

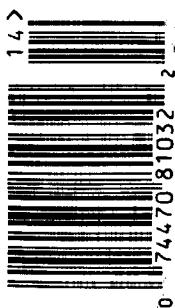
Black History and the Class Struggle

No. 14



Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks, Immigrants

Der Spiegel



Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

**Black Liberation
Through Socialist Revolution!**

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Introduction

This edition of *Black History and the Class Struggle*, the fourteenth in the series of these Spartacist pamphlets, is devoted to the crucial need for a proletarian internationalist fight against the rising tide of racist reaction in the U.S. and around the globe. Internationally, the capitalist rulers are shredding social programs for the working class and the poor. Everywhere, the desperate immigrant has been made the first target in this drive to increase the exploitation and oppression of all of the working class.

Historically, social benefit programs have been the product of class struggle, with capitalist governments trying to pacify an aroused working class. For example, in late 19th-century Germany under Chancellor Bismarck, vast social reforms were implemented to undercut the Social Democracy, which had become the mass party of the German proletariat. Following World War II, what became known as the "welfare state" was introduced in Europe to placate a combative workers movement and to ward off the spectre of "Communism" which, in however a bureaucratically deformed way, was represented by the Soviet Union.

However, as the article "Immigration and Racist 'Fortress Europe'" notes, the European bourgeoisies now see these Cold War social programs as unnecessary overhead expenditures. Destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution, the Soviet Union no longer exists as any kind of counterbalance to the rapacious appetites of the world's bourgeoisies who are now engaged in a brutal drive to increase their competitive edge against their imperialist rivals by attacking the wages, living and working conditions of the working class. Immigrant workers who were brought in as low-wage labor are no longer needed, as mass unemployment provides a ready pool of cheap "native" labor. At the same time, anti-immigrant racism is used to divide and divert the proletariat from united struggle against the capitalist offensive.

In the U.S., the social programs of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal" were launched during the 1930s as a means to buy social peace in the face of the pitched labor battles of the time which built the industrial unions in this country. In the 1960s, Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty" was aimed at trying to quell the mass ghetto upheavals which broke out in response to the failure of the civil rights movement to ameliorate the desperate conditions of life in the inner cities. Such calculations no longer figure in the account books of the American bourgeoisie.

A key turning point was the Reagan

government's destruction of the PATCO air traffic controllers union in 1981, which signaled the beginning of a wholesale onslaught against the unions. The PATCO strike was smashed by firing the entire union membership and jailing union leaders, who were taken to prison in shackles. Having gotten away with busting this overwhelmingly white, highly paid union of professionals—without provoking even a token attempt by the trade-union misleaders to mobilize organized labor in PATCO's defense—the racist rulers of America figured they could get away with doing just about anything to the impoverished black masses in the inner cities.

The social power of the integrated unions, which have a large black membership that could serve as a bridge in linking the power of labor to the anger of the ghettos, has been sapped by a labor leadership which ties the interest of labor to that of American capitalism. Now, reveling in the supposed "death of communism," the U.S. rulers perceive little in the way of opposition to continuing to up the ante in grinding the working class and the poor. Setting the stage for the 1996 presidential elections, which were a veritable carnival of capitalist reaction, the Democratic White House joined the Republican Congress in the inauguration of the "welfare reform" bill. This racist legislation, which will condemn millions to starvation as their meager welfare payments are choked off, took immediate aim at immigrants for whom there was no "waiting period" before all social benefits were axed.

The anti-immigrant provisions of the new welfare law were foreshadowed in the passage of Proposition 187 in California in 1994, denying education, health care and any social benefits to "illegal" immigrants. As we wrote at the time in "Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!" (WV No. 612, 9 December 1994):

"While the anti-Latino nature of Prop. 187 is perfectly obvious, it is less clear to many that this measure is part of a broader racist offensive whose *main and central target is the black ghetto poor*. Depriving 'illegal' immigrants of food stamps and their children of school lunches will *legitimize eliminating these programs entirely*. The bipartisan drive to 'end welfare as we know it,' in the words of Bill Clinton, has been given an enormous boost by the passage of Prop. 187."

Capitalist Rulers Play the Race Card

Whipping up racial and ethnic hatred has long served the American ruling class in furthering the exploitation of all workers. The article "Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks, Immigrants" cites 19th-century American robber baron Jay

Gould's boast: "I can hire one half of the working class to kill the other half."

Well into the early years of the 20th century, the central divide in the working class was one which pitted "native" Protestants against the mainly Catholic German, Irish, Italian and other European immigrant workers who were brought in to provide the cheap labor and raw muscle power for the factories, mines and mills of this country. (On the West Coast, Chinese laborers who were employed as virtual slave labor in building the railroads were the target of vicious "yellow peril" racism.) With the mass migration of blacks from the American South to the industrial cities of the North, particularly during World Wars I and II, religious and ethnic hostilities in the proletariat came to be supplanted by anti-black racism.

Brought to America in chains, blacks were emancipated from slavery by the second American Revolution, the Civil War. But the promise of black equality was betrayed by the Northern capitalists. The Compromise of 1877, under which the last Union Army troops were withdrawn from the South, brought to an end the tumultuous decade of Radical Reconstruction. A new form of white supremacy was established in the South, codified in the "Jim Crow" system of racial segregation and police-state control. Blacks who fled North to what they saw as "the promised land" were integrated into the workforce at the bottom and forcibly segregated into inner-city ghettos. As the "last hired and first fired," the black population supplied, in the words of Karl Marx, a "reserve army of labor" for the American capitalists. The color bar became a fundamental dividing line in American society, a key prop for obscuring the irreconcilable class divide between labor and capital.

Today, there is a great deal of antipathy on all sides between blacks and immigrants. In California, more than 50 percent of the black population voted for the anti-immigrant Prop. 187. The idea that immigrants, the majority of whom labor at the most demeaning, low-paid jobs, are "getting ahead" at the expense of blacks is reflective of a false consciousness. But it is one born of resentment against the very real color bar in this country.

Descendants of the African slaves who were brought to America more than 200 years ago, blacks in this country have more claim to being "American" than most people. Yet, branded by the color of their skin, much of the black population has remained at the bottom while more light-skinned immigrants have historically been able to advance up the economic ladder. At the same time, many immigrants are taught to believe that the desperate conditions of life faced by much of the black

population are their own "fault," reflecting-insufficient "values" placed on education, work and advancement.

Playing on such divisions, the capitalist rulers seek to pit the white working class against both blacks and immigrants by portraying them as a drain on the tax dollars of "hard-working white folks." Welfare recipients have always been portrayed as "sponges" with the purpose of both humiliating the poor and cheapening all labor by exalting the moral value of working at any wage and under any conditions. In racist America, where the words "welfare queen" have long served as code words for the black ghetto poor, the ruling class thinks it can get away with shredding welfare by playing the race card. Leaving aside the fact that the majority of those on welfare are white, the "welfare reform" bill is aimed at driving down the wages and further immiserating the entire working class. This fact is being brought home with a vengeance in the implementation of "workfare" programs aimed at busting the unions by forcing welfare recipients to work these jobs at starvation wages.

The "workfare" deal signed by the leadership of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 in New York City, which will eliminate hundreds of unionized cleaners' jobs and replace them with welfare recipients, is the subject of the article "Enslaving the Poor, Busting the Unions." Grotesquely, the TWU tops and the capitalist press tried to sell this deal as an "opportunity" for the black and Hispanic poor! Not having lifted a finger in defense of the homeless and the poor, many of whom are the products of the giveback contracts and mass layoffs "negotiated" by the trade-union misleaders, the labor tops have now taken on the role of overseers for the capitalist rulers' union-busting, slave-labor programs.

Racist Terror U.S.A.

The current climate of all-sided racist reaction has encouraged the terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan and other white-supremacist organizations. This past year saw an epidemic of church burnings across the South, many of which bore the mark of the KKK nightriders. Recalling the wave of terror against black churches during the civil rights movement, the article "Black Churches Torched Across the South—Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Smash Racist Terror!" notes that today, "The racists burning down black churches are out to destroy what remains of the limited rights gained by blacks in the civil rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s."

In California, the passage of Proposition 209—outlawing the token affirmative action programs which gave blacks and other minorities limited access to higher

education and government jobs and contracts—speaks to the depth of the racial divide fostered by the capitalist rulers. The spearhead for a racist purge of the university campuses, Prop. 209 is also aimed directly at the heavily integrated government workers unions. As *Workers Vanguard* (No. 654, 25 October 1996) wrote in "California: Vote No on Prop 209!": "Taken together with the devastation of welfare by Clinton and Congress and the widespread destruction of manufacturing jobs, Prop. 209 is a declaration that no black person need ever be hired again."

Hoping to discredit the right-wing forces mobilized behind Prop. 209, liberal student bureaucrats at California State University at Northridge invited David "Klan in a suit" Duke to "debate" affirmative action in September. This suicidal "electoral tactic" gave Duke both the mainstream respectability he craves as well as a national platform to recruit to his program of lynch-mob terror. Elsewhere, the fascists also seized on the opportunity provided by the labor bureaucrats and black Democratic Party officials, who worked desperately to stop any protests or strikes that might damage Clinton's reelection, to organize for their program of genocide.

On 29 June 1996, the union tops and black misleaders did nothing in response to an urgent appeal by the Partisan Defense Committee to mobilize to stop the Klan from rallying in the heart of labor/black Chicago. In the event, the KKK terrorists were routed by the hundred militants who did come out. But in the absence of any mobilization of the social power of labor, the cops felt no constraint in rampaging against the anti-KKK protesters, three of whom face up to two years in jail on trumped-up charges of assaulting police. Two months later, hooded and robed Klansmen got away with rallying in downtown Chicago completely *unopposed*. As the article "Free Ride for Klan in Chicago—Why?" bitterly notes: "The kind of class-struggle mobilization that was desperately needed for the working people and black masses to prevail was blocked by the misleaders who would sell their mother to get Clinton re-elected."

State Repression, Terror and Death

The cop attack on the June 29 anti-Klan protest in Chicago was part of the city's designs to keep the streets clear in preparation for the Democratic National Convention in August. More broadly, the legal vendetta that is now being pursued against three of the demonstrators is part of an accelerating drive by the American bourgeoisie to quash any protest or opposition to their increasingly brutal class rule through the abrogation of constitutional

rights, from freedom of speech and assembly to the right of *habeas corpus* to the Second Amendment right to bear arms. As the gap between the rich few and the impoverished millions grows wider by the day, the U.S. rulers seek to contain the seething anger and discontent of those who have been relegated to the bottom of this society through increasingly naked state repression and terror.

The cases of two former leaders of the Black Panther Party, Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal, provide bitter testimony to the lengths this state will go to in order to silence those who challenge the racist status quo. The article "Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Free Geronimo!" documents the government conspiracy—extending from the FBI to the Los Angeles Police Department and district attorney's office—to imprison this fighter for black freedom for a crime they all know he did not and could not have committed.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, an award-winning journalist who was targeted by the Philadelphia cops for his searing indictments of their rampant racist terror, was sentenced to death on frame-up charges of killing a policeman. The article on Jamal's case we reprint in this issue, "Key Witness for Mumia Abu-Jamal Arrested on the Stand," exposes the extent of the frame-up orchestrated by the cops, courts and D.A.'s office which continues in their unbridled efforts to terrorize and silence those who can testify to Jamal's innocence.

The Partisan Defense Committee, the Spartacist League and the Labor Black Leagues have sought to bring the social power of the multiracial working class to bear in defense of Geronimo and Mumia. Only when labor is mobilized in defense of black rights and the rights of all the oppressed can it begin to defend the interests of all of the working people against capitalist repression and exploitation.

Farrakhanite Black Nationalism vs. Black Freedom

In this issue of *Black History* we reprint an obituary memorializing Robert F. Williams, "Courageous Fighter Against Racist Terror." Williams, who organized blacks in armed self-defense against the Klan nightriders in the South during the struggles against Jim Crow segregation, did much to break a generation of young civil rights activists from their liberal illusions in American "democracy." Mumia and Geronimo were part of that generation of black radicals. Yet while rejecting the liberal pacifism of the civil rights movement leadership which contained the fight against racist segregation within the confines of capitalism, the Black Panther Party also rejected the working class as

the vehicle for revolutionary change.

The Panthers wrote off any prospect that in the course of class struggle white workers could overcome their racist prejudices and recognize their common interests with blacks. This view was fed by the racist AFL-CIO officialdom. Today, the "new" AFL-CIO leadership of John Sweeney postures as a force for revitalizing the labor movement, promising to bring in millions of new union members. Yet the biggest mobilization of this "new" leadership was to get out the vote for Clinton's Democrats. And while Sweeney plays up his involvement in efforts such as the overwhelmingly Hispanic "Justice for Janitors" organizing drives, the real program of the AFL-CIO leadership is to "save American jobs" by whipping up hatred of "foreign" workers.

The dearth of any class or social struggle, combined with the racist indifference of the labor misleaders to the plight of the ghetto and barrio poor, has opened the door to sinister black nationalist demagogues of Louis Farrakhan's ilk. As the article "Million Man March Appeases Racist Exploiters" notes:

"In the 1960s, 'I'm Black and I'm Proud' race consciousness, influenced by masses in struggle, was defiant of the racist capitalist rulers. Today we witness 'I'm black and I'm not a criminal' race consciousness influenced by a desperate black middle class begging for 'understanding' from the racist rulers."

Farrakhanite black nationalism embodies the aspirations of a black middle class which, having run up against the ceiling of racism in the white business world, sees a future in becoming the exploiters of "their own" people.

Any program for "black capitalism," however illusory, necessarily mandates the continued existence of segregated black ghettos as a market. The reactionary logic of this program for black separatism, which seeks to turn the anger of the ghetto against Jewish and immigrant shopkeepers, was seen in black Oakland where Farrakhan's Nation of Islam provided security to protect a meeting of the notorious British fascist David Irving. As is pointed out in the article "Nation of Islam: Bodyguards for Hitler Apologist David Irving," the Farrakhanite nationalists share with the Klan and the Nazis a belief in the need to "segregate the races." Contemptuous of the ghetto masses at home whom the Farrakhanites see as "bringing down the race," the sinister Nation of Islam leader is an apologist for black slavery in Sudan as detailed in the article "Farrakhan and the Sudan Slave Trade."

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The article "France: Mass Protests Against Racist Deportations" points to

the mobilization of trade unions against the deportation of 300 immigrant workers as a concrete demonstration of "the possibility of forging international class unity between workers' struggles." As the imperialist powers line up in rival trade blocs—threatening to plunge all of humanity into World War III in their drive to defend or increase their profit margins—the potential for proletarian internationalist unity that was seen on the streets of Paris must be translated into a reality of revolutionary class struggle.

The racist rulers of America arrogantly presume they can get away with starving the poor, killing the sick and aged and further impoverishing all of labor without provoking any social protest. But this is a foolish calculation. While they bray that Marxism has proven to be a "failure," they cannot eliminate the class struggle which is born of the irreconcilable conflict of interests between labor and capital. People cannot stand having no future for themselves or their kids, or being oppressed like slaves, with poverty, disease and homelessness threatening millions. There is tremendous pressure building up at the base of this society which can and will explode. Harnessing and directing this anger toward the eradication of a system based on exploitation is a question of leadership.

The road to black freedom lies in the struggle to shatter this racist capitalist system through proletarian socialist revolution, and the power to do that lies with the multiracial working class. But this power cannot and will not be realized unless a class-struggle labor movement actively champions the cause of black liberation and is mobilized in defense of the rights of immigrants and all the oppressed. The key to unlocking the chains, forged by the trade-union misleaders, that shackle labor to its exploiters is the political struggle to build a revolutionary internationalist leadership of the working class.

At the time of the Civil War, Karl Marx, the founder of modern communism, captured a fundamental truth of American society in his statement that "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." The Spartacist League, the U.S. section of the International Communist League, is fighting to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party that will wrest the tremendous productive resources of this country out of the hands of the greedy and corrupt capitalist owners. When the power of the racist ruling class and its state is shattered, and this wealth is deployed for the benefit of those who labored to produce it, the basis will be laid for eradicating all inequalities based on class, sex and race. ■

reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 653, 11 October 1996

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks, Immigrants



Rivenbark/AP



Nikitin/AP

Left: Black St. Petersburg, Florida demonstrators protesting grand jury verdict in favor of racist killer cop were attacked by police, November 1996. Right: Immigration cops in racist crackdown on Asians in California.

Break with the Democrats—For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

In the lead-up to the November presidential election, the Democrats and Republicans have been engaged in a grotesque competition over which party can be most vicious in attacking black people and immigrants. Last week, Democratic president Clinton signed yet another anti-immigrant bill that puts up barriers to refugees seeking asylum and denies legal redress in the courts against arbitrary roundups and deportations by the hated *migra* cops of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). This new racist measure comes hard on the heels of last spring's "counter-terrorism" law, which vastly expands the racist death penalty and mandates draconian new restrictions on the rights of all non-citizens, and the anti-welfare bill, which consigns millions of women and children to homelessness and starvation and

denies food stamps and other social benefits to immigrants.

A march has been called for October 12 in Washington, D.C. to "defend immigrant rights." But the sponsors of this demonstration have made it clear that they intend this march to be a vehicle not for opposing the *bipartisan* assault on immigrants but rather for mobilizing votes for the Democratic Party "lesser evil." Coordinadora 96, which initiated the protest, declared that the purpose of the march is to "get out the vote for November 5th." Instead of forthrightly defending the rights of undocumented immigrants, these pro-Democratic Latino misleaders plead only for a "streamlined citizenship application process and an extension of the date of eligibility for amnesty for all those who have entered the U.S. prior to January 1, 1992." This

call is expressly tailored to be acceptable to the yuppie racist in the White House, promoting the capitalist rulers' distinction between "legal" and "illegal" immigrants.

And, as we noted last issue, this attempt to line up Hispanic and other immigrants behind the racist Democrats is being uncritically supported by a number of reformist groups—primarily the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers World Party—who are doing the donkey work for the October 12 march organizers. Workers and minorities do not need a "lesser" evil party of racist capitalism but a revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed, fighting for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants!

We present below an edited transcript of a presentation at a September 21



Der Spiegel



Reuters

Border police brutalize immigrants. Clinton, seen here being endorsed by Fraternal Order of Police, has presided over massive militarization of Mexican border.

Spartacist League forum in Chicago by Don Alexander, a member of the SL Central Committee and a veteran of the militant black struggles of the 1960s.

* * *

Around the world today the capitalist rulers are waging ferocious class war against workers and immigrants. From Germany to France to Italy the social welfare programs established after World War II are being ripped up, but not without militant defensive struggles by the workers. Significantly, workers in France have also waged militant struggles against deportations and in defense of African immigrants against the right-wing regime of President Chirac. Recently in Australia, workers joined with Aborigines in storming the parliament building during a protest against racist capitalist austerity measures. There is growing understanding that the attacks on immigrants are an attack on the whole working class.

But history has shown time and again that to raise such defensive struggles into a generalized assault on the capitalist order itself requires the intervention of Leninist vanguard parties to instill revolutionary consciousness in the working class. Such parties, composed of the most politically advanced detachments of the working class, must act as tribunes of the people, like the Bolshevik Party built by Lenin and Trotsky in tsarist Russia which swept away capitalism. Leninist parties are indispensable for new October socialist revolutions.

Many of the social programs now under attack were set up to ward off the prospect of revolutionary upheavals

and as an ideological counter to the Soviet Union. Today, emboldened by the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and East Europe, the rulers of U.S. imperialism believe that they can do anything to workers and the oppressed at home and abroad. In the New World Disorder, characterized by intensified inter-imperialist rivalries, especially between the U.S., Japan and Germany, the U.S. rulers are acting like cops of the world. Increasingly and more brazenly, they are throwing their might around, as with Clinton's air strikes against Iraq. Meanwhile, the European Union, itself torn by national antagonisms, is threatening retaliation against the U.S. for ordering sanctions against them for investing in Cuba, Iran and Libya. From the Balkans to Iraq, the world today resembles the period leading up to World War I.

The labor traitors who prop up this imperialist system have to be ousted and replaced by a revolutionary leadership of the labor movement. Imperialism is not some misguided policy, rather it is the drive to export finance capital which is inherent within the system. For all the current fashionable talk about the "globalization of production," the productive forces of modern capitalist society have long since come into violent conflict with the narrow framework of the national state. This conflict was the source of two world wars fought for the redivision of the world. Today, the capitalists are armed with nuclear weapons, and the U.S. ruling class has already used them, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The only way to defeat imperialism is through international proletarian revolution. As the most powerful of the world powers,

racist U.S. imperialism is the main enemy of the world's workers and oppressed.

