

For Workers Revolution Throughout the Americas!

Peru: Down With Fujimori Dictatorship!

Túpac Amaru Guerrillas: Reformists with Guns

FEBRUARY 2—It is now almost eight weeks since the leftist guerrillas of the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) seized the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, Peru, filled with hundreds of diplomats, businessmen and military officials. While most of those were soon released, the guerrillas still hold over 70 hostages, including key military and police officials as well as the Japanese ambassador and his entourage. The MRTA's main demand is freedom for 400 or more of their comrades who have been condemned to a slow death as political prisoners in Peru's infamous dungeons.

The blood-drenched Fujimori regime has repeatedly declared it will never release the left-wing prisoners and is building up a massive military/police force around the ambassador's residence. This serves both as a means of psychological warfare aimed at breaking the nerve of the Túpac Amaru commandos and as



Bazo/Reuters

Peruvian police massed outside of Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima (above). Túpac Amaru guerrillas demand freedom for hundreds of their comrades imprisoned in dictator Fujimori's dungeons.



Alejandro Balaguer

preparation for an all-out assault should the regime decide the conditions are favorable. An official of the notorious "anti-terrorism" police told the press, "Of course, a plan has been devised to take back the residence." But while

Fujimori has Washington's backing, Tokyo has been sharply critical of the increasingly provocative actions of the Peruvian police, with Japanese prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto summoning Peru's president to a meeting in Toronto yesterday.

As we previously stated, the MRTA's bold action evokes strong sympathy from all those who side with the oppressed. At the same time, we recognize that "the political program which engenders such desperate acts accomplishes nothing toward changing the conditions of life for Peru's impoverished workers and peasants" (WV No. 659, 10 January).

Túpac Amaru's dramatic commando raid in Peru, coming in the context of populist peasant-guerrilla insurgencies in Mexico and the recent "peace" accord in Guatemala between leftist rebels and the military butchers who rule that country, has focused renewed attention on the "guerrilla road" in Latin America. While it is understandable that radical-minded youth throughout the world should solidarize with the small bands of armed fighters defying the dictatorial *caudillo* regimes and their Yankee imperialist godfathers, Marxists understand that only *proletarian revolution and its international extension* can liberate the toiling masses of Latin America from the chains of neocolonial subjugation and immiseration. We publish below an edited and abridged version of a January 16 Spartacist League forum at UC Santa

Cruz by comrade Jorge Ramirez, titled "From Mexico to Peru: Guerrilla Struggle—Reformism with Guns."

* * *

Many of you have probably been following the events in the Japanese ambassador's residence in Peru, where a band of urban guerrillas managed to take over a reception at which representatives of *la crème de la crème* of Peruvian society were hobnobbing with the diplomatic corps. The reaction of the Peruvian populace at seeing the rich and powerful under the guns of the MRTA guerrillas was a barely concealed smile. In Lima, where seven of every ten residents lack basic services such as water, electricity and sewage, reports of the hostages protesting the "indignities" of going without electricity and showers were seen as a sort of poetic justice.

Both the taking up of arms and the sympathy elicited from the populace are born out of the frustration of class oppression in Peru. Fujimori, like his predecessors, presides over the grinding immiseration of the population, imposing one IMF-dictated austerity program after another to pay for usurious loans, otherwise known as the "foreign debt." In the process, the Fujimori regime has intensified its campaign of terror, mainly targeting the MRTA and Shining Path insurgents. Although many of Shining Path's actions have been deadly attacks

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Mata/AFIP

1992 massacre by police in Lima prison left at least 35 dead. Other political prisoners, held in barbarous conditions, face slow death from hunger and disease. Free all victims of Fujimori's terror!



How David North Embraces Karl Kautsky The "Global Economy" and Labor Reformism

See Page 4

Martha Phillips

10 March 1948 – 9 February 1992

This month marks five years since our comrade Martha Phillips was murdered in Moscow. Martha had been a cadre of the Spartacist League/U.S. for 20 years and was a veteran activist in the antiwar, civil rights and labor movements. For many years, she had lived in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she helped found the Labor Black League for Social Defense. At great personal sacrifice, Martha moved to Moscow in 1991, where she became the leading public spokesman for the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and our fight against the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the Soviet Union. She died on the front lines of the struggle to reimplant the internationalist communism of Lenin and Trotsky in the homeland of the October Revolution.

Comrade Martha was found brutally strangled and stabbed on the morning of 9 February 1992. Compound-

ing the anguish over the loss of our comrade is the fact that to this day we do not know who murdered Martha, or why. Our efforts to press for a serious investigation into this tragedy were met with deliberate evasion and incompetence by the Moscow authorities and utter indifference by the American consulate.

Martha brought a keen Marxist intellect and granite hard determination to her life's work: the building of a revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist party. She was also one of those rare individuals who possessed the qualities necessary to be a mass leader of such a party. Her life and work will continue to serve as an inspiration for future generations of proletarian revolutionaries. We honor our fallen comrade's spirit, tenacity and courage through our resolve to continue the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.



WV Photo



TROTSKY

Complete the Unfinished Tasks of the Civil War!

Black History Month this year finds black people facing an all-sided bipartisan racist offensive, from the devastation of welfare programs to the wholesale imprisonment of ghetto youth, rolling back even the minimal gains of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. Speaking in 1883, six years after the Northern bourgeoisie's betrayal of the radical-democratic program of Reconstruction, the great black Abolitionist Frederick Douglass condemned the deeply racist nature of the American "justice" system.

Douglass recalled the "full two hundred thousand strong" black men who had rallied to the Union Army during the Civil War and were thus key in defeating the Southern slavocracy. Today, it will take a proletarian socialist revolution to finish the Civil War and liberate black people from the chains of oppression and impoverishment.

It is a real calamity, in this country, for any man, guilty or not guilty, to be accused of crime, but it is an incomparably greater calamity for any colored man to be so accused. Justice is often painted with bandaged eyes. She is described in forensic eloquence, as utterly blind to wealth or poverty, high or low, white or black, but a mask of iron, however thick, could never blind American justice, when a black man happens to be on trial. Here, even more than elsewhere, he will find all presumptions of law and evidence against him. It is not so much the business of his enemies to prove him guilty, as it is the business of himself to prove his innocence....

What Abraham Lincoln said in respect of the United States is as true of the colored people as of the relations of those States. They can not remain half slave and half free. You must give them all or take from them all. Until this half-and-half condition is ended, there will be just ground of complaint. You will have an aggrieved class, and this discussion will go on. Until the public schools shall cease to be caste schools in every part of our country, this discussion will go on. Until the colored man's pathway to the American ballot box, North and South, shall be as smooth and as safe as the same is for the white citizen, this discussion will go on. Until the colored man's right to practice at the bar of our courts, and sit upon juries, shall be the universal law and practice of the land, this discussion will go on. Until the courts of the country shall grant the colored man a fair trial and a just verdict, this discussion will go on. Until color shall cease to be a bar to equal participation in the offices and honors of the country, this discussion will go on. Until the trades-unions and the workshops of the country shall cease to proscribe the colored man and prevent his children from learning useful trades, this discussion will go on. Until the American people shall make character, and not color, the criterion of respectability, this discussion will go on....

Events are transpiring all around us that enforce consideration of the oppressed classes. In one form or another, by one means or another, the ideas of a common humanity against privileged classes, of common rights against special privileges, are now rocking the world.

— Frederick Douglass, "The United States Cannot Remain Half-Slave and Half-Free," *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass* (1955)



LENIN

Chicago: Support the Anti-Klan Three!

At a January 23 court hearing, lawyers for Jeffrey Lyons, Dennis Glass and Gene Herson were given a number of documents that Chicago city and police authorities had been forced to hand over in preparation for a special evidentiary hearing scheduled for February 28. The three defendants, who face up to one or two years in prison, were arrested on June 29 on bogus charges stemming from their participation in a united-front protest initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee which spiked a violent race-hate provocation by the KKK in Daley Plaza. The documents—including past brutality complaints against the arresting officers—were requested as part of the defense effort to demonstrate a pattern of police brutality and a deliberate policy by the city authorities of suppressing political protest in the months before the Democratic National Convention last August.

The fight to defend the Chicago Anti-Klan Three is critical to all working people and minorities who seek to defend their rights and their very lives against the labor-hating, racist terrorists of the KKK. We place no confidence in the capitalist courts but rather look to mobilizing labor-centered protest and pressure to demand the charges be dropped. Court hearings have been filled with supporters of the Anti-Klan Three, and letters of protest have poured in from defenders of civil liberties and individuals and organizations in the labor movement around

the world. Addressing a January 22 University of Chicago speakout to build student support, a Spartacus Youth Club spokesman pointed to the cops' role in shielding the Klan racists now and in the past and emphasized: "This silencing of social protest is also part of a larger gutting of fundamental democratic rights as the chasm between the few exploiting capitalists and the mass of workers widens."

The February 28 evidentiary hearing will challenge the police frame-up of the Anti-Klan Three. Also, on February 7 five protesters arrested during the Democratic convention go on trial. Drop the charges against the DNC 5! Join the fight to defend the Anti-Klan Three!

* * *

Send protest statements demanding that the charges against the Anti-Klan Three be dropped to: Richard Devine, State's Attorney of Cook County, Richard J. Daley Center, 55 W. Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60602. Funds for legal defense are urgently needed! Send donations (earmarked "Anti-Klan Protesters") and copies of protest statements to the Partisan Defense Committee. Contact the PDC in Chicago at P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867, phone (312) 454-4931; or in New York at P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099, phone (212) 406-4252. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is February 4.

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7 February 1997

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Feds vs. Hacks in Teamsters Election

Government Out of the Unions!

Teamsters union president Ron Carey narrowly defeated challenger Jimmy Hoffa Jr. in December union elections run by the federal government. As the 34 percent membership voter turnout reflected, one could scarcely imagine a more unappetizing choice of candidates. Hoffa openly embraced and defended the notoriously corrupt "old guard" in the union leadership, with its purported underworld connections and shady pension fund deals. Carey, who was installed five years ago in another government-run election, is justly despised by much of the membership for selling out his own base at UPS in a February 1994 strike and then the national truckers strike two months later.

Events in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) are of the utmost importance for all trade unionists and leftists. The Teamsters union is a test case of capitalist state intervention in the workers movement. As a result of the feds' 1988 RICO "racketeering" suit against the IBT and the settlement agreed to by the union tops the following year, the courts and the Justice Department were given unprecedented control over one of the most important unions in the U.S. A federal "review board" has dictatorial powers to expel union officials, take over locals and control the union treasury.

Last December's election, like the one in 1991, was totally controlled by a federal "election officer" who set the rules, approved the candidates and collected the ballots. At least 67 union locals have been put in trusteeship because the feds judged them "corrupt," and their leaders have been summarily thrown out—including Hoffa's running mate, William Hogan of Chicago Local 714. Meanwhile, this army of federal overseers and high-priced lawyers, while bemoaning the high salaries of Teamster officials, is robbing the union treasury blind.

