

Democrats Embrace "Right to Life" Bigots

Defend Abortion Rights!

The overwhelming March 20 vote—by a margin of well over two-to-one—by the House of Representatives to ban a particular late-term abortion procedure represents a frontal assault on the rights of women. The ban, which is so vaguely worded that it could apply to any number of abortion procedures, would threaten doctors who perform them with up to two years in prison and fines of \$250,000. Though the "intact dilation and extraction" (D&E) procedure—labeled "partial

birth" abortion by anti-woman bigots—is relatively rare, if enacted the ban will be used as a battering ram for completely reversing the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion. Echoing the reactionary bigots who have blockaded abortion clinics and harassed and murdered clinic workers, one Democratic Congressman sneered, "It's not about a woman's right to choose. It's about a baby's right to life."

This is the fourth time in three years that Congress has passed such a bill.

On the previous three occasions, it has been vetoed by President Clinton, but Clinton has announced his readiness to approve the "partial birth" ban if Congress agrees to throw in a phrase allowing exceptions on the grounds of a "mother's health." That Congress has now passed the ban by its widest margin ever, after a number of anti-abortion Republicans lost their seats last November, underlines the futility of the liberal strategy of looking to the Democratic Party to defend abortion rights. The Senate is also expected to pass it in a late April vote, possibly with enough of a majority to override a presidential veto.

Even now, millions of women are effectively denied abortion rights, if they are too poor or too young. More than 80 percent of all U.S. counties don't have abortion clinics at all, forcing women to travel hundreds of miles from their homes. As ever more states mandate "waiting periods" of a day or more, this imposes a particular hardship on young and working women. By the time they can save the money needed for travel and hotel accommodations—if they can afford it at all—and arrange for childcare and time off from work, many of these women have already passed the first trimester and are forced to have a late-term abortion.

Under the blows of increasing legal restrictions as well as the extralegal terror by "right to life" reactionaries, the number of legal abortions has dropped dramatically in recent years. The growing assault on abortion rights is encouraged by a broader onslaught by the capitalist

rulers on democratic rights, social welfare programs and workers' living standards. As we wrote following a series of heinous clinic bombings earlier this year: "The bomb-by-night terrorists and killers are emboldened by the war on the poor, minorities, immigrants and other sectors of the oppressed carried out by both major capitalist parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, who mouth smirking pieties as women and children starve" (WV No. 660, 24 January).

The vaunted "pro-choice" president has overseen the sharpest assault in decades on poor and minority women. In axing welfare, Clinton has consigned millions to starvation, while pushing drastic cuts in funding for health care and childcare. This hits hardest at blacks, immigrants and other minorities, while the rollback of affirmative action has led to a racist purge of the universities. The fight to defend women's rights cannot be separated from the struggles of all working people and minorities against the all-sided attacks of the capitalist class. We

continued on page 8



Free Abortion on Demand! Free Quality Health Care for All!



Welfare recipients in South-Central Los Angeles. Attacks on abortion rights are part of broader capitalist assault on health care, welfare, workers' living standards.

U.S. Hands Off Zaire!

Imperialists Out of Central Africa!

MARCH 30—As an American military contingent landed in Zaire, on March 21 President Clinton announced the deployment of hundreds of additional U.S. troops to be sent to the nearby countries of Congo and Gabon. An amphibious U.S. warship with a thousand Marines on board is now steaming from the Adriatic to a position off the West African coast near Zaire. Clinton

claimed that the U.S. forces were being sent to prepare for a possible evacuation of American civilians from the Zairian capital of Kinshasa. But a fully armed and equipped expeditionary force is hardly necessary to evacuate scarcely 500 people, who could freely leave Zaire any time they want. In fact, this imperialist intervention is aimed at helping police the Zairian masses as U.S.-sponsored rebel forces led by Laurent Kabila prepare to move into Kinshasa to replace the tottering French-backed regime of dictator Mobutu Sese Seko.

An imperialist military intervention in Zaire was mooted last fall, when

France proposed a United Nations "humanitarian" mission supposedly aimed at aiding Rwandan Hutu refugees in eastern Zaire caught in the fighting between Tutsi rebel forces led by Kabila and Hutu militias backed by Mobutu. The motive for the French proposal was to prop up Mobutu against a growing rebel threat to his regime. After grudgingly agreeing, Washington aborted the intervention by having its Tutsi client forces engineer an exodus of the refugees. Today, it is the U.S. which is spearheading the moves for imperialist intervention in Zaire as Kabila is poised to bring down Mobutu. As we wrote last November when the earlier imperialist

expeditionary force was set to descend on the region: "The real aim of the imposing show of military force being readied for central Africa is to affirm the imperialists' 'right' to assert their control over their neocolonial slaves whenever and whenever they please" (WV No. 656, 22 November 1996).

Nothing is more cynical than the pretense by U.S. imperialism, the most powerful enforcer of reaction and oppression in the world, that it is intervening to defend "humanitarian" principles. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed a countervailing force to U.S. aims of world domination. This

continued on page 10



U.S. War Criminals Shake Down Vietnam

The scenes of U.S. troops, diplomats and CIA assassins scurrying to flee as the victorious forces of North Vietnam and the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front surged through Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) on 30 April 1975 continue to haunt America's capitalist rulers. In the course of its long, bloody, *losing* imperialist war, the U.S. slaughtered some two million Vietnamese and maimed and tortured countless more. Intent on bombing Vietnam "back to the Stone Age," as one U.S. Air Force general put it at the time, Washington devastated the country's economy,

destroying virtually all farmland and infrastructure. From the mass assassination program dubbed "Operation Phoenix" and the extensive defoliation and napalm terror bombings which literally burned people alive to carpeting the country with land mines which continue to kill Vietnamese villagers to this day, U.S. imperialism and its erstwhile South Vietnamese puppet regime stopped at nothing in seeking to crush the Vietnamese Revolution as part of the effort to "roll back world Communism."

In the 22 years since, the U.S. rulers have vindictively sought to exact ven-



Wide World

U.S. imperialist war in Vietnam devastated the country, slaughtered two million people.

geance for their humiliating battlefield defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese workers and peasants, imposing a punishing trade embargo and trying in all ways to isolate and starve the beleaguered and impoverished Vietnamese deformed workers state. Now, in what has got to be the height of obscene imperialist arrogance, the bloody perpetrators of mass murder have extorted "compensation" from the victims of their war crimes! Last month, the U.S. announced that the Vietnamese government had agreed to pay \$140 million in restitution for debts incurred during the war by Washington's Saigon puppet regime. In return, the U.S. offered Hanoi a trade deal and possible elevation to "most favored nation" trading status.

The backdrop to this grotesque imperialist bloodsucking is the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, which acted as a counterweight to untrammelled imperialist domination. If not for the existence of the Soviet degenerated workers state, the Vietnamese Revolution could not have defeated the U.S. colossus. The demise of the Soviet Union has also led to a heightening of inter-imperialist rivalries. As Japan, Germany and France moved to exploit Vietnam's mineral and oil resources a few years ago, U.S. corporations began clamoring for a piece of the action. Thus, Washington began easing its economic and diplomatic boycott of Vietnam. Conoco, for example, is now close to a deal to exploit Vietnam's vast offshore oil resources. Meanwhile, a U.S. ambassador is scheduled to arrive in Hanoi later this month.

The victory of the Vietnamese workers and peasants—first over the French colonialists in the 1950s, then against U.S. imperialism—was a victory for working people and the oppressed around the world. In hailing the 1975 defeat of the U.S. and its sadistic puppet forces, we Trotskyists proclaimed: "Vietnam was a victory—two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!" As we wrote in celebrating the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Saigon (WV No. 377, 19 April 1985):

"The Vietnam War marked a decisive turning point in U.S. history. The so-called 'American century' died in the rice paddies and jungles of Vietnam. The anti-communist prejudices of the '50s that portrayed America fighting to save the world from the red menace were shattered as young soldiers discovered they were sent to fight an entire people, an armed people united in a revolutionary war for national liberation and socialism. A generation of American youth saw the true face of this racist capitalist system, its arrogant, bloodthirsty barbarism."

At the same time, we consistently warned against illusions in the Stalinist leadership of the Vietnamese liberation struggle. Under Ho Chi Minh's Stalinists, the Vietnamese social revolution was deformed from its inception, with a nationalist, parasitic bureaucracy wielding political power over the proletariat and peasantry. For its part, the Soviet bureaucracy subordinated the defense and economic development of Vietnam to its own reactionary pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with U.S. imperialism, while the Beijing Stalinists not only

blocked Soviet assistance to Vietnam during the war against the U.S. but even invaded the country in 1979. As we noted in 1991, "Wedded to the Stalinist dogma of 'socialism in one country,' their backs against the wall because of the betrayal and now collapse of their Soviet patrons, the Vietnamese rulers see no alternative but to futilely seek to appease their imperialist tormentors" (WV No. 540, 6 December 1991).

The opening of Vietnam to imperialist economic penetration is part of Hanoi's embrace of pro-capitalist "market reforms," which have led to ever greater immiseration of the impoverished worker and peasant masses. While a handful of scions of the Stalinist bureaucracy rake it in as intermediaries for foreign investors, growing numbers of children in



Demulder/Gamma-Liaison

North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front forces liberate Saigon, April 1975.

Hanoi are homeless and education and medical care are increasingly out of the reach of the population, especially in the countryside. A column by Bob Herbert in the *New York Times* (28 March) describes the brutal mistreatment of women workers who slave for \$1.60 a day at a Nike footwear factory in Dong Nai. In order to punish them for a supposed disciplinary infraction, the factory manager forced the women to run around the plant under the hot sun—on International Women's Day—until a dozen of them fainted.

We of the International Communist League have consistently defended the Vietnamese Revolution as part of our fight for world socialist revolution. While calling for proletarian political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy in Hanoi, we understand that the key to defeating the depredations of U.S. imperialism lies in class struggle here in the "belly of the beast." We fight to forge a vanguard party to lead the proletariat in socialist revolution to expropriate the rapacious American ruling class. Among the foremost tasks of a revolutionary workers government in the U.S. will be to provide unstinting assistance to the Vietnamese masses, whom we honor for their heroic, self-sacrificing struggle against the main exploiter and enemy of the peoples of the world. ■

Scientific Socialism vs. Religious Backwardness

The escalating attacks on women's rights reflect and are fueled by a sharp rise in religious bigotry and obscurantism. As Marxists, we call for the strict separation of church and state. In fighting to forge a proletarian vanguard party, we seek to win the working class to the Marxist worldview of historical materialism, which as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in the following passage is necessarily hostile to religion, superstition and ideological backwardness in all its forms.



TROTSKY



LENIN

The economic oppression of the workers inevitably calls forth and engenders every kind of political oppression and social humiliation, the coarsening and darkening of the spiritual and moral life of the masses. The workers may secure a greater or lesser degree of political liberty to fight for their economic emancipation, but no amount of liberty will rid them of poverty, unemployment, and oppression until the power of capital is overthrown. Religion is one of the forms of spiritual oppression which everywhere weighs down heavily upon the masses of the people, overburdened by their perpetual work for others, by want and isolation. Impotence of the exploited classes in their struggle against the exploiters just as inevitably gives rise to the belief in a better life after death as impotence of the savage in his battle with nature gives rise to belief in gods, devils, miracles, and the like. Those who toil and live in want all their lives are taught by religion to be submissive and patient while here on earth, and to take comfort in the hope of a heavenly reward. But those who live by the labour of others are taught by religion to practise charity while on earth, thus offering them a very cheap way of justifying their entire existence as exploiters and selling them at a moderate price tickets to well-being in heaven. Religion is opium for the people. Religion is a sort of spiritual booze, in which the slaves of capital drown their human image, their demand for a life more or less worthy of man.