Democrats Are No "Lesser Evil"

The capitalist ideologues and politicians, representatives of the government of moneybags, say that no matter how bad things might be here, this is still America—a supposed land of democracy, freedom, equality and transcendent moral superiority. All of these are revolting lies. What we have in the U.S.—and in every capitalist "democracy"—is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a democracy for the rich. In the mid-19th century, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the originators of scientific socialism, which is powerfully embodied in the *Communist Manifesto*, explained that the capitalist state is a tool of class oppression: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." That includes the president, the Congress, the courts and their armed enforcers. The great Bolshevik leader Lenin in 1917 applied these teachings in leading the first successful workers revolution in history. In *The State and Revolution*, Lenin argued that the capitalist state could not be reformed but had to be smashed.

The elimination of the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program by yuppie racist Clinton and the Republicans will destroy any minimal lifeline for some 12 million people, more than two-thirds of them children. New immigrants will be ineligible for any benefits until they have been here five years, while SSI benefits and food stamps will be denied to all

immigrants unless they have worked for at least ten years. Welfare recipients will be restricted to a lifetime total of five years of benefits, and will be kicked off the rolls after two years. The latter, of course, is especially aimed at blacks.

What the capitalists are after is to lower the cost of labor by immiserating the working class. This can be seen in cities like New York, where starvation-level "workfare" recipients are forced to take jobs replacing unionized municipal workers. The bosses' bottom line is profits. Social Security and Medicare are their next targets.

The anti-immigrant, anti-black, anti-woman attacks can and must be met by mobilizing the power of the multiracial working class fighting together in its own interests against the capitalists. How do we do that? It begins with a simple truth: the root of all of the social ills of this society is the irrational, anarchic capitalist system of production for profit.

To smash the assault on minorities exemplified by the destruction of welfare and the imprisonment of masses of ghetto youth, a class-struggle leadership—a revolutionary workers party—would fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work around, and to organize the unorganized. It would fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. It would fight for free abortion on demand, for free 24-hour childcare and free quality health care. It would staunchly defend gay and lesbian rights against "family values" bigots. Racial, national and sexual oppression are all rooted in the capitalist system.

The only "dependency" that the working class and oppressed minorities need to get rid of is reliance upon capitalist political parties. We must destroy the illusion that the Democratic Party is a "lesser evil" alternative to the more openly pro-business Republicans. This lie is pushed by the pro-capitalist union misleadership of the AFL-CIO under John Sweeney and by the black misleadership, from Jesse Jackson to Louis Farrakhan, whose Nation of Islam today says "farewell to welfare" with barely concealed glee.

An assortment of organizations masquerading as Marxists joined with the bourgeois liberals in San Francisco on April 14 for a "fight the right" pep rally for Clinton. They included the International Socialist Organization, Refuse & Resist and the Revolutionary Workers League. Then there's the Communist Party, which has one foot on a banana peel and another one in the grave, which of course also supported this march for Clinton. These groups foster the illusion

that the capitalist enemy in the form of the racist Democratic Party can be pressured to do the right thing. This is the bankrupt program of class collaboration which is a roadblock to proletarian revolution.

These opportunist outfits have swallowed the bourgeoisie's lie that communism—the struggle for the liberation of the international working class and the abolition of all class society—is dead. Theirs is the program of the "popular front," a political bloc with the so-called liberal wing of the ruling class, which from Spain in the 1930s to Italy today subordinates the interests of the oppressed to that of the capitalist oppressors and has paved the way for bloody defeats.

The Spartacist League fights for militant integrated class struggle against the racist capitalist oppressors. We say: Break with the Democrats—Build a revolutionary workers party that champions the interests of all of the oppressed and exploited. We communists struggle for workers revolution—the seizure of power by the working class and the creation of a socialist planned economy.

Racist Rulers to Poor: Drop Dead!

When we say the message of the capitalist rulers to many blacks and poor people is to drop dead, we mean it literally. In addition to Latinos, Asian Americans have been brutalized and killed in increasing numbers. I don't have to speak about the raids by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) which are sweeping this country. And although the full implementation of California's anti-immigrant Proposition 187 has been

shelved by court orders, its intent of intimidating and further marginalizing immigrant communities has effectively been realized.

When the right-wing Republicans, with California governor Wilson in the lead, came out with Prop. 187, we pointed out that this was the spearhead of a broader racist offensive and that its ultimate target was the black ghetto poor. This has been proven true. Not skipping a beat, racist politicians like Wilson soon pushed the grotesquely misnamed California Civil Rights Initiative against affirmative action, aimed at reversing any remnants of the gains of the civil rights movement. Many Latino leaders looked to the Democrats to stop Prop. 187, while turning a blind eye to the plight of undocumented immigrants. But the Democrats are no less vehemently anti-immigrant than the Republicans. While opposing Prop. 187, California Democratic Senators Boxer and Feinstein called for militarizing the border with Mexico, which Clinton is implementing at breakneck speed.

We say: Defend affirmative action, and more—fight for free, quality education for all, for open admissions with a living stipend. This—not quotas—is the way to cut through the race and class privileges in higher education. Quotas are tokenistic measures that accept the racist status quo, pitting various minorities against each other. They have been used in the past against Jews and today against Asians. Immigrant rights and black rights go hand in hand, and their struggles advance the cause of emancipation of the whole working class.

The same capitalist government which



WV Photo

Latino misleaders channeled 1994 mass protests against California's immigrant-bashing Prop. 187 into support for racist Democrats.

has waged a racist "war on drugs" in the black ghettos has deported over 54,000 undocumented immigrants in ten months, nearly 25,000 in California alone. The vicious beatings of immigrants by sheriff's deputies in Riverside, California evoked images of the racist cop beating of Rodney King. In "democratic," "civilized" America, workers from Mexico and Central America fleeing poverty, desperation and death are being drowned, killed and maimed at the border. Meanwhile, the Klan and other racist killers have organized "border patrols" to terrorize immigrants. This is a deadly threat to all workers and oppressed minorities. We say: No deportations! Full citizenship rights for those who have made it here! For labor/minority mobilizations to stop the Klan and skinhead fascist scum!

Anti-Immigrant Racism— Spearhead of Capitalist Reaction

With the massive attacks on working people and minorities and the growing disparity between rich and poor, the U.S. ruling class is obviously concerned about the seething discontent barely beneath the surface. That is why it is strengthening the repressive apparatus of the state with the huge increase in the number of police on the streets, with the growth of private strikebreaking outfits. Most of all we see this with the speedup on death row. For years, the brutal racism of capitalist America has been sharply reflected by the savage injustice inflicted upon former Black Panthers Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal. Geronimo has been imprisoned for 26 years and Mumia was placed on death row. Both were targeted for standing up for the oppressed.

Under Clinton's new "anti-terrorism" law, immigrants can be jailed and deported for misdemeanors committed years ago, no matter how long they have lived here! Meanwhile, "English only" laws now exist in 23 states. Undoubtedly, the spirit of the 1857 Dred Scott ruling—that a black man had no rights that a white man is bound to respect—lives on in the current ruling-class drive to strip immigrants of any rights.

The response of the AFL-CIO bureaucrats to these increasingly vicious attacks is to push the lie that Mexicans and other foreign workers are "stealing" American jobs. NAFTA has turned Mexico into a private preserve for unbridled-capitalist exploitation by the U.S. But the labor tops opposed NAFTA on flag-waving protectionist grounds, attempting to line up U.S. workers behind the American ruling class and against their class brothers and sisters in Mexico. We in the Interna-

tional Communist League stand for joint class struggle on both sides of the border. Along with our comrades in the Grupo Espartaquista de México and the Trotskyist League of Canada, the Spartacist League/U.S. fights the NAFTA "free trade" rape of Mexico on the basis of an internationalist revolutionary program directed against all the bourgeois rulers.

It is because of their staunch support of the capitalist private property system that the AFL-CIO bureaucrats turn a blind eye to the burning needs of immigrants, blacks, women, gays and youth. It is because of this that Teamster militant Jesse Acuna continues to sit in jail on a five-year sentence for defending his union on the picket line during the national truckers strike in 1993.

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The fight against black oppression and anti-immigrant racism is central to revitalizing the labor movement in this country. Especially in Los Angeles, Latino workers in the past few years have become a combative and militant section of the working class. Latino workers, many of them refugees from dictatorial regimes in Central America, can play a key role in the fight to organize the unorganized and in combatting illusions fostered by the chauvinist AFL-CIO tops in "democratic" U.S. imperialism.

The bosses will do anything to divide foreign-born workers from their class brothers and sisters here. In the 19th century, railroad baron Jay Gould once boasted: "I can hire one half of the working class to kill the other half." In racist America, many immigrants learn to adapt to the anti-black racism spread by the white ruling class, to the racist filth that the black masses remain at the bottom of this capitalist society because of their alleged lack of adherence to the "work ethic," or because they lack "positive attitudes" or "proper genes." Immigrant workers must grasp clearly that the fight against black oppression is central to any struggle to defend democratic rights and the interests of the working class. It is only the program of united class struggle, the fight for revolutionary integrationism, that holds out the promise of black freedom and working-class emancipation.

In the U.S. the black question is strategic for proletarian revolution. It is a question of special oppression, and we acquired our attitude toward this question first and foremost from Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, who hammered into the heads of the early American Communists that they had to break with a social-democratic tradition of "color

blindness." Guided by the program of revolutionary internationalism, the Bolsheviks argued that blacks in the U.S. suffered double oppression—as workers and from color-based racism. Uniquely on the left today, our slogan to "Finish the Civil War—For black liberation through socialist revolution!" is a recognition that the fight for black freedom in America necessarily requires sweeping away the racist capitalist system.

As Karl Marx observed at the time of the Civil War, labor in the white skin can't be free if it is branded in the black skin. Black people were dragged over here in chains, enslaved, bought and sold like cattle. The Civil War which destroyed the slavocracy was a social revolution. But the racist legacy of slavery has been institutionalized, refined, "modernized" at each turn by the ruling class and its institutions. Through mass bitter struggles during the civil rights movement the back of Jim Crow—that is, the legal trappings of segregation—was broken, but de facto segregation and discrimination remain.

Black workers, potentially the most advanced sector of the multiracial U.S. working class, are a strategic component of the proletariat in this country and remain its most unionized section. Blacks are integrated into the political economy, but forcibly segregated at the bottom. Contrary to the pseudo-nationalists, there is no material basis for a black nation, for an independent black political economy. Historic institutionalized racist subjugation has relegated black people to the status of an oppressed race-color caste. There exists today a visible and sizable



Seib/L.A. Times

Jesse Jackson, front man for Clinton's racist Democratic Party.

black middle class—class inequalities among black people are greater even than among whites. Nonetheless the color line remains even for those middle-class blacks who have made it out of the ghetto. If you're black in this country of the most developed, lying, hypocritical "democracy," you always run up against what radical black democrat W.E.B. Du Bois called an invisible but tangible plate glass.

Racism is not a matter of individual prejudice per se. Racism and racial oppression in the U.S. have been pushed by the exploiters to keep white workers bigoted, backward and unorganized—this is its central purpose, as a prop and a pillar for the capitalist system. It's the capitalists who benefit from the brutal oppression of blacks. The fight against the special oppression of blacks is inseparable from the struggle to free all of the working people from capitalist exploitation.

Black Misleaders Push Anti-Immigrant Chauvinism

There is no militant black leadership today. You've got people looking to Al Sharpton, an admitted FBI fink, for leadership. You've got people looking to Louis Farrakhan, who wanted Malcolm X dead and whose organization defends fascists (see "Nation of Islam: Bodyguards for Hitler Apologist David Irving," page 28).

Black misleaders have joined in the scapegoating of immigrants. Back in 1986, Coretta Scott King and Reverend Walter Fauntroy supported the Simpson-Mazzoli bill, which called for sanctions against employers hiring immigrants. Fauntroy is the preacher who in November 1982 in Washington, D.C. tried to keep blacks away from the 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization initiated by the Spartacist League that swept the Klan off the streets. The KKK tried to rally against immigrants, but the integrated working class under our Marxist leadership handed them a big defeat. In D.C. and elsewhere, our anti-fascist mobilizations are based on our class-struggle program and have been built in opposition to black Democratic mayors who front for the capitalist ruling class.

Thanks to the petty-bourgeois black misleaders, there is significant anti-immigrant chauvinism among blacks, reflected in the fact that over half of black voters in California supported Prop. 187. In contrast to the likes of Farrakhan and others, the great revolutionary Abolitionist Frederick Douglass was an opponent of all social oppression and fought energetically to the end of his life for

women's rights. In the late 19th century, Douglass opposed the scapegoating of Chinese immigrants and denounced the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Today, it's even more urgent that black workers and militant youth break with black Democrats and nationalist demagogues in order to wage an effective fight for black liberation. So it's crucial to throw a brief historical light on the question of anti-immigrant chauvinism among blacks.

At the turn of the century, Booker T. Washington was one of the most prominent spokesmen for "black capitalism." Washington, who was born a slave in Virginia in 1856 and died in 1915, founded the Tuskegee Institute, which was the center of the "self-help" gospel. The cap-

scarcely a month passed in which there weren't a half dozen or more.

During this period, from the late 1880s to the early 1920s, half a million immigrants from Europe, Asia and Latin America flocked to the U.S. With white planters in the South openly seeking immigrant labor to pick cotton, harvest sugar and plant vegetables, there was widespread fear among blacks of being replaced by immigrants. This fear was promoted by Booker T. Washington. In his Atlanta Exposition address of 1895, Washington said, "To those of the white race who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits for the prosperity of the South, were I permitted, I would repeat what I

Louis Farrakhan (left) echoes Booker T. Washington in spewing anti-immigrant chauvinism and pushing accommodation to racist status quo.



Ramsey/AP



Library of Congress

italists made him a big shot. Washington advocated that blacks accommodate to the racist status quo. His motto was "separate but equal." But separate can never be equal. During the militant struggles for black rights 30 years ago, particularly by the radical nationalist Black Panther Party, the name of Booker T. Washington was rightfully associated with Uncle Tom, a sellout, a bootlicker, a lackey of the bourgeoisie. Today the black nationalists and Democrats pay tribute to this man who agreed with the white ruling class that blacks should accept segregation and "stay in their place." Washington's pro-capitalist program was echoed at last year's Million Man March.

After the Civil War destroyed the slave system, the burial of Radical Reconstruction in the South—notably with the so-called Compromise of 1877—signaled the betrayal of the promise of black freedom by the Northern capitalists. The dreams and expectations of black people were buried under the ashes of Reconstruction, with Klan terrorists providing the torch. Black voters, jurors and elected officials became rare. Lynchings were at an all-time high: at the turn of the century

had to say to my own race, 'cast down your buckets where you are'."

Much of this anti-immigrant prejudice was particularly aimed at Italians. The *Voice of the Negro*, a popular black journal, pounded away at Italian workers for being "hell-generating Mafia," organizers of labor unions, strike happy. By and large, Italians imported to the South did not stay at agricultural jobs, and those who remained there settled in the cities where they opened up restaurants, fruit stands and hotels. Moreover, many Italians were vociferous in denouncing lynching in the South and were baited for being friendly to blacks. Italian immigrants were themselves lynched, particularly in 1892 in New Orleans. The ironies of history!

The black press also fostered anti-immigrant chauvinism toward Mexicans, Chinese and Japanese. In the 1920s, A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first black trade union, waged a campaign to exclude Japanese workers from becoming porters. When the bosses launched a red scare after World War I and deported thousands of immigrants and radicals, the black



WV Photo

San Francisco protest, April 5, against videotaped beating of Mexican immigrants by Riverside County sheriff's deputies.

middle-class reformists labored under the delusion that support to anti-immigrant legislation would radically improve the conditions of blacks. The *Philadelphia Tribune*, a black newspaper, remarked that "restricted immigration is fundamentally sound and will help keep the workers with full dinner pails." As a historian of the period aptly remarked, "The Depression would soon empty those full dinner pails." Subjected to intense racism and excluded from economic life, many blacks were embittered by the fact that immigrants had access to theaters, hotels and other social amenities, and bought into the prevalent white racist prejudices against immigrants. But blacks remained no less poor and downtrodden as a result.

For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Racial Oppression!

It is necessary to reject and politically defeat self-proclaimed spokesmen for the oppressed who spread vile anti-immigrant poison, echoing the racist rulers' divide-and-conquer schemes. The sinister demagogue Farrakhan has regularly gone after immigrants, Koreans and Arabs, for example, because the aspiring petty black capitalists he speaks for want exclusive rights in exploiting the ghetto masses. Recently, the Clinton administration threatened legal action against Farrakhan if he accepted money from Libya. We say that Farrakhan should be able to get money from wherever he desires and the racist capitalist gang in the White House should butt out of it. Not only his but the rights of all of us are at stake.

Many black people look to Farrakhan as the only black leader today fighting back and speaking out. But what is Farrakhan speaking out about? That Jews

and Arabs and Koreans are the enemies of black people. He is an apologist for slavery in Sudan. And his Million Man March was a segregationist, anti-woman, anti-working-class march for "atonement" which blamed blacks for their oppression. It was an accommodation to the racist status quo. That's why the racist rulers praised it. And that's why the cops left it alone. Why, Reaganite Republican vice presidential candidate Jack Kemp recently said that some of the things Farrakhan is doing are "wonderful"!

If there is any doubt where the Nation of Islam and Farrakhan stand, read his response to Clinton on Libya. It's a nauseating, ingratiating pledge of allegiance to the U.S. "democracy" of slaveholders:

"America as the flower of democratic society, guarantees its citizens the freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of the press, freedom from fear, and it gives the citizen the right to sue the government if the government has abridged these constitutional guarantees. This is what makes America great. The saving grace of democracy is it allows those who disagree to have a forum in order to correct what may not necessarily be in the interest of the people or the administration."

You tell that to Geronimo or Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Black front men for the racist status quo are on the same side as the racist capitalist oppressors and are contemptuous of the poor and exploited. Their role is not only as a buffer between the black masses and the white ruling class, but as overseers for the capitalist rulers to keep the lid on and to put out any fire that might consume the master's house. They are opposed to militant, integrated struggle. To the contrary, they are about a black elite fattening itself off the black

masses in the name of "black solidarity."

Our task is to mobilize the most conscious layer of the integrated labor movement under revolutionary leadership to fight for power against this murderous ruling class and its dying system. Black workers are, as Trotsky so succinctly stated, convoked by history to play a vanguard role in the liberation not only of blacks and the American working class, but as cadres for world revolution.

The Labor Black Leagues initiated by and affiliated with the Spartacist League have mobilized against Klan/skinhead terrorists, have joined in defending abortion clinics against "right to life" terrorists, have initiated actions against the attacks on immigrants, and mobilized to protest racist cop murder. The Labor Black Leagues seek to intervene in social struggle as transitional organizations linked to the Spartacist League, as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party. Black, Latino, Asian and white workers, men and women, must fight together in a revolutionary Marxist working-class party to advance the interests of all the poor and oppressed against all the capitalists, no matter what their color or sex.

We are Trotskyists. We proudly say that we are the party of the Russian Revolution. A collectivized, planned economy is necessary to provide for jobs, housing and education for all, to end the oppression of women and minorities and provide a future for youth. Undermined by decades of Stalinist misrule and betrayal, the gains of the October Revolution were finally wiped out by capitalist counterrevolution. Today we fight for a new October, to put the working class in power around the world. Our principal weapon is the program of uncompromising class struggle, internationalist, proletarian and revolutionary. We fight for a Trotskyist party of world socialist revolution, a reformed Fourth International.

We encourage you to become fighters for the revolutionary program of Trotskyism, to study the genuine Marxism embodied in the writings of teachers of the working class like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg, who gave their all for the emancipation of the workers and oppressed from capitalist exploitation. We hope that your patient and systematic examination of the fruits of their theoretical labor and revolutionary practice will lead you to join the International Communist League in our fight for world proletarian revolution and for an egalitarian socialist society without exploiters, a society fit for all of us to live and learn in. ■

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— Immigration and — Racist “Fortress Europe”

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Across Europe, racist attacks on immigrants are at the cutting edge of the capitalist rulers' assault on the living standards and union organizations of the entire working class. Most recently, on September 19 the German government of Christian Democratic chancellor Helmut Kohl announced plans to expel 320,000 Bosnian refugees from the country. This comes at the same time as the German bourgeoisie is preparing to push through a massive package of austerity measures.

The same holds true in France, where the government of President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppé is proposing \$12 billion in budget cuts affecting workers, pensioners and students, while carrying out vicious racist attacks on immigrants and residents of African and North African descent. When French riot cops last month stormed a Paris church occupied by immigrant workers seeking permits to stay in the country, it provoked unprecedented protest demonstrations in which trade-union contingents marched together with black and Maghrebin youth (see “France: Mass Protests Against Racist Deportations,” WV No. 650, 30 August).

The International Communist League has consistently fought for mobilizing the power of the working class to defend immigrant rights, raising the calls for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and for worker/immigrant mobilizations to stop racist terror. Moreover, in countries like France, Germany, Italy and Britain, foreign-born workers are a central and often strategic sector of the proletariat. During last December's strike wave by public sector workers in France, our comrades insisted on the crucial need for the strikers to take up the fight against racial oppression, emphasizing that this was necessary to extend the struggle to the private and mainly industrial sector, with its strong component of workers from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa.