Carey's re-election is the product of a decades-long campaign by both capitalist parties, and especially the liberal wing of the Democrats, to shackle the power of the Teamsters union. Yet the government's hijacking of what is potentially one of the most powerful unions in the U.S. was aided and abetted by a self-styled "reform" opposition, the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), which loyally supported Carey in both elections. And prominent among those who have hailed the TDU and its strategy of inviting the feds into the union—and have

been Carey's most assiduous supporters—are avowed "socialists" like Solidarity (*Against the Current*), the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Socialist Action, which have served as slavish press agents for Carey for years.

Echoing the refrain of the viciously anti-labor *New York Times* (4 December 1996), which acclaimed Carey as one of the "most promising leaders" in the labor movement, the ISO saluted the election results as a "Blow to IBT Old Guard" and a "welcome victory" (*Socialist Worker*, 3 January). And *Socialist Action* (January 1997), in an article by Nat Weinstein, called Carey's success "an important victory for rank-and-file Teamsters and for the entire American working class." Sam Marcy's Workers World Party adopted a more backhanded stance and even denounced Carey's reliance on "government interference" (*Workers World*, 26 December 1996). But this did not prevent them from pleading with the feds' man Carey to "serve Teamsters members" and "break all ties with the government." And five years ago, *Workers World* (26 December 1991) joined the rest in hailing Carey's election as "a victory for the rank and file."

Given their view of the state as a class-neutral entity, it is logical that liberals should look with favor upon appeals to the government to intervene to "democratize" the unions. Lacking any confidence in the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat, the reformist left joins with the liberals in looking to the capitalist state to "clean up" the unions. Marxists, however, understand that the bourgeois state at its core is composed of armed bodies of men—the police, prison guards, army, etc.—who serve to defend the interests of the ruling class by defending private property, protecting scabs and breaking strikes. Government attacks on the Teamsters, by both Democrats and Republicans, have never been directed at "mob corruption." Their real aim has been to break the union's power to shut down trucking across the country.

As Marxists, the Spartacist League opposes on principle any intervention in the labor movement by the bosses' government. We oppose Carey just as we opposed the venal, "business union" bureaucrats who ran the Teamsters before. As we have repeatedly pointed out, the "new" Teamsters are indistinguishable on all fundamental questions from the "old guard"—and delivering the union into the hands of the capitalist state is about as

corrupt as you can get. We say the union must clean its own house—feds and finks out!

ISO: Justice Department Socialists

The common line of the reformist "socialists" who backed Carey is that his re-election is a victory for "union democracy." The ISO hailed Carey's "welcome victory over old-guard forces who represent the Teamsters' corrupt, mob-dominated past," while *Socialist Action* spoke of his intent "to open a

Drivers Council for Safety and Health) and TDU platforms to reform the IBT."

The TDU looks back to Arnold Miller's "reform" movement in the United Mine Workers (UMWA), which brought in the Labor Department to run the 1972 UMWA election. Miller, a former coal miner and Democratic Party politico, was swept into office with the aid of the government, backed by the same fake "socialists" who today support the TDU. Miller promptly teamed up with the courts and Democrat Jimmy Carter's White House to smash wildcat



Reformist left hails victory of feds' man Ron Carey as Teamster president in government-run election. Spartacist League opposed state intervention aimed at smashing union power.

Teamsters Boo Bush—G-Men Run Convention, Elections Feds Hands Off Teamsters!

WORKERS VANGUARD
5 July 1991

necessary new stage in the fight to democratize the union from top to bottom." *Socialist Action's* Nat Weinstein did in fact mention government intervention into the Teamsters, only to ludicrously claim that the capitalist rulers "never expected that someone like Ron Carey could win" five years ago. (Weinstein might consult the *Wall Street Journal*, which wrote at the time: "The government will have wasted \$40 million in Teamsters money if Carey isn't elected.") For its part, the ISO abandoned even its occasional nominal criticisms of government intervention, not even hinting that the Teamster ballot was run by the feds.

In fact, prominent ISO supporter Pete Camarata is a longtime leader of the TDU, whose central strategy has always been to drag the Teamsters union into the bosses' courts, while being cheered on by its press agents in *Labor Notes*. In 1987 the TDU literally wrote—and sent to the Justice Department—the blueprint for the government plan to "reorganize" the union. And the TDU served as witnesses for the prosecution in the 1989 "probe" by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—the same outfit that Robert Kennedy used as a weapon in his vendetta against Jimmy Hoffa and the Teamsters in the 1950s.

Though nominally on the side of the IBT when it intervened in the RICO case in January 1989, the TDU argued that its proposal for "democratic elections" run by the Labor Department and the courts would be more "effective" than the government's own takeover plan. In *Collision* (1993), a sympathetic account of the Teamster "reform" movement, Kenneth Crowe writes: "The underpinnings of the [RICO consent] agreement, specifying democratic elections, read like paragraphs from the PROD (Professional

strikes and derail the militant national coal strike of 1977-78. The UMWA, once the most militant union in the country, is now only a shadow of its former self—and the same fate awaits the Teamsters if its leadership stays in the hands of Carey and the feds. The Spartacist League was virtually alone on the left in refusing to support Miller. While David North's Socialist Equality Party today cynically attacks Carey's reliance on the feds (*International Workers Bulletin*, 2 December 1996)—only to line up with the bourgeoisie in opposing the unions outright—North's outfit was prominent in backing the Miller/Labor Department campaign in the UMWA in 1972.

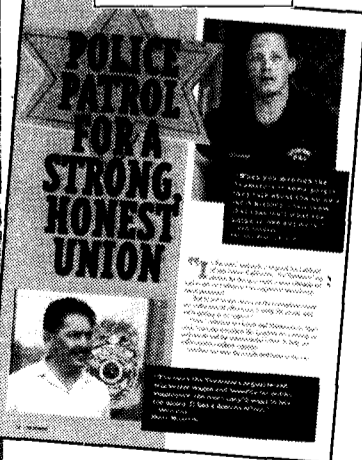
As Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V. I. Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution, noted in a 1940 article titled "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," the fight for trade-union democracy

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Martell/Boston Herald

Teamster
October 1996



Teamster tops "organize" police into union. Cops are racist strikebreakers, seen here attacking picket line during 1994 truckers strike.

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How David North Embraces Karl Kautsky

The "Global Economy" and Labor Reformism

Part One of this article was published in WV No. 660 (24 January).

Buying into a notion advanced by a spectrum of bourgeois economists and spokesmen for the reformist labor bureaucracies particularly since the demise of the Soviet Union, the self-styled "revolutionary Marxists" of David North's "International Committee" (IC) today argue that the recent rise of a "global economy" has ruled out any possibility of successful trade-union struggle in defense of workers' interests. In fact, the Northite view of "globalization"—i.e., the large-scale shift in production by "multinational" corporations to the Third World—and its effect on the relation between labor and capital is a present-day version of what in the 19th century was called the "iron law of wages." This was a doctrine that wages could not be permanently raised above a fixed level regardless of the actions—economic and/or political—taken by the working class. While initially developed by British bourgeois economists, the "iron law" was adhered to by almost all of the early socialist and anarchist tendencies—British Owenites, French Proudhonists, German Lassalleans.

It is readily understandable why the ideologists of the bourgeoisie maintained that the existing level of wages was determined by the immutable laws of the capitalist market. Why would leftists who opposed the capitalist system also uphold such a position? Because they believed that the workers could be won to the program of socialism (or, in Proudhon's case, to anarchism) only if they were convinced that it was **hopeless** to attempt to improve their conditions within capitalism.

Marx vs. the "Iron Law of Wages"

There were different versions of how the "iron law" was supposed to operate. The originator of the doctrine, the Reverend Thomas Malthus, asserted that if wages rose above subsistence levels workers would have more children, more of whom would live to maturity. The increase in the supply of labor would therefore drive wages back to the subsistence level. The leftist adherents of the "iron law" generally argued that any increase in money wages would be quickly and fully offset by rising prices. Hence they regarded trade unionism as useless or even injurious to the working class.

Proudhon's last work, *The Political Capacity of the Working Class* (published posthumously in 1865), was a sustained attack on trade unionism, which had just emerged in France on a significant scale:

"While threatening to strike, some of them [trade unionists], indeed the majority, have demanded an increase in wages, others have demanded a reduction in working hours, and still others both at the same time. Surely they have always known that increased wages and reduced working hours can only lead to a general price increase."

In opposing strikes, Proudhon made the additional argument that the financial resources of the capitalists were so much greater that the workers could never win:

"Let us imagine that an industrial establishment has a capital of three million and that it employs one thousand workers who one day go on strike. The employer rejects their demands.... After



Hubbard/Black Star
Computerized facility in U.S. (above), gold miners in Brazil. To overcome vast disparity in technical-cultural level between imperialist powers and "Third World" requires socialist overthrow of capitalism internationally.



a month the workers have exhausted their funds and will have to resort to the pawnshop. The capitalist will have lost merely a twelfth of his interest and his capital will not have been touched. The match is clearly unequal."

— Stewart Edwards, ed., *Selected Writings of Joseph-Pierre Proudhon* (1969)

If one substitutes "transnational corporation" for "industrial establishment" in the above passage, it accurately represents the current Northite line.

Throughout his life as a revolutionary workers leader, Marx opposed all exponents of the "iron law of wages." His most comprehensive treatment of this question is his 1865 pamphlet, *Value, Price and Profit*, a polemical response to an old Owenite socialist, George Weston, who was then a member of the General Council of the First International. Here Marx scientifically demonstrated that an "immense scale of variations is possible" in the rate of exploitation (the ratio of surplus value to the value of wages):

"The fixation of its actual degree is only settled by the continuous struggle between capital and labour, the capitalist constantly tending to reduce wages to their physical minimum... while the workingman constantly presses in

the opposite direction.

"The matter resolves itself into a question of the respective powers of the combatants."

Marx's theoretical demolition of the "iron law of wages" was confirmed by the actual experience of the working class as mass trade unions developed in Europe and North America in the late 19th century. By the beginning of the 20th century, the "iron law" had been generally discredited within the workers movement and left. A notable exception was the American socialist Daniel De Leon, who counterposed the overthrow of the capitalist system to trade-union struggles for higher wages and shorter hours.

In line with pre-1914 Social Democratic orthodoxy, the De Leonists regarded the decisive event of the socialist revolution as the electoral victory of their party, the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), over the bourgeois parties. Attached to the SLP was an industrial arm called the Socialist Labor and Trade Alliance, which over time tended to shrink to an artificial, Potemkin village organization consisting entirely of the SLP's own supporters. Despite the name, the Socialist Labor and Trade Alliance was **not** a trade

union in any sense. It did not advocate, much less engage in, struggles to improve the wages or conditions of the workers. What then was its purpose? Following the expected electoral victory of the SLP, the Socialist Labor and Trade Alliance would "seize and hold" the means of production from the capitalists and subsequently administer the socialist economy.

Third World Wages Mean... Third World Economies

The present posture of the North group parallels the old De Leonist program except that the De Leonists were principled, albeit misguided, socialists. A primary activity of North's Socialist Equality Party (SEP, formerly the Workers League), and the other SEPs recently set up by IC sections in Britain and Australia, is running for office in bourgeois elections for various levels of government. They have adopted an, at best, abstentionist position in relation to the struggles of the mass trade-union movement. And at least on paper the Northites now project building something akin to the Socialist Labor and Trade Alliance.

