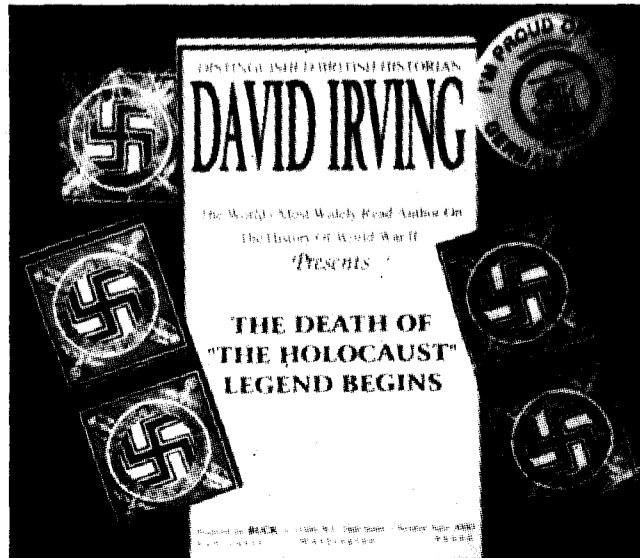
Now the ISO is denouncing “violence.” Not fascist violence, not the violence of the club-swinging cops—no, the ISO is smearing the anti-fascist protesters! “It was a few bad apples acting

David Irving and His Nazi Filth

Searchlight



David Irving, star attraction at meeting of German Nazi Deutsche Volksunion, March 1992. Swastikas seized at his Berkeley fascist meeting.



Young Spartacus

For Labor/Black Mobilizations to Fight Racist Terror!

Report from Columbus Anti-Fascist Conference

Four activists from the Spartacist League and Chicago Spartacus Youth Club went to Columbus, Ohio October 15-16 for the founding conference of the Midwest Anti-Fascist Network. In a number of discussions over what strategy to fight fascism, the issue of going into police pens, which we have repeatedly warned are deadly traps, was hotly debated. Our call for a proletarian-centered strategy to fight the KKK/Nazis put us in sharp counterposition to the Trotskyist League (TL), a centrist outfit itching to form what they see as a "united front" with radicals in the Columbus-based Anti-Racist Action.

Nearly 200 anti-fascists attended, including anarchists, anti-racist skinheads, independent activists, purported socialists and the revolutionaries of the SL and SYC. The International Socialist Organization was nowhere to be seen. Surprisingly, even the Socialist Workers Party (see article on facing page) showed up in order to talk out of the left side of their mouth to impress anti-racist youth. The SWP maintains the deadly strategy of "debating" the fascists, who they do not consider a real threat. At one workshop, an SWP member even went so far as to argue that since black people are part of the "ruling class" of capitalists, fascism in the United States would not target black people!

On Saturday, an SL supporter made an announcement that had particular relevance to the conference: the SYC-initiated united-front demonstration in Berkeley, California had stopped Hitler-apologist David Irving, winning a real victory for anti-racists nationwide.

A number of workshops developed into a debate with the TL. While the TL was busy tailing various political currents in the hopes of building a flabby "coalition," members of the SYC called for building a party to mobilize the working class, which has the social power to smash the fascists. This strategy was demonstrated by Spartacist League-initiated labor/black mobilizations over the last decade and a half in Atlanta, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and most recently on January 16 in Springfield, Illinois. Almost 500 people, including a large contingent of Chicago transit workers and members of various unions in the region, braved sub-zero wind chill and driving snow to stop a Ku Klux Klan rally. That the scum even showed up was due largely to the state of Illinois, which called out its forces in full riot gear to ensure the Klan's safety.

At a workshop on "What to Do When the Klan Comes to Town," members of the Spartacus Youth Club took every opportunity to argue against entering the deadly dangerous police traps, in which anti-fascists "demonstrate" side by side with fascists under the eyes of the cops who control all entrances and exits. Over the past year, this has become the preferred strategy for police around the Midwest in "containing" and repressing anti-fascists. The cops aren't grabbing people by the collars and forcing them into the pens, we stressed. The only people "herding" anyone into these set-ups are the leaders of outfits like the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) and its front group, the National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition (NWROC). In contrast, supporters of the SL and SYC have

urged people to stay out of the pens.

The Trotskyist League (which split from the RWL), calls on paper for "no reliance on cops or courts." But at the conference the TLers argued that entering a pen, as their group did in Painesville, Ohio, is a "tactical decision" to make on site, based on where the "masses" are going. In other words, they are perfectly happy to rely on the capitalist cops if that's what everyone else is doing. So much for revolutionary leadership! The Spartacist League's insistence on upholding in action the principle of not relying

on the bourgeois state is "wooden," according to these pseudo-Trotskyists.

Our stance in Columbus won over at least one activist from Antioch College. At a well-attended workshop where an SL comrade spoke at length, during discussion the Antioch student announced to applause: "No more f---ing pens for me. I'm not going in. The pen allows the fascists to set the tone and set the agenda. This group of people needs to swear off pens."

But the RWL/NWROC unwittingly provided the most compelling argument



October 1993: Anti-fascists penned in by cops at Columbus, Ohio statehouse. Young Spartacus has repeatedly warned: police pens are a deadly trap. No illusions in the capitalist state!

Reprinted from the Howard University student newspaper

THE HILLTOP

-14 October 1994

Student socialist group rallies against restriction on speakers

William Gruen

The Howard University administration's cancellation of Unity Nation's planned meeting, and their new policy which restricts the use of campus facilities by student groups is an attack on the democratic rights of all students, faculty and staff on the campus. The policy has nothing to do with "security." It amounts to an unprecedented attempt to censor and control the student body.

Who does the administration think it is? The Lords of "the Mecca"? We in the Spartacus Youth Club are opposed to all administration bans on student groups. Down with administration censorship!

The administration, acting in loco parentis, is trying to decide for the students whom they can listen to and with whom they can associate. The administration rolls out the red carpet for a commencement speech by General Colin Powell, the former military commander of the U.S. imperialist war machine, who is directly responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqi men, women and children. But the ranting of Unity Nation is an embarrassment to the administration and mobilizations against imperialism and the racist status quo are viewed as a threat by the administration and their paymasters on Capitol Hill.

The Howard University Spartacus Youth Club, which recently organized a speak out

against the invasion of Haiti, is no stranger to petty harassment by Howard security and the administration. When our members protested on campus against the invasion of the tiny Black Caribbean island of Grenada in 1983, we were arrested.

The racists who run this country hardly need an excuse to attack Blacks. The issue of Khalid Muhammad's speech is a red herring. When Muhammad came to

denounce racism while gleefully sending thousands of Black people to their deaths in Africa, in Haiti and in every Black ghetto of this country. They tarred all Howard students with the brush of "anti-Semite," making clear who holds the purse strings all the while.

Insofar as the ruling class wants educated Blacks, they want docile, pliant puppets. One step out of line and they come down like a ton of bricks. That is not to say that the

country, repressing Black people and not uplifting them.

The Nation of Islam wants students to go into the community as capitalist hustlers and the administration wants to seal off the campus from the surrounding community, in an ebony tower.

However, there is an alternative. In 1982 and again in 1988, Howard students were in the forefront of the fight against the Ku Klux Klan in Washington and Philadelphia. These are the kinds of fighters who can and must be won to the program of a revolutionary fight against all forms of race and class oppression, the program of Trotskyism. And this is the kind of movement that the administration wants above all to suppress.

The Spartacus Youth Club fights against the administration's new "restrictive" policies as an attack on the democratic rights of all, but we also link this fight to the struggle to provide a decent education for all. In this racist country, where there is not "separate but equal," we seek to undercut the race and class bias of higher education by fighting for the nationalization of all private universities, for open admissions with free tuition and a state paid living stipend for all. We say abolish the administration and Board of Trustees for student-teacher-worker control of the University!

The writer is a junior majoring in economics.

The administration... is trying to decide for the students whom they can listen to and with whom they can associate.

Howard University to spew his anti-Semitic poison last spring, the bourgeois media illuminated the spectacle with a thousand spotlights. The Howard administration was fit to be tied and the stage was set for yet another attack on Black youth.

The White racist ruling class in this country (who are the real progenitors of racial oppression and exclude Jews from their social clubs) found that Muhammad's obscene "message" made an easy target for them to hypocritically

Farrakhanites are fighters against Black oppression. Quite the contrary.

The ideology of the Nation of Islam, in that it goes beyond rabid bigotry and chauvinism, is the ideology of an aspiring Black cockroach capitalist class. The program of the Muslims coincides with that of some of the most reactionary forces in society. Farrakhan and his Fruit of Islam have hired themselves out as rent-a-cops for the government in Black housing projects throughout the

Barnes Appeals to Clinton White House

Trouble in SWP Over "Federal Troops to Pensacola"

On July 29, an anti-abortion terrorist gunned down Dr. John Britton and his escort James Barrett in Pensacola, Florida. In response, the misnamed Socialist Workers Party, in a 22 August *Militant* editorial, raised the demand, "Federal troops to Pensacola!" However, the SWP is evidently having trouble pushing this reformist line even with its own membership. Another article in the same issue, on its national conference, reports that SWP national secretary Jack Barnes' insistence on the call for federal troops "sparked considerable discussion among the delegates. Several said they opposed the demand, since local, state and federal governments have been carrying out attacks on gains women won with the 1973 Supreme Court decision decriminalizing abortion."