We publish below, in slightly edited



Rebours/AP

Paris, August 21: Trade-union contingents joined mass demonstration in solidarity with immigrant protesters besieged by cops.

form, an article on the question of immigration in Europe which first appeared in *Spartacist* (French edition, No. 29, Summer 1996). This article was initially published as an introduction to a French translation of “In Defense of Revolutionary Integrationism” (*Spartacist* [English edition] No. 49-50, Winter 1993-94).

PART ONE

For most of modern history the United States was the only advanced capitalist country in which there existed a large oppressed minority defined by race. The famous and influential study of blacks in

the U.S. by the Swedish social democrat Gunnar Myrdal in the 1940s was entitled *An American Dilemma*. European social democrats and liberals adopted an air of moral superiority toward anti-black racism and segregation in the United States as if their own societies were immune from such despicable prejudices and practices.

Today, from southern Italy to northern Germany, it has become commonplace for dark-skinned people—immigrant workers and their children, refugees from civil wars and communalist massacres in the Third World—to be killed by fascist gangs or the police. The cultural event of the year in France was the film *La Haine* which depicts 24 hours in the life of three rootless young men who hang out together, all second-generation immigrants: an East European Jew, a North African Arab and a West African black. "An Arab in a police station doesn't last an hour," one of them remarks as a truism. It is telling that in France, the term "immigrants" is used routinely to include people who were born in France and are French citizens.

Over the past decade large fascist parties, such as Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front in France and the Austrian Freedom Party of Jörg Haider, have arisen on a platform of "ethnic cleansing"—the mass expulsion of non-Europeans living in their countries. A British Labour Party member of the European Parliament, Glyn Ford, decries "the rising quagmire of racism and xenophobia, promoted by right-wing extremism, into which our societies run the risk of sinking." But those who bewail the trend while accepting the framework of capitalism can do nothing to resist or reverse the increasing descent of "respectable" politics into an orgy of chauvinist immigrant-bashing.

It is understandable that militants in West Europe's immigrant communities, living in ghettos under racist police occupation, now identify with American blacks, their historic struggles and especially their most radical spokesmen. The powerful personality, writings and speeches of Malcolm X—inspirer of "revolutionary" black nationalism in the U.S. in the 1960s—are admired by young

North Africans and blacks in France as well as youth of African and Caribbean descent in Britain. Groups defending immigrant rights in Europe have rallied to the international campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther and radical journalist on Pennsylvania's death row as a result of a police/FBI frame-up. They see in Mumia not simply a victim of injustice but a comrade in the fight against racial oppression.

While in the past the presence of a large oppressed racial minority was regarded as unique to the United States, one now encounters an opposite tendency, a failure to recognize certain *fundamental differences* in the social character of the American black population and the recently formed non-European communities in West Europe.

The descendants of black Africans enslaved and taken in chains to the New World at the birth of the capitalist system were *integral and central* to the building of the American nation and later of the American nation-state. The American nation was formed in the era of mercantile capitalism through British colonial settlement of a region inhabited by a sparse population of aboriginal peoples with a stone-age culture who proved horribly vulnerable to Afro-Eurasian diseases. The massive importation of slaves from sub-Saharan Africa provided the labor force for the establishment of large-scale plantation agriculture in the southern tier of Britain's North American colonies. The owners of these slave plantations, who developed an aristocratic mentality akin to the European landed nobility, became a dominant component of the ruling class in the American colonies.

When the colonies achieved independence from Britain in the late 18th century, the United States of America was formed as a bourgeois democracy for white, male property owners. Within a few generations, however, male suffrage was extended to the white lower classes. Southern plantation agriculture, centrally cotton, supplied the principal exports for the early American bourgeois state, thereby providing the financial resources for the rapid growth of mercantile and industrial capitalism in the North based on "free" wage labor.

The increasing conflicts of interest between the Southern plantation owners and burgeoning Northern capital led to a full-scale civil war in the 1860s which resulted in the abolition of black chattel slavery when the North won, in part due to the recruitment of hundreds of thousands of blacks into the Union Army. After a tumultuous decade of inter-

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racial bourgeois democracy ("Radical Reconstruction"), a new form of white supremacy was established in the South. The so-called Jim Crow system of legally enforced racial segregation and totalitarian police-state control lasted three-quarters of a century, until the civil rights struggles of the late 1950s-early 1960s brought about a semblance of bourgeois democracy in the region.

American blacks have *always* shared with whites the two main determinants of a national culture: language (English) and religion (Christianity). Interestingly, when the Plains Indians—aboriginal peoples living in the central part of North America—first encountered blacks in the late 19th century, they termed them "the black white men." Blacks in the U.S. are an *oppressed race-color caste* integrated into the American capitalist economy, including strategic sectors of the industrial proletariat, while at the same time largely segregated at the bottom of American bourgeois society.

There will be no social revolution in the United States without the united struggle of black and white workers led by their multiracial vanguard party, which must be the most consistent and active defender of all the specially oppressed layers of society. The revolutionary cadres will certainly be drawn heavily from black proletarians as militants are won to recognizing that there can be no other road to eliminating the special oppression of black people than the conquest of power by the American working class.

Capitalist Counterrevolution Fuels Anti-immigrant Racism

Unlike the black color-caste in the U.S., the presence of a large non-white population in West Europe is, in historical terms, a quite recent development. It was only in the 1960s that the Caribbean islands and Indian subcontinent displaced Ireland as the main source of immigration into Britain. It was not until the 1970s that the number of Turkish *Gastarbeiter* (foreign workers) surpassed Italian *Gastarbeiter* in West Germany. And only in the past decade has the number of foreign workers, mainly North African Arabs, in Italy exceeded the number of Italians working in other European countries. We are thus seeing the recent formation of large non-European, predominantly traditionally Muslim (except in Britain) communities in long-established bourgeois nation-states.

Hence the thrust of nationalist reaction in West Europe is toward the mass expulsion of the non-white population. In last year's presidential election in France,



Detroit News

Black workers played militant role in UAW strike at Detroit Chevrolet plant in mid-1940s, while Jim Crow segregation reigned in the South. The fight against black oppression is key to American workers revolution.



AP

Le Pen, who got 15 percent of the vote, campaigned to "send back home" three million non-European "immigrants." And it would not require the victory of fascism or even the entry of a fascist party into the government in France or elsewhere to forcibly expel hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of immigrants and refugees, especially those who do not have citizenship rights.

By way of historical analogy, during the Great Depression of the early 1930s the number of foreign workers in France—mainly Italians, Poles and Algerians—was reduced by *half a million*, equal to 5 percent of the total labor force. Some left because they couldn't find jobs, but many were simply rounded up and

deported. Throughout the decade anti-immigrant demagoguery, directed especially at Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany and East Europe, fueled French fascism and other right-wing political movements, thus setting the stage for the deportation of Jews by the Vichy regime to the death camps of Nazi-occupied Europe.

Over 20 years ago, when anti-immigrant sentiment re-emerged as a major factor on the West European political scene, our tendency stated:

"The line between reformist social chauvinism and proletarian internationalism in Western Europe must be drawn on the demand that *all* foreign workers are entitled to immediate and full citizenship rights in the nations where they



Illustrated London News

Irish emigrants leaving home in mid-19th century. Chauvinist prejudices against Irish immigrant workers undercut development of class consciousness of British working class.

labor. As any Jamaican or Bengali 'citizen' of Britain will attest, formal citizenship rights do not automatically end the oppression of immigrants. However, winning full citizenship rights for West Europe's foreign workers would be a great victory for proletarian internationalism."

— "West Europe's Imported Labor: A Key to Revolution" (WV No. 31, 26 October 1973)

In the present climate of political reaction—marked by mass unemployment, the drive to dismantle the social-democratic "welfare state" and the effects of the counterrevolution in East Europe and the former Soviet Union—even formal citizenship is not in itself a guarantee against "ethnic cleansing" in West Europe. The immigrant communities are subject to increasing racist oppression—ghettoization, police brutality, fascists. Increasingly segregated, prey to cop and racist violence, and on the bottom of the economic "ladder," dark-skinned European citizens would recognize a lot in the conditions of American blacks.

In the United States, a central slogan of the ICL is "Finish the Civil War—Black liberation through socialist revolution." A central slogan in Europe is for "full citizenship rights" for all immigrants, reflecting the fact that the immigration question is fundamentally a democratic question, which is, however, strategic to proletarian unity. And today, democratic rights—e.g., equal rights for women, national independence of the colonies, immigrants' and minorities' rights—can be won and secured only by the proletariat fighting to take state power away from the bourgeoisie and

establish a socialist economy in a society free of exploitation and all oppression.

Like black Americans, West Europe's dark-skinned proletarians are not just defenseless victims but a very important component of the forces capable of destroying the racist capitalist system. West Indian transport workers and South Asian nurses in Britain, North African Arab and Berber auto workers in France, Turkish coal miners and Kurdish chemical workers in Germany will play an important part in a European proletarian revolution. These workers are a bridge to the workers and peasant masses of the neocolonial Third World, a living link in an international socialist perspective. To transform this perspective into reality requires above all the construction of revolutionary parties, the reorganizing of the Fourth International based on the principles of Lenin and Trotsky.

Immigration and Labor in 19th-Century Britain and France

Unlike in North America, mercantile and then industrial capitalism in Europe developed on a preexisting feudal socio-economic structure based on the exploitation of the peasantry, which constituted the overwhelming majority of the population. Thus in most of Europe the industrial revolution entailed the massive emigration, so to speak, of peasant youth from the countryside to the cities rather than the importation of labor from foreign countries with radically different national cultures (e.g., language, religion). There were, however, two important exceptions, each in a very different way: Britain and France.

Beginning with the 16th century, the development of mercantile capitalism in England pauperized the peasantry, sharply reducing its size as peasants became agricultural laborers and artisan proletarians (e.g., weavers of woolen cloth working in their own homes). In England, the pioneer country of the industrial revolution, factories soon absorbed the indigenous surplus population despite the massive use of child labor. From the mid-19th century onward, the expansion of British capitalism required the importation of impoverished peasants from its oldest and nearest colony, Ireland.

In many important respects, especially in its *political* effects, the Irish immigration in late-19th-century Britain was similar to the Third World immigration in present-day West Europe. Differences in religion—Roman Catholic for the Irish, Protestant for the English—acted as a formidable barrier to intermarriage in an era when the church played a far more important role in working-class communities than it does in contemporary Europe. Furthermore, the colonial subjugation of Ireland impeded not only intermarriage but even social ties between the two main national components of the proletariat in Britain. Many English workers were deeply infected with their rulers' imperialist chauvinism toward the Irish, while Irish immigrant workers viewed all Englishmen as members of the oppressor nation.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels considered the Irish/English antagonism to be a major factor, if not *the* major factor, contributing to the relative political backwardness of the working class in the British Isles despite the existence of a mass trade-union movement. Addressing the 1871 London conference of the First International, Marx stated:

"You will know that between the English workers and the Irish workers there has existed of old very considerable antagonism the causes of which are actually very easy to enumerate. This antagonism has its origin in the differences of language and religion; and in the competition between Irish workers and English workers over wages. In England this antagonism is the dam that holds back the flood of Revolution, hence it is skillfully exploited by the government and upper classes, who are convinced that no bond would be able to unite the English and Irish workers."

The following year Engels, speaking at the International's General Council, condemned "the belief, only too common among English workingmen, that they were superior beings compared to the Irish, and as much an aristocracy as the mean whites of the [American] Slave States considered themselves to

be with regard to the Negroes.”

Throughout the rest of the 19th century, the English trade unions remained politically subordinate to the bourgeois Liberal Party, while Irish working people remained under the sway of petty-bourgeois nationalist movements. It was not until the early years of this century that there emerged even a reformist party of the British working class, the Labour Party. It is perhaps not a historical accident that the Labour Party became the hegemonic party of the British working class in the early 1920s, the same time that Ireland gained its independence from Britain, albeit with the partition of the northern counties of Ulster. Nonetheless, the Irish Republic remained a relatively impoverished neocolony of Britain, exporting labor to the factories and construction sites of London and the Midlands. And to this day, the British upper classes continue to skillfully exploit antagonism between English and Irish working people to impede the forces of social revolution.

In France, the radical bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1789-93 effectively destroyed the landed aristocracy and produced a large and entrenched class of peasant smallholders. The birth rate in 19th-century France, unusually low by European standards, further reduced the supply of surplus labor nec-

essary for the development of an industrial capitalist economy. With the beginnings of the industrial revolution under the Second Empire of Louis Napoleon (1850-70), the French ruling class deliberately opted for the large-scale importation of foreign labor. Given their well-grounded fear of social revolution, they wanted to preserve traditional peasant villages dominated by the local parish priest as bastions of social and political conservatism.

The working class in France was therefore made up in large part of immigrants from Italy, Spain, Belgium, southern Germany and, somewhat later, Poland. In certain periods the scale of immigration exceeded even that of the United States. Many of the members and supporters of the National Front would not today be Frenchmen if Le Pen's program had been applied to their grandfathers and great-grandfathers!

Until the 1930s, the mass of these white, mainly Catholic immigrants were assimilated through widespread intermarriage with the French within a single generation. A number of factors contributed to this development, unique in the history of European industrial capitalism. First, the overwhelming majority of immigrants came from countries which, like France, were traditionally Catholic. Nor were these countries

French colonies or semi-colonies. Thus there was no longstanding political antagonism between Italian immigrant workers and Frenchmen in the late 19th century as there was between Irish immigrants and Englishmen at that time or between Algerians and Frenchmen in France today.

An assimilationist policy was also strongly promoted by the bourgeoisie. In 1889, the anniversary of the Revolution, a new law granted automatic citizenship to anyone born on French soil. While this law was certainly objectively progressive, its authors were by no means motivated by liberal democratic ideals. Faced with the new, more powerful and populous German Second Reich, the French ruling class wanted to conscript the sons of Italian and Spanish immigrant workers into its army.

Nonetheless, the cosmopolitan character of the working class in France strengthened the forces of the left. This became manifest in the Dreyfus Affair of the late 1890s, when the frame-up of a Jewish army officer by an anti-Semitic cabal in the general staff resulted in a sharp left/right polarization leading to the brink of civil war. A heroic and effective role in defense of Dreyfus was played by the famous writer Emile Zola, the son of an Italian immigrant engineer father and a French mother.

For a Leninist Party, Tribune of the People!

PART TWO

Why have large numbers of non-Europeans entered and settled in West Europe over the past few decades? Why have second-generation immigrants (North African and African youth in France, Turkish and Kurdish youth in Germany), many of whom do not even speak the language of their parents' native land, not assimilated through widespread intermarriage as did the children of Italian and Spanish foreign workers in France in the late 19th and early 20th centuries? Why has anti-immigrant racism increasingly dominated West European political and social life in recent years? The answers to these questions are rooted in the post-1945 Cold War division of Europe which ended with capitalist counter-revolution in East Europe and the former Soviet Union.

At the end of World War II, West Europe was pregnant with social revolution. The Soviet Union had acquired enormous new prestige from the Red

Army's victory over Hitler's Wehrmacht, while large sections of the European bourgeoisies were tainted by their collaboration with the Nazi occupation forces. Especially in Italy and France, the national Communist parties had also gained greatly increased authority in the working class. In order to pacify the working masses, with the indispensable help of the social democrats and Stalinists (who joined postwar "popular front" governments with capitalist parties), the bourgeoisie needed to offer a far better deal than the prewar conditions of the Great Depression and the rise of fascism. At the same time, American imperialism promoted and funded social-democratic bureaucrats in the trade unions and anti-Communist reformist parties in order to cohere the NATO alliance against the Soviet bloc. Thus originated the complex of social programs known as the "welfare state"—free or inexpensive medical care, partially government-funded pensions, unemployment insurance, four or five weeks' paid vacation annually, etc.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, West

Europe experienced another period of political instability conditioned by a series of long, losing colonial wars—Algeria, Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique. A new generation of militant working-class and student youth came to the fore, hostile to the traditional social-democratic and pro-Moscow Stalinist parties. In Latin Europe, this period of radicalization culminated in the pre-revolutionary crises of the May-June 1968 events in France and Italy's "hot autumn" the following year, and later the Portuguese Revolution of 1974-75. To restabilize the bourgeois order in the southern tier of NATO, greater concessions were made to the working class while social democracy was deliberately strengthened in this region.

From the late 1940s through the late 1970s, the West European bourgeoisies bought social peace and co-opted the reformist (social-democratic and Stalinist) bureaucracies by accepting a *lower rate of exploitation* than the historic norm. This, however, made it increasingly difficult and uneconomical to employ



Le Bolchévik

Ligue Trotskyste contingent in Paris demonstration against expulsion of immigrants, 1993.

indigenous West European workers at the lower end of the labor market—the kind of jobs historically filled by peasant youth fresh from the countryside. To induce West German, French or Dutch youth to work as unskilled manual laborers—especially at jobs that were hard, dirty, dangerous or regarded as demeaning (e.g., household servants)—would have required *ratcheting up the entire level of wages and benefits* to levels incompatible with profitability. By the 1960s, young West Germans would simply not take jobs like garbage collectors or janitors. And this attitude is now prevalent even in the more backward southern tier of Europe. According to a government official in Rome, “These days you have Egyptian cooks and Filipino maids. There are certain jobs Italians won’t do anymore” (*New York Times*, 8 September 1994).

The Cold War, the “Welfare State” and Mass Immigration in West Europe

The relative prosperity, “welfare state” benefits and increased cultural level of post-1945 West Europe also brought about a significant change in social life and demographic conditions. Women, traditionally housewives beholden to their husbands, went to work. The birthrate fell sharply even in traditionally Catholic countries like Italy. There are now more Italians over the age of 65 than under the age of 15. Thus the economic effect of the higher cost of indigenous West European labor was reinforced by reduced supply. Short of massive, long-term unemployment and a political assault on the “wel-

fare state,” West European capitalism was able to maintain an acceptable rate of exploitation only through the large-scale importation of labor from poor countries.

The Cold War also indirectly determined that those poor countries would increasingly be Third World neocolonies, especially the traditionally Muslim regions of North Africa and Anatolia (the Asian part of Turkey). Before World War II, East Europe was an important source of foreign labor for the more developed western half of the continent. For example, in the 1920s and '30s a large proportion of coal miners in northern France and Belgium were Polish.

The rapid industrialization of the post-1945 East European bureaucratically deformed workers states, based on planned, collectivized economies, absorbed peasant and unemployed urban youth who in previous generations would have worked in West Europe or emigrated to the United States. Since the Stalinist regimes sought to maximize total national output (not the rate of profit), they also prevented emigration through police-state controls. Thus, except for Yugoslavia, East Europe ceased to be a source of cheap foreign labor for West European capitalism until counterrevolution swept across the region in 1989-91.

The first waves of immigrant workers in West Europe were from poorer European countries—Irish in Britain, Spaniards and Portuguese in France, Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs in West Germany. However, the combined effects of economic growth, rising living standards and falling birthrates in these countries reduced their pool of cheap exportable

labor. By the 1960s, the main source of West Europe’s imported labor was the neocolonies of the Third World—the West Indies and South Asia in the case of Britain, North Africa and West Africa in the case of France, and Turkey in the case of West Germany. Thus was introduced into West Europe a large population that was not white and not Christian.

Following the 1974-75 global economic downturn, most West European governments moved to cut down the further influx of foreign workers. West Germany, for example, restricted new immigration to reuniting families and a few particular professions and crafts. The Bonn government even offered Turkish workers lump-sum payments to return to Anatolia but found few takers. Since the mid-1970s, the main source of growth in the “immigrant” communities has been the European-born children of the original immigrants. In Britain, for example, new immigration has been effectively zero for many years, and half of the 2.5 million people considered members of racial minorities were born there.

These second-generation youth are taught in European schools, speak English, French, German, Dutch, etc. as their primary and in many cases only language, and grew up watching European and American films and television programs, etc. The children of Pakistani parents in Britain would be completely alien in Karachi. Yet while these second-generation immigrants are culturally European, they have not been assimilated through widespread intermarriage with their white European contemporaries.

To the pervasive racism of European society is added the Christian/Muslim divide. To be sure, many, if not most, second-generation Arabs and Turks in West Europe are not religious. And this is also true of French and German youth. But the decision to marry across racial and religious lines usually means risking the prospective couple’s being cut off from both families. Mixed marriages are thus uncommon, and those that do occur—subject to hostile social pressures on many sides—experience a high rate of breakups. In 1990, only 1 percent of all children born to Turkish mothers in Germany had ethnic German fathers. The level of mixed marriages is far higher in France with its traditionally more liberal attitude toward race. In 1990, of all children born in France to Algerian mothers, one quarter had Gallic fathers. Nonetheless the underlying thrust of French society today is against integration of the Maghrebian community, as compared for example with the assimilation of the earlier Polish immigrants, who (although



Sygma

Fight against anti-immigrant racism is key to mobilizing workers against capitalist attacks. Above: Workers of North African descent played prominent role in French Peugeot auto strike, 1983. Below: 1992 march in defense of immigrants in Italy.