According to the 1993 Northite pamphlet, *The Globalization of Capitalist Production & the International Tasks of the Working Class*:

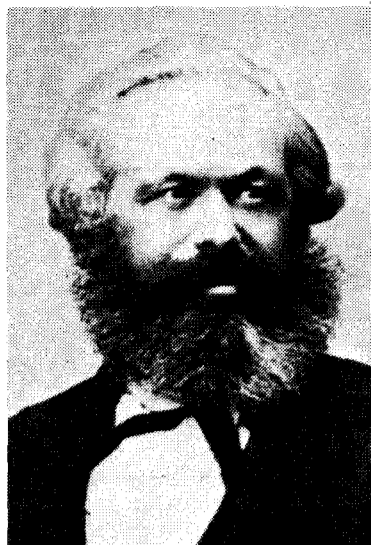
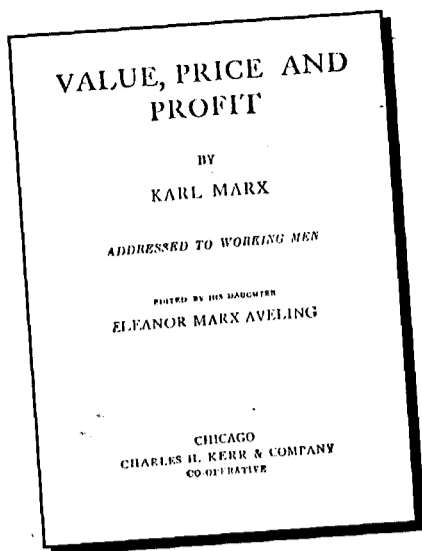
"Transnational corporations are systematically shifting the most labor intensive aspects of production to impoverished regions, where wages are a fraction of the existing levels in the advanced capitalist countries. Even high-tech and skilled labor can be purchased on the cheap in India, parts of Latin America, eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The inexorable result is a downward leveling of wages and living standards and a relentless assault on past social reforms and legal limitations on the exploitation of labor by capital in the imperialist centers."

As we have indicated earlier, the Northites are here advancing, with a thin veneer of Marxist rhetoric, an argument currently propounded by a wide range of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois liberals. Thus, a recent article in *Foreign Affairs* (May-June 1996) warns that "inequality, unemployment and endemic poverty" are the "handmaidens" of the "global economy." And in a special issue of the liberal *Nation* (15 July 1996), British "Green" spokesmen Colin Hines and Tim Lang assert:

"Globalization unquestionably leads to lower-wage economies. The British economist Adrian Wood has calculated a not insignificant shift of 9 million jobs from North to South [i.e., from the industrialized countries to the Third World] in recent years.... Meanwhile, Britain is advertising itself as a low-wage country to attract industry. The trend is clear."

The version of the "iron law of wages" pushed by North and others based on the supposed globalization of production is no more valid than the various 19th-century versions. Wages in the advanced capitalist countries are not going to be driven down to anything close to Third World levels for two fundamental reasons: one political, the other economic.

As we shall see, increased investment by Western/Japanese banks and corporations in backward countries, especially in the manufacturing sector, requires the maintenance of strong imperialist states to **protect** those investments. U.S. capitalists are not going to produce a large part of their steel output in South Korea and Brazil, because they need guaran-



Progress Publishers

In *Value, Price and Profit*, Karl Marx polemicized against "iron law of wages," a theory upheld by French anarchist Proudhon (right) and later American socialist Daniel De Leon (far right) to deny possibility of successful trade-union struggle.



Pierre Petit



no credit

teed access to this steel in case of war with their imperialist rivals—Germany and Japan—or for military intervention against popular revolutions in former colonial countries, like South Korea and Brazil.

The *Communist Manifesto*, written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848, defines the "executive of the modern State" as "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." One of the tasks of that executive committee is to ensure that individual capitalists, seeking to maximize their own profits, do not harm the vital interests of the national bourgeoisie as a whole. Thus, a few years ago Washington prevented the management and stockholders of Continental Oil from investing in the modernization of Iranian oil fields, because building up the Iranian economy went against the currently perceived interests of U.S. imperialism. In the next few years, the U.S., Germany and Japan may well impose—against the immediate interests and desires of sections of their own capitalist classes—high levels of trade protectionism, controls of foreign-

imperialist epoch countries of belated capitalist development cannot attain the overall level of economic productivity of the pioneer regions of the bourgeois revolution—West Europe, North America and, later, Japan. This is the geo-economic basis for the division of the world between imperialist countries and neocolonial countries exploited and oppressed by the former. If India's labor productivity approximated that of the United States and Japan, India itself would be a major imperialist power, since the numerical size of its industrial labor force (about 30 million workers) is the same as that of the U.S. and 50 percent greater than that of Japan.

The Northite notion of "globalization" is in its theoretical essence a repudiation of the Trotskyist understanding of permanent revolution, because it posits a tendency to equalize economic conditions throughout the world by leveling up productivity in the backward capitalist countries and leveling down productivity in the advanced ones. The genuine globalization of production requires an internationally planned socialist economy, which alone can raise the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America to the technical-cultural level of what is now called the First World.

Economic "Globalization": Myths and Realities

An article in the recent special issue of the *Nation* (15 July 1996) devoted to the question of "globalization" begins with the portentous statement: "Economic globalization involves arguably the most fundamental redesign and centralization of the planet's political and economic arrangements since the Industrial Revolution." Similarly, Australian Northite leader Nick Beams asserts that "globalization refers to the internationalization of the circuit of productive capital" and that this constitutes a "qualitative transformation" of the world capitalist system (*International Workers Bulletin [IWB]*, 15 July 1996).

In fact, the history of industrial capitalism was marked by a previous shift, far more profound than the present one, in the geographical distribution of production. The Industrial Revolution began in England and Scotland in the early 19th century and then spread by mid-century to France and the Low Countries (Belgium and Holland). In the late 19th century, the "New Industrializing Countries" of the day were Germany, the United States and Japan.

Writing in the 1890s, Friedrich Engels noted that Germany, which at the time of the 1848 Revolution was economically dominated by peasant agriculture and small-scale artisan manufacturing, had become "an industrial country of the first rank." During the same period the United States, too, became an industrial country of the first rank. American industrial development was heavily dependent on investment by British capital, especially in the key sector of railway construction. Following the overthrow of the feudal order with the Meiji Restoration of the 1860s, Japan deliberately emulated the advanced capitalist countries of the West, beginning by exporting light manufactures produced by cheap unskilled labor. Tsarist Russia also experienced rapid

industrial growth between the 1890s and World War I, largely financed by West European, especially French, capital.

By the beginning of the 20th century, however, the existing advanced capitalist (i.e., imperialist) countries had achieved such dominance over more backward regions that they were able to arrest the development of new rival industrial powers. Hence the present global division between the so-called First World and the Third World.

Since the Northite International Committee maintains that world capitalism has recently undergone a "qualitative transformation," one would expect this ostensibly Marxist organization to substantiate their analysis with a comprehensive study of the relevant economic data. For example, Lenin's 1916 work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, contains pages of statistical tables illuminating and substantiating its analysis on all aspects. By contrast, the writings and speeches on "globalization" by North and his henchmen are devoid of even cursory data on trends in global production, investment and trade. Their 1993 pamphlet, *The Globalization of Capitalist Production & the International Tasks of the Working Class*, contains not a single statistical table or graph.

A few basic and easily accessible statistics debunk the notion of a qualitative transformation of world capitalism. Western/Japanese investment in the so-called Newly Industrializing Countries totaled some \$100 billion in 1993, a peak year. Yet this record amount was only 3 percent of total capital investment in North America, West Europe and Japan. In other words, the imperialist bourgeoisies still invest more than 30 times as much in their own "First World" as in the Third World. American capitalists invest 9 cents in Canada and West Europe and just 5 cents in the entire rest of the world for every dollar they expend on productive assets in the United States.

Why, then, all the hullabaloo about economic "globalization"? For the past few decades, and especially since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the world capitalist economy has in certain respects been returning to the norms of the pre-1914 imperialist order. To maintain a sense of perspective, one should understand that only in the early 1970s

did the ratio of world trade to global production once again reach the level it had attained in 1914, on the eve of the first imperialist world war. Yet the current theoreticians of "globalization" rarely if ever mention Lenin's seminal study of the rise of the imperialist system, to which they add little or nothing, save confusion. As we noted in an earlier article ("David North 'Abolishes' the Right to Self-Determination," Part One, *WV* No. 626, 28 July 1995):

"The idea of an 'era of global economic integration' which North presents as if it were yet another of his unique 'theoretical breakthroughs' has been known to the Marxist movement for over a century now. It's otherwise known as imperialism!"

The term "globalization" refers to certain significant **quantitative** changes in the contemporary structure of world production and trade. In 1970, 85 percent of all exports (in value terms) from Africa, Latin America and Asian countries other than Japan consisted of agricultural produce, oil, mineral ores and other primary products. Since then exports of manufactured goods from Third World countries have increased by an average rate of 15 percent a year in real terms and now make up well over half the value of their total exports. Much of this industrial output is financed and organized by Western/Japanese corporations either directly or through local subcontractors, licensees, etc. However, the growth of internationally competitive manufactures in East Asia and Latin America is reversible and cannot continue at anything close to the rate of increase of the past few decades. That is a political, economic and, indeed, mathematical certainty.

There's a saying in American business circles: there are liars, damn liars and statisticians. One can always select and present statistics to be deliberately misleading. One of the most common ways of doing this is to show dramatic percentage increases from a **low initial base** and then to project similar percentage increases into the future. For example, a worker making \$5 an hour who gets a dollar raise has received a 20 percent increase while a worker making \$13 an hour who gets a dollar raise has received an 8 percent increase. But the second worker is still vastly better off than the

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V. Deni and M. Cheremnykh

1920 Soviet poster: "Comrade Lenin Sweeps the Globe Clean."

exchange transactions and strict limits on the inflow and outflow of capital.

There is in addition a fundamental economic limitation to the "globalization" of production. Manufacturing wages in East Asia and Latin America have been a small fraction of those in the advanced capitalist countries for decades. Why then does Siemens still produce most of its electrical machinery in Germany and General Motors most of its autos in North America? Because 15 unskilled workers in Indonesia (earning well under a dollar an hour) cannot replace a skilled machinist in the U.S. (earning \$15 an hour) or Germany (earning \$25 an hour) in the process of industrial production.

The technical-cultural level of the labor force in Europe, North America and Japan is **qualitatively** higher than in the Third World. Annual expenditure per student for primary and secondary education is over \$5,000 in the U.S., almost \$4,000 in Japan, \$600 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and \$70 in the Indian subcontinent! These vast differences cannot be appreciably narrowed within the framework of the capitalist-imperialist system.

The basic premise of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is that in the

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Petty-bourgeois Guerrillaism

Peru...

(continued from page 1)

on workers, leftists and peasants, the Peruvian bourgeoisie's 15-year-long "dirty war" against the guerrillas has in fact been a war against the mass of the population with casualties numbering in the tens of thousands.