But a slave who has become conscious of his slavery and has risen to struggle for his emancipation has already half ceased to be a slave. The modern class-conscious worker, reared by large-scale factory industry and enlightened by urban life, contemptuously casts aside religious prejudices, leaves heaven to the priests and bourgeois bigots, and tries to win a better life for himself here on earth. The proletariat of today takes the side of socialism, which enlists science in the battle against the fog of religion, and frees the workers from their belief in life after death by welding them together to fight in the present for a better life on earth.

Religion must be declared a private affair. In these words socialists usually express their attitude towards religion. But the meaning of these words should be accurately defined to prevent any misunderstanding. We demand that religion be held a private affair so far as the state is concerned. But by no means can we consider religion a private affair so far as our Party is concerned. Religion must be of no concern to the state, and religious societies must have no connection with governmental authority. Everyone must be absolutely free to profess any religion he pleases, or no religion whatever, i.e., to be an atheist, which every socialist is, as a rule....

The revolutionary proletariat will succeed in making religion a really private affair, so far as the state is concerned. And in this political system, cleansed of medieval mildew, the proletariat will wage a broad and open struggle for the elimination of economic slavery, the true source of the religious humbugging of mankind.

—V.I. Lenin, "Socialism and Religion" (December 1905)

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EDITOR: Len Meyers

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Joe Sol

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

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Workers Shut Down Bonn



Reuters



Spartakist

Bonn, March 11: Striking miners storm police barricades, blockade headquarters of FDP, Kohl's coalition partners.

Germany: Social Democrats Torpedo Miners Strike

The following is a translation, in slightly adapted form, of an article in the April 1997 issue of Spartakist (No. 127), publication of our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD).

For six days in March, 85,000 hard coal miners downed tools and held mass demonstrations throughout the Ruhr and Saar mining regions of western Germany to protest draconian shutdowns and layoffs announced by the government. Despite the fury of hardhatted miners who virtually laid siege to the government seat of Bonn, miners union (IGBE) chief Hans Berger and his right-wing Social Democratic (SPD) cohorts succeeded in demobilizing the miners and pushing through a sellout deal with Christian Democratic chancellor Helmut Kohl and the coal bosses. After nearly a week of militant strike and protest actions, the workers have been saddled with effectively the same deal the government (and the IGBE tops) cooked up in the first place—slashing two-thirds of mining jobs in the next eight years—with “job training” and buy-outs to sweeten the deal.

Only days after the miners strike ended, Krupp announced a takeover bid of Thyssen Steel, aimed at creating the world's fifth-largest steel conglomerate, which would lead to thousands more layoffs in the Ruhr. The news provoked a week of mass protests, as 30,000 outraged steel workers marched through Frankfurt on March 25, while workers walked off the job at three steel plants. Once again the SPD leaders, particularly North Rhine Westphalia state president Johannes Rau—with the backing of the

IG Metall union tops—moved in to enforce the bosses' dictates.

The angry protests against the threatened layoffs in mining and steel come as the German proletariat is faced with the highest unemployment rate since the early 1930s. Likewise throughout West Europe—where the total number of unemployed in the countries of the European Union today stands at 18 million—the capitalist rulers are seeking to ram through sweeping attacks on workers' living standards and social programs as they drive to ratchet up the rate of exploitation. In recent months, hundreds of thousands of workers across Europe have taken to the streets in protest against mass unemployment and cuts in medical and pension benefits. Renault workers in France, Spain and Belgium have held protests and plant occupations against shutdowns which threaten thousands of job losses. In Italy, 300,000 workers recently demonstrated against unemployment.

Victorious defensive strikes by sections of the proletariat can inspire broader workers' struggles. But in and of themselves, such sectoral struggles, even when they are not sold out and beheaded by the reformist misleaders, cannot fundamentally alter the bourgeoisie's policies. Whether through mass unemployment, inflation or shifting production to other, low-wage countries, the capitalist class is determined to lower production costs and increase its profit margin. This is particularly clear in the case of the German mining industry, whose deep-pit mines make its coal uncompetitive on the world market and even in Germany. What is needed is workers revolution to sweep away the entire system of capitalist exploitation. We fight for a red workers Germany as part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

Key to this is the need to break the workers from the social-democratic betrayers of the SPD and the pro-SPD DGB trade-union federation tops. The coal strike sellout gave a living picture of what is meant by Lenin's characterization of parties like the SPD as *bourgeois workers parties*. That the SPD retains the loyalty of much of the west German working class was evident. That it uses this loyalty to slavishly defend the interests of the capitalist class was also made crystal-clear.

During the Cold War period after World War II, the SPD and other social-democratic parties postured as protectors of the workers while suffusing the

working class with poisonous anti-Communism. These parties brokered the deals which provided industrial subsidies and social benefits. They were able to deliver because the bourgeoisie was willing to maintain a “welfare state,” with relatively high wages for West German workers for example, in order to buy the workers' loyalty to “democratic” imperialism, dampen class struggle and ward off the spectre of “Communism.” Now, with the destruction of the Soviet Union and the DDR (East German) deformed workers state, the imperialist bourgeoisies have moved to dismantle the “welfare state.” One striking miner put it well: “Since the [Berlin] wall came down the market economy no longer has to show it has a social side.” At the same time, with the reassertion of inter-imperialist rivalries the bourgeoisie can maintain its profit rates only by savagely attacking the living standards of the

working class. Today, the SPD et al. openly act as *enforcers* for the bourgeoisie's drive to increase profits.

In particular, the social democrats and ex-Stalinist reformist parties like the German Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the French Communist Party and Rifondazione Comunista in Italy act as the capitalists' henchmen in seeking to destroy the unity of the working class, fomenting protectionist chauvinism and anti-immigrant racism. Even as ethnic German miners stood shoulder to shoulder alongside their comrades of Turkish and Kurdish descent—many with long years in the mines—SPD parliamentary leader Rudolph Scharping declaimed on national TV: “Do we want miners in the Ruhr and Saar mining areas to have to be laid off at 32 or 35 years old and their Turkish co-workers to stay in the pits?”

And in Berlin the IG Bau construction

continued on page 4

Spartacist East Coast Regional Educational

150 Years of the Communist Manifesto

Speaker: George Foster, Spartacist League Central Committee 1 p.m.

Mobilize to Defend the Chicago Anti-Klan 3! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Speaker: Rachel Wolkenstein, Partisan Defense Committee counsel,
Jamal co-counsel 3 p.m.

To be followed by organizing workshops on how to build these campaigns

Avenge Steve Biko Through Workers Revolution!

Neo-Apartheid Regime: Enemy of South African Masses

Eyewitness Report: Jon Brule, Spartacist League Central Committee 7 p.m.

Saturday, April 19

P.S. 41, 116 West 11th Street

For more information, contact the Spartacist League:
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Germany...

(continued from page 3)

union tops organized a week of demonstrations aimed at driving out "illegal foreign workers." In this, the racist SPD tops provide an opening for the fascists, who seek to feed off despair over skyrocketing unemployment with their pogromist cry, "Jobs for Germans first!"

What is needed now is for the working class and oppressed to *close ranks* against the bosses' assaults. This means *splitting* the SPD, winning its working-class base away from the pro-capitalist misleaders and forging proletarian class unity on the basis of an internationalist revolutionary program. The SpAD is committed to fighting for this political perspective among subjectively leftist students, workers and youth, as part of the struggle for a Leninist vanguard party. Such a party is the critical tool to lead the battle for proletarian state power.

Explosion in the Ruhr

Following Kohl's March 7 announcement of the cuts in subsidies to the mining industry, outraged miners began blocking highways and government buildings as well as picketing and occupying pits throughout the Ruhr and Saarland. In the Duisburg harbor, a lock was occupied to prevent ships with imported coal from passing. Convoys of miners in cars and on motorcycles converged on Bonn. Strikers chained themselves to the entrances of the Bonn offices of the Free Democrats (FDP), Kohl's coalition partner, which has pushed the hardest for subsidy elimination. The next day, March 11, some 20,000 miners, many in overalls and hard hats, marched on the parliament building. Hundreds stripped down to their underwear and chanted, "Do you want the shirts off our backs?" When some tried to break through police barricades at the "Bannmeile" boundary surrounding parliament, within which demonstrations are banned, Scharping emerged to calm the demonstrators. An SpAD sales and reporting team described the scene:

"The rally is about to start; suddenly, SPD chairman Oskar Lafontaine appears in a group making its way toward the stage. A Turkish miner climbs up on a wall and cries, 'Oskar! Oskar!' and waves to get his attention. But later, as Scharping addresses himself in his speech to 'German citizens' and speaks of 'das deutsche Volk' [the German people], the faces of these workers grow tight and they look at the ground. "The SPD has mobilized the parliamentary fraction to the IGBE rally to back up its beleaguered chief Berger. Berger is greeted with whistling and catcalls of 'Judas!' when he tells the miners they should leave Bonn so that Kohl will negotiate. 'We're staying here!' cry the miners. But Scharping and Lafontaine get big applause and miners chant, 'Kohl's Gotta Go!' Lafontaine and Berger praise the cops who are supposed to be 'our co-workers.' And in the end, the miners do what Rudi and Oskar say, go back to their buses and drive back to the coal mines in the Ruhr."



Spartakist contingent at July 1996 Berlin protest in solidarity with Turkish political prisoners calls for fight against anti-immigrant racism in Germany. Sign reads: "Stop the Deportations—Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants!"

In exchange for getting the miners out of the city center, the government agreed to talks with Berger. Demonstrations continued in other cities, and our comrades reported from Duisburg on Thursday:

"Two thousand miners and their families, a very integrated crowd with women and teenage children, assemble in front of TV monitors at the main gate of the Walsum mine on the outskirts of Duisburg to hear the results of the negotiations between the government, the mine owners and the IGBE. The miners are somewhat tense and expectant; it is difficult to engage them in conversation, much less sell them the paper. After the government proudly announces its 'compromise,' the cameras switch to Cologne to get reactions from the waiting Saarland miners. A miner says into the camera, 'Berger should resign' and a huge cheer goes up in Duisburg. For the first time in three days, miners begin to come to us to buy the paper—not in droves, but in ones and twos, and we stay busy until the crowd disperses."

Fight Anti-Immigrant Racism!

Despite the right-wing SPD types at the head of the miners union and the open attempts by Scharping and others to foment chauvinist hatred, many miners rejected such divisive appeals. As one told a *Financial Times* (10 March) reporter: "Here we stick together. The thing that counts is that you're a miner. Whether you're called Ali or Fritz doesn't matter."

However, as shown in the Berlin construction workers' protests that same week, pushed to the wall by fears of unemployment, sections of the working class have fallen prey to such racist garbage. A third of all building workers are today jobless. Seizing on this, deputy DGB chairman Ursula Engelen-Kefer called for special police to raid construction sites and arrest undocumented for-

eign construction workers. This came on top of IG Metall leader Klaus Zwickel's demand for racist immigration "quotas" to "ease the German labor market." The Berlin demonstrations were organized by IG Bau with the grotesque aim of building an "impassable wall of construction



Frankfurt, March 25: Steel workers outside Deutsche Bank offices protest layoffs threatened by Thyssen-Krupp merger.

workers against Portuguese, Polish and Russians who wanted to go to work." No wonder outright fascists were allowed to hand out their racist tracts with impunity.

This is a deadly danger to the entire workers movement. Where it leads was made chillingly clear on February 15 in Berlin-Hellersdorf, where the Hitlerite "Young National Democrats" tried to stage a murderous racist provocation with the call, "Jobs for Germans first!" But the Nazi skinheads' provocation was spiked by a united front of hundreds of anti-fascist demonstrators led by the Trotskyists of the SpAD. This victory over the fascists required a political battle to counter the demobilizing "peaceful, legal" efforts of the PDS, who preached reliance on the racist forces of the bourgeois state. The SpAD has distributed a special supplement of *Spartakist* outlining the political lessons of the Hellersdorf anti-fascist victory to miners, steel workers and other workers' protests.