L'Espresso

they included a component of Jews) were "white."

The self-conception of bourgeois French society is that France is not racist in the American sense of discrimination based on skin color. Those who assimilate into "French culture," so the story goes, will be accepted as French. This is the "secularist" rationale behind such racist measures as expelling girls from school for wearing the *hijab* (Islamic headscarf). A particular obstacle to assimilation is that racism in France is also a legacy of colonialism. The ex-colonial peoples, whom the bourgeoisie has always considered subhumans needing to be "civilized" with the gun, the Bible and the national anthem, today form the core of the immigrant workforce. And racist anti-Arab repression is

further exacerbated by the bourgeoisie's hatred for the Algerian people, which defeated French imperialism and won national independence in 1962.

Over the past eight years, France has been repeatedly swept by massive, integrated youth protests, as "French" and "immigrant" youth have demonstrated together against cop killings and against ruling-class measures to cut costs for education and to introduce a sub-minimum wage for young workers. But the French left, which is still perfectly capable of rallying tens of thousands to protest nuclear testing, by and large has not raised a peep of protest as legions of cops sweep through the Métro to "check the papers" of anyone with a dark skin.

With the immigrant-derived populations increasingly isolated and vulnera-

ble to cop terror, the second-generation youth face astronomical levels of unemployment and are stigmatized as "criminals." Racist oppression thus directly engenders segregation and the defensive compaction of the Maghrebian "community," also strengthening the hold of religious and other "traditional" values. Thus the immigrant-derived youth who are condescendingly counseled to "assimilate" are in fact thrown by racist oppression and indifference back into the embrace of their families—an embrace often closer than many, especially young girls, would choose if they really had an option of integrating into an egalitarian, pluralistic, anti-racist society.

Despite differences between various European countries, the basic social fact is that large communities of dark-skinned non-Europeans now exist within West Europe's bourgeois nation-state system. And these communities have become the main target of bourgeois reaction fueled by the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc.

Social Democracy: "Left" Face of Racist Reaction

The 1980s saw the efforts of the European bourgeoisies to increase the rate of exploitation which had become unacceptably low by international standards. While the Thatcher regime in Britain launched a frontal assault on the "welfare state" and the trade-union movement, the anti-working-class offensive in continental West Europe first manifested itself at the level of employment. Capitalists simply cut back on hiring young workers newly entering the job market, claiming that the prevailing level of wages and state-mandated benefits made it impossible for them to compete effectively with the Americans and Japanese. Mass unemployment, especially among the youth, has been a major feature of the West European economies since the world downturn of 1982-83.

France in the 1980s, in particular, offers clear and compelling proof of the impotence of social-democratic reformism in the face of the capitalist market, national and international. The country had a social-democratic president, François Mitterrand, while the Socialists were the dominant and at times sole party of government. Yet the level of unemployment far exceeded that under the previous three decades of right-wing bourgeois governments. The unemployment rate, which was 6 percent when Mitterrand entered the Elysée Palace in 1981, climbed to over 10 percent by the end of the decade and has continued rising in the 1990s.

Far from protecting the economic interests of the working class, the Labour and "Socialist" politicians are beneficiaries of anti-working-class "austerity": the bourgeoisie hands them the trappings of governmental power precisely when it wants to defuse resistance to its attacks. As New York City's former black mayor, David Dinkins, once promised the bankers, the working people "will take it from me."

At the same time, West European capitalists have utilized immigrant workers to hold down and reduce labor costs, often by disregarding labor laws and health and safety codes. Many foreign workers, especially "illegals," are hired "off the books" so they do not get medical, unemployment and pension benefits. In the mid-1980s, Günter Wallraff, a West German journalist of leftist sympathies, disguised himself as a Turkish *Gastarbeiter* (named "Ali") and recounted his experiences in *Ganz unten (Rock Bottom)*. In one job Wallraff/Ali and his fellow *Gastarbeiter* were not only forced to work two regular shifts a day but had to clean coke dust from steelmaking equipment without wearing masks or helmets. As a result, Wallraff suffered chronic damage to his bronchial tubes.

Thus, rising unemployment among West European youth has gone hand in hand with the brutal superexploitation of dark-skinned immigrant workers. In the absence of revolutionary, i.e., genuinely communist, parties capable of uniting the working class in struggle against the ravages of capitalism, the fascists and other far-right forces have taken advantage of West Europe's deteriorating social and economic conditions. For example, Austria's Jörg Haider, whose Freedom Party received over 20 percent of the vote in the last elections, organizes rallies with Nazi SS veterans, praises Hitler's "proper employment policy" and terms Nazi death camps like Auschwitz "punishment camps." One of his standard lines is: "There are 140,000 unemployed Austrians" and "180,000 foreigners." Similarly, a cadre of France's National Front recently told American journalist Mark Hunter, "If unemployment goes down, we're finished" (*New York Times Magazine*, 21 April). While unfortunately an oversimplification, this statement expresses an important core of truth.

It is common on the European left to blame the rising tide of anti-immigrant racism on the demagoguery of "extreme" right-wing groups. But the fascists are simply expressing in an open, unvarnished and violent way the *economic and political interests* of the European ruling classes at the present juncture. European

capital now has no need for additional imported labor from Third World countries, while second-generation immigrant youth are economically redundant and regarded as a source of social unrest. For the first time in decades, French and German youth, facing chronic unemployment, are willing to take the kind of jobs that a few years ago only Arabs, black Africans, Turks and Kurds would do. Furthermore, capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc has opened a major new sphere of exploitation for European, especially German, imperialism. A few years ago, German industrial spokesman Tyll Neckar exulted: "Right on our doorstep in Eastern Europe, for the first time we have a vast pool of cheap and highly trained labor." Instead of importing labor from Turkey, German industry is exporting capital for the exploitation of labor in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, etc.

As we have pointed out, the social-democratic "welfare state" originated and was maintained because European imperialism needed to secure the support or at least neutrality of their working classes for the Cold War against the Soviet Union. Now, however, the European bourgeoisies are scrapping these social overhead costs and moving to maximize the rate of exploitation in intense competition with the United States and Japan. Anti-immigrant demagoguery and terror are being used to *divide and divert* the working class from united struggle against the present capitalist offensive.

The main body of social democrats have abandoned their liberal posture on the immigrant question and are vying with the right in chauvinist demagoguery. Brought to power in 1981, the French "left," facing strikes by immigrant auto-

mobile workers in 1982, quickly took a series of disgusting racist measures. In 1988, Mitterrand declared that France had reached the "threshold of tolerance" of immigration. And in Germany in 1993, the Social Democrats joined with the Christian Democrats in effectively eliminating the right of political asylum written into the postwar West German constitution. A few nights later, fascists "celebrated" by firebombing the home of Turkish families in a Ruhr city, killing five women and children. The struggle against anti-immigrant racism must be conducted not only militantly against the fascists but equally on the political plane against the reformist misleaders of the workers movement.

In classical Marxist terms, the reformist parties express the immediate interests and bourgeois consciousness of the "aristocracy of labor"—the whitest and most skilled layers of the proletariat and especially the labor bureaucracy. Nowhere is this clearer than in their prostration before the anti-immigrant frenzy. The German SPD sees itself as representing the workers of the majority group, and certainly not the Turkish and Kurdish workers who do not even vote. The bureaucratized French trade unions were happy to use the non-participation of the "private sector" (heavily immigrant-derived) industrial workers as the excuse to call off last winter's strike wave, but never tried to organize strong militant unions to break the non-union and company-union patterns in industries like the private auto companies.

For Proletarian Struggle Against Anti-Immigrant Racism!

The interests of labor and minorities advance together, or they fall back



H. Christoph.

Ruhr aluminum factory. Turkish and Kurdish workers are strategic component of industrial proletariat in Germany.

together. In the mid-to-late 1950s, the CGT at Renault Billancourt organized a large proportion of the workers in the plant (unlike today's "minority" union representation). The Communist Party's naked social-patriotic betrayal of the anti-colonial struggle in Algeria, lining up with French imperialism as it bloodily repressed the Algerian masses, struck a terrible blow against class consciousness and communist sympathies among Algerian workers in France, who included the majority of workers at Billancourt. The CP underlined its betrayal when the *Humanité* office barred its doors against people trying to escape the bullets and clubs when an October 1961 demonstration in Paris for Algerian independence was attacked by the cops, leaving hundreds dead.

Immigrant workers at factories like Talbot, on strike during the winter of 1983-84, were a spearhead of militant class struggle in defense of the economic interests of the entire working class. But the bureaucracy left them hanging out to dry. The splitting effects of this betrayal remain in the consciousness of the proletariat. Among the results of a "leadership" that won't fight on behalf of the specially oppressed are weak unions that don't defend the interests of any of their members and a political climate dominated by racist arguments in the mouths of both the right and the "left."

The reformist betrayers, who always begin by accepting the limits of whatever racist capitalism says is "possible" (in other words, profitable), are more than willing to compete with the rightists in chauvinist attacks on minorities. Trailing along behind them are many of the groups of the "socialist" left, who—when they do not openly echo the bourgeoisie's racist: code words about "drugs" and "crime" and "terrorism" and the bureaucracy's poisonous appeals against foreign workers "stealing our jobs"—content themselves with abstract "anti-racist" appeals which they do nothing to really implement, for example in the unions where they have influence. Their empty moralism dovetails conveniently with the hypocrisy of the big reformist parties who turn around and organize mass marches for "tolerance"...after the official racist consensus in which they partake has emboldened fascist terrorists to burn down immigrant hostels, murdering men, women and children.

There can be no compromise between the internationalist program which the proletariat requires to fight for power—and even to wage defensive struggles in the imperialist epoch—and the acceptance of the poisonous racism which

In fight for proletarian political revolution against capitalist restoration in East Germany, 1989-90, ICL issued internationalist greetings to Soviet soldiers and Vietnamese, Polish and Cuban workers. Counterrevolution has fueled anti-immigrant terror.

**Интернационалистический привет
нашим товарищам
советским солдатам и офицерам!**

Этой 1917 года большевистская революция открыла перед

человека
солда
проле
револю
офице
интерн

**Internationalistische Grüße an unsere vietnamesischen Genossen!
Cách mệnh quốc-tê chào đón công sản bạn Việt-Nam!**

Cách mạng tháng Mười 1917 đã đón mừng chiến sĩ cách mạng từ mọi

**Pozdrowienia od Internacjonalistów;
Witajcie Polscy Towarzysze!**

Polityczna rewolucja robotników niemieckich nawiązuje do bolszewickiej tradycji
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szarabi
strom
przez
Czerw
Także
i wolt

**¡Saludos internacionalistas a
nuestros compañeros cubanos!**

**Internationalistische Grüße an unsere kubanischen Genossen!
Internationalist Greetings to our Cuban Comrades!**

La Revolución Bolchevique de 1917 acogió a todos los luchadores revolucionarios del mundo como ciudadanos plenos en la nueva república soviética. Así también la revolución política proletaria alemana les ofrece a ustedes, nuestros hermanos de clase, la mano de la solidaridad internacionalista.

Los obreros revolucionarios de la RDA saludan las aportaciones duraderas que Uds. y sus compatriotas han hecho en su victoriosa revolución contra los sanguinarios imperialistas norteamericanos y sus aliados burgueses cubanos. Reconocemos los terribles sacrificios que han hecho al llevar a cabo sus esfuerzos internacionalistas en su defensa de Angola y Namibia contra las fuerzas del apartheid sudafricano.

Una nueva Alemania gobernada por la genuina democracia proletaria de soviets, consejos de obreros y soldados—una Alemania roja que Lenin, Luxemburg y Liebknecht reconocieron como suya—extenderá a todos los trabajadores fraternales aquí un asilario y vivienda decentes, la igualdad social, dignidad, libertad y honor.

Mientras el estalinismo en Europa Oriental se derrumba bajo su propio

splits the working class and serves only the bourgeois masters. The revolutionary Trotskyists of the International Communist League have actively championed the rights of immigrants, fighting for full citizenship rights for everyone—no matter how they managed to get here. The ICL's French section, the Ligue Trotskyiste, fights for organizing mass labor/immigrant mobilizations to smash fascist provocations. In 1993 in Paris, we waged a propaganda campaign for the labor movement to turn out en masse to defend the 18th *arrondissement*, which had been placed under a state of siege: the racist state sent in an army of cops to crush a revolt of youth who took to the streets after a young African was shot in a police station. LTF supporters in the public sector during last December's strikes called on their unions to fight the racist ban on employment of immigrant workers in government jobs.

Only a new, revolutionary leadership—a Trotskyist proletarian party—can unite the working class in opposition to the class enemy and its racist system. Only such a party can win to the side of workers revolution the immigrant workers and the new generation of activist youth. Thousands of youth throughout Europe have sought to militantly defend immigrants and second-generation youth; many now think of themselves as "anarchists," out of disgust with the chauvinism and indifference of parties calling themselves "socialists" and "communists."

Indifference to racial oppression flows

directly from a perspective of *class collaboration*. The fundamental method of the reformists is to seek allies in some sector of "their own" national bourgeoisie (this year in France, the CP is trying to form a bloc with the "anti-Maastricht" bourgeoisie) and certainly not to look for allies among the specially oppressed layers of the working people. We proletarian revolutionaries are the opposite: not made stupid and corrupt chasing after "friends" among the class enemy, we know who our friends are.

While there are important differences in the nature and role of blacks in the United States and the non-European immigrant communities in West Europe, the struggle to overcome racial and ethnic divisions is strategically central to communist leadership of the working class and its allies in all regions of the capitalist world. As we wrote over 20 years ago in "West Europe's Imported Labor: A Key to Revolution" (WV No. 31, 26 October 1973):

"Just as achieving racial unity is central to working-class consciousness in the U.S., so integrating foreign workers into the labor movement is now key to deepening the internationalist consciousness of the French and German proletariat. Conversely, anti-foreign-worker policies are now the main axis for West European reaction. When the French fascist 'Ordre Nouveau' (New Order) reasserted its public presence recently, it did so through a rally to expel foreign workers. The struggle against the oppression of foreign workers is at the same time crucial to winning the West European proletariat to socialist internationalism." ■

Cops Invade Church, Arrest Immigrants

France: Mass Protests Against Racist Deportations

AUGUST 25—Twenty thousand people marched through the streets of Paris last Friday to protest the cops' storming of a church occupied by over 300 immigrant workers seeking permits to stay in the country. The protest march came hours after a thousand club-wielding riot cops had assaulted St. Bernard church with tear gas, smashed through the ring of people who had blocked the entrance in solidarity with the immigrants, and broke down the doors of the church with axes. Police completely sealed off the heavily immigrant Goutte d'Or quarter around the church to ensure that none of the immigrants slipped through their dragnet, and many neighborhood residents were chased down and beaten.

The early morning raid came just hours after Prime Minister Alain Juppé railed on national television that the immigrants "have no right to live in France." A leader of Le Pen's fascist National Front applauded the racist assault, declaring, "This should have been done 45 days ago." Ten of the immigrant protesters, who were in the eighth week of a hunger strike, were dragged off to military hospitals where they were placed under guard. Some 210 arrested immigrants, including 68 children, were locked up in the Vincennes military detention center on the eastern edge of the capital.

The government's action provoked a virtually unprecedented protest demonstration in defense of immigrants, in which trade-union contingents marched together with youth of African and North African descent. There were contingents of metalworkers, Air France employees, teachers, postal workers, and others from the CGT, CFDT and SUD union federations. Chanting "*Libérons les sans papiers!*" (Let's free the undocumented immigrants!), thousands of militant protesters continued marching on to the Vincennes detention center. When the police brutally charged the demonstration at Vincennes, the protesters fought back, and there were running fights with the cops until well into the night. When the first plane took off last night from the Evreux military base west of the capital,

deporting four of those arrested at the church along with about 50 other "illegal" immigrants, 150 stone-throwing demonstrators who tried to block the flight fought with police.

Although clearly taken aback by the scope of the protests, the conservative government under President Jacques Chirac is determined to deport most of the arrested immigrants. The interior ministry announced that only about 40 of those seized in the church would be granted residence permits. But the judicial proceedings against the 80 immigrants who have so far been dragged before administrative court have been such a travesty—with patently falsified documents, arrestees held incommunicado, etc.—that judges have repealed 45 of the expulsion orders. During the first six months of this year, over 7,000 people have been deported in a steady succession of charter plane flights to Africa initiated by the former president, "Socialist" François Mitterrand. These workers, who came to France seeking a better life, are being thrown back to face poverty, repression and, in some cases, starvation.

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

The Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), section of the International Communist League, has consistently fought for mobilizing the power of the working class to defend immigrant rights. During last December's strike wave by public sector workers, the LTF insisted on the crucial need for the strikers to take up the fight against racial oppression, warning: "The working-class leaders' refusal to fight against racist terror is an obstacle to the necessary extension of the struggle to the private and mainly industrial sector, with its strong, combative component of workers from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa" (see *WV* No. 636, 5 January). In the face of widespread anti-immigrant racism and rampant fascist and cop terror, our comrades raise the call: *For worker/immigrant mobilizations to stop racist terror! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Last Friday, at a workers' general assembly of the SUD and CGT unions at the Paris-Bourseul postal money order center, a supporter of the LTF countered the bureaucrats' insipid motion to write a protest letter to Chirac. She called for the unions to mobilize the power of the working class to stop the deportations:

"We are still living under the reign of Vigipirate, a campaign of racist terror against which the union organizations did not mobilize last December. If they had, we wouldn't be in this situation. Against this terror what is needed are mass workers actions organized by our unions. At the time of [Zairian immigrant] Makome's murder in the same arrondissement [district] some years ago, what was needed was for the organized working class to converge on the 18th arrondissement. Today, the government wants to load up military charter flights because the pilots unions refuse to fly them. What is posed is mobilizing powerful workers contingents in Villacoublay [military airport] to stop these deportations. And right now it is necessary to demand immediate freedom and the dropping of all charges for all those arrested this morning."

As French authorities prepared to deport immigrants on a military charter after civilian pilots refused to fly the deportees out, the union of Air Afrique employees issued a formal instruction that none of that carrier's workers throughout Africa "should take part in the base task of helping these flights of shame." When the French military transport carrying the deportees made a stopover in the Senegalese capital of Dakar, it was delayed because the airport ground staff refused to service it. When the plane finally arrived in Bamako, the capital of Mali, airport personnel again boycotted it, and French authorities had to use a military cargo plane to fly in an exit ramp in order to get people off the plane.

Such actions concretely demonstrated the possibility of forging international class unity between workers' struggles in France and Africa. Such a perspective of proletarian internationalism is sharply counterposed to the chauvinist protectionism pushed by the reformist working-class leaders, like the call of the Communist Party (PCF) to "produce French."

The protests over the threatened deportations are an extremely significant event for French workers. The bourgeoisie—joined by the reformist misleaders—relies on exacerbating racial and ethnic divisions in the working class to undercut class struggle. The labor tops supported Chirac's "anti-terrorist" Operation Vigipirate, in which the army was

called out to terrorize immigrant neighborhoods. For years, the PCF and CGT leaders have put the blame for unemployment on immigrants, calling for closing the borders and expelling "ill-gals." And during his 14-year reign, Mitterrand made anti-immigrant racism a hallmark of his rule.

Following the powerful strike wave last winter, Chirac ratcheted up the racist campaign against "immigrants" (which in France means anyone with dark skin). Last March when the immigrant families arrested on Friday, along with others, occupied another Paris church, St. Ambroise, the cops brutally drove them out at the request of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and many were deported. This racist assault provoked protest demonstrations in several cities.

The size of Friday's demonstration, called by the trade unions on just a few hours' notice, testifies to a sound instinct within the working class in favor of class unity. The size of the demonstrations is doubly impressive when one realizes that Paris is virtually deserted in August as most people leave on vacation. During the occupation of the St. Bernard church, hundreds of people came every day to demonstrate their support, including leaders of the CGT and other unions. Friday's demonstration comes after a previous one last Wednesday—which also included sizable trade-union contingents—to protest an earlier cop assault on the same church.

Last week, the CGT and CFDT trade-union federations, along with the FEN and FSU teachers unions, issued a joint statement calling for "direct negotiations" by the government with the hunger-strikers and for a "freeze on deportations." But what was needed was to unleash the power of the working class, including through strikes and mobilizations of thousands to block the military airports until Chirac backed down.

Revolutionary Leadership Is Key

The massive outpouring of protest against the racist deportations exposes the lie of various fake revolutionaries who write off the possibility of winning the working class to the fight against racist attacks. During the strike wave last December, the LTF was unique in underlining the key importance of this issue in its propaganda directed at striking workers. The entire gamut of organizations to the left of the PCF and the Socialist Party (PS)—from Alain Krivine's Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) to Lutte Ouvrière (LO), Pouvoir Ouvrier

(PO) and the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire (JCR)—totally ignored, in their leaflets to strikers, the need to fight racial discrimination and segregation, the exclusion of foreign workers from the public sector, and the racist Vigipirate campaign.