The MRTA's main demand is the release of their comrades in prison. Already, the takeover has cast a sharp light on the inhumane conditions in the dungeons of the Fujimori dictatorship, where those convicted or even simply accused of "terrorism" are put in cramped cells where food is scarce and often inedible, where no clothing or blankets are provided and the toilet is just a hole in the floor. Prisoners are refused all visitors during their first year and allowed only a monthly 30-minute visit after that. Mothers, including those who give birth in prison, are only allowed to see their children once every three months, through a glass partition. Many of those facing a life sentence under such barbaric conditions are driven to attempt suicide by throwing themselves against the concrete floors and iron bars. We demand: Free all victims of Fujimori's terror!

Repression and Resistance

Throughout this century, Peru has been caught in a cycle of oppression and repression from which no escape seems possible. It is the standard story throughout the underdeveloped countries of the "Third World": a government of lackeys makes sure that the "head office," usually located in an imperialist center, can easily exploit the laboring masses. This will include vicious repression when the "natives get restless." Meanwhile, elite intellectuals mouth patronizing platitudes in well-appointed soirées about how "our people are not yet ready for democracy" and "it is our sad burden to guide them on their way."

But periodic explosions do occur when the working masses can put up with the exploitation no longer. Then the capitalist rulers call on a strongman to save their skins through a military coup or police terror. After the massacres, and once the "ringleaders" and "outside agitators"—often claimed to be foreign or "foreign-influenced"—are deported, jailed or murdered, an election may be called, one or



Solimanov/Reuters

Desperately poor Peruvian slum dwellers suffer malnutrition and disease as Fujimori regime imposes IMF-dictated austerity on workers and peasants.

another "upstanding citizen" is elected, and the whole thing starts all over again.

I have just given you the condensed history of most Latin American countries, and certainly the last 80 years of Peruvian history. Missing from this is any solution to the most basic needs of the Latin American masses. The elementary demands addressed by the bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Europe and North America have remained a dead letter for the working people of Latin America: the peasants' thirst for land, national liberation from the imperialist yoke, political democracy. Of course, all these demands have been frequently mentioned in the rhetoric of one or another "anti-imperialist" snake oil salesman, and we have had our share of these. But the cycle of repression, phony reforms and exploitation has continued unabated.

As Marxists, proletarian revolutionaries, we start from the proposition that to break this cycle we must mobilize the working masses of Latin America, with the vanguard of the proletariat at their head, behind a program for the elimination of capitalism, reaching out to our class brothers and sisters across the national barriers that the capitalist rulers would impose. The history of previous struggles makes it unambiguously clear that, in the epoch of imperialist decay, the weak, branch-office bourgeoisies of the semicolonial countries are unable and unwilling to stand up to the imperialists. As it sees its property rights threat-

ened, the "progressive" national bourgeoisie moves into the reactionary camp. They are justified in their deathly fear of the looming proletariat and the radicalization of the oppressed masses, because it is the proletariat—the only consistently revolutionary class in the modern epoch—that has the social power to eliminate bourgeois class power and usher in a socialist future for mankind.

The Guerrilla Road: From Stalinist Nationalism Back to Bourgeois Nationalism

But in certain circumstances, when the proletariat is not able to lead the oppressed masses—usually as a result of savage repression and the efforts of the reformist misleaders—sectors of the oppressed are mobilized behind radical intellectuals in an armed struggle against the established order. This is what has come to be known as the "guerrilla road." In fact, the Túpac Amaru action is the latest in a series of such struggles which have exploded in the last couple of years. Many of you probably remember the cry of rebellion from Chiapas, which sent shock waves throughout Mexico and the world, with its denunciation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as a "death sentence for Mexico's Indian ethnic groups." The insurgency in Mexico's poorest state brought into sharp relief the horrible oppression of peasant women, an age-old form of oppression which capitalist rule continuously reinforces.

Actually, the MRTA appeared as a nationalist, urban guerrilla movement in the early '80s, before the Zapatistas. In its early years, the MRTA carried out bank robberies and other minor actions, and organized a guerrilla column in southeast Peru (near Cuzco) which was rapidly defeated. The MRTA then returned to Lima and staged a series of spectacular raids, taking over radio stations to broadcast their proclamations and stealing a replica of the flag used by San Martín to proclaim Peru's independence in 1821, thereby underlining their patriotic devotion—which is to say, their nationalism. Among their most publicized actions were the "people's distributions," in which they seized trucks—usually containing foodstuffs and often belonging to subsidiaries of "multinational" corporations—and drove them to the working-class neighborhoods that surround the city, where the goods were promptly distributed under the MRTA flag.

Like the Zapatistas and the People's Revolutionary Army (EPR) in Mexico, the MRTA evokes the Robin Hood aura of young rebels compelled to take up arms by the unendurable injustice in the world around them. Ideologically, Túpac Amaru derives from a group of radicalized intellectuals who broke from Peru's bourgeois parties and who saw in the Cuban example the road to national lib-

eration and to a just society.

Just after its inception in 1985, the MRTA declared that it had been "born to struggle for revolution and for socialism," defining itself as "nationalist, democratic and anti-imperialist." But more recently, its propaganda simply calls for a just, democratic society, while highlighting bourgeois-nationalist figures like Bolívar, San Martín and Martí and rejecting all "foreign" labels. Thus, while endorsing a vague program of radical reform of capitalism, they behave simply as a pressure group on "progressive" sectors—particularly sections of the bourgeoisie considered "reformist" or "patriotic." The absurdity of this is underlined by one of the MRTA's current demands: that the brutal Fujimori government "commits itself to change its economic course in favor of a model which aims for the well-being of the great majorities."

In a sense, the MRTA appears to have traveled backward on Castro's political path. The band of *guerrilleros* led by Fidel Castro which took up arms in Cuba's Sierra Maestra in 1956 originally saw themselves as saviors of the Cuban nation, embracing a radical-democratic program. They demanded a return to the liberal constitution of 1940, very moderate agrarian reform and the confiscation of the "ill-gotten gains of all who had committed frauds during previous regimes." But exceptional circumstances forced the Castroite guerrillas to go beyond that program and carry out the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and its imperialist masters in order even to



Cambio 16

Túpac Amaru, reformists with guns, foster illusions that brutal capitalist Fujimori regime can "change its economic course" to benefit masses.

achieve their reforms. There was no "third road." Under the relentless hostility of imperialism, the guerrillas created a society which in its essential political and economic characteristics was similar to the one that issued out of the Stalinist degeneration of the 1917 Russian Revolution. In the process, the Castroites adopted Stalin's perversion of Marxism—the ideological hallmark of all such bureaucratically deformed workers states—the claim to be building "socialism in one country."

From its inception, the Cuban Revolution was seen by a whole generation the world over as a brand new model of revolution, and inspired a wave of guerrilla adventures which proved disastrous to the participants. But, dependent on economic support from the USSR in constructing a bureaucratic island of "socialism" in the Caribbean, the Castro regime's initial militancy gave way to a more pragmatic approach. Now that capitalist counterrevolution has opened the Soviet Union and East Europe to unbridled capitalist exploitation, Cuba's very existence as an isolated deformed workers state is in grave danger.

Meanwhile, the mass "left" (reformist) parties appear increasingly irrelevant, as



AFF

Guatemalan president Arzú (center) celebrates December "peace" deal with guerrilla leader Morán (right) to end 36-year civil war in which U.S.-backed regime massacred over 150,000. Relatives march with photos of victims.



Joe Fish

vs. Proletarian Revolution

they continue to play their role of lulling the masses with talk of "democracy" and "justice" in the by-and-by, while in the here-and-now they assist the ruling classes in implementing starvation policies and widespread attacks on the oppressed. In this context, the image of the rebel with a gun has once again acquired an appeal, particularly to youth around the world.

But it is important to realize that the creation of a deformed workers state in Cuba by the *Fidelistas* (as by other guerrilla movements in China, Vietnam and Yugoslavia) could come about only as a result of exceptional circumstances: the extreme weakness of the ruling class, the absence of a conscious proletariat fighting for its own interests and the existence of the Soviet Union as a counterweight to imperialism. These conditions no longer exist in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

History has shown, both before and after the Cuban Revolution, that a far more likely outcome of the victory of such a peasant-based, petty-bourgeois reformist armed force is the consolidation of a new bourgeois regime and the re-establishment or continuation of imperialist domination. In fact, there currently seems to be an epidemic of "peace" between erstwhile guerrilla movements and the military butchers—the Colombian M-19, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador a couple of years ago, and now the Guatemalan UNRG rebels. Forgotten among the participants in this kiss-and-make-up in Guatemala City are the 150,000 dead Mayan peasants, leftists and others killed in the last 36 years. The treaty of "national reconciliation" signed last month offers complete amnesty to the mass murderers. This "peace of the graveyard" is the most frequent end of the guerrilla road.

Castro's Cuba: A Deformed Social Revolution

I would like to convince you of two basic propositions. The first is that the guerrilla road is fundamentally a losing road, because the social power of a geographically limited guerrilla band is non-existent and because there is no "third way" to organize society in a backward capitalist country. It can either be organized along capitalist lines of imperialist subjugation or along proletarian lines—the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the organization of production in a centralized, planned economy.

The second proposition is that, even given the unlikely circumstances of the Cuban Revolution, the best result possible was a bureaucratically deformed workers state in which the economy is organized along proletarian lines, but the workers do not hold political power. Political power is in the hands of a Stalinist bureaucracy which, under the guise of "building socialism on one island," sup-

presses workers democracy and hoodwinks the masses into allowing it to keep its privileged position. This bureaucracy is deeply hostile both to a working-class political revolution within its borders because that would sweep it away, and to socialist revolution elsewhere, because it is trying to survive by negotiating a deal with imperialism. As is painfully apparent in the current period, "socialism in one country" is actually "socialism in no country."

At bottom, we are talking about the basic counterposition of reform vs. revolution. Let me explain this through two clear examples: Cuba and Nicaragua.

Throughout the first half of this century, the United States ran Cuba like a sugar plantation for the benefit of American corporations like United Fruit, Standard Oil, etc. Whenever trouble brewed, the U.S. engineered a palace coup and then things would go back to normal, as under the butcher Batista who ruled Cuba in the 1950s. Tired of this cycle of changes at the top while everything in society remained the same, the *Castroistas* decided that the only way to get real reforms was to take up guns.

In the event, the rebel army overran the country as Batista's military collapsed with most of its officer corps deeply compromised in the corruption and abuses of the regime. Castro, Guevara and their group then formed a coal-

ition government with bourgeois figures, whose interests they promised to protect. Though the sugar mills, the mines and almost all manufacturing plants in Cuba were either foreign-owned or dependent on foreign equipment, materials and markets, there was no talk of expropriating the imperialists' property.

The Castro regime's initial modest land reform, diversification of foreign trade and the revolutionary tribunals organized to impose justice on the former police torturers scared the hell out of the American imperialist rulers. When the agrarian reform was announced in June 1959, Washington threatened to cancel the U.S. sugar quota, upon which the Cuban economy was dependent, and began denying credits to Cuban importers. At the beginning of 1960, Cuba announced a major trade and credit pact with the Soviet Union (followed by a smaller one with China), which promised to buy millions of tons of Cuban sugar over a five-year period. The showdown was approaching.