The fascists have been emboldened by the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the DDR deformed workers state and led to the annexation of East Germany into a reunified Fourth Reich of German imperialism. At the same time, the desperation and massive unemployment created by the destruction of

East German industry has provided fertile ground for Nazi recruitment. We warned at the time that capitalist reunification would facilitate the bourgeoisie's attempts to pit one sector of workers against another.

For now, the fascists restrict themselves mainly to murderous attacks on immigrants and leftists. But the ultimate aim of these shock troops of capitalist reaction is the eradication of the whole of the organized workers movement. As it was in the 1930s, fascism will be the ultimate recourse of the bourgeoisie in the face of a proletarian challenge to its order. If the capitalists have no need to give the fascists free rein to carry out their genocidal program now, it is only because the social democrats are doing the job of keeping the proletariat in line.

We advance a revolutionary program which transcends and fights against sectoral and racial divisions by addressing the unitary class interests of the proletariat as a whole. Workers of Turkish and Kurdish descent and immigrant workers are a significant and combative component of the German proletariat. It is necessary for the entire workers movement to combat anti-immigrant racism. Particularly as the German bourgeoisie begins to expel some 300,000 Bosnian refugees, the biggest mass deportation since the Third Reich, it is vital to demand: "Stop the deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!" In the face of murderous Nazi terror, it is imperative to



SPD leader Oskar Lafontaine addresses angry miners at Bonn strike rally, ramming through sellout deal.

M. Darchingner

organize labor/immigrant defense groups to protect immigrant quarters. The labor movement must organize superexploited workers, demanding jobs and union wages for all.

Capitalist *Anschluss* has created a multi-tier workforce in which older workers are paid at the "old" levels and younger, often East German workers are hired at lower wages. And soaring unemployment hits immigrants, women and youth particularly hard. The unions must demand special measures to bring these sectors into the workforce, including free 24-hour childcare, and raise the call for equal pay for equal work. To combat joblessness, it is necessary to fight for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay while demanding that wages be indexed against inflation—for a sliding scale of wages and hours! In the Transitional Program, the 1938 founding program of the Fourth International, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained:

"It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of *transitional demands*, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class

continued on page 9

S.F. State Witchhunts Woman for Self-Defense

Campus Repression Fed by "Date Rape" Hysteria

On March 5, students at San Francisco State University (SFSU) beat back the threatened eviction of a student from her campus residence hall. The freshman, named Ann, had reported that she had been raped and was then promptly hit by a campus ruling evicting her from her dorm—because she defended herself against her assailants with a five-inch knife and because she had the audacity to drink with men in her own room! While student protests succeeded in defeating the administration's action, Ann is still being forced to attend an alcohol and drug counseling program. The university's harassment of Ann demonstrates the role of the administration as the capitalist rulers' morality police on campus. Students have every right to defend themselves against attack and to engage in whatever consensual behavior they choose to in the privacy of their dorm rooms.

The SFSU student newspaper, the *Golden Gater* (27 February), ran a disgusting editorial echoing the administration's pernicious "family values" line by blaming the victim: "If she could have controlled her guests, she may not have allowed them to rape her!" Under SFSU's "zero tolerance" weapons policy, students face *felony criminal charges*, expulsion from the university or removal from campus residences for the "crime" of self-defense. The administration also recently imposed a racist ban on a step show competition—unison dancing popular among black fraternities and sororities—on the grounds that last year attendees didn't disperse fast enough. In the present climate, such repression attempting to strictly control every aspect of student behavior is not an anomaly. With the 1994 passage of the federal "Gun Free Schools Act," the bourgeoisie's reactionary efforts to disarm the population and vitiate the constitutional right to bear arms have been taken to grotesque and ludicrous lengths. In Louisiana recently, an eight-year-old was suspended for bringing her grandfather's watch with a one-inch fingernail knife to school for show and tell!

For the past two decades, the ruling class has been pushing a reactionary "family values" campaign targeting women, blacks and teens, consciously reinforcing "Christian" moral values as an instrument of social control. This anti-sex witchhunt was picked up by many feminists, who for the past few years have pushed a campaign against "date rape." So now when new students arrive in the SFSU dorms every fall, they are greeted by a poster of a large beer mug with the words "A lot of campus rapes start here." The "date rape" frenzy is aimed at promoting the image that women are passive victims in need of protection, that sex is dangerous and all dating should be done sober and with a chaperon. In 1993, popular SFSU Human Sexuality professor John De Cecco became a target of such anti-sex hysteria when he was witchhunted by a group of "incest survivors" for his research into child sexuality, which they outrageously equated with advocacy of child molestation.

As a direct result of the "date rape" crusade, the much-hated *in loco parentis* anti-sex, anti-everything codes that 1960s New Left student protesters fought

to overturn are now back with a vengeance. In our article "The 'Date Rape' Issue: Feminist Hysteria, Anti-Sex Witchhunt" (*Women and Revolution* No. 43, Winter 1993-Spring 1994), we warned that "politically correct" restrictions on campus sexual activity invite the campus administration and the cops to intrude into students' personal business in the guise of "protecting women" and "stopping rape." This is part of a broader



Schneider/Golden Gater

March 5: SF State students celebrate victory over administration attempt to evict student who defended herself against attackers.

war on privacy being waged by the capitalist state, from censorship on the Internet to TV "V-chips" to "squeal rules" restricting abortions for teens. We also pointed out that by redefining rape to include everything from morning-after regrets to savage brutality, "date rape" hysteria trivialized the crime of rape and belittled the real terror, humiliation and agony that rape victims undergo.

Organizations that purport to be socialist opportunistically promoted the "date rape" fad. The International Socialist Organization (ISO), the Revolutionary Workers League's Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action By Any Means Necessary (BAMN) and the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) have marched in lockstep behind the feminists' campaign to invoke government authority to intervene as moral arbiter in our most intimate affairs. Thus although the ISO and BAMN rightly protested the administration's witchhunt of Ann, with their campaigns to "stop date rape" these groups bear their share of responsibility for the regulations which allowed the administration to go after Ann for her act of self-defense.

With Clinton's new \$250 million "education" campaign to promote "sexual abstinence," the "born-again virgin" crusade is no longer the sole purview of the religious right. We are smack in the middle of a "moral rearmament" of American society, involving a conscious attempt to force women back into the home, instill fear of sex into young people and shore up the "sacred" monogamous family—where most of the oppression and abuse of women and children takes place. As they increasingly grind down and impoverish the working class and oppressed in their drive for profits, the American rulers seek to regiment the population to be subservient to their dictates. As the writer Gore Vidal noted in 1979, when the threat of "foreign ene-

mies" failed to rouse "a howl of manly rage, particularly from ladies at church receptions...in desperation, the nation's ownership has now gone back to the tried-and-true hot buttons: save our children, our fetuses, our ladies' rooms from the godless enemy."

We in the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs demand that the government and campus administrations get out of the bedrooms. This is part of our

fight to mobilize the working class, championing the rights of all the oppressed, in a battle to wrest power from the capitalist class in a socialist revolution that can liberate humanity from the backwardness, poverty and wars inherent in class society. We understand that the state exists to protect the rule and property of the capitalist class. Campus administrations are the agents of the bourgeoisie with the job of ensuring that students adhere to bourgeois values. Far from promoting the "free exchange of ideas," under capitalism the universities are meant simply to train sufficient numbers of youth to keep the profit system going. And with the attacks on affirmative action and cuts in funding, any chance for higher education is increasingly closed to minority and working-class youth.

Both BAMN and the ISO accept the framework of the ruling class, seeking

only to modify the worst features of racist capitalist oppression. Thus they reject the Marxist understanding of the state, which leads them to slide over the class line and into the arms of the SFSU administration and the forces of bourgeois "law and order."

In their leaflet in defense of Ann, BAMN appeals to the administration's "claims to fight sexism." In an earlier incarnation as the National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition, this group held an "anti-rape" rally at UC Berkeley during a cop-sponsored "campus safety week" in 1993. They issued a leaflet with such a vague description of a guy alleged to have fondled several women ("a light-skinned black male") that it amounted to an anti-black manhunt on campus. Playing to the ultimate racist taboo—interracial sex—this action simply put a "politically correct" veneer on racist vigilantism and was especially dangerous in the context of escalating cop attacks on minorities in Berkeley. Last fall, BAMN members at Berkeley ran on a program for residence halls to "organize a system of emergency response action to stop date rape" and for "student security patrols," essentially a call for students to become adjuncts of the racist campus police.

For its part, the ISO thinks that cops can be won to the side of the working class. Thus they supported prison guards on strike in Canada last year. They also whitewash the role of the cops as deadly enemies of the working class by positing that cops would cease to be agents of the bourgeois state if they were to "rebel collectively" (see "ISO: Looking for a Few Good Cops," *WV* No. 664, 21 March). That a self-proclaimed revolutionary organization could see cops as potential allies testifies to its true role as a reformist roadblock to revolution.

Ann's case is a snapshot of the kind of all-sided oppression that women, minorities, youth and the working class face daily in capitalist America. Her victimization by the administration is an outrage which only further demonstrates its nature as an agency of the repressive state apparatus on campus. We call for an end to all *in loco parentis* rules and for cops off campus, and fight for the abolition of the campus administration and for student/teacher/campus worker control of the universities! ■

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Government Out of the Bedrooms!

The People vs. Larry Flynt A Review

It's not pornography that bothers us, but the Supreme Court really is dangerous. The main objection we socialists have to Milos Forman's new movie, *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, is its presentation of the Supreme Court, which is an institution of racist capitalist repression, as a staunch defender of civil liberties. That puts us at odds with the "politically correct" liberals who say: of course pornography degrades women, but isn't the Supreme Court's protection of our rights just wonderful?

Otherwise, the movie could almost make you nostalgic for the late, unlamented 1970s, when everybody smoked and wore tacky polyester clothes. And the "Reagan years" of the '80s are shown in all their wild yahoo reaction, when Jerry Falwell's "Moral Majority" was riding high.

by Helen Cantor

This is a big Hollywood movie and so the story line is classic Americana: how Flynt, a plucky youth from the backwoods, finds fame and fortune by freaking out the squares as publisher of *Hustler*, and how, with the help of his earnest, decent lawyer sidekick from the upper class (played by Ed Norton), he takes on the biggest sacred cow of all, the sanctimonious Rev. Falwell, and wins in the Supreme Court. Flynt's 1988 victory overturning Falwell's \$45 million suit against him for a satire in *Hustler* is presented as a heartwarming triumph for free speech, guaranteed to make good liberals all teary-eyed.

Forman's film predictably provoked a hue and cry among self-appointed guardians of "public morals" and anti-porn feminists for its sympathetic portrayal of Flynt. Though the film won a number of Golden Globe awards and was nominated for two Oscars (best director and best actor, for Woody Harrelson in his

role as Flynt), it was shunned by the Hollywood establishment. The movie won no Academy Award, and Columbia Pictures even refused to give Flynt a ticket to attend the awards ceremony, though he managed to get in anyhow.

An Op-Ed piece in the *New York Times* (7 January) by Gloria Steinem snarled: "A pornographer is not a hero, no more than a publisher of Ku Klux Klan books or a Nazi on the Internet." In his column in the *Times* (3 February), Bob Herbert echoed that pornography and *Hustler* in particular represent "an extreme and unrelentingly violent hatred of women, a hatred every bit as fanatical as the Klan's hatred of blacks and the Nazis' hatred of Jews." During the Oscar nominations campaign, Steinem's piece was reprinted as a full-page ad in the trade magazine *Variety*, paid for by an anonymous group of Hollywood types.