The question of revolutionary leadership is key. The most advanced workers must be won to a program which links their immediate struggles to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Otherwise, even the most powerful working-class mobilization can be undercut, dissipated, and channeled into the reactionary dead end of class collaboration. After ducking the question of racial oppression during last December's strikes in order not to antagonize the bureaucrats, who were lined up behind the government's racist offensive, the centrists now seek to cynically use Chirac's attacks on immigrants in order to channel support to the new class-collaborationist popular front which the PCF, the PS and their bourgeois partners are putting together. Thus, the LCR and LO signed a joint declaration last week with the PCF, the PS, the ultra-chauvinist Mouvement des Citoyens (Movement of Citizens) and the bourgeois Radical Party calling on Chirac to negotiate with the immigrants occupying the church—because "the image of France could be lastingly tarnished."

While PO, which is affiliated with the British Workers Power group, formally stands outside this reactionary lash-up, in reality it constitutes the left wing of what Trotsky called a "syphilitic chain" of class collaboration, leading through the PCF and PS to the bourgeoisie. As always, the centrists of PO tail what is

popular. With masses of workers on the streets opposing anti-immigrant racism, PO has now issued a leaflet (dated 23 August) calling "For Working-Class Mobilization to Stop the Deportations!" But nowhere is there any mention of last December's strikes. Little wonder, since at the time PO refused to so much as mention the need to mobilize the working class to fight Operation Vigipirate and the all-sided attacks on immigrants. And far from exposing the treacherous role of the reformist bureaucrats, PO builds illusions by calling on the trade-union leaders to "make their acts conform to their words!"

But the union tops have *no words* when it comes to racial discrimination in jobs, housing and education; to racist cop terror and Operation Vigipirate; to the denial of citizenship rights to immigrants. The bureaucrats refuse to challenge racial oppression because it is inherent to the capitalist system, which they uphold. In its August 23 leaflet, PO clamors, "It's Chirac...who must be thrown out!" But to be replaced by what? PO's unspoken answer is obvious: a new class-collaborationist alliance with the bourgeoisie. PO has always supported the popular front by calling for a vote to its reformist working-class components.

The LTF is fighting, in sharp political struggle against such opportunism, to regroup and consolidate the cadres for the forging of a revolutionary workers party. Such a party would be, in Lenin's words, a tribune of the people, uniting minorities, women, youth and all the oppressed behind the proletariat's struggle to overthrow the capitalist system—the root cause of racial oppression—and set up a socialist order. ■



Paris cops storm church, drag away immigrants on August 23.

AP

Farrakhan and the Sudan Slave Trade

Louis Farrakhan is currently traveling through Africa, where he has met with, among others, Libya's Muammar Qaddafi and Nelson Mandela in South Africa. Farrakhan launched his "friendship tour" in order to pursue his political and social aims and projects and for evident self-enhancement, newly magnified by his leadership of the Million Man March in October. Particularly in light of the Nation of Islam (NOI) leader's heightened prominence, it behooves all those who struggle for black emancipation to look even more sharply and closely at the aims and practices of Farrakhan's movement as shown in concrete circumstances.

Through newspaper articles, conferences and demonstrations, "new abolitionists" have exposed the continuing existence of black chattel slavery in Mauritania, on North Africa's Atlantic coast, and in Sudan, Africa's largest country. When this issue hit the black press, it naturally caused an uproar among American blacks, who were emancipated from slavery barely 130 years ago with the victory of the Union Army over the slaveholding South. What particularly made this a red-hot issue for black people was the revelation that Farrakhan and the NOI are acting as *apologists for black African slavery*, stemming from their close ties to the vicious military dictatorship of Sudan, which professes Islamic fundamentalism.

Farrakhan's support to the Sudanese slave masters is yet another example of his utterly reactionary program and purpose. Last fall, *Workers Vanguard* forthrightly called his Washington, D.C. march for "atonement" a "poisonous reactionary mobilization" which was "directly counterposed to any struggle for black emancipation" (*WV* No. 631, 20 October 1995). We noted that despite the racist rulers' hypocritical denunciations of Farrakhan's anti-Semitic and anti-white demagoguery, capitalist politicians ranging from Democratic president Clinton to Republican Senate leader Bob Dole embraced the march's aim of making black males take "responsibility" for the conditions of their own oppression. Almost all black politicians hailed the



Konnerth/Lichtblick

Nation of Islam demagogue Louis Farrakhan (below left) maintains cozy relationship with Islamic fundamentalist leader Hassan al-Turabi of Sudan (below right), denies existence of slave trade there. Above: black slaves sold at market in Sudan.



Faircloth/Philadelphia Daily News



Bonner/NY Times

event as they courted Farrakhan's increased following, while virtually all the black press signed on as publicity agents for the march. And much of the reformist "left" threw its support to the march while claiming to separate the "message" from its "messenger."

Many blacks who marched in Washington did so out of a desire for some, any action that claimed to fight for the

rights of blacks in this increasingly vicious racist society. Farrakhan's posture as a black "leader" who stands up to the racist rulers will likely be strengthened now that he is being vilified by right-wing yahoos in Congress for securing a promise of financial assistance from Libyan strongman Qaddafi, who was himself targeted for assassination by U.S. imperialist air strikes on Tripoli in

1986. For its part, the Justice Department immediately threatened to force the NOI leader to register as an agent of a foreign government. Yet the U.S. government didn't bat an eye over Farrakhan's embrace, during his tour, of Nigerian military dictator Sani Abacha, whose recent execution of well-known poet Ken Saro-Wiwa and seven other dissidents has provoked international outrage.

However, Farrakhan's trip got major media attention when he met with South African president Nelson Mandela. The NOI head hypocritically played up to Mandela by appealing for "Muslims and Christians and Jews" to "work together for the common good." Nonetheless, Mandela felt the need to distance himself from the racist NOI demagogue, admonishing him about the ANC principle of "nonracialism."

Louis Farrakhan is no fighter for black rights. He is a sinister huckster who seeks only to be an exploiter of "his" people. Farrakhan's backward worldview degrades black people themselves, not least black women, who lead a strictly segregated existence in the NOI and were excluded *en masse* from the Washington march. And his cozying up to brutal military chiefs who engage in and protect the growing market for black African slaves in Sudan gives further proof of what we have said all along, that Farrakhan is bad news for black people.

The Scourge of African Slavery Today

The Brooklyn-based black newspapers *City Sun* and *Daily Challenge* have run literally dozens of articles in the past year exposing the horror of contemporary slavery in northern Africa, notably a three-part series last February by the *City Sun's* Samuel Cotton. Others who have been active in the anti-slavery campaign include Nate Clay of Chicago's *New Metro News* and WLS radio, Washington, D.C. radio host Joe Madison, and Republican Tony Brown, whose PBS TV show aired documentary evidence. Protest meetings and debates have been held at Harlem's Schomburg Library and at black churches and schools uptown and in Brooklyn. Abolitionist conferences at Columbia University and the New York Law School have featured eyewitness reports on slavery in Mauritania and Sudan.

"As you read this," wrote Cotton, "there are Black people being bought and sold in two North African countries" (*City Sun*, 1 February 1995). Cotton continued:

"Although slavery was declared abolished three times since Mauritania's independence in 1960, it persists. Slaves



WV Map

are given as wedding gifts, traded for camels, guns or trucks, and inherited... "In the Islamic Republic of the Sudan, as a result of an Islamic vs. Christian civil war, Black women and children (mostly Christian) are being captured in raids on their villages and sold as chattel slaves."

Such reports have been widely documented in recent years by a number of human rights groups, such as Anti-Slavery International in London and the Puebla Institute, affiliated to the Catholic church.

In 1994, a United Nations special report on Sudan by Hungarian lawyer Gaspar Biro detailed systematic torture and "disappearances" of opponents of the regime and reported that women and children "are kept in special camps where people from the north or from abroad come to purchase them for money or goods such as camels." In its report, *The Tears of Orphans* (1995), Amnesty International confirmed reports of abduction and enslavement of women and children in Sudan, adding that the southern Sudanese anti-government forces have also murdered and abducted villagers, not only suspected government sympathizers but others who fell afoul of tribal and factional conflicts.

Village Voice columnist Nat Hentoff has also written a number of articles recently on the slave trade in Sudan. In one of them, Hentoff cites an account by Professor Ushari Ahmad Mamoud, who was imprisoned by the previous Sudanese regime in 1986 for his reports on the slave trade: "What usually happens is that Arab armed militias go into the Southern villages or the Nuba mountains.... They burn the villages. The men are killed if they don't escape, and the women and children are rounded up. The survivors

are tied up and taken to the Arab north.... The women and children are put to work in the fields—all without pay—and are also available as slave concubines" (*Village Voice*, 12 December 1995).

Farrakhan's Sudan Connection

Enraptured by Farrakhan's new political clout, much of the American black political establishment has utterly ignored the revelations of slavery in Africa. Jesse Jackson has yet to make a statement, although both the NAACP and the head of the Congressional Black Caucus have issued condemnations, but they are seeking to refurbish the "democratic" credentials of U.S. imperialism.

African anti-slavery activists wrote to Farrakhan asking for a speaker on the subject at the Million Man March; he turned a deaf ear to them. This was no aberration: Farrakhan had already dismissed the issue of slavery in Sudan as a concoction of the "Western press." This was hardly a statement of concern for the hypocrisy and lies regularly doled out by the mainstream imperialist media. His protestations came in the form of a letter read by NOI international spokesman Abdul Akbar Muhammad to a "Popular Arab & Islamic Conference" in Khartoum last March. The conference was run by Islamic fundamentalist Sheik Hassan al-Turabi, the power behind the Sudanese regime. The year before, Farrakhan himself had been feted as a guest of Sudanese leaders General Omar Hassan al-Bashir and Sheik Hassan al-Turabi, who of course themselves deny that slavery exists in their country.

In a venomous anti-Semitic diatribe in the NOI's *Final Call* (12 April 1995), Muhammad denounced the anti-slavery campaign as a "Big Lie," later charging

that it seeks to "divert attention from the role Jews played in the slave trade" (*Final Call*, 26 April 1995). In an outraged response to this despicable disinformation campaign, which was picked up by some of the black press, black journalist William Pleasant wrote in his new weekly paper, the *Liberator* (4 January), that much of "the Black media either turned its back on the African slaves or adopted the numbskull, Jew-baiting arguments in support of the slaving regimes of Sudan and Mauritania served up by the Nation of Islam's Akbar Muhammad."

As part of its attempt to channel black anger against capitalist oppression into anti-Semitism, including in such tracts as *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, the NOI has long purveyed the absurd claim that 75 percent of slaves in the American South before the Civil War were owned by Jews. As we pointed out in "Farrakhan Is Bad News for Black People" (*WV* No. 600, 13 May 1994): "In reality, the not very numerous Jews in the South in 1860 owned a tiny fraction of the four million slaves, and only a tiny proportion of the Atlantic slave trade involved Jewish merchants." Arab merchants and black African tribal chiefs were heavily involved in the Atlantic slave trade, too. But of course Farrakhan disappears this incontrovertible historical fact.

For all of Farrakhan's hypocritical denunciations of the Atlantic slave trade, the vile bigotry of his racist demonology reveals shared social values with the contemporary slave traders in the Sudan, particularly their anti-woman fundamentalism. NOI doctrine holds, in Elijah Muhammad's words, that "the woman is man's field to produce his nation." This is no doubt music to the ears of the Islamic establishment in Sudan, which imprisons women in the veil and where the hideous practice of female genital mutilation is pervasive. The would-be exploiter of the black ghetto masses in the U.S. clearly feels at home with the heads of African dictatorships.

Despite his affinity with the Arabic-speaking Islamic fundamentalist regime in Khartoum, in the U.S. Farrakhan purveys anti-Arab and anti-Asian no less than anti-Jewish bigotry. In his infamous "bloodsuckers" speech on the eve of the Million Man March, Farrakhan ranted: "We considered them [the Jews] bloodsuckers because they took from our community and built their community but didn't offer anything back to our community. And when the Jews left, the Palestinian Arabs came, Koreans came, Vietnamese and other ethnic and racial groups came. And so this is a type and we call them

bloodsuckers." This is pogromist, a recipe for all-sided race war, which could only benefit the likes of the KKK and other fascists and in which black people would be the biggest losers.

U.S./UN Imperialists: Hands Off Africa!


A number of opponents of slavery in Africa have appealed to the U.S. government or the United Nations to act to end the trade in human chattel. For example, the "Coalition Against Slavery in Africa" demonstrated outside the UN in September demanding, in the words of CASIA president Dede Ombombassa, that Sudan and Mauritania be "diplomatically, financially and culturally isolated" (*Daily Challenge*, 25 September 1995). Such calls are an invitation to continued imperialist exploitation and oppression. In Zaire in the 1960s, UN intervention was a cover for the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the fight against Belgian colonial rule in the Congo. More recently, the 1993 neocolonial occupation of famine-stricken Somalia, also carried out under the UN flag and in the name of "humanitarianism," was marked by brutal massacres like the slaughter of some 200 civilians in Mogadishu who were gunned down by U.S. troops firing from Cobra helicopters.

Today Washington labels the Kharطوم regime as "terrorist." But today's "terrorist" is often yesterday's CIA "asset." During the Cold War, Turabi and his reactionary Muslim Brotherhood group were considered an "asset" by the State Department because of his vehement anti-Communism and his alliance with mullahs fighting against the USSR in Afghanistan. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. no longer needed this relationship with the Sudan regime. As *CovertAction* (Summer 1994) noted, "Throughout the Cold War, the official U.S. position was that the [southern] SPLA rebel army was simply a communist organization set up by the Eastern bloc to destabilize a pro-Western Sudan." But now American attentions have shifted south, and the U.S. "is looking for any excuse to provide more substantial assistance" to the rebels.

Historically, it was the imperialist "scramble for Africa" in the latter part of the 19th century which created the structure of Sudan today. This is the period of the British drive to create a "Cape to Cairo" East African empire linked by rail and telegraph, which the French sought to spike by creating a colonial belt across Central Africa from the Congo to the Red Sea. The Italians and the German Kaiser grabbed bites wherever they could, and

80 Million Women Maimed

The Crime of Female Genital Mutilation



Women and Revolution

Two million victims are maimed each year.

Women and Revolution Issue No. 41 (Summer/Autumn 1992), available for \$1 from Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

the treacherous King Leopold II of Belgium carved out a monstrous regime of terror in the Belgian Congo, under which some eight million Africans died over a 50-year period—the holocaust of the 19th century. The rival imperialists tore the tribal structures and agrarian societies of the continent apart, while ensuring the survival and reinforcement of ancient tribal practices suited to the Europeans' "divide and rule" program. This is what the Dinka people of southern Sudan call "the time when the world was spoilt." As David Levering Lewis writes in his book, *The Race to Fashoda* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987), by the late 19th century:

"Territorial dispossession, institutional chaos, collective panic, and disease and famine had ignited a wave of flesh-eating that spread from inveterate cannibals like Bakusa to Batetela, the Mangbetu, and much of Zande. Before the end of the decade [the 1870s], the felon interplay of raids, migrations, and animal and crop wastage would open the Interior to tsetse fly. Trypanosomiasis, sleeping sickness, would soon devastate whole peoples from the mouth of the Congo to Lake Victoria. Much of Africa was becoming as anarchic, pestilential, and brutal as the arriving missionaries, physicians, soldiers, and commissioners never tired of reminding the outside world that it had always been."

The first British attempt to control Sudan in the 1880s ended in humiliation when the forces of the Islamic Mahdi creamed the insufferable General Gordon at Khartoum. When the British finally established colonial rule in 1898, they instituted a policy to keep the south segregated, welcoming Christian missionar-

ies there while banning Islamic proselytizers. The "Southern Policy" kept the area economically primitive, as the British concentrated economic resources, investments, roads, and schools in the north. The northern region, whose black population has intermixed for many centuries with Arab settlers, is now defined as primarily Arab and Islamic, with a mingling of Egyptians, Turks and Circassians. The south is populated mainly by black tribal groups. The educated elite in this region tends to be Christian, while many of the poorer farmers, marsh fishermen and cattle herders maintain animist beliefs.

British colonial rule was ended in 1956 after having exacerbated these regional and religious divisions in this country which encompasses peoples speaking more than 400 different languages. Since independence, Sudan has been ruled by a series of more or less eccentric and ruthless military regimes in Khartoum, interspersed with a very few, very short periods of parliamentary "democracy." The social devastation of civil war combined with Islamic fundamentalism has intensified barbaric horrors, from punishment by flogging and amputation to female genital mutilation.

For Permanent Revolution!

Today, apologists for Western imperialism, which has brought us such barbarities as the Holocaust and the nuclear incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, pontificate about the "lack of civilization" in backward countries of Africa. While condemning such racist hypocrisy, we do not share the outlook of some liberals who, in the name of "cultural relativism," condone the inhumane legacies of the past practiced by semicolonial peoples. In many cases, this goes hand in hand with support to "Third World" nationalism.

In order to mobilize sufficient support to establish themselves as the ruling class in their own countries after gaining independence, the new bourgeois rulers had to rely on backward-looking "cultural traditions." Thus, Jomo Kenyatta, the darling of Pan-Africanists, endorsed female genital mutilation as a form of nationalist resistance to European colonial domination. Likewise, cheerleaders for the Ayatollah Khomeini's 1979 "Islamic Revolution" in Iran white-washed the imposition of the head-to-toe chador—which reflected the social segregation of women and their imprisonment in the home—as a symbol of opposition to Western imperialism. And what of the Indian practice of *suttee*, in which the widow is burned alive after the death

of her husband? Is this, too, simply a matter of "cultural heritage"? Such heinous practices are vestiges of pre-capitalist and even pre-feudal stages of human development and are representative of the all-sided sexual, social and economic oppression of women.

Marxists are not advocates of "national culture." Even in writing about the advanced capitalist countries of Europe and the oppressed peoples of the tsarist empire, Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin remarked that "the general 'national culture' is the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie," adding that socialist internationalists "take from each national culture *only* its democratic and socialist elements; we take them *only* and *absolutely* in opposition to the bourgeois culture and the bourgeois nationalism of each nation" ("Critical Remarks on the National Question," December 1913).

Industrial capitalism in the West drew women into the proletariat, and bourgeois-democratic revolutions legally and formally wiped out the more abhorrent aspects of women's oppression. But the Western "democracies" did not bring these bourgeois-democratic reforms with them into the colonial countries. The penetration of decaying capitalism into the "Third World" has fostered the most reactionary aspects of degenerated tribalism. This underscores the validity of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, that in the semicolonial countries the gains of the bourgeois-democratic revolution can only be achieved through the proletarian seizure of power and the extension of socialist revolution to the imperialist centers. This requires the construction of Leninist vanguard parties as part of

the fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International.

Today, the fight against chattel slavery is intimately linked to the struggle against all forms of oppression and for world socialist revolution. As we wrote in "The Crime of Female Genital Mutilation" (*Women and Revolution* No. 41, Summer/Autumn 1992) in regard to Sudan and other parts of Africa:

"The banner of revolutionary socialism seems an empty reference in sub-Saharan Africa, where the Marxist conception of 'combined and uneven development' would only encompass marginal pockets of industrialization. There are oil workers in Nigeria, dock and rail workers in Kenya, miners in Zambia. They are presently isolated and politically subordinate to demagogic nationalist regimes, but they represent a strategic industrial workforce. It is the challenge of an international revolutionary party to transform this sector into a human link to the workers movements of the Near East and the industrial proletariat of South Africa. Mobilized against their capitalist exploiters, these vanguard layers can launch a struggle to emancipate the cruelly oppressed men and women throughout Africa."

This revolutionary perspective is closely linked with the struggle against black oppression in the U.S. imperialist heartland. Black workers are a strategic component of the multiracial U.S. working class. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party which will champion the cause of all the oppressed as part of the struggle for socialist revolution. This requires telling the truth about people like Farrakhan, who give aid and comfort to the murderous racist ruling class at home and to its slaving neocolonial regimes abroad. ■

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Spartacist Supporter Writes in *Black Scholar*: “Million Man March Appeases Racist Exploiters”

By *Don Cane*

Reprinted from

THE **BLACKSCHOLAR**

The following article is reprinted from *Black Scholar* Vol. 26, No. 1 (Winter/Spring 1996). Comrade Cane is a spokesman for the Spartacist League in the Bay Area and a member of the Labor Black League for Social Defense.

The rulers of America are conducting a one-sided class war against the working class, targeting as their main scapegoats the black ghetto masses. With barely a peep from the “leaders” of organized labor, they have gutted industry, busted unions and driven down wages. The wealthy few have condemned the impoverished many in the black ghetto as a “surplus” population. Permanent unemployment, the elimination of welfare, the assault on Medicare, intensified police terror, an overflowing prison population and the speedup on death row—all speak to the impulse to genocide inherent in the policies of the racist rulers.