With consummate cynicism, Barnes admitted in his summary that of course the feds have been involved in attacks on abortion rights. He even conceded that the federal government has "been complicit in the lynchings and political killings of most Black rights fighters throughout the 1950s and '60s." And today you only have to turn on the TV to see U.S. troops engaged in a racist colonial occupation of Haiti. So why on earth call on this bloody-handed military to defend black rights or a woman's right to an abortion?

Barnes' rationale, according to the *Militant*, is that "the workers movement does not yet have the strength or leadership to prevent people from being killed," so therefore one must "demand that the authorities act to do so." There are "massive illusions" among "broad layers" of working people that the government acts "to advance democratic and social rights." Thus, according to Barnes, "calling on Washington to enforce the laws working people have won is part of the process of dispelling such illusions over time among thinking workers and youth."

So to dispel illusions in this government one should...spread illusions in this government?! This nonsense is only a thin cover for the SWP's real politics, which are deeply reformist. It's been some 30 years now since the SWP decisively abandoned its revolutionary heritage, giving up any belief in the capacity of the working class for revolutionary struggle. Instead, they chased after "popular" movements of various hues, ultimately leading to preaching reliance on the capitalist state.

The notion that imperialist troops will defend the oppressed is at odds with the fundamental nature of the capitalist state. It is a basic Marxist truth that the capitalist state, its army and police, cannot be controlled or "taken over" or made to work in the interests of the exploited. As Marx and Engels wrote, the working class "cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." Lenin pointed out in *State and Revolution*, "The state is an organ of class domination, an organ of oppression of one class by another."

To see what's wrong with the SWP's call, look at it in another context: the British imperialist occupation of Northern Ireland, supposedly in defense of the beleaguered Catholic minority.

When the Labour government sent in the British army in 1969, this was supported by a host of reformist outfits. Thus, the Cliff group, represented in the U.S. today by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), hailed the imperialist inter-

(28 September 1957) headlined "IKE MOVES AS NEGROES HIT BACK." As we detailed in the article "Not Federal Troops, But Labor/Black Defense!" in *Young Spartacus* No. 27, December 1974, the role of federal troops in Little



Boston, 1974: SWP reformists joined liberal NAACP in calling for federal troops; Spartacists fought for integrated working-class defense of busing.



vention as providing a welcome "breathing space." But the British troops hardly protected the Catholics. Less than three years later, the British army perpetrated the "Bloody Sunday" massacre of Civil Rights marchers, one of a long series of brutal atrocities against the oppressed Catholic population.

The SWP is a past master at calling to "Send federal troops to..." wherever. And the *Militant* editorial makes it clear that the SWP really *does believe* that the Clinton White House—which unleashed the Waco holocaust, and threatens to starve young mothers and their children in order to "end welfare as we know it"—can be pressured to defend the rights of workers and the oppressed. The *Militant* falsifies history, asserting that, "The successful call for federal troops to help integrate the schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957 and in Boston 17 years later made victories in those struggles possible."

Victories? In fact, Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock only *after* a black armed upheaval to defend the black community erupted in the wake of racist attacks on integration at Little Rock High School. The *Amsterdam News*

Rock, as in Birmingham and the rest of the civil rights era protests, was to *suppress* black struggle that the government feared was "getting out of hand."

Inside the SWP, Richard Fraser led opposition to the party leadership's line, writing in November 1957 that, "The demand for Federal Troops to the South is revealed in action, not as an adjunct to but as a substitute for the organized action of the masses and is counterposed directly to it" (see our bulletin, "In Memoriam, Richard S. Fraser," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3).

This question was also raised within the SWP by the Revolutionary Tendency (predecessor of the Spartacist League). In an 18 August 1963 document, "The Negro Struggle and the Crisis of Leadership," the RT called for "organized self-defense movements in southern cities—for the tactics of Robert F. Williams; against federal military intervention, which always supports the status quo."

In the battle over busing in Boston in 1974, the SWP joined with the NAACP and leaders of the Black Caucus of the Massachusetts State Legislature in the call for federal troops. In contrast, the

SL fought to "Implement the Busing Plan—Extend Busing to the Suburbs!" and demanded "No Federal Troops—For Integrated Working-Class Defense!" Far from Barnes' imaginary "victory," busing was *defeated* in the streets of Boston by a mobilization of white racist reaction.

And now the SWP has once again revived its call for federal troops...to *Pensacola* of all places, a right-wing bastion dominated by the Navy and Eglin Air Force base, where commandos trained to invade Haiti. Back in the '60s, the *Militant* raised the social-patriotic call to bring "our boys" home from Vietnam and send them to Mississippi. So maybe now Barnes will petition Clinton to get "our boys" out of Haiti and send them back to Pensacola?

Today women's right to abortion is under siege by right-wing terrorists—and by the government. A year before Dr. Britton was murdered, abortion provider Dr. David Gunn was also killed in Pensacola, shot in the back by a fanatic with links to the KKK. Ominously, this August in Melbourne, also in the Florida Panhandle, patients had to run a gauntlet of eight hooded Klansmen at an abortion clinic. The president of an organization which operates nine abortion clinics told a Congressional hearing on September 22: "We have been confronted and attacked more violently than ever" since the murder of Dr. Gunn. "The F.B.I. takes our death threats, but tells us they cannot really investigate" (*New York Times*, 23 September).

The onslaught against abortion rights has driven women to desperate measures. Last spring Florida teenager Kawana Michele Ashley, too poor to afford an abortion (estimated to cost up to \$1,800), shot herself in the stomach. The child delivered by Caesarean section in the hospital was too underdeveloped to live (it died of kidney failure). But outrageously, the girl was charged with murder and thrown into Pinellas County jail on \$50,000 bond. We say: Drop the charges against Kawana Michele Ashley! For free abortion on demand!

In opposition to the SWP's timid and treacherous reformism, the Spartacist League fights to mobilize workers and the oppressed to stop the attacks on the right to abortion. As we wrote last August:

"If ever an event demonstrated the suicidal futility of looking to the capitalist state—the Clinton White House, the FBI, cops and courts—to defend the rights of women and minorities, the murderous rampage in Pensacola, Florida is it.... What is needed to win the raging war to keep abortion clinics open are *mass, militant mobilizations* drawing in all defenders of women's rights and seeking in particular to mobilize the social power of the integrated labor movement. It is necessary to *drive off and disperse* the rightist mobs who lay siege to the abortion clinics and thus provide a screen for the killers like Hill and Griffin."

— "Pensacola: Anti-Abortion Terrorists Kill Again," WV No. 604, 5 August ■

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Yankee Occupation...

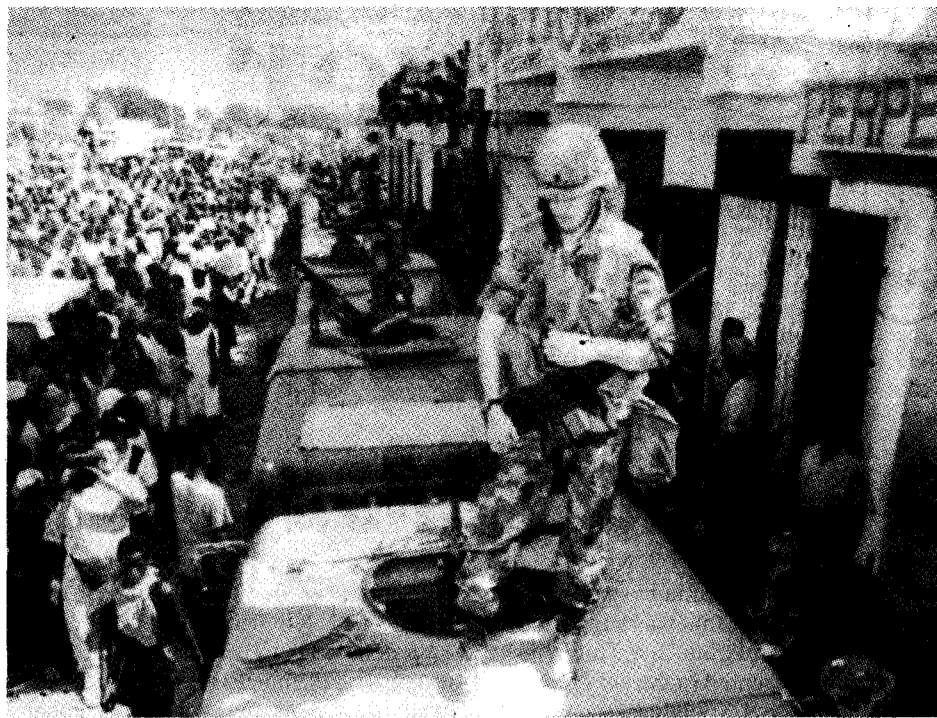
(continued from page 1)

warehouses to prevent looting, and on the roads leading to the villas of the rich in the hills above the capital. As crowds of unarmed Haitians caught and detained dozens of *attachés*, U.S. troops repeatedly intervened to save them, or simply handed them back to their pals in the police who later released them.

The U.S. military commander, Lieutenant General Henry Shelton, has insisted that the Haitian army and police "must survive as an institution." But the Yankee imperialists have a big problem as they try to "professionalize" the Haitian armed forces. For the past month, these armed thugs have terrorized Haitians on the streets under the eyes of the American occupiers. Now, from Port-au-Prince to the rural provinces, these professional killers are scrambling to fade into the population, hiding their guns and awaiting future "guaranteed" employment under the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) jobs program.

The primary task of the 17,000 U.S. troops in Haiti is to prevent the kind of *déchoukaj* (uprooting) of the oppressors which began to break out after Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier fled the country in 1986. The working people, peasants and unemployed sought to bring to justice every Macoute they could find. Squatters took over grand houses in the Port-au-Prince suburb of Pétionville after the owners had fled, while the Duvaliers' gaudy family mausoleum was torn apart and a huge statue of Christopher Columbus toppled into the sea.