On the other side, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) took out its own ad praising the movie, lauding director Forman as a "First Amendment advocate." The *Times*' Frank Rich also hailed the film, saying it "deserves a huge adult audience because it is the most timely and patriotic movie of the year." In short, liberals who defended the movie did so largely on First Amendment grounds, while those who denounced it tend to be rabidly anti-porn. Opportunist leftists like Workers World and the International Socialist Organization tried to have it both ways, simultaneously tailing the civil libertarians and the feminists, upholding freedom of speech while denouncing Flynt for "misogyny" and "smut."

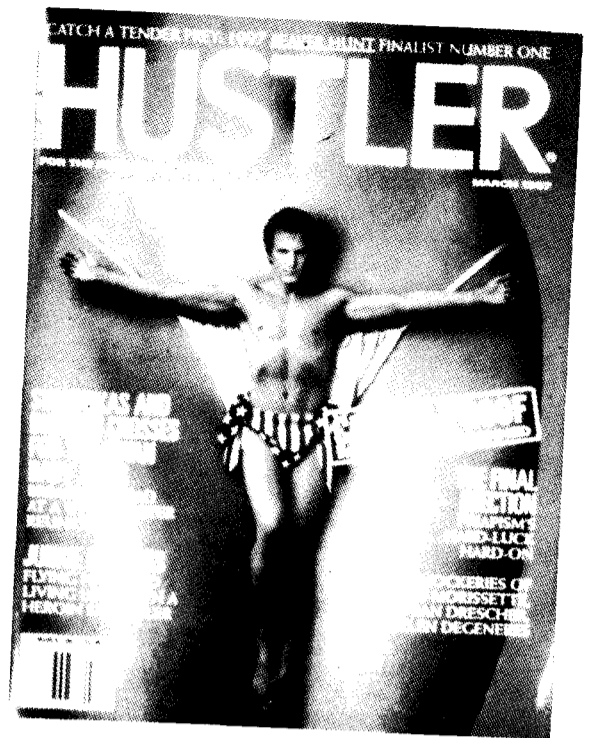
We see the question differently, because of our Marxist, materialist approach to the two disparate questions of the capitalist state and human sexuality. As a starting point, we understand that it is a deadly trap to look to the government to censor any sort of expression—such legal weapons can and will be used

against leftists and others who the rulers deem to be beyond the pale of "protected speech." For example, the first victim of a Canadian anti-pornography law pushed by feminist Catharine MacKinnon was a lesbian magazine imported from the U.S.

In this class-divided society, all the institutions of the state—from Congress and the Supreme Court to the prisons and the military—exist to maintain the rule of capital. The Supreme Court's rulings are overwhelmingly designed to make this society work better for the rich, the capitalists who own the means of production. While it is vital for working people and the oppressed to defend and extend the democratic rights and civil liberties that exist, especially those codified in the Bill of Rights, we know that these rights can be snatched away or ignored by the ruling class, unless hard class battles are waged to protect them.

Where the reformists fall in step behind the feminist (and Christian fundamentalist) anti-porn crusade, we understand that attempts to censor sexuality and pornography reflect this society's repressive sexual morality, aimed at ideologically bolstering the monogamous bourgeois family unit, the main social institution oppressing women and youth. It's certainly true that some pornography reflects ugly, crude and violent aspects of our society—but those reflections are not the cause of women's oppression. And it's downright grotesque to identify sexual fantasy with the Nazis and KKK, the shock troops of murderous reaction.

Sexual fantasy is integral to human sexual experience. All animals engage in sex. One of the things that distinguishes humans from other animals, including other mammals, is that we not only act but think about our actions. As conscious



Hustler cover featured movie publicity poster which was censored by the Motion Picture Association of America.

beings, we not only engage in sex but also fantasize about it—much to the dismay of those like the Catholic church hierarchy, which ordains that sex is not meant to be a pleasurable experience. (Of course, with the latest brouhaha over human cloning, the church has added to its earlier dictum—no sex without procreation—a new admonition against procreation without sex!) Pornography is one expression of that fantasizing. And it is not possible to separate fantasy from sexual activity itself.

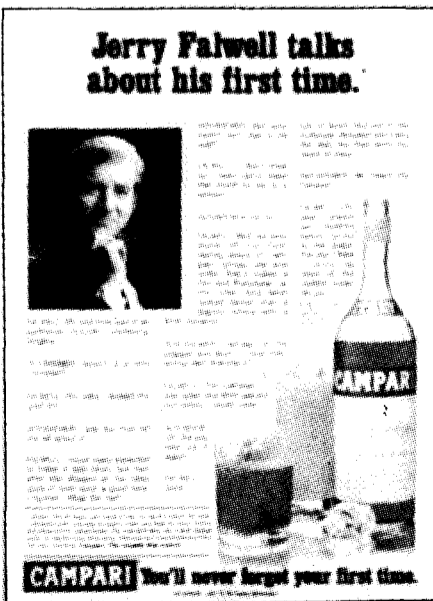
Sex, Civil Liberties and Powder-Blue Leisure Suits

What is it about Larry Flynt that causes such an uproar? For one thing, unlike *Penthouse* or *Playboy*, Flynt's *Hustler* has gloried in lack of social pretension—a polite way of saying it's totally crude. Director Forman tries to placate feminists by claiming his movie doesn't glorify the pornographer Larry Flynt but "the Supreme Court of the United States [which] is and will always be my hero." Despite Forman's protestations, Flynt nonetheless comes across as the movie's hero, decked out in the flashiest, widest-lapelled, gaudy plaid and powder-blue leisure suits of the late '70s.

Of course, the movie considerably cleans up its hero to try to appeal to middle-class standards of taste. Flynt's own book, *An Unseemly Man: My Life as Pornographer, Pundit, and Social Outcast* (Dove Books, 1996), co-authored by Kenneth Ross, lays out plenty of ostentatiously crude detail. In the movie, the young Larry Flynt is seen as a Huck Finn type, hauling a wagon of moonshine through the woods. Definitely *not* in the movie, but related by Flynt in the book, is the fact that in his hillbilly region of Kentucky, "sexual relations with animals—particularly cows, sheep, and horses—were common.... At the age of nine, I had sex with a chicken. Yes, this is what the old preachers called bestiality." Later, Flynt had a three-foot replica of a chicken built in the basement of his mansion. He liked to "shoot fish in the shallow waters of Lickin' River"—not exactly Robert Redford's *A River Runs Through It* genteel fly-fishing fantasy.

Later, Flynt became notorious in Dayton, Ohio, where he survived bar brawls in taverns and go-go clubs he owned, began publishing *Hustler* and became embroiled in a series of obscenity trials pushed by Ohio's "anti-sin" crusaders. Among them, he notes, were:

"Citizens for Decency Through Law (CDL). The CDL had been founded and funded by the conservative Catholic and moral crusader (and now, convicted felon) Charles H. Keating. Before he



Larry Flynt (left) beat back "libel" lawsuit by Rev. Falwell for infamous *Hustler* satire of "Moral Majority" leader. Right-wing religious bigots burn books at Christian school in North Carolina, 1987.



Der Spiegel

fucked the savings and loan industry, Keating tried to prevent the portrayal of fucking in magazines."

Of Cincinnati's chief prosecutor, Simon Leis Jr., who in more recent years tried to ban the Mapplethorpe exhibition at the Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center and has crusaded against what he considers deviant sexual practices (including fellatio and cunnilingus), Flynt writes, "As far as I know, he couldn't tell a clitoris from a rutabaga."

Flynt's *Hustler* is infamous for two things. The August 1975 issue ran nude photos of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis (sold by an Italian paparazzo), catapulting the fledgling magazine into the national spotlight. Some years later, there was the "meat grinder" cover, showing the bottom half of a woman going into an old-fashioned meat grinder, supposedly to show how the skin mag would no longer treat women "like meat." Feminists freaked out over that one. But as the movie shows, even then-governor Rhodes of Ohio was caught out buying the "Jackie" *Hustler*, underlining the movie's theme of upper-crust hypocrisy versus honest "good old boy" dirty-mindedness.

The movie recounts other dramas of Flynt's life, including his temporary conversion to born-again Christianity by Democratic president Jimmy Carter's evangelist sister, Ruth Carter Stapleton, and the near-fatal shooting which left his legs permanently paralyzed. Those who charge racism against Flynt for *Hustler*'s vulgar ethnic jokes should consider the fact that his attacker, who was never tried for the shooting, was convicted for a host of racist killings and confessed while in prison that he tried to kill Flynt because he was outraged by *Hustler*'s depictions of interracial sex.

The film's classic Hollywood climax is when Flynt finally gets his day in the Supreme Court against Falwell. But the movie does not mention an earlier Flynt case that came before the Supreme Court, because it was just too tacky: it was another libel suit, brought by *Penthouse* publisher Bob Guccione's girlfriend against Flynt for insinuating she caught venereal disease from Guccione. In that case, Flynt yelled at the Court, "You're nothing but eight assholes and a token cunt!" Not what Forman would want us to hear from Flynt regarding these supposed "heroes."

The Supreme Court case depicted in the movie had nothing to do with pornography or "obscenity," making it a lot easier on Hollywood liberals, since they could duck the feminist anti-porn frenzy. Falwell had sued Flynt for libel and "emotional damage" for *Hustler*'s Campari ad satire, "Jerry Falwell talks about his first time." The issue posed in this case was simply whether satire of public persons is protected by the First Amendment.

Flynt pointed out that his satire of Falwell's "first time"—in an outhouse with his mother—was obvious parody: "If I wanted to hurt Reverend Falwell, we would do a serious article on the inside and make it an investigative exposé and talk about his jet or whether he has a Swiss bank account." Touching as it did on political censorship, the case won Flynt some allies. "Suddenly I had a lot of friends—reluctant ones," he recalls. Backing Flynt as *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) were the New York Times Company, the American Newspaper Association and the ACLU, among others.

The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in December 1987, and in 1988 Chief Justice William Rehnquist, a Nixon appointee, decided for Flynt in a unanimous 8-0 opinion, declaring: "The fact that society may find speech offensive is not a sufficient reason for suppressing it. Indeed, if it is the speaker's opinion that gives offense, that consequence is a reason for according it constitutional protection. For it is a central tenet of the First Amendment that the government must remain neutral in the marketplace of ideas."

One ironic sidelight on all this is the fact that the *New York Times* had itself

censored Flynt in its own "marketplace of ideas" some years earlier, rejecting his paid ad about Reagan's efforts to use the downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 over sensitive Soviet airspace in 1983 to whip up anti-Soviet war fever among a skeptical U.S. population. We published what the *Times* refused to print, noting in our introduction to "Another Gulf of Tonkin Provocation?" (WV No. 338, 23 September 1983): "One of the more interesting and far-ranging expressions of this skepticism is a statement by Larry Flynt, an idiosyncratic liberal and publisher of *Hustler* magazine.... While as Marxists we do not share Flynt's worldview, we are reprinting a substantial portion of his statement."

Feminists and Feds' Anti-Porn Frenzy

Forman also cleaned up the Flynt story by leaving out the feminists' role in the anti-porn crusade. The anti-porn frenzy took off under born-again Christian Jimmy Carter and became a "front line" issue under Reagan's attorney general Edwin Meese. Totally uncoincidentally, a group of bourgeois feminists—including Gloria Steinem (who knowingly took CIA money early in her career), Jane Alpert (Weatherperson turned FBI fink), Robin Morgan, Bella Abzug and Susan Brownmiller—created "Women Against Pornography" (WAP) at the same time.

Opposing a WAP march on Times Square's then-porno/pinball/kung-fu fan-

case, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee filed an *amicus* brief for the October 1987 Supreme Court term in regard to two Indiana cases specifically addressing the issue of obscenity. The government had used its draconian RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act, more often used against the unions, to try to shut down two pornography publishers (Fort Wayne Books and Fantasy One and Fantasy Two). Terming this a "frontal assault on First Amendment protection of the spoken and written word," our brief said:

"The issue presented in these cases is whether the government can criminalize First Amendment communicative materials, seize and destroy them and imprison their distributors—simply by alleging 'obscenity.' In these cases the government applied the most powerful weapon in its legal arsenal to an area of social concern inseparably connected to humanity's most public and most private worlds—opinion and sex."