Seeing no leadership willing to fight the Gingrich/Clinton reaction, many blacks grabbed at Louis Farrakhan’s Million Man March like a drowning man for a straw. The Million Man March dressed up a black constituency with the conservative trappings of anti-woman “family values” and segregationist bigotry. As journalist Don Terry noted in the *New York Times* (15 October 1995), “Mr. Farrakhan is a conservative and on the surface, at least, some of the rally’s themes echo those heard at Republican gatherings: God, loyalty, family, discipline.” In order to court America’s party of property (Democrats and Republicans) the black misleaders—Farrakhan, Jesse Jackson, Ben Chavis—condemn blacks for their own oppression and black women “to be the slave of a slave.”

Much is made of the march as a demonstration of “black operational

unity”—a million black men standing together. In the 1960s, “I’m Black and I’m Proud” race consciousness, influenced by masses in struggle, was defiant of the racist capitalist rulers. Today we witness “I’m black and I’m not a criminal” race consciousness influenced by a desperate black middle class begging for “understanding” from the racist rulers. The black misleaders, branded by race themselves, can barely conceal their contempt for the black masses on whom they call to “atone.” I say *black people have nothing to atone for!* But the false prophets of the “American Dream” blame the victim for not “succeeding” and degrade the proud history of black working people who have struggled long and hard for freedom from the chains of racist oppression.

With the defeat of Radical Reconstruction the social revolution that launched the American Civil War remained unfinished. Chattel slavery was destroyed, but blacks were not free from ruthless political and economic subjugation. The social ferment unleashed by the Civil War harbored the underlying question: Who created the society’s wealth and who should rule? If the free slave demands 40 acres and a mule from the confiscated plantations why not the workers the factories? Why should these laboring classes not unite and overthrow the masters, South and North? In defense of private property, the masters (South and North) united to head off any incipient workers’ struggle by withdrawing the Union army from the South (bringing it North to break strikes) and sanctioning race terror and the repressive Black Codes (the foundation of Jim Crow).

American capitalism was built on the forcible segregation and subjugation of blacks at the bottom of society. This is the fundamental fact that the civil rights movement crashed into when it came “up North” in the 1960s. This mass movement, built on the courage of millions of black and white activists, did overturn the “Jim Crow” system of *de jure* segregation of Southern blacks. But

the liberal-led civil rights movement had no program to address the *de facto* segregation and ghetto poverty of blacks in the major Northern cities—all they could offer was utopian pie-in-the-sky: the “brotherhood of man” under the thumb of a genocidal racist ruling class.

The perspective of the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Spartacist League is one of revolutionary integrationism—for black freedom through socialist revolution. It is rooted in the understanding that the brutal oppression of blacks in this country is part of the very bedrock of American capitalism and it is one that guides our practical work. Together with the Partisan Defense Committee, we have sought to bring the social power of the integrated working class to bear in mobilizations demanding freedom for black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and the abolition of the racist death penalty. The perspective of an integrated revolutionary fight for black freedom was what guided the PDC-initiated labor and black mobilization against an attempted Klan provocation in Springfield, Illinois on Martin Luther King Day in 1994. Organized labor, led by the Chicago transit unions, was the hard core of this mobilization which

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spiked the KKK lynch mob.

Revolutionary integrationism is a program for building a fighting labor movement that champions the cause of all the oppressed and a revolutionary multiracial workers party that acts as the tribune of all the people in the fight for an egalitarian socialist America. Revolutionary integrationism recognizes that black oppression is the Achilles' heel of American capitalism, with the understanding that "because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution" ("Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," *Spartacist* No. 10, May-June 1967).

"Marxist utopian rubbish!" the liberal integrationist and the segregationist nationalists would both shout in unison. But let us see whose program is utopian. In an article in the *Nation* (30 October 1995), Eric Foner writes that his "vision of a nation transformed, one in which equality is a reality for all Americans" will "require not only the passage of new laws but a change of America's hearts and minds." Racism is a conscious tool of ruthless capitalist hegemony—it poisons class consciousness and divides to rule. It is the whip that drives American workers, white and black, to pull the capitalist cart through war, economic depression and social ruin.

The idea that racism can be fought by changing "hearts and minds" finds grotesque reflection in the whole premise of the Million Man March: racist oppression is the fault of blacks themselves. Louis Farrakhan recalls with nostalgia the Jim Crow era: "When civil rights broke down the segregation laws we began to lose black businesses and spend our money with white businesses. So throughout the South the economic advancement that we gained under Jim Crow is literally dead" (*Emerge*, August 1990). Economic advancement for whom? Surely not the sharecropper chained by debt to the plantation store and the rural capitalist's land. Surely not the "last hired, first fired" urban worker who fought tooth and nail for a decent paying job in industry. Surely not the youth who studied in dilapidated class rooms with outdated books because public tax money was needed for projects to enhance business opportunity.

Today 20 percent of black families earn half of all black income. This is the black middle class created by Johnson's "War On Poverty" as a buffer against black unrest exemplified by the 1960s ghetto upheavals. This layer was the main bene-



Spartacists and Labor Black Leagues protest Jim Crow racism at Denny's restaurants, July 1993.

ficiary of the civil rights revolt, although its constituents continue to endure the daily humiliation of racism and are watching the openings which they were afforded slam shut for their children. Their despair at the prospects for integrated social struggle against racism is conditioned by their lack of faith in the power of the multiracial working class as an instrument of change. For them the ghetto masses are a social weight "holding down the race" (them) from upward mobility. For them an integrated labor movement is a poor cousin compared to the powerful, wealthy patrons of the Democratic Party. These patrons made it clear they have no need for demanding blacks or bothersome workers when in 1992, Clinton's New Democrats focused his campaign toward the "racist Reagan Democrats."

Farrakhan denounces the small Jewish, now Arab and Asian ghetto shopkeepers as "bloodsuckers." The new Booker T. Washingtons seek to be the *real* bloodsuckers—the capitalist exploiters—of "their own" people, claiming the ghetto as their illusory "exclusive market." In their political role as overseers for their capitalist patrons the language of fascism serves to divert black anger from the real enemy, the capitalist White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ruling class, to the hapless small change "foreign" shopkeeper. For the ghetto masses and even the middle class the "empowerment" of "Black capitalism" is a fraud—old wine in new bot-

tles. It is utopian to believe that this ruling class will share any part of its market with a yet unformed black capitalist class. Farrakhan's cockroach capitalism is premised on the benevolent acquiescence of the white power structure while at the same time feeding off of segregation.

Farrakhan's is a program to sweep up the crumbs that fall from the capitalist table for a price. He advertises himself as an alternative to revolution: "if black people rise up in an evil manner, we could foment revolution inside this country and so weaken America that she could not entertain war with her enemies on the outside" (*Back Where We Belong*, 1989). Indeed, the "Mission Statement" of the Million Man March Organizing Committee offers "the Black community...in a partnership with government" to form "the salvation army of the world"—to make the world safe for Wall Street profiteering and plunder.

Malcolm X once said of American capitalism: "The system in this country cannot produce freedom for an Afro-American. It is impossible for this system, this social system, this system, as it stands, to produce freedom right now for the black man in this country."

What Malcolm said also goes for the average American workers, who are being squeezed by the system. We cannot reform the racist capitalist system. It threatens us with total annihilation. It must be overthrown. It is socialism or barbarism. ■

Letter

Nation of Islam: Bodyguards for Hitler Apologist David Irving

Oakland, CA
1 October 1996

To the Editor:

Workers Vanguard has repeatedly warned that Louis Farrakhan is bad news for black people [see, for example, "Louis Farrakhan: Apologist for Slavery in Sudan," *WV* No. 651, 13 September]. Just how bad was demonstrated recently here in Oakland, California, where about 43 percent of the population is black and another 28 percent is Latino and Asian. Many black people settled in Oakland during and after World War II, moving here from the Deep South to work in the Richmond shipyards and other industries. Many black families had firsthand experience with the night-riding Ku Klux Klan race-terrorists. So if the hooded Klansmen ever tried to have a rally in downtown Oakland, you can bet they wouldn't last five minutes.

But no less of a racist provocation occurred here on the night of September 10, when one of the world's most notorious Hitler-loving Nazi organizers and propagandists, named David Irving, slipped into downtown Oakland to give an organizing speech titled, "Freedom of Speech and Adolf Hitler's Final Solution Finally Solved"! His presence here was an insult and a threat not only to the majority black, Latino and Asian population, but to every person who hates racism and fascism. How could this have happened without a massive mobilization by all the people—many of them trade-union members—who would be the intended victims of this dangerous racist? The answer is that *Irving's meeting took place in cooperation with and under the protection of Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam (NOI)* on the basis of their shared program of Jew-baiting anti-Semitism!

The time and location of the meeting was kept secret until the day it occurred, when an ad appeared in the *Daily Californian* at the University of California-Berkeley. On site at 24th Street and Telegraph Avenue, six of the NOI's Fruit of Islam (FOI) stood guard at the front door of the hall where Irving spewed his anti-Semitic filth. Other members of FOI security stood on nearby street corners with communications devices and more were seen going into the meeting. Oak-

land police also mobilized to guarantee Irving a platform. A racist white-supremacist like Irving should have been run out of Oakland. The fact that instead he had the protection of the Nation of Islam is a condemnation of Farrakhan's program of black separatism, which puts the NOI in a bloc with racist segregationists and violent terrorists like the KKK and Nazis, since they all believe in the "separation of the races."

This British fascist Irving seeks to use "academic" credentials to deny that six million Jews, and hundreds of thousands of Gypsies, homosexuals, Catholics, communists and others designated as *Untermenschen* ("sub-humans") were gassed in Hitler's concentration camps. He is the star attraction at meetings of European fascist terror gangs which have carried out murderous campaigns against dark-skinned immigrants and Jews: the British National Party, the Hitlerite "Nationale Offensive" in Germany, the white-supremacist Heritage Front in Canada.

Irving has twice been denied a platform by militant demonstrations here in the Bay Area for his fascist recruitment meetings. In October 1994, an integrated protest of 300 students, leftists and workers initiated by the Spartacus Youth Club broke up a fascist rally outside UC Berkeley. Irving was reportedly flattened on the floor, sprawled amongst his Nazi paraphernalia. In February 1995, the grotesquely misnamed "UC Berkeley Free Speech Coalition," a front group of anti-Semitic, gay-baiting, racist Islamic fundamentalists, organized a second provocation on campus with UC administration support. This time Irving's intended meeting site was surrounded by a spirited 400-strong demonstration that stopped the Hitlerites from daring to enter the building.

Humiliated, Irving and his cohorts have been probing for a way to get a foothold in the Bay Area. It is an outrage that Irving was given this opportunity under the auspices of Farrakhan and the Fruit of Islam, thus setting up a potential scenario of integrated anti-racist demonstrators clashing with black nationalist security squads protecting the meeting of a white-supremacist in heavily black Oakland.

This is not the first time the Nation of

Islam has joined with fascists. In 1961, Elijah Muhammad invited a delegation from the American Nazi Party to an NOI convention. In 1985, Farrakhan invited California Klan leader Tom Metzger to an NOI rally in L.A. and accepted a \$100 donation from this racist terrorist! Farrakhan also recalls with nostalgia the Jim Crow era: "When civil rights broke down the segregation laws we began to lose black businesses and spend our money with white businesses. So throughout the South the economic advancement that we gained under Jim Crow is literally dead" (*Emerge*, August 1990). The Farrakhanites use anti-Jewish, anti-Arab or anti-Korean bigotry to create scapegoats and divert black people away from the struggle for equality. For the Farrakhanites, their program for black capitalism *requires* the continued existence of segregated black ghettos to guarantee a market for blacks exploiting blacks.

In this period of open racist reaction, a racial demagogue like Farrakhan gets a certain hearing among black workers and youth because he appears to be anti-racist. But as the NOI's defense of the notorious racist David Irving shows, this "leadership" is based on smoke and mirrors, designed to conceal its reactionary accommodation to the racist capitalist exploiters.

The acceptance of separatism has historically meant accommodation to oppression and *renunciation of struggle*. The separatist doctrine is the cover for the black nationalist misleaders' program of peace with the racist ruling class. In fact, the fundamental truth of the race question is that the interests of the working class and those of blacks—an oppressed race-color caste—are not antagonistic but go hand in hand.

As an oppressed racial minority, blacks find a driving force in their struggle for emancipation in the demand for full equality, the right to complete integration and assimilation into American life. The Spartacist League and the Labor Black Leagues fight to mobilize the working class on the program of revolutionary integrationism—complete social, political and economic equality in an egalitarian, socialist society. Achieving that goal requires the building of a multiracial, revolutionary vanguard party which can lead the multiracial working class to the seizure of state power. The road to black freedom lies here—in proletarian emancipation, the building of a society in which those who labor rule!

Comradely,
Deborah Maguire

Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Free Geronimo!



AP

Los Angeles courthouse demonstration for Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), December 17.



WV Photo

As Black History goes to press, a court hearing is continuing in Santa Ana, California to rule on the request for a new trial for former Black Panther Party leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt). The hearing, which began on 16 December 1996, is centrally focused on the testimony of Julius Butler, the prosecution's "key witness" in Geronimo's 1972 trial for a murder the government knows he did not commit. While a plethora of facts documenting Butler's role as an informant for the FBI and Los Angeles Police Department have surfaced over the last 17 years, it was revealed for the first time last summer that Butler was also an informant for the L.A. district attorney's office before and during Geronimo's trial.

We reprint below a 4 May 1996 statement issued by the Partisan Defense Committee following a Los Angeles Superior Court ruling in April against hearing Geronimo's appeal to overturn his conviction. The statement appeared in *Workers Vanguard* No. 645, 10 May 1996.

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), a former leader of the Black Panther Party and an unbowed fighter against black oppression, has been behind bars in the U.S. for a quarter of a century—just one year

short of the time that Nelson Mandela was imprisoned by the South African apartheid state. He has been denied parole 14 times and will not be considered again until the year 2000. Framed up by the LAPD and the FBI's "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO) for a crime everybody knows he did not and could not have committed, Geronimo is a living condemnation of the American capitalist state and the racist "justice" of its courts.

The fight for Geronimo's freedom received a savage blow on April 17 when the Los Angeles Superior Court refused to hear his case to overturn his conviction. This continues the series of grotesque cover-up operations by state and federal courts since his conviction in 1972. The current round of court hearings was the result of a *habeas corpus* petition filed on February 26, Geronimo's fifth attempt at exposing his frame-up for the 1968 murder of a schoolteacher in Santa Monica. The petition detailed two decades of disclosures of government misconduct, orchestrated misidentification and perjured testimony.

Since Geronimo's original trial, COINTELPRO's conspiracy to destroy the Panthers has been exposed; evidence of

three sets of FBI wiretaps on Panther offices showing that Geronimo was 400 miles away at the time the murder was uncovered; the victim's husband's identification of another suspect was disclosed; and the man who testified Geronimo had confessed to the crime, one Julius Butler, was revealed as an FBI and LAPD informer with an ax to grind against Geronimo (facts Butler lied about on the stand). All of this was known at the time by the FBI, the LAPD and the district attorney's office and was hidden from the defense. Geronimo's petition also provides statements from former Panthers that they were at a meeting with Geronimo in Oakland at the time of the murder, and documents the investigation by lay minister Jim McCloskey which identified the likely real killers as associates of Butler.

Presiding judge Michael A. Cowell had ordered L.A. district attorney Gil Garcetti—who has been "investigating" this material for three years—to respond on March 28. Instead, Garcetti first asked for a three-month postponement to "investigate" and then, the day before the hearing, he argued that Geronimo's attorneys had filed in the wrong court. Judge Cowell, assigned to hear the case, acknowledged that Geronimo had raised



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION			
DATE	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD		
6/26/70	5/6/69 - 5/21/70		
REPORT MADE BY	TYPED BY		
[REDACTED]	76 BCS		
CHARACTER OF CASE			
[REDACTED]			
LA 157-3436			
<p>It is noted that PRATT's photograph is included in the Black Nationalist Photo Album.</p> <p>For the information of the Bureau, in view of PRATT's adamant expression of hatred toward law enforcement personnel in general, no consideration is being given to reinterview PRATT for the purpose of development as a PHI. It is noted, however, that constant consideration is given to the possibility of the utilization of counterintelligence measures with efforts being directed toward neutralizing PRATT as an effective BPP functionary.</p>			

1969 police raid on L.A. Black Panther Party headquarters. 1970 FBI document calls for "neutralizing PRATT" as part of murderous COINTELPRO vendetta against black militants.

"some very substantial issues" but gave credence to the D.A.'s "late challenge."

By the next hearing, Cowell had undergone a stark change in attitude. In the 13 April *Los Angeles Times*, an unusual "correction" appeared to a story on the March hearing which supposedly "incorrectly suggested that a Superior Court judge had found merit in arguments to overturn Geronimo Pratt's murder conviction." Four days later, Cowell came into court with his mind made up. Ignoring the law which clearly permits a hearing in Superior Court, he transferred the case to the California Supreme Court and, echoing the arguments D.A. Garcetti had made in response to an inquiry from Geronimo's longtime defender, Congressman Ron Dellums, the judge blamed the delay on Geronimo's attorneys for filing in the wrong jurisdiction.

COINTELPRO's Deadly War Against the Panthers

This is a blatant attempt to once again bury Geronimo's case. The judge and D.A. know that the Supreme Court is not likely to permit any court to hear further documentation on the government's murderous war against the Panthers. Appointed in their majority by California's right-wing governor Pete Wilson, the present Supreme Court was assembled as a conservative law-and-order body with the explicit mission of tearing apart the court's long history of judicial liberalism, most recently under anti-death penalty judge Rose Bird. Since 1990, Pete Wilson's court has upheld 94 percent of death sentences under appeal.

There are not a few in bourgeois circles who built their careers on the government vendetta against the Panthers. Contragate co-conspirator Edwin Meese presided over the war on the Panthers as Governor Ronald Reagan's top cop in California. Richard Held, a COINTELPRO specialist who played a major role in targeting Geronimo in L.A., led the FBI's August 1985 roundup of Puerto Rican militants, and went on to head the FBI in San Francisco. Richard Kalustian, the deputy D.A. who prosecuted Geronimo and paved the way for FBI fink Butler's admission to the California bar, is now a sitting L.A. County Superior Court judge.

American capitalism rests on the brutal oppression of black people, who are integrated into, but forced to the bottom of society as a race-color caste. The hard-fought and only recently won juridical rights of blacks are once again being overrun as the daily reality of joblessness, cuts in education, welfare "reform" and health care destruction take place side by side with summary executions by the cops in the ghettos, a burgeoning black prison population under "three strikes" laws, and legal lynching ordered by the courts. Geronimo is a symbol of black revolt against this oppression. His continued imprisonment is a message from the ruling class: Those who challenge the racist status quo will not be tolerated.

The state's refusal under any circumstances to allow Geronimo a new trial, let alone free him, is testimony to the fear inspired in the racist rulers of this

country by the Panthers' rejection of Martin Luther King's passive acceptance of the brutally oppressive capitalist order. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover ordered the "neutralization" of the Panthers for their advocacy of black-armed self-defense against the cops who were, *and still are*, gunning down black youth with impunity.

Thirty-eight Panthers were shot in cold blood by the COINTELPRO "operations"; those not killed were framed up and imprisoned for years. Mumia Abu-Jamal's role as a young Panther leader in Philadelphia put him in the cops' cross hairs; today, from Pennsylvania's death row, he is fighting to keep his voice of protest against police brutality and racist oppression from being silenced forever. Geronimo was targeted for death as a "Key Black Extremist," narrowly escaping death in a 1969 raid on the L.A. Panthers.

No Justice in the Capitalist Courts

Many supporters of Geronimo thought that the unambiguous evidence of his innocence, announced by attorneys Johnnie Cochran and Stuart Hanlon at a press conference which included significant participation by important witnesses and community activists, would lead in short order to Geronimo's release. We in the Partisan Defense Committee, who have worked for Geronimo's freedom for over a decade, would have surely welcomed such a turn of events. But our understanding of the nature of the state, race and class in America has led us to see

that there is no justice in the capitalist courts.

Justice in America is neither blind nor does it carefully weigh the evidence on balanced scales. The courts, like the cops, are part of the state, which is not a neutral body but exists to administer the exploitation of the working class by the handful of rulers who own the wealth of society. Every extension of democratic rights in this country—from the right to strike, to universal suffrage, to the dismantling of Jim Crow in the South—has come about only as a result of struggle against the state. The recent attacks on affirmative action programs are ample evidence that these gains are also only partial and reversible.

The ruling class has always attempted to victimize those who struggle for an extension of rights for working people and the oppressed. The Partisan Defense Committee was launched by the Spartacist League in order to defend such class-war prisoners. In so doing, we look to the organized multiracial working class which has the social power both to fight for temporary gains under capitalism and to end capitalist rule altogether. With their nationalist outlook, the Black Panther Party saw the plebeian ghetto masses rather than the working class as the agent of revolutionary change. In fact, workers have a compelling interest in Geronimo's cause. The cops who rush in to break one union strike after another also beat up immigrants with impunity and kill any minority youth who crosses them, later whitewashed as "custody death syndrome."