But with the Macoutes temporarily out of the way, the U.S.-trained army soon brought back "Duvalierism without Duvalier," installing first General Henri Namphy, then the puppet Leslie Manigat, then Namphy again, followed by General Prosper Avril. Unable to stabilize the situation, the U.S. backed former World Bank official Marc Bazin in the 1990 elections, only



U.S. troops stand guard against impoverished masses outside food warehouse reportedly owned by newly appointed military chief General Jean-Claude Duperval, shown below (center) with 1991 coup partners Raoul Cédras (left) and Philippe Biamby.



to see Aristide elected by a two-thirds majority.

IMF "Reconstructs" Haiti

Today the American occupation authorities include experienced counter-revolutionary operatives, exemplified by one Gunther Otto Wagner, who was recruited from Hitler's *Luftwaffe* after World War II. In the Vietnam War, Wagner "advised" the puppet govern-

ment in the South during the U.S.' notorious "Phoenix program," which assassinated more than 30,000 "suspected Viet Cong cadre." He also trained Nicaraguan contra leader Enrique Bermúdez. Dispatched to Haiti after the 1991 coup that overthrew Aristide in order to "investigate" why thousands of Haitians were fleeing the country, Wagner announced that 95 percent of Haitians' asylum claims were "fraudulent" (John

Canham-Clyne, "U.S. Policy on Haiti: Selling Out Democracy," *CovertAction*, Spring 1994).

Aristide's appeals for calm are generally being heeded in the mistaken hope that his promises of a better life are for real. But Haiti's desperate masses will inevitably become disenfranchised with the long journey from "misery to poverty," and may wonder where Aristide's talk of "dignity" comes in. Before the U.S. invasion, the Haitian president agreed to a "reconstruction" program which was presented at an August meeting to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Interamerican Development Bank. One of the presenters was Leslie Delatour, a former aide to Baby Doc's finance minister and a minister of finance under Namphy.

Among other items, this austerity plan calls for slashing public employment in half and selling off state-owned industries. Many may be bought up by the imperialists, while the remainder will go to Haiti's notorious "six families." These wealthy mulatto clans have lorded it over the black masses since the late 19th century and were granted monopolies over key sectors of the economy by Haiti's dictators. At the head of the pack were the Brandts (who got port facilities and energy) and Mevs (owners of the Haitian American Sugar Co.), followed by the Accras (textiles), Behrmanns (car and truck imports), Bigios (steel, iron and construction materials) and Madsens (beer and coffee).

The plan also targets Haiti's starving peasants by initially cutting in half the protective tariff for rice and other grains and eventually removing it altogether, while eliminating all other import restrictions and tariffs. This could cause a social explosion in the countryside, where 75 percent of the population lives. When the Namphy regime opened Haiti to rice imports, it touched off a "guerrilla rice war of roadblocks and shootouts" by peasants, who provided an important base of Aristide's *Lavalas* (flood) movement (*Financial Times*, 20 October).

Haiti's trade-union movement was mostly shattered under the Cédras regime's repression, and militants were driven out of the factories in Port-au-Prince. This has only been exacerbated by three years of the U.S./UN starvation

Mississippi...

(continued from page 6)

racist American capitalism! The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for *revolutionary integrationism*, with equal rights for black people guaranteed through a planned, collectivized economy in a socialist, egalitarian society.

White racist opponents of education for blacks—and some black liberal integrationists—accuse the Mississippi protesters of "fighting for segregated schools." In fact, it is the *abject failure* of liberal integrationist programs which has led some black protesters to look nostalgically back to the days of Jim

Crow segregation, when the fate of separate black institutions was less precarious.

On an individual level, who can blame black students for leaving white institutions where they are under attack to attend more-hospitable black colleges? But pseudo-nationalists who exalt the accomplished fact of racial segregation stand in the way of the fight for racial integration on an egalitarian basis. Plaintiffs in the Ayers lawsuit argue that the state could strengthen separate black institutions by moving some of the pricier programs from white institutions to black colleges, and gradually luring more white students to predominantly black schools. But this will do nothing to answer the systematic underfunding

of predominantly black schools and will likely result in generalized lousy education, while the racist authorities will seek to use it to inflame white racist reaction in the Deep South.

Rather than pit white against black or play pork barrel politics with the racist capitalist state, the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for *quality education for all!* A fight to nationalize the elite private universities and an education system based on *open admissions* and *free tuition* would really redress the race and class bias inherent in a capitalist education system.

Some 30 years since the civil rights movement, by every social index there's been an increased intensity of racist segregation and immiseration. "Last hired, first fired" has been a way of life for black people. Now more black Americans lack regular employment than at any time since the Depression. At the same time, nearly a quarter of black workers are unionized. A pattern of reverse migration has developed, as Southern-born black workers have returned to the South to gain employment after having been laid off from industrial jobs in the North. A new industrial belt has developed along Interstate 85, running southwest from the Carolinas.

Although predominantly rural farmland, Mississippi has a high concentration of black unionists at the sprawling Pascagoula shipyards on the Gulf of Mexico. Next door in Alabama, strikes by rubber workers in Huntington and steel workers in Bessemer have showed the power of inte-

grated labor. Black workers in the South, concentrated in auto, steel, Teamster and longshore jobs, can be the basis for sharp class struggle to back students' fight for an education on the road to a social revolution that can achieve genuine black equality.

Many of the activists fighting to defend education for blacks are inspired by the liberal civil rights activists of the 1960s, and the radicalized SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee). SNCC organized the Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964, which brought hundreds of idealistic and courageous black and white youth into the state to fight for integration and the right to vote. The civil rights movement attempted to break through the entrenched segregation and forced racial separation known as Jim Crow.

But when the movement confronted the hellish conditions of the Northern ghettos, it had no program to break through the economic bedrock of racist oppression. Missing from the struggles of the 1960s was a class-struggle leadership that could link the fight for black liberation to the power of the labor movement. The mass struggle for black rights was led straight into the dead end of Democratic Party politics and the root cause of racial oppression—capitalism and production for profit—was not challenged.

The fight for equal education is integrally linked to the working-class fight for the revolutionary integration of blacks into an egalitarian socialist society. This is the revolutionary perspective that's urgently necessary today. ■

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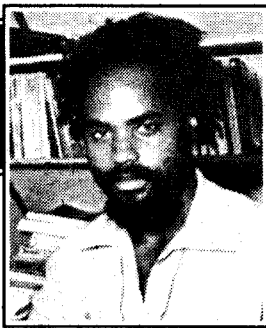
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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

American Hatred of Haiti



Few nations have come into existence facing as much opposition as Haiti.

Born January 1st, 1804 after a bloody and horrific revolution against their French overlords, Haiti became the first nation on earth where an enslaved people broke their own chains and militarily defeated a powerful colonial army.

Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a military disciple of Toussaint L'Ouverture, in proclaiming Haiti's independence, said, "Never again shall colonist or European set foot on this soil as master or landowner. This shall hence forward be the foundation of our constitution."

Haiti, the first independent nation in all of Latin America, was officially declared a haven from oppression, and an asylum for escaped slaves, and for any person of either African or Amerindian descent.

How did America react to this isle of freedom floating to its south?

With fear, hatred, contempt and military aggression.

How did America respond to the new nation?

One politician, South Carolina Senator Robert

Hayne (1824) made no bones about the issue of Haiti's recognition; "Our policy with regard to Haiti is plain. We never can acknowledge her independence... The peace and safety of a large portion of our Union forbids us even to discuss [it]."

The black republic struck fear into the hearts of a white Euro-American empire that drew its sustenance in a vampirish exploitation of black labor, suffering, and slavery.

European nations, joined by America, entered into a diplomatic quarantine of Haiti that made independence a virtual nullity.

Although independent since 1804, the United States didn't recognize Haiti until some 58 years later—1862.

As late as 1872, German ships entering Haiti seized 2 Haitian vessels and as a sign of their contempt, took down their flags, and smeared the national emblem with human excrement (to prove, no doubt, European civilization).

In 1915, the U.S. Marines invaded and occupied Haiti until 1934. In the interim, they forced Haitians into labor gangs, called *corvée*, to work for U.S.

corporations that went there to exploit cheap labor.

When the people rebelled against this involuntary servitude in the Cacos Insurrection, the U.S. Marines responded by ruthless repression, that left an estimated 15,000 peasant casualties.

One U.S. Marine officer, Colonel Littleton W.T. Waller (Virginia) wrote of his impressions of the people historians now say they came to "help"; the Haitians were "real n----rs and make no mistake—there are some fine looking, well educated polished men here, but they are real n--s beneath the surface."

A perfect example of exported American "democracy."

Haiti's military, trained, armed and paid by the U.S. government, are America's latest example.

Hands off Haiti!

In the spirit of L'Ouverture.

19 August 1994

© 1994 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Philadelphia black journalist, is on death row at Pennsylvania's Huntingdon state prison. Framed up because of his political views, Jamal faces death for his defiance of the racist, capitalist order. His columns appear periodically in *Workers Vanguard* and other newspapers.

To get involved in the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the death penalty, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, 1100 Pike St., Huntingdon, PA 16652-1112.

embargo, which caused what little industry existed to shut down. While the economy will be reactivated by the lifting of the embargo, and there is bound to be a welling up of discontent, the new colonial authorities will be no friends of labor. The "reconstruction" plan pointedly says nothing about raising Haiti's miserable minimum wage of \$3 a day.