In June 1960, Castro nationalized American-owned oil refineries when they refused to refine shipments of Soviet crude oil which had started arriving under the new pact. In early July, the U.S. government eliminated the sugar quota, intending to *starve the Cubans into submission*. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev immediately warned of possible military support to Cuba "should the aggressive

forces in the Pentagon dare to start intervention." Two weeks later, acting in self-defense, the Castro government expropriated key American properties such as the sugar mills and their lands and then the utilities. By mid-October, railroads, printing presses, agricultural processing plants and chemical, metallurgical and other factories had also been nationalized. In the end, the state owned 90 percent of Cuba's industrial capacity.

These nationalizations, made possible by the existence of the Soviet degenerated workers state, meant the expropriation of the Cuban bourgeoisie as a class, thus laying the basis for the elimination of capitalist exploitation in Cuba. It was this step which enabled Cuba to resist decades of imperialist attacks and economic blockade. This was a revolutionary act. As we have since that time, we Spartacists call on all workers and peasants, all partisans of the oppressed, to defend Cuba against imperialist encirclement and counterrevolution! Down with the blockade!

Sandinista Nicaragua: Failure of the "Middle Way"

The Cuban Revolution provided quality health care for its people, education for its youth, and housing and adequate food for all. It was the expropriation of the bourgeoisie which laid the basis for these advances. We can see how crucial this was by contrasting the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua.

In 1979, 20 years after Castro's forces marched into Havana, the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional overthrew the hated puppet regime of Anastasio Somoza. Talk about a bloodsucking dictator—literally! His idea for solving the country's foreign exchange problem was to set up a company called *Plasmaféresis* which specialized in exporting human blood to the United States. He was so tight with the Yankee imperialists that he put the picture of the American ambassador on the \$3 bill. By the time the Sandinistas came to power, the Somocista army, the National Guard, had killed 50,000 people.

So the Sandinista revolution was a genuine national uprising and had the support of virtually the entire bourgeoisie outside the Somoza family, his cronies and his army. It also included the mobilization of the population in various cities across the country, who fought bitterly against the National Guard. But the Sandinista program, agreed to at a meeting with the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie shortly before the revolution, aimed at preserving capitalism without Somoza and even allowed for the incorporation of "honest" officers and soldiers of the National Guard into the Sandinista army. It called for a Council of State with a bourgeois majority and for a "mixed economy," that is, guarantees for the preservation of private ownership of the means of production. Only the property of the dictator and his henchmen was to be nationalized.

But the expropriation of the Somoza dynasty brought a large proportion of the economy (as much as 40 percent) into the hands of the state. This gave the Sandinistas enormous latitude. And while the new government was shot through with priests and bourgeois figures, the insurrection carried within it significant social consequences. Effective power was in the hands of the Sandinista army, which was not necessarily committed to re-establishing bourgeois rule.

The Sandinistas stubbornly pursued their mirage of an "independent economic development model," trying to develop a "mixed economy" with a capitalist sector, and a so-called "middle way" of "democratic pluralism," refusing to smash the pro-imperialist bourgeoisie. They even offered to establish joint

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Protest by transport workers in Argentina, July 1996. Strikes have broken out throughout South America against capitalist austerity.



Bettmann



Franken/Sygma

Left: Fidel Castro (center) takes Havana, 1959. As head of deformed workers state committed to "socialism in one country," Castro advised Sandinista leaders in Managua, 1980, not to create "another Cuba."

Peru...

(continued from page 7)

border patrols with the military regime in El Salvador to demonstrate to the imperialists that they were not supplying arms to the Salvadoran leftist insurgents! Castro strongly encouraged the Sandinistas to conciliate both the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie and Yankee imperialism. When he visited Managua, his advice was: "Avoid the early mistakes we made in Cuba, the political rejection by the West, premature frontal attacks on the bourgeoisie, economic isolation." So much for Fidel, *el duro* (the "hard one")!

The Sandinistas continued to pursue this mythical "middle way" despite the imperialist hostility exemplified by Reagan's Cold War against the Soviet Union (and by extension against Cuba, Nicaragua and anything perceived as "Communist"), despite the relentless pressure of the CIA-sponsored *contra* war, despite the imperialist embargo which strangled the economy, while industries were run into the ground as the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie refused to invest in their plants. As war-weariness set in, many Nicaraguans came to the conclusion that things could only improve through an agreement with the imperialists rather than a continuing siege under the Sandinistas. In 1990, Violeta Chamorro, "Madame Contra," came to office in an election bought and paid for with U.S. dollars. The Sandinistas made their peace and signed on as a loyal opposition, explicitly acting as guardians of capitalism, in return for maintaining their privileges—posts in the state bureaucracy and the like.

The events in Cuba and Nicaragua confirmed in a powerful way that—contrary to the line of reformists, particularly Stalinists and Maoists, throughout the world—all sectors of the bourgeoisie in backward countries are too tightly dependent on imperialism to introduce fundamental changes in society. In Cuba, the only path to the liberation of the country from the grip of imperialism was through the elimination of the bourgeoisie as a class. In Nicaragua, despite every effort of the Sandinistas to find an alternative, seeking every compromise with the imperialist bourgeoisie and its domestic partners, the end result has been the re-establishment of a semicolonial regime under the yoke of the U.S.

For Permanent Revolution in Latin America!

Well before the events of the last 50 years, history had already shown that there is indeed no middle way. More than 90 years ago, Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky set down the theory of permanent revolution. Trotsky argued that in the epoch of imperialism, the bourgeoisie of a backward country like Russia is unable to carry out the tasks of the bourgeois-

democratic revolution: national liberation, agrarian revolution, political democracy and modernization. From a study of the conditions in tsarist Russia at the turn of the century and the history of class struggle in West Europe in the 19th century, Trotsky concluded that the bourgeoisie was too tightly connected to the imperialists and the landed gentry to allow the expropriation of the land, the essence of an agrarian revolution.

Trotsky also pointed to the "combined and uneven" character of capitalist development in backward Russia. By this he meant that its industrial development, though retarded, was not simply at the level of a more advanced capitalist country, say, 50 years earlier. Rather, the most backward forms of production, cottage industries, existed side by side with the most advanced techniques in massive, imperialist-owned plants.

As a corollary to this combined and uneven development, a sizable, advanced proletariat arose which began to act in its own name and which represented a threat to the existence of the bourgeoisie. Drawing on the lessons of the class struggles of the 19th century, Trotsky argued that "wherever the proletariat appeared as an independent force, the bourgeoisie shifted to the camp of the counter-revolution. The bolder the struggle of the masses, the quicker the reactionary transformation of liberalism." If you look at Latin America, whether in Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico or Peru, you will only find confirmation of this fact.

Why is it that the guerrilla program of radical-democratic reform of capitalism has never worked? At the core of modern society, the capitalist mode of production, only two classes have a strategic role to play. The capitalist class owns the factories, the means of production. If the capitalist refuses to invest, his factory stagnates and goes out of business. The other strategic class is the proletariat. No matter what the capitalist does, the only way he can make a profit is by the use of labor power, the mental and physical labor of the worker. But if the worker refuses to work, production comes to a screeching halt and so does the flow of profits. As capitalism develops, it concentrates larger and larger amounts of capital into monopolies which in turn concentrate larger numbers of workers in manufacturing enterprises. In order to carry out production, the workers must be collectively organized into a well-oiled machine. The very process of production gives the working class its social power and prepares it for collective action. This can be seen very dramatically in the recent general strike in South Korea.

The bourgeoisie and the proletariat have counterposed interests. The capitalist is interested in the defense of his property and his ability to extract profits, constantly trying to maximize them by speed-up and intensifying the productiv-

ity of the labor force. Concerned with obtaining enough to provide for himself and his family, the worker seeks to resist this intensification, making use of his experience in collective action to form trade unions to defend his job, wages and conditions.

But what about the other layers in society, the so-called middle classes, the petty bourgeoisie? Encompassing the small merchant or businessman, the peasant, the intellectual or professional, the petty bourgeoisie is an intermediate layer. It is often marginal to the means of production, although perhaps playing a role in the distribution of goods. The petty bourgeoisie holds no power; a "strike" by small merchants typically will mostly hurt themselves. Their capital is much too small to be of any consequence. Furthermore, this class is atomized. To the extent they have a common interest, it is their aspiration to grow and join the ranks of the big bourgeoisie. Yet because of their marginal existence, they are continually threatened with ruin by big monopolies. When this happens they may occasionally join hands with the proletariat against the big merchant or the big bourgeois or the big bank (which are often one and the same). To the extent that the petty bourgeoisie seeks to defend its aspirations to exploit the labor of others, it is the sworn enemy of the proletariat.

If you think this does not apply to the peasantry, look again. What is a peasant? There is the relatively well-to-do layer of smallholding proprietors, owning some tools and a farm too big to work alone and thus requiring the employment of other peasants. There is the poor peasant with a minimal plot of land for his use, forced to work for the landowner or richer peasant part of the time. There is the landless peasant who is forced to eke out a living as a temporary laborer wherever he can find work. What Trotsky said of tsarist Russia, addressing the counterposed interests of various layers of the peasantry, holds true in Latin America today: "The peasantry as a whole was utterly incapable of assuming the reins of government."

For Revolutionary Internationalism!

So we come to the answer to the question: Why have all guerrilla struggles been unable to find an alternative road? Because there is none. You might as well be looking for the Land of Oz. The petty bourgeoisie, lacking a decisive relationship to the means of production, is unable to organize society in another way. By its very nature it is forced either to pursue bourgeois aspirations or, under extremely exceptional circumstances, it seeks to expropriate the bourgeoisie, extracting some privileges as a bureaucratic layer on top of a deformed workers state.

This relates to another structural characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie. The greatest threat to their most deeply felt aspirations is being thrown onto the heap of the proletariat and the dispossessed. They feel they are better than that and deserve a better fate. And in the case of the intellectual, brought up in a system where manual labor is considered infinitely inferior to brain power, he is predisposed to lord it over the working masses. If he breaks from such an outlook, he may join the ranks of the proletarian revolution. But the leftist intellectual who becomes a guerrilla is nothing if not a *caudillo* out to save the masses in spite of themselves. In power, as in Cuba, the guerrilla rapidly makes the transition to a parasitic bureaucrat.

"But at least they got rid of capitalism," some of you may insist. Yes, but for how long? A deformed workers state is not a way station toward socialism; it is a nationalist, bureaucratic obstacle to it. The guerrilla army, having been ushered into power without the conscious participation of the workers and peasants, and thus answerable to no one in particular, from the start plays the role of arbiter over the competing interests of the various social layers. To the extent

that there is an ideological justification, it is nationalism, in this case couched in the rhetoric of liberation.