Beginning with the most vulnerable, the ruling class is taking aim at the organized working class to maximize their competitive edge in the "New World Order." From Congress's "counterterrorism" bill—whose centerpiece is the curtailment of death row prisoner appeals to the federal courts—to the prohibition of press interviews in an attempt to silence prisoners from protesting frame-up convictions and viciously repressive and dehumanizing prison conditions, the democratic trappings of the bourgeois state are under bipartisan attack. While the legislature debates a national anti-immigrant Prop. 187, undermining the 14th Amendment won through the war against slavery, Clinton has carried out a high-tech militarization of the border with Mexico unequalled in U.S. history.

The bourgeoisie has always tried to exploit racial and ethnic divisions within the working class, hoping to distract the exploited, while the capitalists pick their pockets. This is particularly evident in Los Angeles, center of the ongoing

frame-up of Geronimo, where the bourgeoisie has worked assiduously to foster racial animosity in the wake of the multiracial rebellion against the Rodney King verdict. In a city which has a gap between rich and poor that ranks third behind Rio de Janeiro and Calcutta, the ruling class relies on racist cop terror to contain any manifestation of social protest. This fact has been understood by the SEIU's "Justice for Janitors," with its heavily immigrant membership, which successfully fought the bosses and their cops to organize their union. In 1994, SEIU locals organized a protest the day before Geronimo's 13th parole hearing, marching into Garcetti's office to present petitions and demand he review the evidence in Geronimo's case.

Integrated unions representing over two million workers have gone on record in support of Geronimo, and a number of key union officials have sent letters of protest to Garcetti in the past months. But the members of these organizations have largely not been mobilized in action to combat this racist frame-up. The integrated demonstrations outside the courthouse at the March and April hearings were spirited, but they lacked the necessary social power. On the day of Geronimo's second hearing, the union representing Kaiser Permanente hospital workers called a protest against the hospital closures which are cutting off medical care for the impoverished black and minority population and slashing hundreds of jobs; the union should have marched down Sunset Boulevard to the courthouse to put some muscle behind its support to Geronimo.

The lack of mobilization for Geronimo is of a piece with the unions' abstention from the struggle in defense of democratic rights for blacks and Latinos, immigrants and women. The fault is with

the trade-union tops, who won't even call their members into action to protect their own economic interests against the union-busting offensive currently being waged throughout the U.S. The union bureaucracy is wedded to the defense of the bourgeois order through support to the capitalist Democratic Party; their job is to keep the workers in line, and lined up to vote for Clinton in November. The union banners come out only for Democratic election vehicles. In the words of Mumia Abu-Jamal in a 1993 message from death row, the Clinton White House was "born in the blood of executions and bent on out-Republicanizing the Republicans...proving once again that repression is still repression, no matter which party is in power."

The big business of union-busting feeds on racism; if the state can with impunity frame up and keep in prison those like Geronimo, it will all the more readily turn its sights on the workers movement as a whole. An injury to one is an injury to all! Successful workers struggle requires a strategic commitment to smashing black oppression, and that requires a political fight against the present pro-Democratic leadership of the unions. It's time to build a working-class party which mobilizes its forces independent of the capitalist state and takes up the battles of the poor and oppressed in this country. Free Geronimo now!

* * *

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Free Ride for Klan in Chicago—Why?

Twenty Klansmen, half of them wearing the hoods and robes of nightriding terror, rallied in Chicago's Daley Plaza on September 21. Two months ago, when a gang of KKK thugs tried to stage a similar provocation in Daley Plaza they were trounced by anti-fascist protesters who had responded to the Partisan Defense Committee's call to mobilize against the racist killers. This time the Klan was unopposed. Why? Because those who purport to be the leaders of labor and of the black masses are desperate to keep the union ranks and minorities off the streets for fear of damaging Clinton's re-election bid. So they leave the streets clear for Klan terror!

While the AFL-CIO bureaucrats peddle their red-white-and-blue "Vote Clinton/Gore" decals, Jesse Jackson (whose "Operation PUSH" is based in Chicago) and other black Democrats want blacks to ride on the back of Clinton's bus with them. Farrakhan, who plays himself up as the black leader who is "in the face" of the white racist rulers, also calls for getting out the vote in November. Two months earlier, when the PDC put out an urgent call on 24 hours' notice to dozens of unions and black organizations to mobilize to stop the Klan on June 29, the response was *only* from individual leftists and trade unionists. The labor tops didn't lift a finger, while many black radio stations in Chicago—who buy into Farrakhan's message that the black ghetto masses should "atone" for their own oppression—refused to even broadcast appeals to turn out in force against the Klan.

Some 100 people did respond on June 29—mainly youth, anarchists, leftists and individual trade-union members. These determined anti-fascist militants gave the Klan a well-deserved lesson. But in a union town like Chicago, with its huge black and Hispanic population, there should have been thousands on the street that day to stop the Klan.

Since the June 29 protest the Chicago city authorities and the notorious Chicago police force have continued working hand in hand with the Klan, waging a legal vendetta against eight of the anti-fascist protesters who were arrested and face up to a year behind bars. At a court hearing on September 9, a Klansman gloated, "See what happens

when you mess with us." Later a plain-clothes cop "casually" told a lawyer for some of the anti-Klan defendants that the KKK was planning another rally for September 21.

We smelled a real set-up here, manufactured by the cops and the Klan, where the cops would be mobilized in force to beat up and arrest anti-Klan protesters only two days before the next court hearing for the anti-Klan defendants. Reports from the site of the September 21 Klan rally certainly bore out that assessment. About 35 Chicago cops—headed by police commander McNulty, who led the vicious assault on anti-Klan protesters on June 29—were visible at Daley Plaza itself. In an adjacent walled-in construction site, there were an estimated 30 unmarked police cars with four uniformed cops in each car. There were also two horse trailers and three police wagons on the north side of the plaza. Thugs wearing black T-shirts with "Security" lettered in white on them, standing across the street from Daley Plaza, later put on hoods and sheets to join the Klan rally.

To have prevailed against this deadly cop/KKK alliance would have taken a powerful, integrated, labor-centered mobilization bringing out thousands of trade unionists together with black and other minority organizations. In 1982, a gang of Nazi would-be stormtroopers were protected by hundreds of cops in their bid to stage a provocation against Gay Pride Day in Chicago. They were met with a 3,000-strong mobilization of unionists, blacks, Jews, gays, leftists and others which was initiated by the Spartacist League/U.S.

In 1994, a determined demonstration of 500 people—representing the hard core of the Chicago-area union movement—came out in Springfield, Illinois to take on a Klan race-hate rally against Martin Luther King Day. Frightened that the union ranks might be mobilized in some actual struggle against racist terror, the AFL-CIO bureaucrats came down hard in trying to knife any union support. Now, with the labor and black misleaders keeping their heads down for Clinton, the fascists are seizing the opportunity to organize for their program of genocide.

On September 10 in a black neigh-

borhood in downtown Oakland, California, a meeting featuring Hitler apologist David Irving was defended by goons from Farrakhan's Nation of Islam. Suit-and-tie Klansman David Duke has been invited by liberal student bureaucrats to "debate" affirmative action at Cal State Northridge on September 25. And in Chicago on September 21, the Klan got away with rallying under the protection of a massive cop mobilization. This was a state-sponsored provocation against—and a trap intended for—the left.

The fascist nightriders must be stopped! But, unlike organizations like Progressive Labor, we do not seek to substitute our own small forces for the necessary social power of the multiracial working class. When we heard that the Klan was planning to rally again on September 21—a plan that was "leaked" by the cops and otherwise not publicized—we knew it smelled of a police/Klan trap designed to set up the most effective fighters against fascist terror. We considered it our responsibility to call other organizations in the Chicago area to inform them of what we had heard and advise them that we considered this to be a police trap which we weren't about to walk into.

This decision was based on the bitter recognition that the kind of class-struggle mobilization that was desperately needed for the working people and black masses to prevail was blocked by the misleaders who would sell their mother to get Clinton re-elected. They have presided over the decimation of organized labor. They have allowed, and even encouraged, the racist rulers' war on desperate immigrants. They did nothing when the Democrats and Republicans axed welfare.

This devastation—the product of a profit-crazed system based on the exploitation of the many by the few—nourishes the Klan in its quest for a "racially pure" America, one in which there would be no trade unions. Now these kill-crazed racists are feeling their oats, having gotten away with staging a provocation in the heart of labor/black Chicago unopposed. Here is the bitter fruit of shackling labor and the oppressed to their exploiters in its Democratic Party face. ■

Defend Chicago Anti-Klan Three!



WV Photos

Chicago cops attacked 29 June 1996 anti-Klan protesters, arresting nine, and protected KKK race-terrorists.

JANUARY 11—Three anti-racist activists face trumped-up charges of assault and battery against police and obstructing police stemming from a demonstration against the race-terrorist Ku Klux Klan in Chicago's Daley Plaza on 29 June 1996. Gene Herson, Labor Coordinator of the Partisan Defense Committee, and Jeff Lyons, a supporter of Refuse & Resist, face up to a year in prison, while Dennis Glass, a young black worker, faces up to two years in prison for having taken part in the June 29 protest in which a violent Klan provocation was decisively routed.

Initiated on less than 24 hours' notice by the Partisan Defense Committee and

the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League, the united-front anti-Klan protest drew over 100 trade unionists, leftists and youth. The Klansmen were stopped as they marched in military formation, armed with bolt-studded shields and long, heavy flagpole "lances" wielded as weapons against the anti-racist protesters. Finding themselves sprawled on the pavement, the KKK scum were taught a simple lesson: cross-burners and lynchers will not be tolerated in Chicago. *This was a victory for all working people and minorities!*

Seeking to stop or limit any protests, city officials had kept a virtual news

blackout on the KKK's plans to rally in Chicago. Then on June 29, police intervened to protect the Klansmen, escorting them behind metal barricades where they continued to spew their genocidal filth. The cops later launched a series of attacks against the anti-Klan protesters, taking particular aim at black and minority youth. Several demonstrators were hit with clubs, others were pepper-gassed and nine were arrested, including unionists and a young organizer in the AFL-CIO's "Union Summer" program. While charges against six of the protesters have been dropped, the continuing victimization of the Anti-Klan Three is the state's blatantly malicious and vindictive retaliation for the trouncing suffered by the Klan.

At stake in the defense of the Anti-Klan Three is the right to engage in social protest, which is being increasingly abrogated by the "democratic" capitalist state. As a defense motion calling for dropping the charges pointed out: "Police approached the June 29 demonstration as a 'test run' of their tactical methods of suppressing and controlling political expression in the context of the Democratic Convention" held in August. Indeed, five demonstrators arrested outside the convention continue to face charges of "inciting to mob action," while six supporters of the Progressive Labor Party face charges of "armed

Join the Labor Black Leagues!

We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people for militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

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violence" for protesting against Clinton's axing of welfare just two days before the start of the convention. On the basis of the Anti-Klan Three's defense motion, an evidentiary hearing in their case has been scheduled for January 23.

The KKK's fascist terror is fed by the attacks of the capitalist rulers and their two parties—the Democrats and Republicans—on welfare recipients, blacks, immigrants, unions. The Klan nightriders must be stopped, and what's necessary to do it are mass mobilizations of all the Klan's intended victims: trade unionists,

blacks, Hispanics, Jews, gays, Catholics. It is vital for the labor movement and all opponents of racist terror to join the effort to defend the Anti-Klan Three. If the cops and courts get away with punishing anti-fascist protesters for making a stand against race-hate provocations in Chicago, it will give a green light for the racist terrorists everywhere. *Drop the charges!*

* * *

Funds are urgently needed to cover the legal costs of this defense effort. Dona-

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

reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 650, 30 August 1996

From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal

On Chicago Anti-Klan Protest

Why Cops Protect Racist Terrorists



"The terrorist and the policeman both come from the same basket."

— Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (1907)

Over 100 men and women, people of various hues, gather on June 29th, in Chicago's Daley Plaza, to protest a gathering of the KKK—guess who the cops assemble to protect?

The Arkansas-based Klan found Chi-town inhospitable, as trade unionists, anarchists, socialists and others introduced them to the City's pavement, and upon doing so, nine of them (the anti-racists) found themselves facing serious felony charges, like assaults on cops, for duking it out with Klanners.

Is punching a Klanner the same as assaulting a cop?

Maybe.

The recent "good ole boy" picnic showed cops, both state and federal, having a public boozefest, with one *caveat*, written in bright, bold print on a sign: "No n-----s allowed!"

The FBI, according to a rare Jewish agent in the '60s, had instructors refer to blacks openly as "n-----s."

Why is it that cops always act to defend America's terrorists?

When those terrorists are homegrown, American white supremacists, these groups which have bombed babies, and burned churches, find safety and solace in the arms of police.

At the Daley Plaza rally, it was not the terrorists who were arrested, but the anti-racists, including trade unionists, a youthful organizer from the AFL-CIO's "Union Summer" project, anarchists, a "Refuse & Resist!" supporter, and several PDC (Partisan Defense Committee) supporters.

Now, after the cops protected the KKK, the Cook County State's Attorney, Jack O'Malley, is rushing to lock away those who opposed, and protested them.

When the "law of the land" protects the Klan, what will it do to those who oppose them?

What can you do?

Speak out against the prosecutions!

Demand that charges against the anti-Klan protesters be dropped!

Join the protests at the Cook County Circuit Court, 1121 S. State Street, in Chicago.

For more information: call the Chicago PDC at (312) 454-4931.

© 1996 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

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

To get involved in the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the death penalty, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.

reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 653, 11 October 1996

Sabo's Court: Racist Capitalist "Justice" in Action Key Witness for Mumia Abu-Jamal Arrested on the Stand

For the many thousands around the world who rallied to stop the execution of black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal last year, his continuing persecution by the cops and courts has been an object lesson in the racist American "justice" system. The capitalist state's intent to silence Mumia and his supporters and to kill this fighter against racism and oppression was demonstrated again last week in the Philadelphia court of "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who presided over Jamal's 1982 frame-up "trial" and death sentence.

In a supplemental evidentiary hearing on October 1 ordered by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Veronica Jones, an eyewitness in the 1981 shooting of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner for which Jamal was falsely convicted, gave powerful testimony pointing to Jamal's innocence. In retaliation, in front of scores of Jamal's supporters who had filled the courtroom, Jones was dragged from the witness stand and taken to jail. Jones, a black mother of three, had taken

Free Mumia Now!

the stand to testify that in 1982 she was coerced by police to retract her eyewitness account of having seen two men run from the scene of Faulkner's shooting while Jamal lay wounded on the ground. After two hours of browbeating Jones, Assistant District Attorney Arlene Fisk declared, "I'm promising to lock you up." Moments later, Jones, while under oath, was placed under arrest for an outstanding bench warrant issued more than two years ago in New Jersey on alleged bad-check charges.

Although Jones had already testified that she was completely unaware of the 1994 New Jersey bench warrant, the D.A. rose to "ask that the sheriffs take her into custody...as a fugitive from justice," announcing that two New Jersey police officers were waiting outside the courtroom. Despite pleas by the defense attorneys that Jones be allowed to continue to testify and that an arrangement



Veronica Jones, jailed for telling the truth.

be made for her to appear in New Jersey to settle the outstanding warrant, Sabo hypocritically argued he had no jurisdiction, and Jones was dragged from the court. Later that afternoon, a New Jersey

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Jennifer Beach



WV Photo

August 1995 labor-centered protest in New York City initiated by Partisan Defense Committee to stop threatened execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

cop testified that they had known Jones' Camden address from the time the bench warrant was issued, but no action was taken to arrest her until Assistant D.A. Fisk phoned the New Jersey police last week. Following her arrest, Jones was not finally released until 5 a.m. on \$10,000 bail.

Asked why she had come forward now, Jones said that she did not want her grandchildren to "think their grandmom was living a lie." Testifying in Mumia's case for the first time since the 1982 trial, Jones described how just days before the trial began she was visited in jail, where she was facing serious felony charges, by Philadelphia police detectives and threatened into retracting her eyewitness account. Jones was later put on probation on charges which carried a sentence of up to 15 years in prison. Jones told the hearing, "I was to name Mr. Jamal as the shooter." She refused to make such a statement but did retract her original true account to avoid imprisonment. In an anguished voice she said, "It was a big decision to make, but this was five or ten years away from my kids." When threatened with arrest by Assistant D.A. Fisk, Jones responded, "You think that's going to make me change my story. It's not."

"This Courtroom Is Not for Justice"

Jamal's lead counsel, Leonard Weinglass, told a midday press conference out-

side City Hall on October 1 that Veronica Jones "came forward to bravely and courageously tell the truth after 14 years and was set up in a courtroom." What happened to Jones, Weinglass said, illustrated the continuing "intimidation and coercion of witnesses who have come forward on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal. It's happened in the police station. Today you saw it happen in open court."

From the moment Jones took the stand on October 1, she was subjected to a stream of threats and accusations by Sabo and Fisk. Continuing the pattern of misconduct by the police and District Attorney's office in this case, prosecutors again used the threat of arrest in a blatant attempt to coerce Jones to recant her testimony, just as they had in 1982. Even before Jones started her testimony, Sabo threatened Jones with back-to-back perjury convictions ranging up to seven years' imprisonment each. The prosecutor then dredged up an eight-year-old allegation that Jones had worked for several months while collecting welfare for her three children, snidely accusing Jones of "steal[ing] from the State of New Jersey." After patiently withstanding this gross abuse for more than an hour, Jones responded to her persecutors: "I'm the one on trial now. This courtroom is not for justice."

Overruling all defense objections to the Assistant D.A.'s outrageous persecution of Jones, Sabo threatened Jamal's

attorneys with removal from the court. The antics of Sabo and Fisk were a replay of Jamal's post-conviction relief (PCRA) hearing in the summer of 1995, when Sabo repeatedly ruled against every defense motion and objection and had Jamal co-counsel Rachel Wolkenstein briefly arrested.

As Veronica Jones was hauled off to jail, Mumia's supporters immediately began collecting funds for her bail. After her release, on October 3 Jones returned to the hearing, demonstratively sitting with Jamal's supporters. The evidentiary procedure ended that day, following a morning session in which Sabo responded to defense appeals for the release of prison logs from the time Jones was imprisoned in 1982 by screaming at Wolkenstein to "shut up" and threatening to remove her from the court. From beginning to end, the latest hearing was marked by the same kangaroo-court behavior that has been rampant throughout the 15-year attempt to "legally" lynch Mumia Abu-Jamal: continuing cover-up of evidence showing Jamal's innocence, intimidation of defense witnesses, massive cop and prosecutorial misconduct.

State Apparatus of Racist Repression

In reporting the events last week, even the *Philadelphia Daily News* (2 October) felt compelled to express its exasperation at Sabo for "exhibiting his usual

prejudice against the defense.... Such heavy-handed tactics can only confirm suspicions that the court is incapable of giving Abu-Jamal a fair hearing." It's not as if the pro-cop *Daily News* has now come out for Jamal. Ever since the beginning of last year's PCRA hearing, the bourgeois media and other ruling-class elements—including Republican "law and order" types like Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter—have feared that Sabo's flagrantly biased conduct was threatening to undo the state's trumped-up "case" against Jamal. In blatantly teaming up with prosecutors and cops in the face of widespread public attention, Sabo's actions were serving to tear off the veil of "impartiality" which is central to the myth of "blind" bourgeois justice.

Many liberals and reformists, who joined the campaign to save Mumia's life buy into the illusion that the capitalist court system can dispense "justice" for Jamal. Thus, many of them have focused on the call for a "fair trial," which they argue would necessarily result in either a reversal of the 1982 verdict or the voiding of the death sentence. A more "radical" take on this position is offered by Refuse & Resist activists, who showed up in the Philadelphia court last week with buttons reading "Sabo Must Go." But then what? Jamal's defense team has rightly called for Sabo's recusal from the case. But as Rachel Wolkenstein, who is also counsel for the Partisan Defense

Committee, pointed out at the October 1 press conference: "Every day, Sabo and the prosecution have made it clear that it is impossible for Jamal to get a fair trial in the city of Philadelphia. Our legal papers call not only for a new trial but call for his freedom based on the history of prosecutorial misconduct."

The openly pro-prosecution Sabo simply exhibits in a blatant fashion the real workings of the frame-up system that is bourgeois "justice." The cops and their Fraternal Order of Police have waged a frenzied campaign to kill Jamal. The courts on every level have turned a truly blind eye to the overwhelming evidence of Jamal's innocence. The prisons lock up fighters for black freedom like Jamal and Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt). All of these are the essential components of the capitalist state, which is not some "neutral" body but exists to administer the exploitation of the working class by the handful of rulers who own the wealth of society. From the very origins of the U.S., when black enslavement was enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, racial oppression has been built into the foundations of American economic and social life, enforced by deadly cop terror. At the summit of this apparatus of racist repression is the institutionalized barbarism of the death penalty.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was targeted by the state for death from the time he was a young leader of the Philadelphia Black

Panther Party. This continued when Jamal was a widely known journalist who exposed the racist reality of daily life in Philly and later became a supporter of the MOVE organization. As Wolkenstein said at the October 1 press conference: "We have an innocent man who's on death row, an innocent man who's been framed up by the police and prosecution. Mumia was subject to daily surveillance from the time he was 15 years old by the FBI, part of the COINTELPRO program," which sought to "neutralize" the Black Panthers and other black and leftist activists.