To carry out the IMF austerity program, Aristide has just announced the appointment of U.S.-educated commodities trader and "free market" advocate Smarck Michel as prime minister. Michel helped finance Aristide's 1990 election campaign and served as his commerce minister for five months until resigning in opposition to lowering food prices.

Aristide: Front for U.S. Imperialism

In early September, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) was holding meetings under the title "Should the U.S. Invade Haiti?" Clinton answered that for them. Now the ISO is attempting to build liberal coalitions to pressure Clinton to get out of Haiti. Meanwhile, the ISO lauds the counterrevolutionary mobs who rioted in Havana, Cuba in early August (see "ISO: Gusano Socialists?")

WV No. 606, 16 September).

Appealing to those who have seen Aristide as a liberator of the Haitian masses, and are now queasy over his role as front man for the Americans, the ISO has suddenly discovered that there are "two Aristides": the one who "campaigns around a program of reform" in 1990 and today's tool of the World Bank (*Socialist Worker*, October 1994). Back in 1991, the ISO described Aristide as "fully aware that for democracy to survive in Haiti, the whole system had to be restructured" (*Socialist Worker*, November 1991).

The truth is that Aristide, a radical "liberation theologian" whose *Lavalas* movement was based on the peasantry and urban poor, came to power in alliance with a small, liberal section of the Haitian bourgeoisie, represented by Georges and Antoine Izméry (both assassinated by death squads). While the Aristide government initially tried to carry out some reforms, such as raising the starvation minimum wage, it was pledged to respect bourgeois property rights. As the *Financial Times* notes, "President Aristide's first government attempted to wrest political power away from the military-appointed rural strongmen, but did not touch their economic power by promoting land reform."

Aristide called for a "marriage between the army and the people," naming Cédras as his military chief. Whereas before his election he often denounced U.S. imperialism's role in Haiti, once in office Aristide welcomed USAID and IMF assistance. In an essay published in the *New York Times* (16 October) the day after he returned to Port-au-Prince, Aristide boasted that he would "restore the World Bank's confidence in Haiti," adding: "In 1991, the bank commended our Government for 'providing a window of opportunity for the country to move towards sustained social and economic progress'."

The international proletariat must oppose Yankee imperialism's colonial occupation of Haiti and rally to the defense of the Cuban Revolution. The liberation of the Haitian masses from their desperate impoverishment is not their task alone. A workers and peasants government in this terribly ravaged land, where the hills are denuded of trees because this is the only source of cooking fuel for the millions of poor, would immediately have to be linked to revolutionary struggle throughout the region and in the center of capitalist power in North America. This only underscores that a Haitian Trotskyist party must be built as part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International.

As Spartacist League spokesman Marjorie Stamberg noted in a recent forum on Haiti and Cuba:

"Any revolutionary struggle in Haiti has to be extended to the Dominican Republic. As far back as the slave revolt led by Toussaint L'Ouverture at the time of the French Revolution, what is now the Dominican Republic was the staging ground for counterrevolution, and you



Morris/Black Star
Jean-Bertrand Aristide returning to Haiti's National Palace in Port-au-Prince.

can bet that is what the former Port-au-Prince police chief François [currently living in Santo Domingo] is going to be up to today. There are thousands of Haitians working in the Dominican Republic in virtual slave conditions in the cane fields.

"Beyond that, the struggle has to be taken to the imperialist heartland. The Haitian working class is present by the hundreds of thousands in North America—in cities from New York to Boston to Washington, D.C. to Montreal. Above all, the fight for socialist revolution must be extended to the 'belly of the beast.' The multiracial American proletariat is key to the fight for socialist revolution here and around the globe." ■

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South Korea...

(continued from page 2)

Korean government is anyone who asserts that the workers who created the country's wealth are more than just slaves to the *chaebols*.

Former "dissident" Kim Young Sam learned well his lessons from the military dictatorships he claimed to oppose. Throughout the summer, as the United States rattled its sabres at the North, Kim Young Sam's police state carried out vicious attacks on labor activists, and against students for alleged pro-North

sympathies. Since coming to office his regime has swelled the country's prison population with trade unionists and dissidents, and carried out attacks on striking workers and students that would be envied by Park Chung Hee, Roh Tae Woo and the rest of the previous South Korean dictators propped up by U.S. arms.

We demand that all charges be dropped against Choi Il Bung and the other arrested supporters of the International Socialists. Free all imprisoned trade unionists and leftists!

Very truly yours,
Paul Cooperstein

Popular Frontism and the Strong State

The following article is adapted from *Spartaco* No. 44, September 1994, published by our comrades of the *Lega Trotskista d'Italia*.

The rightist victory in the March 1994 elections marked a turning point in Italy's postwar history. It underlined the sharply escalating political and class polarization throughout West Europe. For the first time since World War II, fascist forces are now present in the government of an imperialist power. This ominous development repre-

PART ONE OF TWO

sents a direct threat to the workers movement, as the reactionary ruling triumvirate of Berlusconi-Fini-Bossi takes aim at union gains won through decades of hard struggle.

Democratic rights are menaced by this so-called "Pole of Freedom" right-wing coalition, which claims to be "liberal" while seeking to establish a muscular "presidential republic," drastically curbing the power of parliament and the judiciary. But the "Pole of the Progressives" coalition which was defeated in the elections presents no real opposition to their reactionary designs. Indeed, the left (and not-so-left) bloc offered itself as an alternative vehicle to carry out the bourgeoisie's program for a "strong state."

In the elections of March 27-28, the Trotskyist League (LTd'I) refused to call for votes to the "progressive pole." The latter was a typical *popular front*, a class-collaborationist coalition which tied the working class to direct representatives of the bourgeoisie, from anti-Mafia liberals to prominent capitalists such as a former vice president of Confindustria (the manufacturers' association) and the brother of the owner of Olivetti. Although it was led by the reformists of the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) and Rifondazione Comunista (RC), this front is a *bourgeois* political formation. It stood not for defense of the workers' livelihoods but for the bosses' profits—to continue the government of the former Bankitalia chief Ciampi, which has meant the loss of *one and a half million jobs* since mid-1992 and a sharp drop in real wages last year.

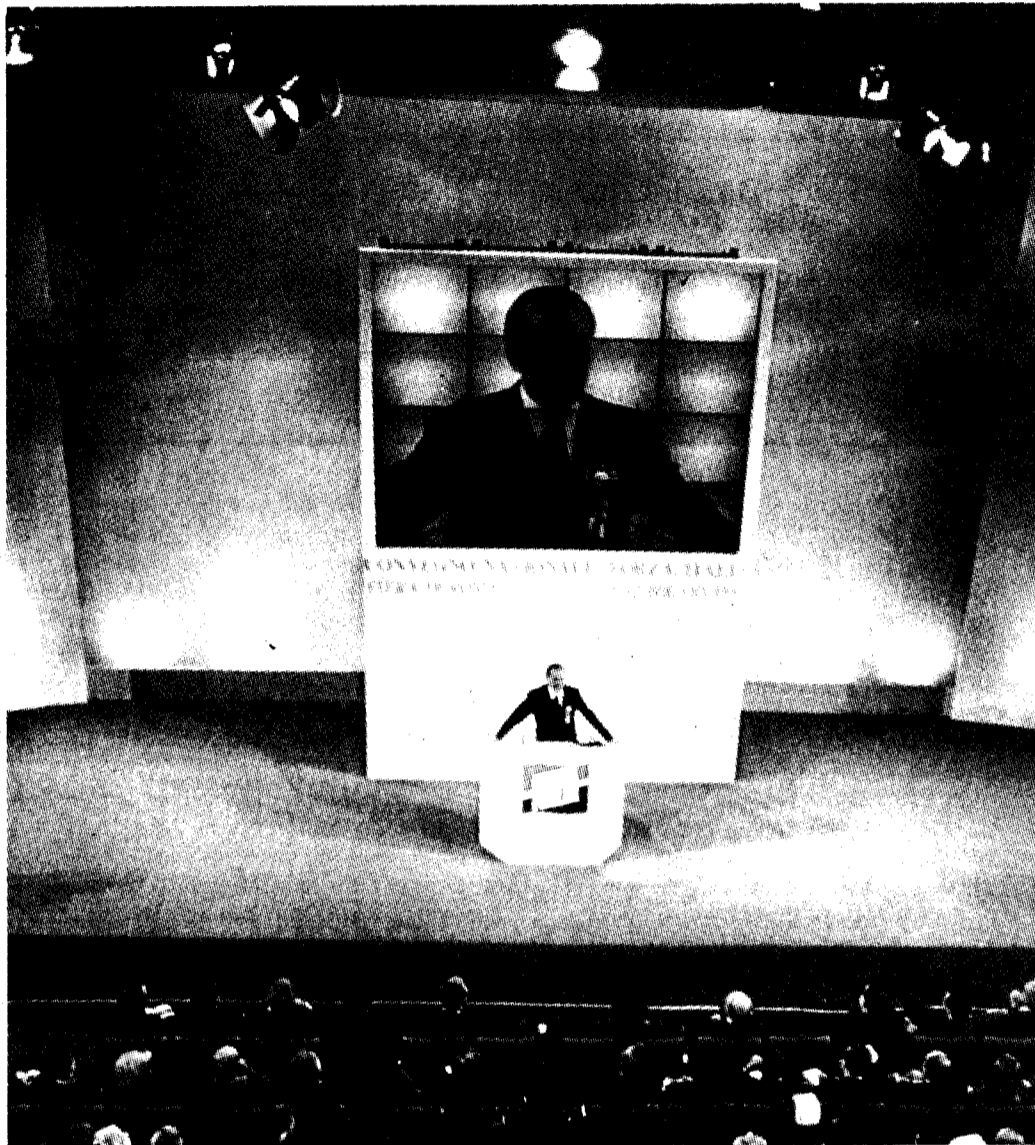
We have pointed out that the push toward a "strong state" in Italy is a direct

result of the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe and the Soviet Union. Across West Europe, the capitalist rulers no longer see the need to throw a few crumbs to the workers to fend off the "communist menace." This and the economic crisis of the last several years are key factors in producing a general onslaught against the "welfare state" under its different national rubrics: "*l'état providence*" in France, "*lo stato sociale*" in Italy. What Thatcher and Reagan undertook in the 1980s, the continental bourgeoisies are driving hard to accomplish in the '90s:

to increase profits by jacking up the rate of exploitation and holding down social "overhead" expenses. But their success is by no means guaranteed.