Consider Central America in the 1980s, when Reagan unleashed his dogs of war against the Nicaraguan Sandinista regime and the leftist insurgents in neighboring El Salvador. At the time, we in the Spartacist tendency insisted: "Defense of Cuba and the Soviet Union begins in Central America!" But the former leftist guerrillas in power in Cuba and Nicaragua operated within the narrow framework of nationalism, sacrificing revolutions elsewhere to maintain their own positions. The Sandinistas refused arms to the Salvadorans. And Castro, seeking "peaceful coexistence" with the U.S., counseled against "another Cuba" in Central America. And it was not just an "old and tired" Fidel, forced by circumstances, who pushed "peaceful coexistence" with U.S. imperialism. In a 1964 speech at the United Nations, Che Guevara also called for "peaceful coexistence between states with different economic and social systems." Since Stalin's time, this has always meant sacrificing other revolutions for narrow national interests.

Karl Marx pointed out more than a century ago, and this is the other component of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, that unless a socialized economy is extended to the advanced industrialized nations internationally, an isolated workers state will be condemned to "the generalization of scarcity." And if the Stalinist program of "socialism in one country" was impossible in a big country like the Soviet Union, it is simply ludicrous as "socialism on one island." Anti-imperialist rhetoric, appeals to that den of thieves, the United Nations, and a nationally limited policy of battering down the hatches and hunkering down will not defend Cuba from the unremitting pressures of imperialism—not only military encirclement with its concomitant deformations but also the pressure of the world market and its cheaper capitalist commodities. What is urgently necessary today is for all opponents of imperialism to mount an *internationalist* defense of Cuba, through *class struggle at home*.

The police-state apparatus of the bureaucratic caste in Cuba—even in its more "humane," patronizing, Guevarist olive green—has worked to destroy the best hope for the defense of the revolution, namely, proletarian class consciousness. As the collapse of the Soviet degenerated workers state has proven, the atomization of the proletariat by Stalinism was the single most important element in the undermining of the deformed workers state. Genuine workers democracy not only would mobilize the Cuban masses in defense of their revolutionary gains, but is a necessary prerequisite to an effectively run planned economy. The best defense of Cuba is workers revolution from the U.S. to Mexico to Central and South America.

As Marxists, we start from the proposition that the proletariat is the only class with the social power and the class interest to liberate humanity from the yoke of class oppression. Led by a revolutionary internationalist Trotskyist party, with the proven authority of many class battles behind it, the proletariat can carry out the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and its international extension across the globe. In backward countries, where workers are a minority and where the uncompleted tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution remain on the agenda, it is only the revolutionary proletariat that can rally to its cause the lower strata of the oppressed classes through a program of agrarian revolution, emancipation of the doubly oppressed peasant women and working women, expropriation of the propertied classes and a government of soviets of workers and peasants deputies. This was the road of October and it is the only road to victory for the oppressed masses of Latin America. For a Socialist United States of Latin America! For socialist revolution throughout all the Americas! ■

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Russia: Strike Wave Provoked by Capitalist Misery

For a Multinational Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

Last week's elections in Chechnya punctuated the humiliating defeat inflicted on Russian invasion forces over the past two years by secessionist fighters in that small Caucasus republic. Meanwhile, Moscow is awash in intrigues and power plays, as President Boris Yeltsin's increasingly frequent hospital stays fuel speculation over an imminent "succession crisis."

At the same time, there have been dramatic manifestations of the massive discontent simmering at the base of Russian society, as hundreds of thousands of workers have gone on strike this winter to demand payment of months of back wages. On January 13, teachers at more than 10,000 schools around the country walked off the job. The month before saw a massive strike wave centered in Russia's coal fields.

The destruction of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism ushered in by Yeltsin's ascent to power in August 1991 have led to unmitigated hardship for much of the population. Some 12 million workers are now permanently unemployed, while millions more have nominal "jobs" at which they don't get paid. To ensure his re-election as president last summer, Yeltsin doled out wads of money and promised to clear up the huge backlog of unpaid wages. But with the balloting over, wage arrears climbed at the rate of 20 percent a month, reaching a staggering *eight to nine billion dollars* in December.

At the time of Yeltsin's pro-imperialist counter-coup in August 1991, the International Communist League pointed to the need for workers mobilizations to disperse the counterrevolutionary forces. Such mobilizations could have rapidly led to a proletarian political revolution to oust the tottering Stalinist bureaucracy, which in the main was also promoting the restoration of capitalism, and establish an internationalist regime based on the rule of workers councils (soviets). However, nearly seven decades of Stalinist bureaucratic rule had so atomized and paralyzed the Soviet working class that it did not resist capitalist counterrevolution.

Today, the plight of Russia's workers is exacerbated by the misleaders who seek to poison the multinational working class with Great Russian chauvinism and to chain it to the bourgeois state and the former state enterprise managers who are now capitalist owners. In the course of the workers' struggles that develop and through assiduous Marxist propaganda work—aimed not least at inculcating in the most advanced workers and leftists an understanding of the Stalinist-nationalist betrayals of the past—we fight to cohere a vanguard nucleus modeled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky and committed to its internationalist program.

Miners Strike: Catalyst for Labor Protests

On December 3, in the largest workers action yet in post-Soviet Russia, some 400,000 miners—four-fifths of the workforce—walked out to demand unpaid wages going back an average of four months. As Yeltsin's labor minister warned that the strike was "dangerous from a social, economic and political standpoint," the government scrambled to at least make a pretense of meeting the miners' demands. By the time the Russian Independent Union of Coal Industry Workers (Rosugolprof) voted to end the

strike eight days later, the finance ministry had ordered emergency payments of \$177 million—a fraction of the nearly half billion owed miners—with pledges of more to come.

The coal strike quickly became a catalyst for other actions. Two days after the miners walked out, nuclear reactor operators—acting in solidarity with a hunger strike already under way—occupied the Leningrad Atomic Power Sta-

Moscow's Red Square was crowded with protesting workers, and not the fascist-infested chauvinist rabble of the "red-brown" coalition.

The recent wave of labor protests reflects growing desperation and frustration among wide sections of the population. The "New Russians" who have grown fabulously wealthy as a result of capitalist counterrevolution dole out \$2,000 apiece for artificial Christmas

annually. Others, meanwhile, sell weapons on the black market or hire themselves out to the numerous private armies and security forces which now include some 800,000 men.

Western bourgeois commentators no longer even mention the once-touted "economic miracle" which was supposed to transform the country into a thriving capitalist marketplace, while the numerous fake-left groups which cheered on the downfall of the Soviet degenerated workers state now maintain an embarrassed silence over their erstwhile support to Yeltsin counterrevolution. Even as the new capitalist robber barons spirit billions of dollars out of the country, industrial production has plummeted by more than half since 1991 and continues to drop. The giant Siberian factory complexes have been turned into ghost towns, with some workers going into small businesses and the poorest forced into lumpenism, while others get by on subsistence farming and petty trade.

Academic Vladimir Bilenkin observes: "Regular strikes are useless in indus-

Coal miners protest in Vladivostok, June 1996, against non-payment of wages.



tion, which supplies electricity to that city, now called St. Petersburg. The government immediately flew in a billion rubles—amounting to \$200 per worker—to settle the action.

Throughout Russia, teachers, medical workers and others staged strikes and protests over money owed them. Workers at a nuclear missile production facility picketed Finance Ministry offices in Moscow. Retirees in Tver blocked the railroad lines between Moscow and St. Petersburg to demand their pensions. In Vladivostok, a joint protest of coal miners and power engineering workers representing all enterprises in the Far East territory demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's government.

A month earlier, on November 5, hundreds of thousands of workers staged a nationwide day of protests with signs demanding, "Give Us Our Money Back!" For the first time in years, the area around

trees and flaunt their Versace silks and convoys of Mercedes limousines. But for working-class families, real average income is barely *one-fourth* what it was before. Homeless people now line the streets and subway stations.

The pervasive poverty has also penetrated the armed forces, making them so unreliable for the new capitalist state that leading figures have warned of an impending mutiny. This is why former Yeltsin aide General Aleksandr Lebed, a diehard militarist and arch-nationalist, pushed through a peace deal in Chechnya. "To mention the army," observed a recent article in the London *Guardian Weekly* (17 November), "is to conjure up an image of hunger and rags." Young soldiers in Moscow stop cars at street corners to beg for change, former submarine commanders moonlight as cab drivers, troops in the countryside get by on the cabbage they are sent out to harvest

tries that work at five to ten percent of their capacity while the [management] bureaucrats eagerly wait to shut them down completely, sell them, and get their kickback" (*Monthly Review*, November 1996). Not surprisingly, many of the recent actions over back pay have taken the form of hunger strikes, while some individual workers have resorted to even more desperate measures. During a strike at the Cheboksary Tractor Plant in December 1995, three workers committed suicide, and last September a 38-year-old miner in the Kuzbass coal field blew himself up with a hand grenade because he had not been paid for months.

With coal accounting for 80 percent of Russia's heating fuel and more than half of its electric power generation, the miners still have some economic clout. Even here, however, production is little more than half what it was before the counter-revolution. Since 1993, 50 pits have been shut down and 180,000 miners laid off, and an imperialist World Bank loan to help "rationalize" the coal industry is contingent on widespread further closures. Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO's "Free Trade Union Institute" in Moscow acts as advisers in "labor relations" to the new capitalist rulers. Workers in the U.S. must demand an end to these nefarious operations on behalf of U.S. imperialism by the "AFL-CIA," in Russia and around the world!

Down With Great Russian Chauvinism!

While previous miners strikes were strictly limited to demands for back pay and state subsidies to the industry, this time the union tops called for the government's ouster. But as union chairman Vitaly Budko conceded, "Resignation of the government is not our aim, it is our cry of despair, to make them negotiate with us." When calls to demand the



Elections in Chechnya, staged after Russian invasion army's humiliating defeat at hands of secessionist fighters.

Teamsters...

(continued from page 3)

"flows directly from...and presupposes for its realization the complete freedom of the trade unions from the imperialist or colonial state." The aim of union democracy is to allow the workers to select a leadership which will fight for their class interests against the employers and their state. Intervention by the capitalist state is counterposed to that very purpose.

The ISO's support to government intervention in the trade unions is of a piece with their refusal to defend Cuba today and the Soviet Union while it existed against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. In the name of defending "democratic rights," these social democrats supported any and every anti-Soviet force sponsored by the CIA, from Solidarność in Poland to the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* cut-throats in Afghanistan. Trotsky drew an analogy between the bureaucratically run unions in the West and the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state under Stalin, calling for defense of both against the capitalists while fighting to oust the bureaucratic misleaders. Those

like the ISO who cannot defend past gains of the working class will not conquer future ones.

Revolutionary Leadership and Working-Class Independence

The Teamsters became the powerful industrial union it once was as a result of the 1934 Minneapolis general strike and militant campaigns to organize over-the-road truckers, all led by Trotskyists. In drawing the lessons of those battles, James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, emphasized:

"The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn.... The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups."

— *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944)

When, in 1941, Democratic president Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered the trial and imprisonment of 18 Trotskyist leaders, including Teamsters union militants, for their opposition to imperialist World War II, the pro-capitalist IBT tops aided his efforts to purge the union of "reds."

Russia...