Supreme Court of Injustice

The most irritating thing about *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, as we noted earlier, is its treatment of the Supreme Court as the legitimate, just and final arbiter of democratic rights in the U.S. This particularly grates when we consider that what's being glorified here is the openly reactionary Nixon/Reagan/Rehnquist Court, not even the Warren Court (itself a pack of racist anti-Communists) of liberal myth. As we noted in our 1987 *amicus* brief, the



Dennis Silverstein

Nina Hartley, X-rated film star, socialist, champion of sexual freedom. Viva Nina!

reactionary ruling at the time, demanding, "Government out of the bedrooms!"

From the anti-gay *Bowers v. Hardwick* decision to an onslaught of racist "reverse discrimination" decisions in the Reagan years and a host of rulings upholding the barbaric death penalty—including the 1987 McCleskey ruling that racist discrepancies in death sentences were "inevitable"—to whittling away what few rights prisoners still retain, the Supreme Court has acted as black-robed legal lynchers. You won't see that in Forman's movie.

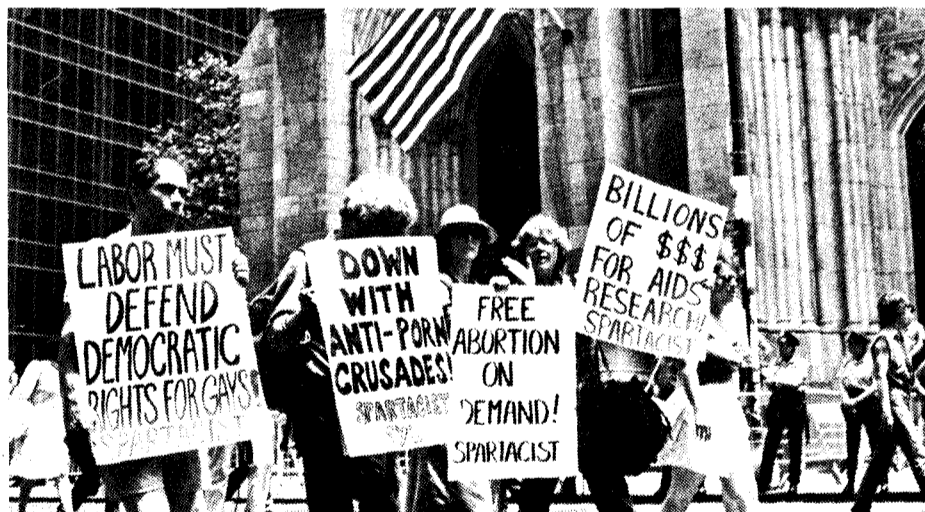
From its origins, the Supreme Court was designed by the "founding fathers" explicitly as a ruling-class protection against the masses, "an essential safeguard against the effects of occasional ill humors in the society" as Alexander Hamilton put it in his 1788 *Federalist Papers*. Flynt got his day in court because his interests coincided with those of a bunch of big capitalist publishers. But for most of the rest of us, for working people and minorities, the Supreme Court is just another institution to uphold the rule of capitalism, including its most repressive aspects.

The People vs. Larry Flynt does mention a few of the more bizarre frame-ups and sinister mysteries of the past decades, like the Feds' cocaine entrapment of independent auto designer John DeLorean, and the sinister death of Vicki Morgan, mistress of Reagan crony Al Bloomingdale. She was murdered in the wake of sensational rumors that she had videotapes of various Reagan appointees having sex with her. Such things are presented in passing, seemingly the ravings of a drug-crazed man, thus evading the chance to shine some real light on the dark corners of this sex-hating, puritanical, brutal society. Still, the movie has its moments, and those who missed the '70s and '80s may get a pale sense of the bizarre political machinations of that era of the yahoos, which so devastated the political climate that today unappetizing types like Hillary and Bill Clinton and their yuppie racist administration can pass themselves off as some kind of "lesser evil." ■



WV Photos

Above: 1979 feminist march on New York's Times Square echoes right-wing anti-sex witchhunt. Below: Spartacists at 1986 Gay Pride Day rally in New York oppose anti-porn crusade.



tasyland, we wrote: "As Marxists we oppose attempts at puritanical censorship, whether launched by open reactionaries seeking to smash whatever (limited) civil liberties formally exist, or by this new feminist 'Legion of Decency.'" Countering the feminists' argument that pornography is the source of violence against women, we said: "It is this capitalist society with its enforced poverty, rigid family structure and straitjacket morality which breeds the poisonous frustrations that explode in violence" (WV No. 243, 9 November 1979). As Katha Pollitt recently noted in the *Nation* (3 February): "Any serious discussion of texts that cause real-life harm to women would have to begin with the Bible and the Koran: It isn't porn that drives zealots to firebomb American abortion clinics or slit the throats of Algerian schoolgirls."

Around the same time as the Flynt

Rehnquist Court upheld reactionary state sodomy laws, as in the 1986 *Bowers v. Hardwick* case, with explicit appeals to the Bible. We joined protests against this

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ

Saturdays, 3 p.m. Next classes, April 5: *The Bolshevik Revolution*; April 26: *The Revolution Betrayed*; Rutgers University, College Avenue Campus, Scott Hall, Room 102
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Next class, April 17: *The Revolution Betrayed*; Spartacist Public Office, 41 Warren St. (one block below Chambers St, near Church St.)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

SAN FRANCISCO

Alternate Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. Next class, April 17: *Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution*; San Francisco State University, Student Union, Room C116
Information and readings: (415) 777-9367 or (510) 839-0851

VANCOUVER

Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Next class, April 9: *Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!*; UBC, Student Union Building, Room 213
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

Abortion...

(continued from page 1)

fight for free abortion on demand and free, quality health care for all as part of a program to sweep away the capitalist profit system through workers revolution.

Religious Reaction and Anti-Woman Bigotry

If the Congressional bill is enacted, it would be the first time since abortion was legalized in 1973 that Congress has outlawed a specific abortion procedure. As a pretext for voting for the measure, a number of supposedly "pro-choice" politicians pointed to the brouhaha provoked by an abortion clinic lobbyist who said he had earlier lied (in an unaired TV broadcast) about how rarely intact D&E abortions are performed. But whether this procedure accounts for 500 or 5,000 of the well over one million legal abortions each year is not the issue.

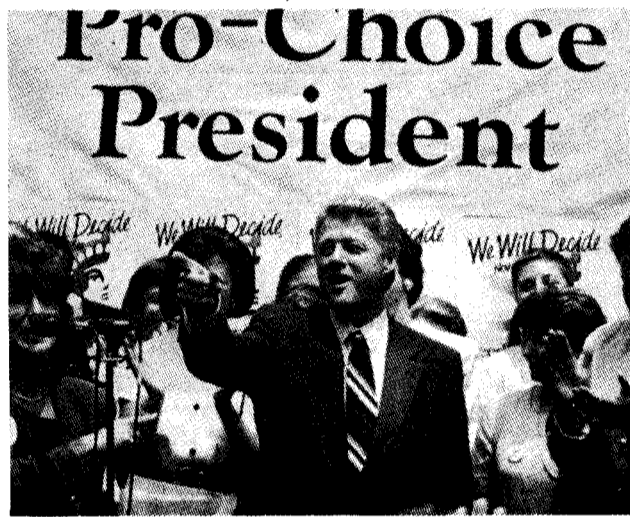
As an article in the *New York Times* (23 March), headlined "Abortion Vote Signals a Shift in Political Momentum," made clear, the move to ban "partial birth" abortions is central to the crusade to overturn *Roe v. Wade* altogether. Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed gloats, "For the first time, we've shifted the debate away from an amorphous, philosophical defense of an alleged constitutional 'right to choose'." The *Times* reported how Reed and House Speaker Newt Gingrich have talked of scheduling "a series of votes that would outlaw abortion by developmental stages," first banning abortions in the ninth month, then in the eighth, and so on.

The hysteria being whipped up about the supposedly "brutal" treatment of fetuses in such late-term abortions was epitomized by Republican Staten Island borough president Guy Molinari's truly grisly call for executing abortion doctors by crushing their skulls! This grotesque outburst only serves to legitimize the murders of doctors like David Gunn and John Bayard Britton and the 1995 slayings of two young women clinic staffers in Boston. With nearly half of all clinics reporting violent harassment last year alone, it takes real dedication and courage these days for a doctor to perform abortions. Capitulating to the right-wing climate, many medical schools have stopped teaching how to do abortions while few hospitals now provide them. The ghettoization of abortion services in specialized, often isolated clinics sets up both patients and providers for harassment and worse. No wonder that the number of legal abortions in this country has fallen to its lowest level in two decades.

The attacks on women's rights have accelerated with the sharp growth in religious obscurantism in the U.S. Poll after poll reveals the pervasive, weird backwardness evident among all layers of the populace, from belief in angels to the skyrocketing number of messianic sects to the growth of sinister movements like the all-male, Christian "Promise Keepers." This is encouraged by bour-

geois politicians at all levels—from local courts to the halls of Congress—who steadily erode the constitutionally mandated separation between church and state: parochial schools get public funding, while public schools sanction religious broadcasts and prayer meetings. The U.S. Congress recently voted a special resolution to support an Alabama judge who displays the Ten Commandments in his courtroom! Meanwhile, the anti-sex witchhunt particularly targets teens, from "squeal rules" and parental consent restrictions on abortion to outright bans on sexual activity.

Yet the liberal/feminist "pro-choice" movement has been virtually dormant in the face of the steady barrage of attacks on women's rights. This is not surprising: for years, the National Organization for Women (NOW), the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARRAL) and other bourgeois feminists devoted their efforts to putting a "pro-choice" Democrat in the White House. Now they've got what they wanted. Since Clinton's election in 1992, the only big demonstration called by NOW in Washington, D.C. was the 1995 "Rally for Women's Lives." Far from promoting women's rights, this march centered on calling for more cops and laws to combat "domestic violence," while NOW marshals acted as "thought



Der Spiegel

Clinton campaign rally, 1992. Bourgeois feminists, tailed by reformist left, preach reliance on racist capitalist Democrats.

police" for Clinton's Democrats by trying to stop leftist literature from being distributed. And NARRAL, conforming to Clinton's emphasis on "family values," has now shifted its focus to "stopping teen pregnancy" by "teaching abstinence."

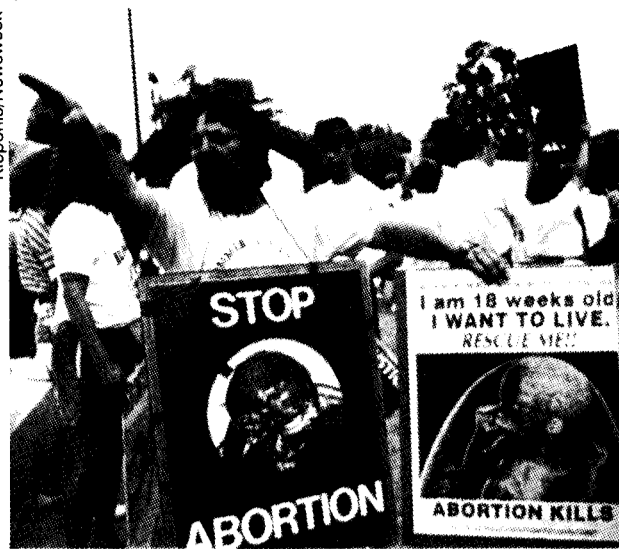
Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Many women—including Republicans—voted for Clinton in 1992 because of his stand on the formal right to abortion, about the only issue that distinguished him from Republican George Bush. As Marxists, we warned against any support to the capitalist Democratic Party, which is no less the enemy of poor, minority and working women than its Republican partner party. Clinton wasted no time in repudiating his promises on gay rights and in pushing to fulfill his vow to "end welfare as we know it," and now Democrats are increasingly jumping

on the "right to life" bandwagon.