Now a battle has been launched over the government's plans to drastically slash pensions. Finance Minister Dini wants to cut L50,000 billion (over \$30 billion) out of the health and social security system, and declares peremptorily that there will be "no negotiations on pensions" with the unions (*La Repubblica*, 7 September). This is a showdown for the entire workers movement. The

ITALY



Media magnate Berlusconi, head of right-wing government, promotes himself as strongman to "save the nation" and eliminate union gains.

Der Spiegel

CGIL-CISL-UIL union tops talk of a "hot autumn" of social struggle, while politely waiting for an audience with "no-negotiations" Dini. But angry metal workers in the Fiat bastion of Torino have declared that they are not waiting for permission and will launch a "preventive" strike against the cutback offensive of Berlusconi & Co. on September 8.

This is a good opportunity to give the rightist government in Roma the treatment the Air France workers gave the rightist government in Paris. An offensive of sharp class struggle could dramatically change the relationship of forces. Yet current PDS leader D'Alema is calling to "broaden" the popular front into a center-left "pole of the democrats." In Italy, as in France and throughout Europe and the world, the key question is leadership, the need for a revolutionary vanguard, a Leninist-Trotskyist party that can break the chains of class collaboration and wage a victorious struggle for working-class power. In order to build such a party, it is necessary to understand what are the forces in contention and what the battle is about.

"Sweat and Tears"

For the last several years, decisive sectors of the Italian bourgeoisie have been driving for an authoritarian, semi-bonapartist regime. Their goal: to "discipline" the working class by breaking the power of the unions and "clean out" the Italian political establishment, which was put together by the CIA after WWII and has since been rotted by decades of corruption. Because this involves some real reshaping of the capitalist class itself, they must displace the normal push-and-pull of competing factions under bourgeois democracy.

A would-be Bonaparte, who presents himself as savior of the nation, is already in place: Citizen Berlusconi, the media magnate whose Fininvest holding company is one of the largest capitalist enterprises in the country. But he is constrained by his two allies, the fascist Italian Social Movement/National Alliance (MSI/AN) of Gianfranco Fini and Umberto Bossi's rightist populist Northern League. This latent conflict between the right-wing coalition partners came to a head in mid-July over Berlusconi's attempt to hamstring the *mani pulite* (clean hands) anti-graft investigations.

Berlusconi appealed to small and medium businessmen beset by heavy taxes and ubiquitous bribes, squeezed by the Mafia, facing powerful unions which have won relatively high wages. In a country where 99 percent of all businesses are family-owned, this is a large audience. This is the same voting base as the Northern League, whose battle cries of "*Roma ladrona*" (Rome the thief) link up the widespread anti-Southern chauvinism of the Northern petty bourgeoisie with what is at bottom a classic tax revolt. It is also from this layer of enraged petty-bourgeois that the fascist MSI/AN draws its hard core of support, until now largely in the South. Although he pitched himself to small entrepreneurs as a "self-made man," Berlusconi is personally worth an estimated \$7.5 billion and is the quintessence of a monopoly capitalist. And that raises a real conflict of interest be-



La Stampa

Workers demonstrate against Berlusconi's pension-slashing austerity, October 14, in front of giant Fiat Mirafiori plant in Torino.



Der Spiegel



Liberazione

Berlusconi's coalition partners include racist-populist Northern League of Umberto Bossi (far left) and fascist MSI/National Alliance of *Il Duce's* granddaughter, Alessandra Mussolini. Skinhead thugs saluted fascist gains in March elections.



AFF

tween Berlusconi and his voting base. Because now that he was in the saddle, the Hon. Fininvest wanted to stop the corruption purge and get on with business. Although they recruit from the same milieu, the parties of the right-wing coalition have important policy differences (e.g., the League is federalist, the fascists are centralist). Twice in mid-July, differences within the governing majority came to fistfights in parliament. But they have one common enemy: the working class. And in spite of rifts and maneuvering, the coalition partners will unite in their crusade to drive down wages, undo union gains and devastate the unions themselves.

In this country where union membership is still over 20 percent, the bourgeoisie from top to bottom yearns to become like the U.S., where unions are down to 15 percent of the workforce, or France, where the labor movement now counts barely 12 percent of the workers. The CGIL-CISL-UIL federations now sense that they are facing a mortal threat, and are negotiating a bureaucratic unity agreement after decades of being tied to the multiple parties of the "first republic." But neither they nor the mass reformist workers parties, the PDS and RC, waged a *class* fight against the capitalist assault. On the contrary, through the "progressive" popular front they gagged the working class and bound it to its class enemy.

To demonstrate his "responsibility" to the bosses, then PDS leader Occhetto promised the workers nothing but "sweat and tears." Berlusconi promised "one million jobs." With unemployment at a record 11.5 percent and rising, is it any wonder that the right wing won? And with the petty bourgeoisie clamoring for a strong state to clean up corruption, to cut taxes, to drive down wages, they voted for the force that put forward a would-be strongman who told them what they wanted to hear. Now that he's in office, of course, Berlusconi will deliver "sweat and tears."

Fascism and Bonapartism in the "Second Republic"

The right-wing election victory accompanied by pictures of fascists giving the straight-arm "Roman salute" and chanting "*Duce, Duce*" in celebration sent shock waves around the world. Was fascism back in power? Various European bourgeois and reformist leaders, such as French president Mitterrand, postured as "anti-fascists" striking the alarm. Europoliticians in Strasbourg wagged their fingers over the MSI ministers in Berlusconi's new government. But soon this died down, and various media began accepting Fini's self-definition as a "post-fascist." There was a rush to declare fascism a purely "historical" question. Now the *New York Times Magazine* (24 July) published an article, "Benito Mussolini: Back From the Dead," discovering that *Il Duce* wasn't so bad after all, especially before

1938 (when he joined Nazi Germany in the drive to World War II—this is the same kind of argument used by "respectable" German apologists for Hitler).

The electoral gains of the fascist MSI in part reflect the political vacuum created by the collapse of the Christian Democrats and their Socialist allies, who were so shot through by corruption that key sectors of the bourgeoisie decided to get rid of them in the interest of restoring the "competitiveness" of Italian business. The now-defunct parties that governed Italy throughout the whole postwar period had been cobbled together and fostered by the American CIA to serve the purposes of the Cold War. Over time, the Italian bourgeoisie can reconstruct "center" parties with new faces and configurations. As it is, large sections of the Italian and international bourgeoisie are far from convinced that the newly preponderant rightist and fascist formations constitute the best chance for consolidating stable capitalist rule. Thus, at the time of the March elections, PDS leader Occhetto received the OK of the American ambassador, the blessing of the Pope and the open support or tacit acceptance of prominent Italian industrialists.

Shattered by their electoral defeat, some of the "progressives" raised a lament that fascism stood at the door. On the other hand, PDS leaders Occhetto and D'Alema (the new party secretary) during the campaign flirted with Fini during TV talk shows, treating the MSI leader as a "valid conversation partner." Even ostensible Trotskyists belittled the fascist danger. Livio Maitan, veteran Italian spokesman of Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat" (Usec), declared that in judging the National Alliance "overly simplistic characterisations should be avoided. No doubt, the MSI was founded to organise those nostalgic for the Mussolini regime. But...it systematically integrated itself into the institutions, and appeared more as [a] right-wing or far-right conservative formation in which the weight of those nostalgic for fascism progressively diminished" (*International Viewpoint*, June 1994).

For leftists to take part in painting the heirs of Mussolini in respectable colors is foolhardy in the extreme. The National Alliance is nothing but a double-breasted electoral suit for the MSI fascists, quite a few of whom are not-so-neo at all. MSI Eurodeputy Pino Rauti was a fascist thug in Mussolini's 1943-45 "Salò Republic" in German-occupied northern Italy. And the *squadristi* are not just history. Leading MSI parliamentary deputy Teodoro Buontempo was long active with these gangs of goons. It was only a couple of years ago that blackshirted MSI squads marched in Milano to support rightist state president Francesco Cossiga. And galvanized by the victory of the right, bands of skinheads have begun openly attacking the workers movement. In Roma and Milano, skinheads have burned down offices of

Rifondazione Comunista, and on May 14 a couple of hundred of these Nazi scum staged a provocative march in Vicenza.

As for AN/MSI leader Fini, this "post-modern" yuppie fascist not only proclaimed *Il Duce* "the greatest statesman of the century" but also declared: "It's necessary to give thanks to Benito Mussolini that Italy didn't become communist in 1922." He also praised fascism as a tradition of "honesty, correctness and good government" and came to the defense of skinheads, saying "Naziskins are not dangerous."