(continued from page 9)

government's resignation came up at a Moscow congress of the corporatist Federation of Independent Unions (FNPR), held in the midst of the miners strike, they were defeated with the argument that the FNPR "could not pose a credible alternative government." Indeed, FNPR head Mikhail Shmakov got his job as a result of Yeltsin's October 1993 bombing of the old parliament. Two years later, the FNPR ran on a joint slate for the new rubber-stamp parliament, the Duma, with the Union of Entrepreneurs and Industrialists! The ties between the union tops and management were evident at a miners' strike meeting in Tula observed by supporters of the International Communist League last winter, as the mine director conspicuously sat on the podium beside the union bureaucrat and lorded it over a passive, if bitter, audience.

In the early 1990s, the combative miners were used by their leaders as a battering ram for Yeltsin's counterrevolution. Disgust with Yeltsin has since grown so widespread that in the 1995 Duma elections, Gennady Zyuganov's Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) garnered massive support in the Kuzbass region. In the West, the KPRF is supported not only by Stalinist has-beens like Gus Hall's Communist Party in the U.S., but also by self-proclaimed Trotskyists like the centrist British Workers Power group. During the presidential elections, Workers Power called for a vote to Zyuganov and prettified the KPRF as a reformist "bour-

geois workers party," effectively equating it with the social-democratic British Labour Party which Workers Power perennially tails.

Despite its name, the KPRF is a thoroughly bourgeois party committed first and foremost to fostering Great Russian chauvinism and the revival of Russian imperialism. In response to Yeltsin's bloody invasion of Chechnya two years ago, Vorkuta miners and other strike committees around the country passed declarations condemning the war. The KPRF sought to take advantage of such sentiment by posturing as opponents of the war, though restricting itself to criticisms of Yeltsin's "incompetence." But when Lebed signed a pact with the Chechen secessionists, the KPRF denounced him for "national treason," while Zyuganov railed that the "unconstitutional" agreement "marks the beginning of Russia's collapse" (*Moscow News*, 4 December 1996).

For Socialist Revolution!

The catastrophic breakdown of production has made it difficult to speak of a workers movement even in a sociological sense. As Bilenkin noted in *Monthly Review*, "The deskilling and massive unemployment transform ever larger sections of the Russian working class into déclassé paupers and threaten the class with its own disintegration."

Continuing capitalist immiseration will impel the workers of Russia into new and convulsive battles for their very survival. In conditions which militate against an entrenched role for labor reformism, the proletariat could well make leaps in consciousness, rapidly reappro-

Jimmy Hoffa was sent by gangster-linked Teamster chief Daniel Tobin to "clean out" the Minneapolis local. After the war, this reactionary witchhunt was extended throughout the labor movement, consolidating the viciously anti-communist, class-collaborationist union bureaucracy that today lords it over the workers.

All wings of the union bureaucracy, "reform" and "old guard" alike, serve as lieutenants of the capitalist class in the workers movement. Carey refused to lift a finger for union militants victimized in the 1994 strike, such as Southern California trucker Jesse Acuna, who was sentenced to five years in jail for courageously defending the picket line. Meanwhile, the Teamster tops have spread protectionist poison against Mexican truckers, fomenting chauvinist hatred and helping to fuel the racist assault on Latinos, Asians and all immigrants. Both wings of the Teamster bureaucracy, including the TDU, turn a blind eye to rampant racism against black workers (see "Mobilize Teamster Power to Smash Racism at UPS!" *WV* No. 660, 24 January). This goes hand in hand with the push to recruit Pennsylvania state troopers and other cops into the union. And

groups like the ISO support the "unionization" of these professional strike-breakers and racist killers. We say: Cops out of the unions!

The interests of the working class are irreconcilably opposed to the interests of the capitalist class and its political parties, both Democrats and Republicans. The pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy must be swept away by political struggle within the unions as part of the fight for a revolutionary workers party that will champion the cause of the international working class and all the oppressed. Such a party would fight for a workers government to expropriate the means of production from the capitalist profiteers and create an egalitarian society. As Trotsky wrote in his 1940 article:

"The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat...."

"The independence of the trade unions in the class sense, in their relations to the bourgeois state, can, in the present conditions, be assured only by a completely revolutionary leadership, that is, the leadership of the Fourth International." ■

riating its revolutionary history. In a number of situations, strike committees have already taken over tasks of administration and distribution of goods. What is necessary is a sharp political struggle against those who seek to poison the working class with Great Russian chauvinism and for class independence from the new bourgeoisie and its state. As we noted following Yeltsin's re-election last summer (*WV* No. 649, 2 August 1996):

"What is necessary is the reawakening of the dormant working class and its entry into the arena of class struggle, fighting for its interests and those of all the oppressed on the road to a socialist revolution that sweeps away the new exploiters and their state. Key to this is the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party of the working class." ■

Global Economy...

(continued from page 5)

first. And the low-wage worker well knows he is not going to keep getting a 20 percent raise every year for the next ten years.

However, much writing and discussion on the world economy—by both bourgeois ideologues and leftist intellectuals—is based on this kind of fallacious methodology. For example, between 1950 and the mid-1970s Japan's national

output grew at an average annual rate two to three times greater than that of the U.S. In the 1970s, big-name American intellectuals wrote well-publicized books—e.g., Herman Kahn's *The Emerging Japanese Superstate*, Ezra Vogel's *Japan as Number One*—predicting that Japan would overtake the United States as the world's leading capitalist economic power by the end of the century. Not long after these books came out, the Japanese growth rate sharply decelerated and during the past decade Japan's economy has been stagnant. Today, Japan's national output is still less than half that of the U.S.

The current apocalyptic vision of economic "globalization" is based on the same faulty premises as the "Japan will be number one" literature of the 1970s. For example, between 1985 and 1994 China's share of world exports of footwear went from 1.5 percent to 15.5 percent, an increase of 1,000 percent. If one projects the same increase for the next ten years, China will account for 150 percent of world trade in footwear, a mathematical impossibility. In another example, investment in plant and equipment by Western/Japanese corporations in backward countries, now including East Europe and the ex-USSR, increased last year by 13 percent. But it is wrong to assume this trend will continue indefinitely into the future.

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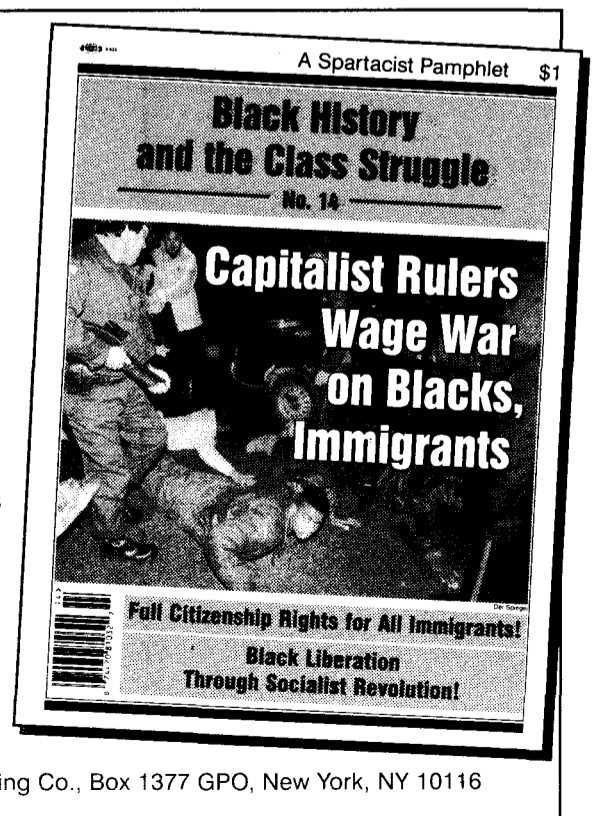
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Crack...

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War II with the mission of fighting "international Communism," as part of the imperialist Cold War against the Soviet Union. As *CovertAction* (Winter 1996-97) noted: "Official collaboration between US government entities and known drug traffickers dates back at least to World War II. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), predecessor of the CIA, made deals with Corsican heroin traffickers as well as with US gangster and known heroin dealer Lucky Luciano to prevent communists from gaining a political foothold in post-war France and Italy." A central role in this was played by CIA "labor" operative Irving Brown.

Against the Chinese Revolution, the CIA funded the anti-Communist forces of Chiang Kai-shek, in part by transforming the Burmese Shan people into the world's largest opium dealers. The CIA used a similar strategy during the dirty, losing imperialist war against the Vietnamese people, creating a secret anti-Communist army of 30,000 Hmong tribesmen whose commander used the CIA's Air America to ship opium. The CIA also ran drugs to fund the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* who fought the Soviet-backed PDPA government in Afghanistan in the 1970s and '80s, producing, as *CovertAction* put it, "a tremendous wave of heroin that flooded the lucrative US market."

Millions have died and entire populations have been enslaved by Washington's local butchers, who rise and fall as a result of U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionary wars, invasions or "covert" actions. But the real story behind the cocaine scandal is the last thing you'll hear from the black Democrats who wholeheartedly back U.S. imperialism and serve this system "at home" as overseers of the immiseration of the ghetto masses.

Black Democrats and Their Reformist Camp Followers

Subjecting South Central residents to the "plausible denials" of the CIA was a bridge too far, but the Democrats have with more success played on the very real anguish of the black population watching an entire generation consigned to poverty, illiteracy, prison and death. From the outset, Jesse Jackson, Louis Farrakhan and a host of other black bourgeois types enlisted as lieutenants in the racist "war on drugs." For his part, Jackson cynically played down Klan terror and lynchings, declaiming in 1986 that "ropes never killed as many of our



Cancellare/Picture Group

Sandinistas' capture of American mercenary pilot Eugene Hasenfus in 1986 blew lid off CIA contra operation. CIA's Southern Air Transport shipped guns to Nicaraguan contras, carried drugs back to U.S.



Carlos Durán

young people as the pushers of drugs." In New York City, FBI fink Al Sharpton organized anti-drug vigilante gangs as auxiliaries to the racist cops. And more recently Congressional Black Caucus head Maxine Waters used the CIA crack scandal to call for "a real war on drugs" (*Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1996).

These Democratic Party politicians have found it convenient to push the line that the contra-crack connection was a "plot" against the ghettos, moreover involving sinister "foreign" forces. Thus, Millender-McDonald stated: "It got to the point where we could not depend on each other. The village has been ruined by some outside force" (*Los Angeles Times*, 22 October 1996). As if the grinding poverty of the ghettos weren't a homegrown product of racist capitalism! And Waters has demanded "a war on drugs whether they come from Managua, South East Asia or the CIA."

True to form, the petty-bourgeois black misleaders have seized on the involvement of Nicaraguans in the drug trade to fuel anti-Hispanic, anti-immigrant sentiment. This is sinister stuff. While the majority of drug arrests today ensnare black youth, historically anti-drug witch-hunts have targeted immigrants. In the 1880s, Chinese Americans were singled out for arrest and deportation under oppressive anti-opium legislation. The anti-marijuana wars of the 1930s were directed against Hispanics. Among those who have teamed up with Maxine Waters over the recent drug scandal is Brotherhood Crusade leader Danny Bakewell, who has a history of scapegoating Latinos for black unemployment. During the

"rebuilding of Los Angeles" after the 1992 uprising over the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King, Bakewell drove Latinos off work sites to grab business for black contractors.