While reformist "socialists" like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) nominally oppose electoral support to either capitalist party, in practice they join with liberals and feminists in fostering illusions in the Democrats as a "lesser evil." Echoing liberal disillusionment with Clinton, the ISO now whines, "Clinton's first four years have been one big disappointment for abortion rights supporters who believed his campaign promises" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 January). But what is their answer? Far from

Kleponis/Newsweek



"Right to life" bigots target women's rights, terrorize patients and staff at abortion clinics. For mass mobilizations to defend the clinics!

it was precisely because those movements remained limited to "activist" pressure politics that the street protests were defused and many radical youth were led into the fold of the Democratic Party. In any case, it wasn't particularly marches and rallies which secured the legalization of abortion. The capitalist rulers acquiesced to this and other reforms in order to quell social unrest at a time when the bourgeoisie was itself torn by its losing war in Vietnam and after mass civil rights protests and ghetto rebellions had rocked the country.

Even then, the legalization of abortion particularly benefited rich and middle-class women. Catering to NOW's overwhelmingly white, middle-class constituency—which can afford to pay for expensive abortions and decent medical treatment—*Socialist Worker's* articles on abortion over the past year and a half have only once so much as mentioned "poor and working-class women" and never even referred to blacks and Hispanics. As communists, we fight to make abortion accessible to all women. That is why we have always linked the defense of formal abortion rights with the calls for free abortion on demand and for free, quality health care for all. And that requires a strategy aimed at sweeping away the entire capitalist profit system.

Unlike the reformist ISO, we fight to win leftist activists to the understanding that the fight for women's rights is integral to the working-class struggle against capitalism and that women's liberation can only be achieved through socialist revolution. Abortion is an explosive political issue because, at bottom, it raises the question of the all-sided oppression of women, which is rooted in the institution of the family, a crucial prop for the capitalist system of exploitation. From participating in militant defense of abortion clinics to publishing *Women and Revolution*, the only Marxist journal devoted to the cause of women's emancipation, the Spartacist League fights to build a revolutionary workers party which will serve as a tribune of the people, seeking to mobilize the proletariat against every manifestation of oppression and injustice as part of the fight for an egalitarian socialist society. ■

Albeit with a somewhat more militant veneer, the ISO shares the liberals' perspective of seeking to pressure the bourgeois state for reforms. Harking back to how "activists pressured the Supreme Court—stacked with conservatives appointed by then-Republican President Richard Nixon—to make abortion legal with the *Roe* decision," the ISO proclaims, "This kind of struggle can roll back attacks on women's right to choose" (*Socialist Worker*, 19 January 1996). But

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Capitalism and Anti-Science

The following is a contribution received on March 28 from Mark K., a close sympathizer of the Spartacist League in the Bay Area.

The bourgeois media is filled with shock that the 39 people who committed suicide could have believed in such obviously insane notions as a heavenly spaceship hiding behind the comet Hale-Bopp. But this is no more shocking than the fact, documented by polls, that a majority of Americans believe in angels. Decaying capitalist society fosters such other-worldly beliefs, and the attack on rational thought has accelerated since the collapse of the Soviet Union, as the triumphant bourgeoisie no longer sees the need to invest heavily in such things as public education or science. In 1995, "some 200 worried scientists, doctors, philosophers, educators and thinkers" came together for a meeting of the New York Academy of Sciences under the rubric "The Flight from Science and Reason":

"There is growing danger, many said, that the fabric of reason is being ripped asunder, and that if scientists and other thinkers continue to acquiesce in the process, the hobbling of science and its handmaidens—medicine and technology among them—seems assured."

— *New York Times* (6 June 1995)

The participants "were urged to counter-attack against faith healing, astrology, religious fundamentalism and paranormal charlatanism."

Carl Sagan, one of the popular icons of

American science who died last December, spent his last days mounting a defense of science against the encroaching darkness in his fascinating book, *The Demon-Haunted World* (1996), subtitled "Science as a Candle in the Dark." While patiently debunking everything from alien abduction to recovered memory, he

"so our colleagues could know a little about their own political beginnings."

Sagan's book is good counterpoint to another popular book by an ostensible science writer, John Horgan, who published *The End of Science* (1996), subtitled "Facing the Limits of Knowledge in the Twilight of the Scientific Age." Hor-

craft, denounced the intellectuals' "zeal for objectivity" as "criminal" and openly apologized for fascism. (Feyerabend himself commanded 3,000 German-allied troops against the USSR in World War II.) The most shocking thing is that Horgan is a "senior writer" and member of the "Board of Editors" of *Scientific American*!

Horgan himself inadvertently demonstrates that the attack on science is directly tied to the collapse of the Soviet Union. After noting how Engels believed in the continued forward stride of science, Horgan writes:

"Of course, powerful social, political, and economic forces now oppose this vision of boundless scientific and technological progress. The cold war, which was a major impetus for basic research in the United States and the Soviet Union, is over."

He notes that Václav Havel, who came to power with the capitalist counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia, "declared in 1992 that the Soviet Union epitomized and therefore eternally discredited the 'cult of objectivity' brought about by science." Havel hoped that the collapse of the USSR would bring about, in his words, "the end of the modern era," which had been "dominated by the culminating belief, expressed in different forms, that the world—and Being as such—is a wholly knowable system governed by a finite number of universal laws that man can grasp and rationally direct for his own benefit."

So today the clarion call of the triumphalist bourgeoisie is "Death to knowledge!" Thus does capitalism throw humanity back to the Dark Ages. ■



Right-wing climate fuels pervasive religious superstition, as reflected in mass media last month.

linked the growing anti-science movement with political developments, rightly suggesting it logically leads to fascism: he quotes Hitler boasting of a "magical explanation of the world...based on will rather than knowledge." Though politically Sagan was a liberal, he enjoys telling how he used to smuggle copies of Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* into the Soviet Union in the 1980s,

giving interviews many scientists and philosophers and gives a sympathetic plug for the notion that "science—true, pure, empirical science—has ended," either because the main truths have been discovered or because the truth cannot be known. He even treats seriously such creeps as Paul Feyerabend, a recently popular "philosopher" (he died in 1994) who likened science to voodoo and witch-

Germany...

(continued from page 4)

and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat."

Above all, this requires the forging of a Bolshevik party, acting as a tribune of the people, to lead the proletariat to power.

For a Leninist Vanguard Party!

The SPD's sellout of the miners and steel workers is part of its bid to secure a place for itself in the government, with Kohl appearing to be in his last term and Bundestag (parliament) elections coming next year. The various opportunist groups which occasionally posture as "revolutionary" have joined the call "Kohl must go!"—i.e., for an SPD chancellor. Their tailing of the racist, pro-capitalist social-democratic tops is simply an expression of their own perceived role as the most militant defenders of the old status quo, appealing to the SPD to "fight" to defend the "welfare state" that it has already abandoned. Not one of these "far left"

groups offers the perspective of a proletarian struggle for state power.

Typical is the Mandelbrite Revolutionär Sozialistischer Bund (RSB). In a March 24 leaflet directed at steel workers, the RSB joins in the chorus "Kohl must go" and for its maximum demand appeals to the SPD to expropriate Krupp and Thyssen on the basis of...the 1950 North Rhine Westphalia bourgeois state constitution! The idea that an SPD government can or would "expropriate" the bourgeoisie piecemeal—on the terms of the bourgeoisie's own constitution, no less—is classic reformist drivel. The bourgeois state exists in order to defend the interests of the capitalist class which owns and controls the means of production. It is patently utopian and dangerous to look in this way to the social democrats, the agents of capitalism within the workers movement who are taking the lead in shoving capitalist austerity down the workers' throats.

Taking a more leftist tack, a leaflet addressed to steel workers by Arbeitermacht, affiliated to the British centrists of Workers Power, raised the need for a workers government constructed through

smashing the "repressive state machinery" and aimed at introducing "socialist planning of production." But these fine words are window-dressing for Arbeitermacht's real program which, echoing the RSB, urges steel workers to "Demand that the SPD support this fight against the capitalists and for their expropriation." This demand, claims Arbeitermacht, will "show" what the SPD's true intentions are. In fact, this only shows that centrism is crystallized confusion.

Far from exposing the SPD, Arbeitermacht fosters illusions in these class traitors. The SPD made its intentions clear at the start of World War I when it passed over to the camp of the bourgeoisie by voting in favor of war credits for the Kaiser's Reich. In 1919, the SPD openly proclaimed itself to be the bourgeoisie's "bloodhounds" of counterrevolution in suppressing the Spartacist workers uprising and presiding over the murder of revolutionary leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. For Arbeitermacht, as for its British cothinkers who always call for a vote to the wretchedly pro-imperialist Labour Party, the bottom line is unswerving support to

the Social Democracy.

A real workers government—a dictatorship of the proletariat—to expropriate the Krupps and Thyssens, the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz, can only be the product of a thoroughgoing socialist revolution. First and foremost this entails political combat with the centrists who seek to disguise their tailing of Social Democracy with revolutionary phrases. It is through polemical struggle against the pretenders to Marxism and through intervention in the class struggle itself that the revolutionary internationalist program, which is our most powerful weapon, will be proven. In the course of class struggle, the revolutionary vanguard must make clear to workers that, to be more than raw material for capitalist exploitation and cannon fodder for another imperialist war, the proletariat must transcend the nationally based realm of trade-union economism and chauvinism and break the political straitjacket of social-democratic reformism. Those who labor must rule! For revolutionary working-class unity across borders in the struggle for a Socialist United States of Europe! ■

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Zaire...

(continued from page 1)

emboldened Washington to carry out a string of invasions, from the brutal slaughter in Iraq in 1991 to the racist occupations of Somalia and Haiti. The U.S. claimed to be providing "famine relief" when it led a UN intervention force into Somalia four years ago, but U.S. helicopter gunships were soon shooting down the residents of Mogadishu by the hundreds. We say: *U.S. hands off Zaire! All imperialist forces out of central Africa!*

Imperialist Rivalry and Neocolonial Satraps

Ironically, it was under the aegis of Washington that Mobutu was installed in power in the 1960s. Determined to retain the vast copper, cobalt, manganese and zinc riches of the country after Zaire (the former Belgian Congo) achieved independence in 1960, the imperialists engineered a rebellion against the first prime minister, nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba. The U.S. staged a military intervention under the guise of a UN "peacekeeping" mission. Lumumba was ousted in a U.S.-sponsored coup and turned over to rebel leader Moïse Tshombe, who had him assassinated with the complicity of the CIA.

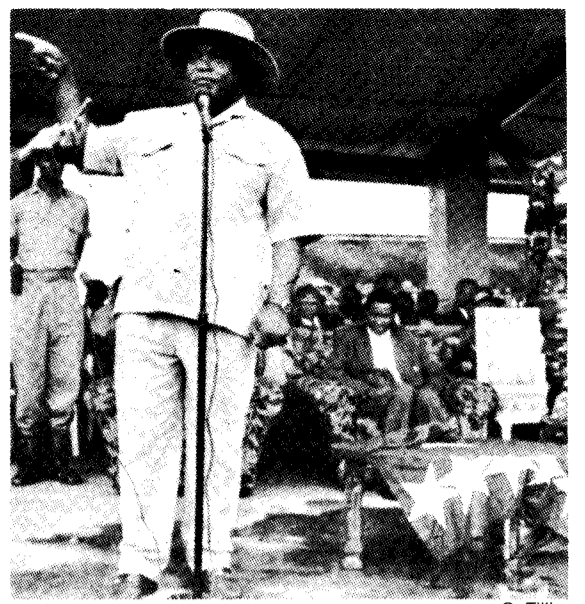
UN troops only withdrew after installing the butcher Mobutu in power in 1964. Mobutu recruited an army of mercenaries, armed by the U.S., to put down a nationalist uprising which had been sparked by Lumumba's fall. Backed up by U.S. air support and Belgian troops, the mercenaries then marched on Stanleyville (today Kisangani), indiscriminately massacring the population by the thousands. Since then, Mobutu has carried out an uninterrupted campaign of reactionary terror against his people while stealing the country blind.