At the same time, it would be losing all sense of reality to consider the presence of fascist ministers in the government as the equivalent of a new march on Rome. Fascism means the military mobilization of the enraged petty bourgeoisie in the interests of big capital to prevent social revolution by utterly *destroying* the organized workers movement. This is not happening in Italy today, because the proletariat has not frightened the bourgeoisie by threatening its power. For now, the fascist gangs, guard dogs of capital, are being kept on a leash, mainly used to terrorize dark-skinned immigrants. What is happening, which is ominous enough, is the enlisting of petty-bourgeois *electoral* support as voting cattle for capitalist forces seeking to erect a "strong state" to *discipline* and decisively *weaken* the workers movement. But whether this succeeds depends centrally on the response of the proletariat to this concerted capitalist offensive.

With his right-wing racist appeals, Bossi and his Northern League (formerly Lombard League) certainly have fascist overtones. Sometimes the League's aims coincide with the MSI. But Bossi's fundamental appeal is against high taxes, the bane of the small entrepreneur. "Tax regionalism" (i.e., spending more of the

state's revenue in the "industrious" North rather than subsidizing the "indolent" South) is Bossi's rallying cry, not separatism.

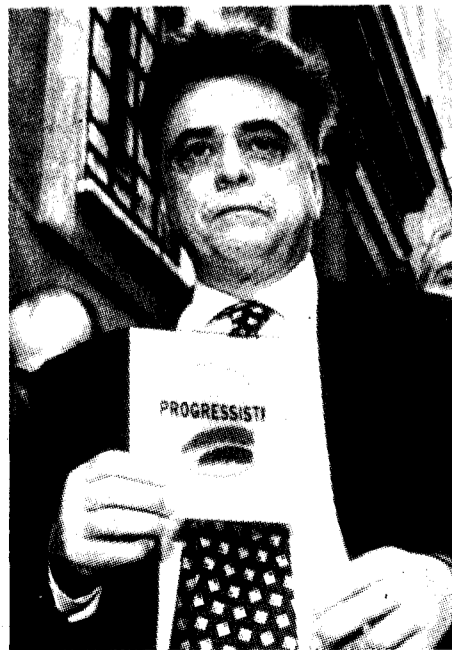
When you strip away its medieval heraldry and costumery, the Northern League evokes the tax revolt led by Pierre Poujade in France in the 1950s. This, too, was mainly a crusade of small property owners demanding cheap government. The Poujadists were looking to sweep away the corruption and chaos of the French Fourth Republic (1947-58), where "revolving door" cabinets came and went just as frequently as in the Italian First Republic. Poujade himself recognized the affinity of his movement with the Italian Northern League. In an article last year titled "Bossi C'est Moi" in the weekly *Famiglia Cristiana* (No. 24, June 1993), Poujade expressed his sympathy for the "Senatur," saying that "your League is very similar to an updated version of Poujadism," and "they make the same criticisms of Bossi as of me: racist, xenophobe and so on."

In the French Fourth Republic, the petty-bourgeois proprietors grew increasingly unwilling to cough up the taxes to finance the losing colonial war against Algerian independence, while remaining staunchly pro-colonialist, which posed a national crisis. In rising up against the "republic of parties," the Poujadists were a movement for authoritarian rule. And when a strongman came along—General de Gaulle—Poujade's movement, although it had received 3 million votes (over 11 percent of the total) in the 1956 elections, disappeared almost overnight.

If comparisons of Bossi to Poujade come to mind, Berlusconi's most fervent fans picture him as a new de Gaulle—although he's a pretty poor excuse for one. The French general was a real bonapartist figure, but the "presidential" Fifth Republic he installed in 1958 was only a *semi-bonapartist* regime, in which the democratic trappings of a substantially weakened parliament were maintained. Berlusconi, with his years-long participation in the P2 "masonic lodge" (membership card number 1816), certainly aspires to de Gaulle's plebiscitary style of government.

For the last couple of years, key sectors of the Italian bourgeoisie have been demanding a "strong state" and a "second republic." In our article "Italian Capitalists Demand 'Strong State,'" *Workers Vanguard* No. 554, 26 June 1992), we quoted Fiat boss Giovanni Agnelli's declaration that "a strong government that takes unpopular measures" is needed, particularly to cut pensions and health care. The present cabinet in Roma is not (yet) such a regime, witness the hesitations of Labor Minister Mastella to launch a frontal war over pensions in the middle of the uproar over Berlusconi's attacks on the magistrates. But neither is it just a continuation of the unstable parliamentary ministries of the First

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Veziro Sabatini

PDS leader Achille Occhetto, leader of popular-front "Pole of the Progressives," promised the workers "sweat and tears."

General Strike...

(continued from page 1)

power, particularly amid the turmoil of this "hot autumn" of class struggle in Italy. But by itself it would not resolve that question. There has never been a lack of militancy in the Italian working class. The key question is that of revolutionary leadership.

Berlusconi is widely despised. A typical poster on October 14 read, "I repent, I voted for Berlusconi." But what's needed to sweep away the Berlusconi government and smash his austerity program is all-out workers resistance, including strikes, plant occupations, the formation of workers councils and workers militias. This would pose a situation of dual power. And a genuinely Bolshevik vanguard party must be built in order to lead the workers' struggles beyond economic militancy in the direction of a fight for workers rule. For otherwise, decisive sectors of the Italian bourgeoisie are pushing for a "strong state" to destroy the workers' gains, whether under the aspiring Bonaparte Berlusconi (called "Berluskaiser" by his ally Bossi of the Northern League) or the "progressive" popular front led by the PDS (see "Italy: Popular Frontism and the Strong State," page 12 of this issue).

Hot Autumn of Workers Struggle

Every day since late September, tens of thousands of workers took to the streets to protest against the deep and deadly pension cuts proposed by Berlusconi. On September 28, 200,000 workers struck and marched in cities around the country. From Palermo to Milano, workers held assemblies in the middle of highways and blocked railroad stations. Brescia had four de facto general strikes of 25,000 each. Fiat's giant Mirafiori works repeatedly struck and filled the streets of Torino. Massive daily protests semi-paralyzed Genova for two weeks; on the eve of the national strike an opera concert was held "for labor and culture" in the port city. "What better way...to fly to the biggest Genovan protest than on the wings of Verdi and Puccini?" commented *La Repubblica*.

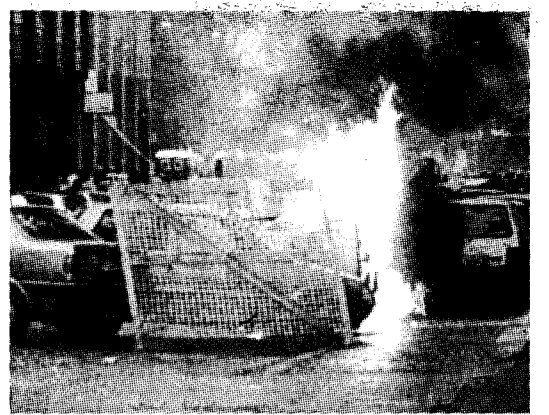
On October 14, 350,000 marched in Milano, 250,000 in Firenze (Florence), 200,000 in Torino and Roma, 150,000 in Bologna, Napoli (Naples) and Genova, 70,000 in Palermo, 50,000 in Bari, etc. Seven special trains and 300 buses brought strikers to the regional Firenze demonstration. In many cities, the marches stretched for kilometers, and most demonstrators never made it to the end. All schools closed down for the day and hundreds of thousands of students marched in spirited contingents that arrived together from hundreds of high schools and universities. In Roma, youthful student demonstrators enlivened the marches by singing a rap version of *Bandiera Rossa*. Many pensioners marched and there were also large PDS and Rifondazione Comunista (RC) contingents.

Comrades of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia and other sections of the International Communist League sold some 640 copies of the LTd'I paper *Spartaco* in Milano October 14, while another 80 were sold in Palermo.

The semi-anarchist *Autonomia Operaia* (Workers Autonomy) chose to have their own separate marches in Milano and some other cities. The syndicalist CUB/COBAS (rank-and-file committees) held a national demonstration of 50,000 in Roma in the afternoon. But many youth from the *autonomo* milieu and many COBAS members chose to march with the mass of the workers in their own cities. And *Corriere della Sera* (15 October) noted the spectacle, "never before seen," of the head of the COBAS at Alfa Romeo, Corrado Delle Donne, speaking from the same platform as the official union leaders. In Genova, workers carried signs saying, "Berlusconi, Remember Tambroni!" They were recalling the massive working-class mobiliza-



Supporters of Leoncavallo leftist social center battle cop attempts to evict them, Milano, September 10. *Corriere della Sera* photos



tion there in 1960 when port workers closed down a fascist meeting and fought it out with the cops, eventually leading to the downfall of the Christian Democratic/fascist Tambroni government.

October 14 was not just a parade, like so many Italian "general strikes" in the past. One striker declared, "This is only the antipasto." A national mobilization has been scheduled for November 12, when the CGIL-CISL-UIL union federations are planning to bring one million workers in a march on Roma. In addition to the eight hours of officially authorized strikes leading up to the 12th, there are already other spontaneous strikes and actions all over the place. Already on October 22, some 50,000 students and youth from around Italy marched in Napoli.

In the March 27 elections, Berlusconi won many votes by promising a "new Italian miracle" to revive the economy and provide one million new jobs. Now the bitter reality of mounting unemployment, falling wages and brutal cuts is staring everybody in the face. The prime minister is increasingly isolated. He is presently immersed in what seems to be a battle with the magistrates over their corruption investigation into his Fininvest empire. The cabinet is beginning to fragment in the face of the demonstration of social power and combativity by the working class. Labor minister Mastella (whose son and wife joined the protests) wants to cut a deal with the unions on pension cuts. Meanwhile, fascist MSI deputies in parliament assaulted a left-wing speaker last week in the raging fight over the government's political purge in the RAI state television system.