The pernicious fostering of anti-immigrant chauvinism by black demagogues was reflected in the fact that over half of black voters in California supported the immigrant-bashing Proposition 187 in 1994. The passage of Prop. 187 was in turn the prelude to the assault on affirmative action embodied in last year's Prop. 209, which outlawed programs that had provided minimal access for blacks to government jobs and higher education. Such poisonous divisions among the workers and oppressed block the necessary common fight against the capitalist system.

Today the calls by Millender-McDonald, Waters et al. for a cleaner, meaner "war on drugs" feeds into a broader program of social reaction and repression aimed at regimenting the population. The specifically racist character of the anti-drug laws is reflected in the fact that penalties are 100 times harsher for cheap crack, available to the ghetto poor, than for the expensive powdered cocaine favored by middle-class whites. With their "moral uplift" rhetoric, the black misleaders play on the very real fears among the black poor that their kids will become prey for the pushers and simply another "crime" statistic. But widespread drug use in the ghettos is not the source of the problem; it is a reflection of the social degradation, mass poverty, joblessness, homelessness and disease that plague the inner cities of this country, where the rulers have written off much of the black population as simply expendable.

As it is now, if you've got the money, you can afford quality drugs when you want them, and quality lawyers and the Betty Ford clinic when it becomes an inconvenience. We Marxists call for the decriminalization of drugs, which would also take the huge profits and consequently much of the violence out of the trade. Drug addiction should be treated as a health problem, with education and free, quality, voluntary medical care. We

ening desperation.

The horror now unfolding at Rochester brings to mind the butchery committed by the British state 16 years ago when ten Irish republican prisoners died slow and painful deaths on hunger strike, fighting for political prisoner status, in the H-block of Long Kesh.

In the vile tradition of the British government's exclusion of Jews fleeing the Nazi holocaust, today the capitalist governments of Fortress Europe clang shut the doors on hundreds of thousands of refugees from brutal repression from all corners of the world. On Christmas Day, 280 Indian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan immigrants were drowned off the Sicilian coast, murdered by smugglers who understood that such refugees are deemed expendable by the imperialist rulers.

We demand: Immediate release of the Rochester Prison hunger strikers and all asylum seekers held in detention! Shut down Campsfield and all the refugee detention centres! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Yours sincerely,
Kate Klein for the
Partisan Defence Committee

oppose the imposition of "drug testing" at the workplace, which is aimed at victimizing militants and blaming workers for accidents that are the product of the indifference of the capitalists to elementary safety. Yet the pro-capitalist labor tops have accepted and pushed these union-busting measures.

In thrall to the reformist program of tailing the Democrats, many on the left have chimed in one way or another in the anti-drug fever. *Socialist Action* (January 1997), for example, echoed the black Democrats, decrying "the CIA's protection and promotion of drug dealers," without one word on the devastation wrought by the government's war on the ghettos and barrios in the name of fighting drugs. Their "demand to open all government files on this matter" echoes the liberal Democrats' call for the CIA to "come clean," and exposes their dangerous and impotent strategy of seeking to reform the capitalist state and its repressive apparatus.

Indeed, in a shamefaced self-criticism of their own tailing after Millender-McDonald, Waters et al., the quirky reformists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) admitted that the black Democrats' meetings around the CIA drugs affair were "Democratic Party get-out-the-vote operations from start to finish" (*Militant*, 4 November 1996). Those seeking a revolutionary program should draw some conclusions from the fact that the SWP has difficulty telling the difference between social struggle and Democratic Party electioneering.

The servants of this capitalist state will often use scams like conspiracy theories to sidetrack the rage of the oppressed masses into reformist dead ends. In the 1995 movie *Panther*, the militant black radicals of the Black Panther Party are portrayed in the end as the inner-city spearhead of the war against the drug conspiracy. As we wrote in "Hollywood's Tame Panther":

"The concoction of a drug conspiracy theory to explain the destruction of the Panthers only serves to mystify and alibi the whole system of racist capitalist oppression. The Panthers were destroyed by police terror and murderous internal factionalism inflamed by the FBI."

— WV No. 624 (2 June 1995)

But despite their courage and militancy, the Panthers did not have a political program which could destroy the capitalist system in which black oppression is rooted. As we noted in the article, "The Panthers sought in the lumpenproletariat a substitute for revolutionary working-class struggle." As a strategic component of the multiracial proletariat, black workers will play a key role in fighting for black liberation through socialist revolution.

The CIA, police and courts, agencies of state repression, will be swept away only by the elimination of capitalism itself. We fight to break working people and minorities from the partner parties of racist U.S. capitalism, the Democrats and Republicans. Our fight is for a workers revolution led by an internationalist, multiracial vanguard party to put the whole profit system out of business. Only then will we have the basis to construct a planned socialist economy providing jobs, education and a decent future for all. ■

Hunger Strike...

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than three weeks, against, as their statement says, their "unlawful imprisonment without trial, hearing or process." The barbaric British state could very soon be responsible for the deaths by starvation of three of the hunger strikers who, as of midnight on Sunday 26 January, began refusing fluids. Greatly weakened already, they have been pronounced by doctors to be in danger of dying within 48 to 72 hours of the time they stopped taking fluids. Now two more have joined them.

The jails and detention centres of Britain are filled to overflowing with asylum seekers like the 180-200 at Rochester Prison, who have fled repression in such countries as Russia, Algeria, Zaire, and Nigeria. Charged with no crime, they are left to rot as criminals for an indefinite period, often two years or more. This country's racist and draconian immigration policies ensure that such people are driven to acts of extreme, life threat-

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

SAN FRANCISCO

Alternate Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. Begins February 13: *The Origins of Marxism and the Marxist Program*; February 27: *The Marxist Understanding of the State*; San Francisco State University, Student Union, Rm. C116
Information and readings: (415)777-9367 or (510) 839-0851

TORONTO

Alternate Thursdays, 7 p.m. Next classes, February 13: *The Bolshevik Revolution*; February 27: *The Degeneration of the USSR: How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*; International Student Centre, 33 St. George Street (north of College), University of Toronto
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138

SANTA CRUZ, CA

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Next class, February 18: *Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution*; University of California, Santa Cruz, Porter 246
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851

VANCOUVER

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Next classes, February 12: *Marx's View of Economics*; February 26: *The State and Revolution*; UBC, Student Union Building, Room 213
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

WORKERS VANGUARD

Black Democrats Line Up Behind Racist "War on Drugs"



Morris/Washington Post



Hosefros/NY Times

California Democrat Maxine Waters calls for hearings into CIA involvement in drug trade at Washington, D.C. rally. "War on drugs" means terrorization of ghettos.

The CIA Crack Scandal

LOS ANGELES—Last August's three-part exposé in the *San Jose Mercury News* linking the CIA and its Nicaraguan contra clients to a massive domestic crack-cocaine trade provoked justified outrage among black people across the country, particularly in South Central L.A. The government's complicity in the ghetto drug trade—even as one in three black men in their twenties is in the clutches of the "justice" system, mostly on drug charges—testifies to the racist hypocrisy which runs to the core of this capitalist society.

For a host of Democratic Party politicians, however, the "revelations" about the CIA-cocaine connection have provided an opportunity for cynical politicking aimed at diverting ghetto anger from the bipartisan slashing of welfare and education. They also seek to amnesty their support to the anti-drug witchhunt, which was never intended to save kids from "the scourge of drugs" but to legitimize a virtual occupying army of police in the ghettos.

South Central L.A. is a stark example. For three consecutive nights in April 1988, as the LAPD initiated its "Operation Hammer," a thousand cops hit the streets, rounding up some 1,500 black and Latino youth. We described this racist cop rampage in "L.A. Flashpoint U.S.A." (*WV* No. 555, 10 July 1992):

"Armed with sledgehammers and battering rams, they completely demolished four apartments—smashing windows, walls and furniture, ripping out toilets and throwing washing machines into bathtubs, and spray-painting the walls with 'LAPD Rules.' Meanwhile those who were arrested were forced to whistle the theme song of *The Andy Griffith Show* as they were marched through a gauntlet of cops beating them with flashlights and fists."

Seizing on the *Mercury News* exposé, South Central Democratic Congressman Juanita Millender-McDonald invited none other than CIA head John M. Deutch to address a "town meeting" in the South Central ghetto. As Millender-McDonald did her best to plead for calm, Deutch's

bald-faced assertions of CIA clean hands were met with boos, jeers and chants of "Bull! Bull!" from the audience.

After by and large ignoring the *Mercury News* story, major capitalist newspapers like the *New York Times* then retailed the official CIA denials in stories heavily laced with arrogant racist sneering over the "paranoia" of black people. But you don't have to be paranoid to believe that this capitalist government is capable of the most heinous crimes against black people. "The Government's medical people once experimented on black people by injecting them with syphilis," one woman at the South Central meeting exclaimed. "What's different about this?" In the infamous 40-year-long Tuskegee "experiment," which only ended in 1972, government researchers deliberately allowed 300 black men who had syphilis to be ravaged by the disease while telling them they were being treated.

Notwithstanding the recent hue and cry by black Democrats, the CIA crack scandal

is hardly a revelation. As far back as December 1987, *Penthouse*, for example, ran a feature titled, "The Contras and Cocaine." The real purpose behind this CIA conspiracy was not to flood the ghettos with drugs, but to further the "war against Communism" abroad, with a long and stinking trail involving drug-running extending from Cambodia to Afghanistan to Central America. Given the CIA's repetitive lies to cover up its proven role in criminal endeavors throughout the world, why should anyone believe it *wasn't* deeply involved in backing drug dealers in South Central? Certainly its denials are a lot less plausible than those of Fidel Castro, whom the U.S. secret police have been accusing for over a decade of running drugs.

The Company's Drug Connections

Harry Truman, one of Bill Clinton's role models, created the CIA after World

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Asylum Now! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Britain: Desperate Hunger Strike in Prison Hellhole

FEBRUARY 2—For nearly four weeks now, upwards of 16 asylum-seekers in Britain have been on a hunger strike in protest against the government's brutal policy of imprisoning refugees from repression and torture. On January 26, five of the hunger-strikers began refusing fluids as well and now face death from starvation at the hands of the British state.

The Tory government of Prime Minister John Major has spurned the refugees' demands and defended its bar-

baric detention policy, while granting temporary admission to three Albanian refugees from the Kosovo region in Serbia who agreed to end their protest. Meanwhile, Nigerian Ejike Emenike was near death when he agreed to emergency rehydration last week. Having fled Nigeria after being arrested and tortured for protesting the execution of dissident Ken Saro-Wiwa, Emenike has been in a British prison since last February. From the hospital, he vowed to continue his hunger strike for free-

dom and refugee status.

Our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain have joined in protest demonstrations, demanding freedom and asylum for the imprisoned refugees and full citizenship rights for all immigrants. The plight of immigrants seeking entry into racist "Fortress Europe" was starkly highlighted by the deliberate drowning of nearly 300 South Asian immigrants in late December. We print below a January 29 protest letter by the Partisan Defence Committee in

London to the British Home Secretary, Michael Howard.

29 January 1997

Home Secretary Michael Howard
London

To the Home Secretary:

We vehemently protest the brutal treatment of the asylum seekers at Rochester Prison in Kent. At least 16 have been on hunger strike for more

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