As long as the various imperialist powers were united behind the U.S. in an anti-Soviet consensus, regional inter-imperialist rivalries remained muted. Today, however, Washington is engaged in a sharp tug of war with Paris for influence in French-speaking central Africa, historically considered by French imperialism to be its "chasse gardée" (hunting preserve). Some 1,200 French "evacuation" troops are currently in Brazzaville, Congo—a former French colony—across the Congo River from Kinshasa. They are joined by 500 troops from Belgium, former colonial overlord of Zaire. Meanwhile, "retired" French generals have recruited several hundred mercenaries to fight with Mobutu's forces in eastern Zaire, where they carried out a reign of terror against the local population.

With the Mobutu dictatorship about to topple at the hands of U.S.-backed forces, Washington's rivals in the region are jockeying to maintain some influence. At the same time, in order to ensure that the ethnically riven and deeply impoverished country does not come apart at the seams following Mobutu's downfall, the U.S. is putting intense pressure on Kabila to accept a cease-fire and come to power in



Zairian dictator Mobutu with former U.S. president Bush. U.S. installed bloody Mobutu regime in 1960s as bulwark against Soviet influence in Africa, now sponsors rebel forces led by Laurent Kabila (right).



G. Tillim

Kinshasa through an orderly "negotiated settlement."

This inter-imperialist rivalry is the backdrop to the civil war between Kabila's rebels and the Mobutu dictatorship. This is essentially a struggle to decide who will preside over selling off the country's immense mineral riches to the imperialists while lording it over the dreadfully oppressed masses. Revolutionaries do not have a side in this conflict.

Yet the fake-Trotskyist British Workers Power (WP) group has unhesitatingly sided with Kabila against the Kinshasa regime, labeling his movement "progressive" and "a legitimate struggle against

cisco Bay Area, which is associated with the Argentine Partido Bolchevique por la Cuarta Internacional (Bolshevik Party for the Fourth International, PBCI), campaigned last winter to raise funds for the FPR, with the preposterous claim that the rebellion in Zaire is directed "against the forces of imperialism" and is nothing less than "the mother of all battles for African Liberation"!

Workers Power and the CWG renounce in practice the Trotskyist theory and program of permanent revolution, which holds that in backward countries in this epoch, an end to imperialist domination can only be achieved through the seizure

cial Times, 25 March).

Kabila's vaguely "leftist" aura is based on the fact that as a young follower of Lumumba in the 1960s, he led a short-lived guerrilla movement in which Che Guevara briefly participated. But now Kabila is, in the words of the *Times of London* (24 March), the "darling of the diplomatic crowd" in Washington and London, and his finance minister is a U.S.-trained economist with a reputation as a "committed free-marketeer."

Kabila is no less pro-imperialist than Mobutu; they are simply allied with different imperialist powers. According to *Le Monde* (29 March), Kabila's forces and the FPR army include several dozen "unofficial" U.S. military "advisers." WP itself acknowledges the U.S. ties of the anti-Mobutu forces when it seeks to justify its support to the FPR regime in Rwanda, arguing that "despite the bourgeois nature of the Rwandan regime, and its backing by Uganda and ultimately the USA, this does not remove the progressive character of Rwanda's war against the [Hutu] Interahamwe."

The Interahamwe militias and the former Hutu-dominated regime in Rwanda perpetrated hideous massacres against the Tutsi population. But WP's support to the "just struggle" of the FPR/Kabila forces denies the fact that under imperialism, "nation-building" in backward countries necessarily means one tribal or ethnic group dominating the others and seeking to drive them out or eliminate them. Especially in Africa, where the imperialist policy of "divide and rule" has created artificial states containing a multitude of peoples, nationalism in power, even the nationalism of a formerly oppressed people like the Tutsis in Rwanda, inevitably strives to compact an ethnically homogeneous state through the brutal methods of forced assimilation, expulsion or genocide directed against racial and national minorities.

The key to social progress and national development in central Africa, with its weak and dispersed working class, lies in an internationalist perspective, particularly directed at the powerful black proletariat of South Africa. Pursuing the regional imperialist ambitions of the neo-apartheid bourgeoisie, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress regime is now acting as the intermediary for negotiations between the Zairian rebels, the Mobutu dictatorship and U.S. imperialism. South Africa's capitalist Randlords have been pouring investments into Zaire and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, even as they continue to lord it over the millions of black workers who create their wealth and other oppressed layers of the population.

As we noted in our article last November: "The expropriation of the South African bourgeoisie through socialist revolution and the creation of a black-centered workers republic would mean not only the emancipation of the nonwhite masses in that country but would open the road to social transformation throughout the rest of that horribly impoverished continent." What is necessary is the forging of internationalist Trotskyist vanguard parties to lead the struggle against capitalist imperialism and its neocolonial bourgeois regimes throughout Africa. ■



U.S./UN "humanitarian" mission in Somalia meant racist imperialist terror.

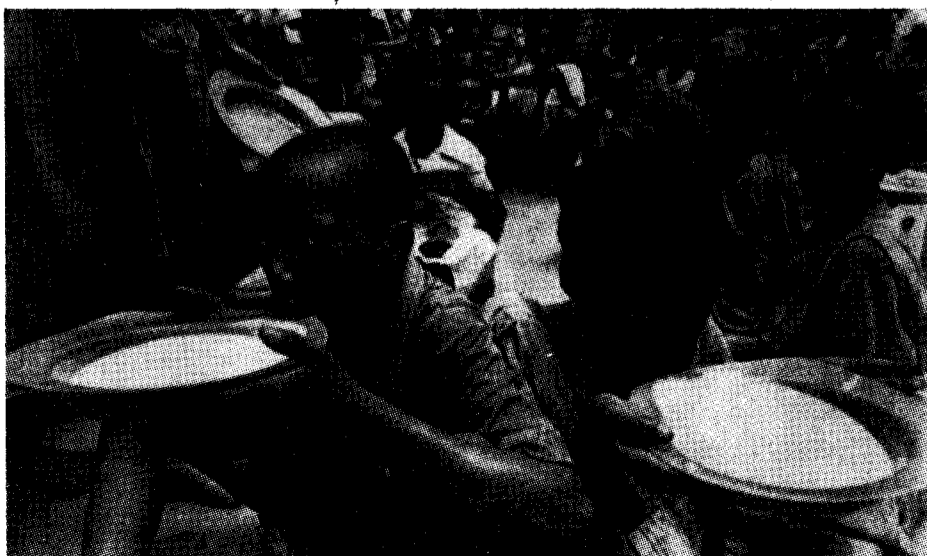
the pro-imperialist Mobutu dictatorship by an alliance of petit bourgeois opposition forces" (*Workers Power*, December 1996). WP also argues for support to Kabila's forces because they are supposedly waging a "legitimate war of self-defence" on behalf of the Tutsi minority in Zaire against attempts to expel them. Likewise, Workers Power claims that Kabila's allies in the Rwanda Patriotic Front (FPR) regime on Zaire's eastern border have been waging a "just war" in "defence of the Rwandan population against the genocidal raiding parties" by Hutu militias.

Along the same lines, the Communist Workers Group (CWG) in the San Fran-

of state power by the proletariat—standing at the head of all the oppressed masses—which must seek to extend socialist revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. Trotsky also explained that the subordination of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces in the colonial and semi-colonial world to imperialism makes them incapable of consolidating homogenous nation-states. Thus, while Kabila's forces have made an effort to avoid appearing like a Tutsi-dominated ethnic rebellion (Kabila himself is not a Tutsi), once in power they will inevitably seek to play off various tribal and ethnic groups to maintain their rule while serving as the agents of imperialist pillage.

For Socialist Revolution Throughout Africa!

Of course, there are circumstances in which Marxists give military support to petty-bourgeois forces as, for example, in a direct conflict with imperialist/colonialist forces or when questions like national self-determination are posed, as was the case in the Biafran and Eritrean struggles. But a regime headed by Kabila would in no way be fundamentally different from the present neocolonial regime. Indeed, Kabila has already been granting gold mining concessions to imperialist investors. Eastern Zaire, where most of the country's gold mines are located, was seized by the rebels in January; within weeks they were offering prospecting concessions to foreign companies. "It is pretty open for business already," gushed a South African investment analyst (*London Finan-*



Starving Hutu refugees in eastern Zaire. Murderous ethnic conflicts in Africa are the legacy of colonialism.

Chicago...

(continued from page 12)

out of nowhere, nor is such racist terror a phenomenon peculiar to Chicago's white enclaves. It is the "street gang" expression of the attacks on blacks, immigrants and working people being waged by the Democrats and Republicans in the White House, on Capitol Hill and in state and city governments across the country. Whole layers of the population in the inner cities are deemed to be a "surplus" population by a greedy ruling class which doesn't want to shell out even the most paltry social benefits to those whose labor power is no longer necessary to this rotting profit system. In Chicago, convict labor is being brought in to clean the city's buses—jobs which were once unionized!

The axing of welfare and introduction of slave-labor workfare; the attacks on such basic needs as schools and hospitals for the poor; prisons that are overflowing

with black and minority youth; the speed-up by the state's executioners on death row—all this reflects an impulse to genocide by America's capitalist rulers. The instrument for enforcing the increasingly hideous exploitation and oppression of the many at the bottom by the few at the top is the capitalist cops and courts.

Not surprisingly, the racist enclave of Bridgeport is home to large numbers of Chicago cops. These racist thugs in blue daily carry out terror on the streets, from routinely picking up black youth and dropping them off in Bridgeport and Canaryville to gunning blacks down in the name of the "war on drugs." Mayor Richard Daley Jr., who until recently called Bridgeport home, weeps crocodile tears for Lenard Clark, while Cook County State's Attorney Richard Devine appears on television to denounce "hate crimes." Meanwhile, both Daley and Devine are behind a cop vendetta against opponents of racist terror who participated in an anti-Klan protest initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and



Chicago, February 28: Demonstration at Cook County Circuit Court in defense of the Anti-Klan Three.

Defend the Anti-Klan Three!

The trial of Gene Herson, Jeff Lyons and Dennis Glass—who were arrested last June 29 for participating in an anti-Klan protest—is set to begin May 5 in Cook County Circuit Court. The labor movement and all opponents of racist terror must rally to the defense of the Anti-Klan Three! Protest statements demanding the charges against the Anti-Klan Three be dropped should be sent to: Richard Devine, State's Attorney of Cook County, Richard J. Daley Cen-

ter, 55 W. Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60602. Mail urgently needed donations for legal defense (earmarked "Anti-Klan Protesters") and copies of protest statements to the Partisan Defense Committee. For more information, contact the PDC in Chicago at 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, e-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com.

Labor Black Struggle League in Daley Plaza on June 29. At this protest, a potentially lethal Klan assault was turned back. The cops retaliated by launching their own vicious rampage against the anti-Klan protesters. Three of the protesters will be put on trial on May 5, facing one to two years in jail on phony charges of assault and battery against police. Drop the charges against the Anti-Klan Three!

A Spartacist League speaker at a protest in defense of the Anti-Klan Three last month explained the role of the police in enforcing capitalist attacks on workers and the poor, saying: "These assaults on the very ability of most people to live in anything but misery, or simply to live, require repression and, even more, silence—lest the spark of social protest ignite a conflagration of discontent and social struggle.... The frame-up of Rolando Cruz, the cop murder of Jorge Guillen, the drug-dealing in Austin are simply the price the cops extort for maintaining 'order' in this rotting system, an order enforced by terror and by the courts of the bourgeoisie."