Popular Front Chains Workers

The possibility of hard class struggle to bring down this reactionary regime—only months after the bourgeois elections—and smash the vicious austerity program is palpable. But the reformist leaderships—principally the two offshoots of the Communist Party, RC and PDS—are moving might and main to block this road by tying the working class to the bosses in a class-collaborationist front. The head of the CGIL, Sergio Cofferati, summed up the politics of the trade-union bureaucracy and the anti-Berlusconi popular front immediately after the general strike, saying: "Now the government must bargain with us." The RC and PDS want to use these massive strikes as a pressure tactic to modify the budget and make the "sacrifices more equal."

RC president and senator Armando Cossutta talks of waging a battle in parliament with the help of mass pressure in the streets. D'Alema, head of the PDS,

says: "We are a responsible force, we don't want to damage the country and the markets," adding: "The days are over when the left thought that it could do it alone" (*L'Unità*, 15 October). In order to show its "responsibility" to the bourgeoisie, the PDS is now pushing the "unity of all democrats," ranging from Rifondazione Comunista to the recycled Christian Democrats of the Popular Party (PPI), and is even flirting with the racist populists of the Northern League. RC says it has no "prejudices" against the PPI, and an interview with RC leader Bertinotti was recently run in the League newspaper *L'Indipendente* (21 August).

Sensing the possibility of bringing down Berlusconi, the "progressive" popular front is looking to the bourgeois state apparatus. Two days before the general strike, on October 12, RC, PDS and the COBAS of Alfa Romeo demonstrated shoulder to shoulder with the Northern League in front of the Milano courthouse in solidarity with the "anti-corruption" magistrates. Among their chants was "Maroni, Arrest Berlusconi"—a truly grotesque call on the Northern League minister of the interior to arrest the head of government. Such dangerous illusions in the *mani pulite* (clean hands) judicial operation that is jailing many leading politicians could help pave the way to a bonapartist crackdown *against the left*.

Also on October 12 there was a sinister police and prison guard "strike." As 20,000 cops rallied in Roma at the call of the cop "union" SIULP, Cofferati (CGIL) and D'Antoni (CISL) addressed the uniformed thugs from the platform as "fellow workers." On October 5, some of these same police violently charged into unemployed workers who were demonstrating in front of Palazzo Chigi (the prime minister's offices) with signs denouncing "Berlusconi." And on October 11, police in Torino tried to beat up several hundred militant anti-fascist demonstrators at the university. A month earlier, on September 10, police in Milano waded into a demonstration in defense of the *autonomo* social center Leoncavallo, attacking everybody in sight and launching a massive manhunt.

During the October 14 general strike, an SIULP cop was allowed to speak from the platform in Roma, and received applause. The vice president of the CGIL, Guglielmo Epifani, said, "We thank the forces of order who are here to guarantee the peaceful carrying out of this extraordinary demonstration." But while the police were given a place of honor, one group that was notable by its absence in the demonstrations on the 14th was *immigrants*. The chauvinist reformist leaderships have criminally refused to mobilize the Italian workers movement against

anti-immigrant attacks by fascists and police, while the PDS and RC have actually called for "cleaning out" immigrant squatters' camps. The Trotskyists warn that the cops and courts and capitalist politicians represent the class enemy. We demand cops out of the unions, and call for worker/immigrant mobilizations to stop racist terror.

Forge a Trotskyist Party!

As the Stalinists and ex-Stalinists embrace the bourgeoisie and its state ever more openly, what's urgently needed is a struggle for authentic communism. Among those in Italy who falsely claim to represent Trotskyism, two leaders of an opposition current in RC, Marco Ferrando and Franco Grisolia, authored a half-page article in *Il Manifesto* (11 October) in which they never once mention revolution, communism, socialism or even workers power, nor do they warn of the popular front or class collaboration, or distinguish themselves from RC's support to racist killer-cops and bourgeois magistrates. Ferrando/Grisolia's maximum program is for a general strike that would be a "political defeat for the government," as they call vaguely for "the liberation of forces and energy from below for the real alternative."

So while the PDS calls for a "democratic alternative" and RC for the "progressive alternative," these pseudo-Trotskyists call for a "real alternative." Yet in the March elections, Ferrando/Grisolia called for RC members to "participate actively in the front lines of the electoral campaign of the party in the central struggle against the right" and called to vote for all the candidates of the popular front, including the openly bourgeois politicians (*Proposta* No. 3, March 1994). They, along with the Stalinist rump in the RC, the born-again social democrats of the PDS and the syndicalists of the COBAS, perpetuate the belief, deeply rooted in Italy, that the only "alternatives" are either popular-front parliamentarism or a syndicalist ignoring of political struggle.

This heritage has been a curse of the Italian workers movement ever since the early 1920s, when militant socialist workers of the Northern industrial belt seized the factories...and sat there. What was needed then was a tempered Bolshevik leadership that could overcome this false polarization between parliamentary class collaboration and militantly apolitical workers struggle. That was also lacking in the workers insurrection betrayed by the Stalinists in 1943-45, during the militant worker and youth struggles in 1968-69, and again today. It is to the task of forging such a Leninist party that the Lega Trotskista d'Italia directs its efforts. ■

Strong State...

(continued from page 13)

Republic. The current fractious coalition, a government "uniting" the various components of the right-wing "party of order," is the intended antechamber to a Second Republic of considerably stiffened presidential powers, which are already being drafted.

But whether Berlusconi & Co. succeed in realizing their aspirations is quite another question. That depends centrally on the response of the proletariat to their capitalist offensive. There is a parallel to the victory of the Gaullist right in France a year and a half ago. After an election campaign whose hottest issue was unemployment, the French right won because Mitterrand's popular front, which had administered capitalist austerity for a dozen years, repelled decisive sections of the proletariat. The left was reduced to a small minority in the French parliament; Prime Minister Balladur's popularity soared. Yet within months, the Balladur government was reeling when the Air France workers rose in rebellion against plans to privatize the airline and cause thousands of layoffs. The victory of the workers inspired other sections of society to struggle. Last spring French students forced Balladur to abandon his plan to slash the sub-minimum wage for newly hired workers (which is an explicit model for Berlusconi's heralded "new Italian miracle").

Behind the Tangentopoli Affair

The economic program of the rightist triumvirate Berlusconi-Bossi-Fini is a derivative of Thatcherism/Reaganism, but Italy does not have the deep-seated, centuries-old Westminster traditions of bourgeois democracy, and it has the most militant working class in Europe. The fact that the labor mobilization in Italy against the cutback offensive has been the most widespread and militant in Europe is a main reason why the recent dramatic growth of fascist and rightist populist parties and the emergence of a new popular front both came about first in the peninsula.

It all goes back to the aftermath of World War II. Italy was the one place in West Europe where the smashing of the fascist regimes was accompanied by an actual working-class uprising, which was strangled with the decisive aid of the Stalinists. This is the "heroic" history of the *Resistenza* that the offshoots of the Communist Party, the PDS and RC, look back to. But since the Italian work-

ing class was so strong, the victorious imperialist Allies and the Italian bourgeoisie had to strike a deal with the PCI. In return for preventing the workers from going for power, the Stalinists would be integrated into subordinate positions in the state apparatus.

From the 1948 constitution to the "red belt" of PCI local and provincial administrations to the *lottizzazione* (patronage jobs) which gave the RAI 3 television channel to the PCI, these concessions were the price paid for the domestication and social-democratization of the Stalinists. While Berlinguer's project of a "historic compromise" between the PCI and the Christian Democrats was vetoed at the government (cabinet) level, it was a fact at the parliamentary level: it is estimated that since the late 1970s some 80 percent of all laws passed had the support of the PCI/PDS, which for the last 18 years has held the presidency of the Chamber of Deputies.

But to set up this system in the aftermath of the demise of the fascist regime, the American occupiers had to scramble to put together the bourgeois machinery of state. In return for keeping the Communists out of the government, the Mafia was given free rein in controlling Sicily and the South, while De Gasperi's Christian Democrats were quickly cobbled together as a "party" by allowing the fascist functionaries to remain in place. Of the 64 provincial prefects in office in 1960, 62 served in the Interior Ministry under the fascist government; all of the 241 sub-prefects made their career in the bureaucracy of Mussolini's regime; and 120 of the 135 *questors* (provincial police chiefs) entered the police under fascism.

Similar operations were carried out by American military governments in Germany and Japan. The resulting all-inclusive bourgeois parties (Christian Democrats in Europe, "Liberal Democrats" in Japan) were characterized less by their program than for the fact that they served as institutionalized bulwarks against the Communists. The process of mediating between different factions of the ruling class was carried out through the maneuvering of tendencies within these hegemonic parties of the bourgeoisie. And to oil this machinery, patronage was spread about on the model of New York City's Tammany Hall political machine.

In large part because of the militancy of the Italian working class, Italy did not undergo lengthy military occupation. The Americans couldn't even afford to go through the motions of "de-

Nazification" and cartel-busting that were carried out in postwar West Germany (only to be reversed with the onset of the Cold War). The old fascist state-owned business syndicates (and firms like Fiat and Pirelli) continued to operate without a hitch. As a result, roughly 40 percent of Italy's economy is in the public sector, going up to 90 percent in key sectors such as transportation, steel and banking. These state-capitalist enterprises then became the source of patronage jobs and bribes.

The pervasive graft which became the object of the corruption scandal and the *mani pulite* (clean hands) judicial operation was not due to any special avarice of Italian politicians. Rather it was the product of and necessary fuel for a whole system set up to deny the strongest CP in West Europe control of the state. Thus the IRI (the giant industrial holding company set up by Mussolini, with almost 500,000 employees) was staffed by right-wing Christian Democrats; ENI (oil) was run by left Christian Democrats, beginning with Enrico Mattei, and Sarragat's Social Democrats (PSDI). In the 1960s, when the Socialist Party (PSI) joined the coalition with the DC, the electricity industry was nationalized to create ENEL to give them jobs.

This payroll padding occurred on a truly massive scale, and contributed to the enormous budget deficits which steadily pushed up to over L160,000 billion (US\$103 billion) this year, or about 13 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). By now, the accumulated public debt is up to L1,500,000 billion (US\$1 trillion), or about 110 percent of the annual GDP. In addition, the cost of bribes has been estimated about L15,000 billion a year, while organized crime takes in something like L26,000 billion yearly, according to the London *Financial Times* (30 June 1993). This tremendous overhead cost for Italian capitalists has become all the more burdensome as the collapse of the "threat" of the Soviet bloc since 1989 made it seem unnecessary.

Carlo de Benedetti, head of Olivetti and publisher of *La Repubblica*, summed up the causes of the demise of the Christian Democratic regime in an interview in the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* (29 November 1993):

"The catalyst of this revolution was the fall of the Berlin Wall. Italy also had its internal Wall, and it collapsed just like the one in Berlin. As the Communist threat was finally gone, there was no more reason to accept the Christian Democrats' blackmailing with the Commu-

nists. With this blackmail, a lot of people made a huge lot of money. Corruption and state debt are the price that had to be paid for the political consensus. The rulers followed out Italy's financial stability for their private purposes. They didn't worry about the infrastructure and the educational system. They destroyed the administration and the state."

Competition from capitalist rivals is another important factor leading to the explosion of this system. While Italy had the largest Communist Party of West Europe, its industry was the least able to withstand the impact of the advent of the European single market at the end of 1992. Italy's few giant conglomerates are mostly state-owned and heavily in debt, while there are a multitude of small and medium-sized companies. Thus while three of the seven largest European companies are Italian (IRI, Fiat and ENI), after those three giants there was nothing until Ferruzzi (no. 43 on a list published by *Die Zeit*, 30 August 1991).

As the Bundesbank and German capital remake West Europe in their image, they have imposed a number of rules (e.g., budget deficits not to exceed 3 percent of GDP, strict limits on government subsidies) which would cripple Italian big government holdings, while the tiny family-owned firms are not large enough to compete with much larger German *Mittelstand* (middle bourgeois) companies. So in order to become competitive, Italy's bourgeoisie, both small and large, are seeking to feed off the state-owned giants through *privatization*. Already in the last six months of the Ciampi government, three major public banks and other enterprises were sold off to the sum of L10 trillion (US\$640 million). Now the Berlusconi cabinet has decided to put the state insurance company INA on the market, followed by STET (telecommunications), ENEL (electricity) and, in 1995, ENI (oil).

Berlusconi is an *affarista* (profiteering) adventurer who promises to produce a new "Italian miracle" like the 1970s and '80s by "privatizing" the state in the interest of himself and his cronies. (Louis Bonaparte similarly made fortunes by handing out concessions for railway construction while speculating on the Paris bourse.) In the *Azienda Italia* (Italy Inc.) which Berlusconi wants to establish, he is to be the *capo*. While complaining about an *assistenzialista* (welfare) state, he wants the state to assist business, or at least his business interests, and he isn't worried about damaging the other big shots of Italian capitalism.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

March Against Prop 187...

(continued from page 16)

among the leading organizers of opposition to Prop. 187. Although Asians are not the prime target of this anti-immigrant initiative, they understand that it is simply the opening shot of a racist campaign against *all* immigrants. And not just in California. On October 22, 5,000 mainly Salvadoran demonstrators marched in Washington, D.C. protesting against the impending cancellation of their residency status and chanting against Prop. 187.

California Republican governor Pete Wilson, who has made Mexican-bashing a key plank in his re-election campaign, was burned in effigy. But the name of the game for the labor bureaucrats and Democratic Party "community" leaders who headed the march was to channel opposition to Prop. 187 into votes for the equally racist Democrats and their gubernatorial candidate, Kathleen Brown. Following the lead contingent in the L.A. demo came a sea of placards with the slogan "Prop. 187—No! Kathleen Brown—Yes!" Echoing right-wing Republicans like William Bennett, this week Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein announced her opposition to



Los Angeles, October 16: Contingent of construction workers and their families march in 80,000-strong march against Proposition 187. Mobilize California labor to smash anti-immigrant racism!

Prop. 187, declaring that it "makes no provision whatsoever to deport illegal aliens and reduce their number!"

In counterposition, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club raised our banner declaring: "No to Proposition 187! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Break with the Racist Democrats and Republicans! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!" Close to 400 copies of *Workers Vanguard* (14 October)

with the back-page article calling to "Mobilize California Labor to Smash Anti-Immigrant Racism!" were sold, as well as nearly 200 issues of *Espartaco*, newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México. As we wrote in the WV article, which was translated into Spanish for the demonstration:

"The only action that can successfully resist this racist onslaught is *multi-racial* class struggle which can unite

the militant heavily Latino L.A.-area unions and others who have denounced Prop. 187 (including teachers, health workers and the California Labor Federation) together with superexploited Mexican workers just across the border in the U.S.-owned *maquiladora* (free trade zone) sweatshops of Tijuana. Such proletarian internationalist action would send a powerful message to the immigrant-bashers. *Down with Prop. 187! Full citizenship rights for ALL immigrants!*" ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

80,000 March Against Prop 187

Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES—It was the largest demonstration seen in decades in L.A. Upwards of 80,000 spirited protesters marched on City Hall October 16 in a powerful display of opposition to the racist, immigrant-bashing "Save Our State" initiative (Proposition 187). Prop. 187, on the ballot for the November 8 California elections, would deny welfare, medical care and education to

undocumented immigrants. There was an impressive turnout of the huge Latino working class, who have been in the forefront of recent militant labor battles and who are particular targets of Prop. 187. Contingents from dozens of area unions, including SEIU Locals 660 (county workers) and 399 (Kaiser hospitals and "Justice for Janitors"), ILGWU (garment workers), UFW (farm workers), UTLA (teachers), HERE 11 (hotel and restaurant workers) and United Food and Commercial Workers, were there.

Youth came out in big numbers, cap-

ping a week of student walkouts at public schools stretching from L.A. to Orange County to Oakland in the Bay Area. Two days earlier, on October 14, more than 1,500 students bolted classrooms at L.A.'s Jordan and Fremont High Schools, Roosevelt in East L.A., and others in Bell, Huntington Park and South Gate. Students braved suspensions, police encirclement and, in Huntington Park, the drawn guns of the cops! Student walkouts against Prop. 187 continued this week. In Paramount, sheriff's deputies fired two "stingball" grenades—explosive devices that shoot out rubber pel-

lets—at a crowd of 500 young protesters!

It is estimated that over 60 percent of the student body in some of these schools would face summary expulsion under the provisions of Prop. 187, which also mandates that teachers operate as finks for the hated *migra* immigration cops. At Sunday's demonstration several union teachers carried signs reading: "I'm a teacher—not an immigration agent!"

A contingent organized by the Korean Immigration Workers Advocates marched in the L.A. demonstration. In the Bay Area, Asian students have been

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Young Spartacus

Hitler-Lover David Irving Run Out!

Hundreds Rout Nazis in Berkeley

For years, the Spartacus Youth Clubs have exposed the sinister and dangerous role of David Irving, a Nazi apologist who hides his fascist brownshirt under "academic" robes. We've protested Irving's speaking tours as nothing other than platforms to mobilize the forces of racist terror and genocide around the world. In 1988, comrades who later went on to found the Dublin Spartacist Group were among the organizers of a 500-strong demonstration that stopped Irving at Ireland's Trinity College in Dublin. In 1989, the Berkeley SYC organized a militant protest against Irving when he was giving a fascist speech. So it's with considerable pride that we reprint below the Berkeley SYC leaflet describing our October 13 united-front demonstration which successfully thwarted Irving and his fascist pals.

The Spartacus Youth Club congratulates the hundreds of anti-fascist militants who answered our united-front call to "Stop Hitler-Lover David Irving!" last Thursday night. The Nazis who hosted Irving no doubt thought they

could cash in on the anti-immigrant hysteria being whipped up behind Proposition 187 to recruit and organize for their racist terror. Together we made sure that they didn't get away with it.

Irving, who was originally scheduled to appear at Alumni House on campus, was billed as an "author and historian." But as our leaflet, which was distributed in the thousands at Cal and other campuses, pointed out: "This isn't just some crackpot, raving right-wing 'academic.' Behind the white shirt and tie of this so-called 'historian' is the fascist brownshirt of Nazism. Irving denies the Holocaust in order to recruit and organize the perpetrators of new fascist depravities."

Irving has been a star attraction at meetings of fascist terror gangs from the British National Party, to the Hitlerite "Nationale Offensive" in Germany, to the white-supremacist Heritage Front in Canada, to the Klan and Nazis in the U.S. He whips up the fascist thugs who have been waging a campaign of terror and murder against immigrants, minorities, gays, blacks and anti-racist protesters around the globe.



Young Spartacus
Anti-fascist protesters march into Nazi rally site in Berkeley, California on October 13.

When Alumni House got wind of our protest call, they yanked Irving's event permit, citing the "potential for danger." But we and hundreds of others

understood that the *real* potential for danger would be if Irving's appearance went unopposed. Chanting "Stop

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