The crying need for the unions to fight racist attacks runs right up against the

current misleadership of labor, which is completely tied to the racist rulers' political machinery, particularly in its Democratic Party face. The union bureaucrats did their bit for the ruling class by not mobilizing the slightest union presence against the racist Klan murderers on June 29. On September 21, the Klan, under massive cop protection, was able to rally in Daley Plaza. The labor misleaders did nothing, as their main concern was to prevent any protests which might upset Clinton's re-election campaign.

To put a stop to the system that breeds lynch mobs and cop terror, to achieve what we need for a decent life—jobs, quality integrated housing and education, health care for all—requires a struggle to break the ties that bind workers and minorities to the Democratic and Republican parties. This requires a political fight against the pro-capitalist labor tops. The Labor Black Struggle League stands for building a revolutionary workers party that will unite all workers—black, white, Hispanic, Asian—in a fight for socialist revolution to sweep away this racist, corrupt profit system and build an egalitarian society where those who labor rule. Join us in this fight! ■

Williams...

(continued from page 12)

high gear. The city's "Office of Citizen Complaints" exonerated police "investigators" who destroyed evidence of the crime, throwing out the mask used to suffocate Williams and hosing down the bloody police van. Last November, the Police Commission acquitted the cops of "excessive force" charges.

Recently, hundreds of protesters have turned out for meetings of the city's Police Commission, which is appointed by the mayor, to voice their outrage over the killing of Williams. At the same time, these hearings have been the scene of ominous bonapartist mobilizations by the cops, who chafe at even the most token "constraints" on their ability to terrorize working people and minorities. The more than 300 protesters who came out for a March 19 hearing were met with a legion of more than 130 cops packing one side of the hall in support of Mark Andaya—the leader of the police pack that killed Williams—who had earlier been slapped on the wrist with a suspension for "failure to follow medical procedures." At a hearing the following week, cops outnumbered protesters three-to-one.

Reformists such as Van Jones, a black lawyer who leads Bay Area PoliceWatch, have worked overtime to channel anger at Williams' killing into pressuring the Police Commission, upholding it as a vehicle for reforming the killer cops. In this they take their cue from black Democratic Party mayor Willie Brown, who called for firing Andaya, and other liberals who portray Andaya as simply a "bad apple." But the real role of the Police Commission was expressed by liberal commissioner Pat Norman, who pleaded with the cops on March 26 that "We work on your behalf." In fact, in voting to suspend Andaya last month, the Police Commission reversed the Police

Department's recommendation to fire him. "Oversight" bodies such as the Police Commission and civilian review boards act only to make the system of racist capitalist repression more efficient and "credible," as the cops pursue their daily reign of terror against working people and minorities.

Beneath the city's burnished veneer of "do your own thing" liberalism, San Francisco is a racist hell for blacks and immigrants. The white capitalist upper crust has a longstanding practice of pitting white working-class and petty-bourgeois neighborhoods against Asian and Latino immigrants as well as blacks. The pattern set by vicious anti-Chinese pogroms at the end of the 19th century was repeated with the concentration camps set up in the state and elsewhere for Japanese Americans during World War II. Today, fascist scum emboldened by the racist mobilizations against immigrants and affirmative action have targeted the growing Asian population of the historically white Sunset district, carving swastikas signed by the "Sunset white boys" on Asian storefronts.

The Spartacist League and Labor Black League for Social Defense have participated in protests against the killing of Aaron Williams, calling for class-struggle action against racist cop terror. Below we print a speech by SL spokesman Barbara Franck at a February 26 protest outside the Richmond District police station where Aaron Williams was killed.

* * *

Aaron Williams was beaten to death by a mob of bloodthirsty cops while his family and friends watched helplessly. And the racist thugs who carried out this brutal act are *not* the exception, as some here say. They are the rule in this historically racist city.

These cops were just doing their job, terrorizing black people, serving their

capitalist masters from the SF financial district to Wall Street. We've had one whitewash after another as the racist ruling class stands by their thugs in blue. People like PoliceWatch say that the Mark Andaya and Mark Fuhrmans are only "rogue" cops and that the police are mainly all right and can be reformed to "help people." This is a lie.

The truth is that the cops are the armed fist of a whole system of class and racial oppression. Along with the courts and the prosecutors of the District Attorney's office, they are special bodies of armed men that constitute the capitalist state. Their function is to defend the property and privilege of the wealthy against the working class and the poor. Once this basic truth is grasped, it becomes clear that this official apparatus of repression cannot be reformed. It must be completely smashed as part of a struggle to put the working class in power, so that those who produce the wealth shall also rule society.

So when Van Jones and PoliceWatch tell you to plead with the Police Commission for "justice" for Aaron Williams, or when the International Socialist Organization and their newspaper *Socialist Worker* tell you to dialogue with the cops, think about something Aaron Williams' uncle, William Bowser, said: "This is a pattern that seems to be throughout the United States—that police officers can do anything and get away with it. This system is useless." After the SF cops killed Aaron Williams, they killed Latino Teamster Mark Garcia in the Mission District. Then they killed another black man, William Hankston. The rate of cop killings in SF is double that of New York City and Los Angeles. And in 20 years, the D.A.'s office has not prosecuted a single cop for one of these killings.

Aaron Williams' killing personifies the campaign of race terror by the ruling class which is intended to drive the black population out of San Francisco. In

Democrat Willie Brown's SF, trigger-happy cops occupy the black neighborhoods, arrests of the homeless are up and public housing projects are coming down. Brown was elected with the backing of big business and the Police Officers Association. And he's doing their bidding in terrorizing the city's minorities and squeezing them out to make room for new and bigger stadiums, other million-dollar developments—in a word, more money.

The American ruling class and its twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans, are waging war on blacks, immigrants and the poor. And that means war on the working class. In SF, the working class is multiracial and potentially a powerful social force, from the longshoremen to the Teamster truckers to the bus drivers. But the workers are chained to their bosses through the pro-capitalist trade-union misleadership and its slavish embrace of Willie Brown and the Democratic Party. The SF Labor Council endorsed Brown; Muni bus drivers were sent door to door to campaign for him; the ILWU tops let him use their hall. Willie Brown was elected for the reason given by New York's former black mayor David Dinkins: "They'll take it from me."

A one-day strike that shuts down Bay Area ports or public transport to protest the racist killing of Aaron Williams, Mark Garcia or any other victim of the racist cops would do a lot more for the barrios and ghettos of this city than a hundred worthless Police Commission hearings. That means breaking from the Democrats and carrying out a political struggle inside the unions to replace the union bureaucracy with a class-struggle leadership that will stand up to the cops and defend black people and all minorities against racist repression. To carry out this struggle requires the forging of a fighting workers party. The SL and LBL are dedicated to this struggle. For black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Chicago: Mobilize Integrated Union Power Against Lynch Mob Terror!

We reprint below a March 30 statement issued by the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League.

Thirteen-year-old black youth Lenard Clark lies in a hospital bed after being beaten nearly to death on March 21 by three depraved racist punks. Clark was riding home after a basketball game with friends when he crossed through Bridgeport, a notorious racist enclave in Chicago. The young boy's crazed attackers repeatedly beat his head against a wall, kicked him and then left him for dead. The three then bragged to friends that they had "taken care of the n-----s in the neighborhood." Outrageously, while Clark was fighting for his life in the hospital, the thugs who tried to kill him were released after paying a paltry bail fee.

The bloody attack on Lenard Clark comes in the wake of a racist campaign that drove a black couple out of Mount Greenwood in February; the invasion of Cabrini-Green by an army of CHA [Chicago Housing Authority] and Chicago cops who fired over 70 rounds at terrified residents and pumped a bullet through the chest of the president of the residents' council, Fernanda Royal; the racist epithets shouted against black Thornton High basketball players by white Brother Rice High School students at a game two weeks ago.

Worried that things could blow in "Segregation City," everyone from Mayor Daley to Jesse Jackson to black and white priests and preachers have been appealing for "racial harmony." Meanwhile, black nationalists sought to channel outrage over the brutal beating of Lenard Clark into a march to send a "message to whites." Attempting to polarize the situation along race lines feeds directly into the hands of the racist rulers who seek to

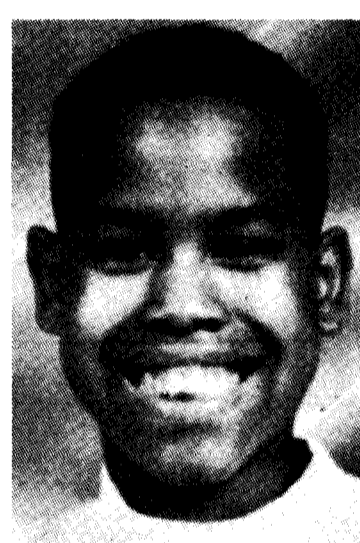
Racist Atrocity in Bridgeport



Velasquez/Chicago Sun-Times
Wanda McMurray and Tallulah Black, mother and aunt of 13-year-old Lenard Clark (right), victim of savage racist attack.

keep the working class and oppressed divided by fomenting racial hatred.

Lenard Clark's mother, Wanda McMurray, spoke to the need for an integrated protest after someone approached her with a proposal for a march: "I told him that was fine, just as long as it wasn't just blacks marching. I told him to get whites and blacks and Chinese and Mexicans together and then march.... What happened to my son should be the whole city's business." Avenging the racist terror of which Lenard Clark is the latest victim should be the business of the integrated unions of Chicago, in



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whose hands lies the power to prevail against racist terror and the entire system of capitalist exploitation which breeds it.
We of the Labor Black Struggle League

say: Labor/black defense against the racist terrorists is an urgent necessity! A disciplined and militant mobilization of black, white, Hispanic and Asian trade unionists, marching through Bridgeport in a citywide day of protest centered on the integrated labor movement, would send a powerful message that the working class of this city is determined to defend blacks, immigrants and all who are targeted by racist thugs and lynch mob murderers. Mobilizing labor in the fight against racism is both necessary and possible. A small but important example was given in 1975 when a black United Auto Workers (UAW) member had his house firebombed after he moved into the white suburb of Broadview. His union, UAW Local 6, organized a weeks-long, nightly, integrated union defense guard outside his home that sent the racists packing.

Bridgeport has long been one of the most segregated white bastions in "Segregation City." Prominent among the white gangs which organized four days of lynch mob terror against blacks during the "race riot" of 1919 was Richard Daley Sr.'s Bridgeport-based Hamburg Club. The aim of Daley's thugs was to drive blacks out of white neighborhoods and to smash an integrated meatpackers union organizing drive. In 1964, riots raged for three days after two black college students leased an apartment in Bridgeport three blocks from the Daley home. The students were eventually evicted by Daley Sr.'s cops and replaced with white tenants. In recent years, an interracial couple was driven out of the neighborhood and a black postal worker was attacked on the job.

The fists and boots of racist terror that rained down on Lenard Clark didn't come
continued on page 11

Sinister Police Mobilization for Racist Killer Cop

S.F. Police Commission Whitewashes Killing of Aaron Williams

SAN FRANCISCO—Protests over the continuing whitewash of the cop killing of Aaron Williams, a 35-year-old black man, have helped turn a spotlight on the reality of racist police terror in "liberal" San Francisco. In June 1995, 12 cops savagely beat Williams with clubs, doused him repeatedly with pepper spray and rained kicks to his head, in full view of more than 20 horrified family members and neighbors. Williams was hogtied, gagged with a surgical mask over his nose and mouth and tossed face down into a police van. Wounded, blinded, desperately trying to breathe, Williams died as his heart gave out (see WV No. 625, 30 June 1995).

Following Williams' brutal killing, the cops' cover-up machinery went into
continued on page 11

February 26
protest in front
of police station,
where Aaron
Williams was
killed in 1995.