What saved Jamal from execution last year was the powerful wave of protest that broke out on his behalf around the world. As we wrote last year in the PDC pamphlet *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*:

"In Clinton/Gingrich's America, what possibility is there for a valiant fighter against oppression like Mumia Abu-Jamal to find justice in the criminal court system?..."

"Jamal should not have spent a day in jail in the first place, and he should not be in prison now. He should be allowed to join his family and to join all those who seek and struggle for a society in which there will be no racist frame-ups and legal lynchings. While Jamal's lawyers pull every possible legal lever to win his freedom, what's urgently needed is to mobilize millions of workers and the oppressed worldwide to demand: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!" ■

Join the Campaign to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Funds are urgently needed for legal defense! Make a contribution today to the Bill of Rights Foundation (earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense") and mail it to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001

Organize protest! Pass motions demanding Jamal's freedom in your unions, campus, community and church organizations. Get your union or organization to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Jamal. Publicize Jamal's case in your union or organization's newsletter.

Spread the word! *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* No. 22 centers on the struggle to save Jamal, and the PDC pamphlet, *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, exposes in detail the prosecution's case of lies, the coercion of witnesses and the FBI's COINTELPRO terror campaign against Mumia and the Black Panther Party (\$1 for both). Order bundles of either publication; 25 copies for \$10. The PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, can be purchased for \$30 from the address below.



Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013 • (212) 406-4252

Black Churches Torched Across the South

Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Smash Racist Terror!

The epidemic of church burnings sweeping the South has provoked revulsion and outrage among wide layers of the population and is rightly seen as a deadly threat by every black person in the country. In the past 18 months, scores of Southern black churches have been burned down in suspicious circumstances. In ten of these cases, the night-riders underlined their message of race-hatred by setting the fires around Martin Luther King Day. A number of other burned churches had integrated congregations of black and white believers, making them symbols of "race-mixing" in the eyes of racist terrorists like the Klan. This wave of terror recalls the targeting of black churches during the civil rights movement, such as the infamous 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham.

It is patently obvious that white-supremacist organizations, feeding off the climate of racist attacks on blacks and minorities, are involved in a large number of these attacks. A case in point was the torching last summer of the Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in Greeleyville, South Carolina and the Macedonia Church in nearby Bloomville. Just before the fires, a Klan rally near the Macedonia Church singled out black churches as places where people learned how to get on welfare. A KKK flyer depicting a hooded Klansman and a skull and crossbones was tacked to the church door. After the fires, the Klan opened a storefront recruiting center in Greeleyville.

The escalating wave of racist terror is not restricted to the South or to churches. Last December, three Nazi skinheads from the U.S. Army's elite 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, North Carolina wantonly gunned down a black couple in nearby Fayetteville. In May, a lynch mob attack led by an off-duty cop in Westhampton, Long Island almost killed a young black man, Shane Daniels. Mean-



NBC News

North Carolina church in flames, one of scores of Southern black churches torched in past 18 months.

while, the KKK has recently raised its ugly head in several Northern cities.

The racists burning down black churches are out to destroy what remains of the limited rights gained by blacks in the civil rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s. After resisting pressures for months from the NAACP and other black groups, Clinton and his "Justice" Department last month formed a special federal task force to investigate the church burnings, cynically aimed at securing his hold on the black vote in the November elections. But for months, even as the number of black churches burned down soared, the leaders of both capitalist parties maintained a studious silence.

Furthermore, as the frequency of church burnings rises, more and more denials are heard from government spokesmen that there is any widespread "conspiracy" involved. Obviously, we have no way of knowing if all the burnings of these often old, ramshackle buildings were the result of racist arson. But the sharp rise in the number of black churches burned in the past 18 months is undeniable. According to the Center for Democratic Renewal, there were an average of eight burnings per year of Southern black churches between 1990 and 1994. That number increased to 18 in 1995. And so far this year, some three dozen black churches have been torched,

Federal Government—No Friend of Labor, Blacks, Poor

even as the overall number of church fires in the U.S. has been declining. Imagine the immediate outcry there would have been if scores of *white* churches were being reduced to cinders!

From the moment federal agents moved in, they made it clear that their "investigation" was directed at...the victims! Pastors were accused of torching their own churches and forced to take lie detector tests while entire congregations were fingerprinted. Bishop Melvin Talbert, president of the National Council of Churches (NCC), declared: "Without exception, the victims of these hate crimes said they felt intimidated by the very forces they had hoped would provide them with protection." In fact, the FBI and other federal police agencies are racist to the core: the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) had to remove two agents from Clinton's federal task force when it came out that they had attended a Klan-infested "Good Ol' Boys Roundup" last summer in Tennessee.

Black community leaders and liberals applauded a bill extending federal authority to investigate and prosecute church burnings which was unanimously passed in Congress. But a look at its sponsors makes it clear this legislation has nothing to do with fighting racist terror. A co-sponsor of the House bill is right-wing Republican Henry Hyde—who has spearheaded the assault on welfare and abortion rights—joined by black Democrat John Conyers. In the Senate, liberal Democrat Ted Kennedy joined hands with die-hard racist Republican Lauch Faircloth. Such legislation, like all moves to strengthen police powers, is



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

Integrated congregation of burned Little Zion Baptist Church in Boligee, Alabama. Klan killers target "race-mixing."

ultimately directed *against* minorities and working people.

Today, many black leaders are calling for greater federal intervention in the South. "If it means the National Guard, so be it," declared Mac Charles Jones of the National Council of Churches. "If it means declaring a state of emergency, so be it." Such illusions in the "democratic" credentials of the U.S. ruling class are truly suicidal. To see what a military "state of emergency" would mean for black people, look at the National Guard's indiscriminate gunning down of black residents of the Watts area of L.A., Detroit, and other cities when black anger exploded in the ghetto revolts of the late 1960s. And don't forget that Bill Clinton,

Janet Reno, the BATF and the FBI incinerated 86 men, women and children of the racially integrated Branch Davidian religious sect outside Waco, Texas!

The way to fight race-terror is not through suicidal appeals for federal intervention in the South. The fight against racial oppression and for black freedom must be taken up by the only force that can win, the multiracial working class. The working class has a vested interest in smashing the Klan—the race-terrorists are not only implacably hostile to black rights, but are also deadly enemies of labor. This was demonstrated last summer when the KKK burned a cross outside an Alabama poultry processing plant on the eve of a union recognition vote.

As the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense, affiliated with the Spartacist League, declared in a June 16 leaflet following the attack on Shane Daniels:

"The key is revolutionary leadership. To achieve any real victories, provide decent jobs, quality education, health care for all and a future for the working people and impoverished ghetto masses requires a fight to break the ties that bind the unions to the two ruling-class parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. To put a stop to the system that breeds lynch mobs, to avenge all the victims of racist terror, we need to forge a revolutionary workers party that will unite all workers—black, white, Asian and Hispanic—to sweep away this racist, corrupt capitalist system and build an egalitarian socialist society."

Racist Rulers Wage War on Black Masses

With the restoration of capitalism in East Europe and the former Soviet Union, the ruling class has been emboldened to drive back social gains which were won



Young Socialist

National Guard mobilized against striking black sanitation workers in Memphis, 1968. Reliance on federal troops to protect black rights is suicidal.

fourteen Klan groups and headed one state organization. At one time in 1965, nearly two thousand of the FBI-estimated ten thousand Klan members were its own informers." These agents and "informers" acted as loyal dual agents of both organizations, keeping the feds well informed of Klan activity while *perpetrating race-terror*.

The same interpenetration of federal security forces and fascist terror squads was manifested in the November 1979 massacre of five leftists at an anti-Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina. From the outset the government aided and abetted the KKK/Nazi death squad, from the BATF agent who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations, to the "former" FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade going to the murder site, to the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear.

Nevertheless, Sam Marcy's Workers World Party now calls for its own version of federal intervention in response to the church burnings, moaning that Clinton's actions are "not enough" and that the KKK must be "disarmed" and "outlawed" (*Workers World*, 20 June). Crying for federal marshals or calling to "Ban the Klan" plays right into the hands of the main enemy, the racist ruling class. Moreover, "anti-terrorist" laws supposedly directed against the fascists invariably end up being used against the left and labor movement. We fight instead to mobilize the power of the labor movement to keep the KKK/Nazis off the streets, as we have in a number of united-front actions from Detroit in 1979 to Springfield, Illinois in 1994. When the Klan tried to stage a race-hate provocation in Atlanta in 1989, the Partisan Defense Committee and Spartacist League built a 3,000-strong labor/black mobilization based on the support of area unions and community organizations. In response, the state and local authorities unleashed a literal army of cops and National Guardsmen to protect the fascists.

As Marxists, we understand that the state is an instrument of oppression of one class by another, "an engine of class despotism" in the words of Marx and Engels. In the final analysis, the bourgeois state consists of special bodies of armed men—the military, police and prison guards—which serve to defend private property and guarantee unfettered exploitation of the working class. The true nature of the state is revealed with brutal, swift and deadly force when the capitalist class feels its rule is challenged by a revolt of workers and other oppressed. Marx and Engels sought to

instill in the workers movement the crucial understanding that the police, army and state bureaucracy could not be made to work in the interests of the exploited, but had to be smashed.

For Organized Self-Defense Against Racist Terror!

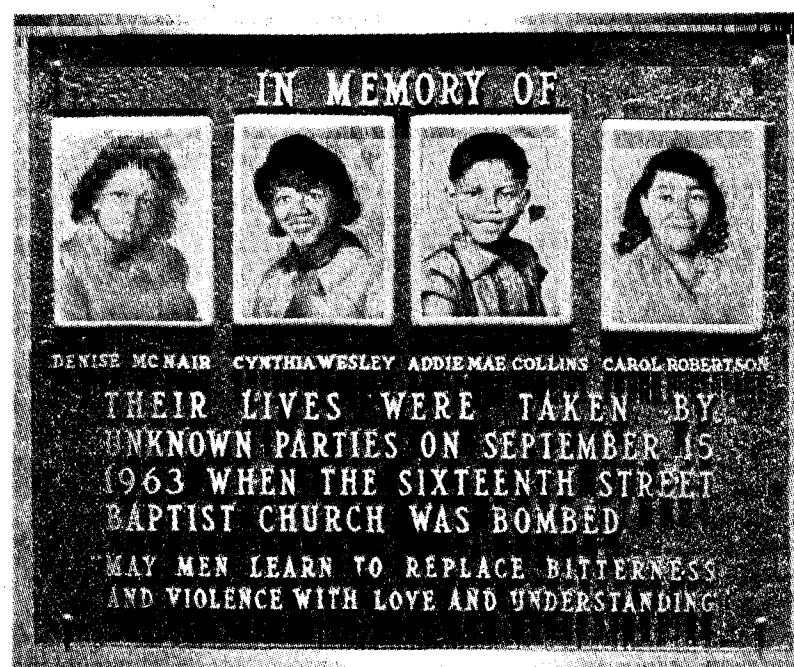
Self-defense against racist terror is and was a burning necessity for the black movement in the South. An example was set in 1959 in Monroe, North Carolina by Robert F. Williams, whose courage in organizing armed self-defense against the Klan earned him the enmity of the liberal NAACP, which disowned him even as the FBI hounded him out of the country. He found refuge first in Castro's Cuba and then in Mao's China.

At the time, Williams was an exception among civil rights activists, who generally adhered to the program of "nonviolence" preached by King and his SCLC. However, the movement was radicalized by, among other factors, repeated federal interventions under liberal Democrat John F. Kennedy and then Lyndon Johnson *against black struggle*. The organization of armed self-defense against the KKK took a significant step forward in 1964 with the rise of the Louisiana-based Deacons for Defense and Justice, which soon spread to Mississippi and Alabama (see "Toward Arming the Negro Struggle," *Spartacist* No. 5, November-December 1965). In 1966 the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

(SNCC), then the main organization of young civil rights activists in the South, raised the slogan of "black power" in defiance of both the white liberal establishment and King and the black preachers.

We wrote at the time: "The concepts implied in the SNCC slogan of 'Black Power' are radical enough to have caused the bourgeois press and politicians to shower vicious abuse on it, precisely because the slogan is a groping for solutions *outside* the framework of the capitalist society" ("SNCC and Revolution," *Spartacist* No. 8, November-December 1966). We sought to give the slogan of "black power" and the underlying mood of militancy a *working-class axis* around such demands as unionization of Southern labor, mobilizing the power of labor to defend against racist terror, and a break with the Democrats to form a Freedom-Labor Party.

In the mid-1960s, black militants in Lowndes County, Alabama associated with SNCC did break with the Democratic Party of the racist ruling class and, openly advocating armed self-defense, set up the Black Panther Party. In response, the feds framed up the SNCC leaders on a gamut of phony charges—arson, conspiracy, criminal syndicalism. Inspired by the Lowndes County organization, black radicals in the North set up the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, centered in California and extending to various Northern cities. It was in good



New York Times

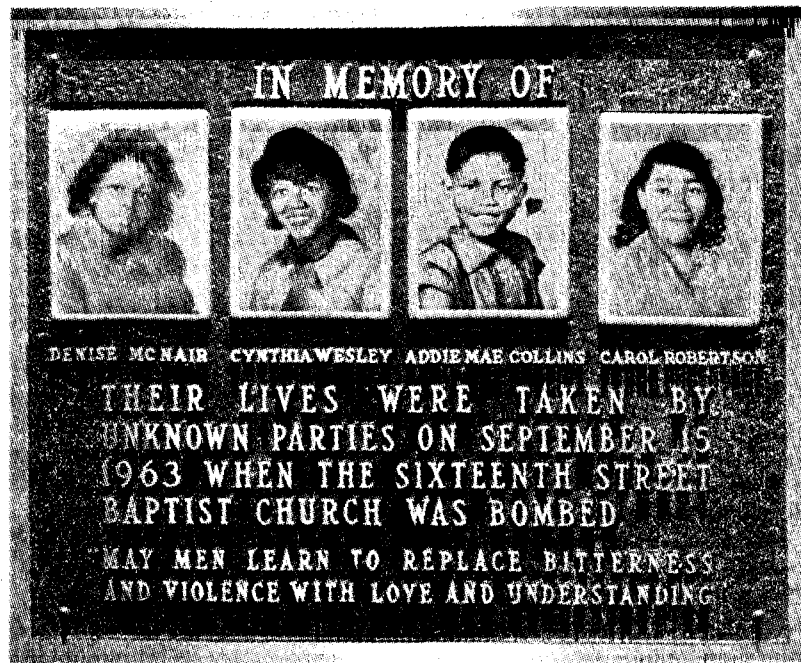
Memorial at 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham commemorating four young girls murdered in 1963 bombing. Heinous bombing was engineered by FBI's Klan "informant" Gary Rowe.

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New York Times

Memorial at 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham commemorating four young girls murdered in 1963 bombing. Heinous bombing was engineered by FBI's Klan "informant" Gary Rowe.

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For Organized Self-Defense Against Racist Terror!

Self-defense against racist terror is and was a burning necessity for the black movement in the South. An example was set in 1959 in Monroe, North Carolina by Robert F. Williams, whose courage in organizing armed self-defense against the Klan earned him the enmity of the liberal NAACP, which disowned him even as the FBI hounded him out of the country. He found refuge first in Castro's Cuba and then in Mao's China.

At the time, Williams was an exception among civil rights activists, who generally adhered to the program of "nonviolence" preached by King and his SCLC. However, the movement was radicalized by, among other factors, repeated federal interventions under liberal Democrat John F. Kennedy and then Lyndon Johnson *against black struggle*. The organization of armed self-defense against the KKK took a significant step forward in 1964 with the rise of the Louisiana-based Deacons for Defense and Justice, which soon spread to Mississippi and Alabama (see "Toward Arming the Negro Struggle," *Spartacist* No. 5, November-December 1965). In 1966 the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

(SNCC), then the main organization of young civil rights activists in the South, raised the slogan of "black power" in defiance of both the white liberal establishment and King and the black preachers.

We wrote at the time: "The concepts implied in the SNCC slogan of 'Black Power' are radical enough to have caused the bourgeois press and politicians to shower vicious abuse on it, precisely because the slogan is a groping for solutions *outside* the framework of the capitalist society" ("SNCC and Revolution," *Spartacist* No. 8, November-December 1966). We sought to give the slogan of "black power" and the underlying mood of militancy a *working-class axis* around such demands as unionization of Southern labor, mobilizing the power of labor to defend against racist terror, and a break with the Democrats to form a Freedom-Labor Party.

In the mid-1960s, black militants in Lowndes County, Alabama associated with SNCC did break with the Democratic Party of the racist ruling class and, openly advocating armed self-defense, set up the Black Panther Party. In response, the feds framed up the SNCC leaders on a gamut of phony charges—arson, conspiracy, criminal syndicalism. Inspired by the Lowndes County organization, black radicals in the North set up the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, centered in California and extending to various Northern cities. It was in good

measure to suppress such movements that the bourgeois rulers began pushing their drive for gun control—echoed by pacifists and reformists—which is aimed at disarming workers and minorities.

The militant Panthers took the full brunt of the FBI's COINTELPRO murder conspiracy. Through nearly 300 FBI operations against black groups in the late 1960s and early 1970s—233 of them against the Panthers alone—virtually every militant black leader was either physically eliminated or slammed in jail. Former Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) is still in prison, framed up for a murder which the government *knows* he did not commit.

The Panthers represented the most radical expression of black militancy in this period. However, they remained confined within the self-defeating framework of ghetto-based black nationalism, glorifying “lumpen rage” while rejecting the racially integrated working class as the central agency for social revolution. The Panthers' own political shortcomings and the feds' murderous vendetta—wiping out a whole generation of radical black leaders—helped bring to the fore such a misleader as Louis Farrakhan, an anti-woman, anti-Semitic bigot and preacher of “black capitalism” who speaks for those who dream of becoming the exploiters of “their” people. Farrakhan's Million Man March last year was a reactionary appeasement of the racist rulers, laying the blame for conditions in the ghettos on the “personal responsibility” of black men and calling on them to “atone.”

Finish the Civil War!

The texture of Southern society was formed by the betrayal of Radical Reconstruction (symbolized by the Compromise of 1877) following the Civil War. In the decades following 1877, the political and civil rights accorded blacks in the aftermath of the Civil War were progressively stripped away. And while the Civil War destroyed chattel slavery, blacks were left economically disenfranchised as virtual serfs, toiling as impoverished sharecroppers and rural laborers under the boot of white landowners.

Black people constitute an oppressed race-color caste integrated into American society while forcibly segregated at the bottom of it. The fight for black liberation, a central question of the American revolution, can only be resolved through the program of revolutionary integrationism, requiring the overthrow of the capitalist system by the working class standing at the head of all the oppressed. This is why we say that it is necessary to



Norfolk longshoremen march against segregation, for school busing in 1983. Labor movement must champion black rights.

finish the Civil War through socialist revolution.

The KKK is likewise a product of the betrayal of Reconstruction by the Northern capitalists, who after the Civil War became the senior partners of the white Southern landowners and businessmen. Formed in the South by former Confederate officers, its purpose was the destruction of black rights through the lynch ropes and torches of white racist mobs. The Klan was revived in 1915 with the lynching of an Atlanta Jew, Leo Frank. The fascist terrorists of the KKK are not only implacably hostile to black rights and equality; they are also deadly enemies of working-class struggle.

In the South, more so than in other regions of the country, it is especially clear that the support of the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy and black liberals to the Democratic Party perpetuates violent racist oppression and the brutal exploitation of the working class. A campaign to unionize the South in the late 1940s, called “Operation Dixie,” failed because the union tops would not combat the local Dixiecrat regimes, with their cracker sheriffs, lynch-law “justice” and nightriding Klansmen. In the subsequent decades, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy made no serious attempt to organize the large and growing industrial working class in the region into racially integrated trade unions.

As a consequence, the South has not only remained a bastion of political reaction but has increasingly become a sphere for the superexploitation of labor by American as well as foreign capital. A major factor behind the gutting of the union movement in this country over the past few decades is the massive transfer of industry from the North and Midwest to the “open shop,” low-wage South and

Southwest. The number of factory workers in North and South Carolina, taken together, is now greater than in any state in the union except California. Concentrations of integrated industrial workers, along with predominantly black ILA longshore and other unions in the South, can be the basis for organized workers defense guards against the nightriders and strikebreakers.

The labor tops, with their cringing acceptance of the bosses' rules—like the anti-union Taft-Hartley law—are utterly incapable of unionizing the growing ranks of industrial workers in the South. As we stated over a decade ago in the WV special supplement “Labor's Gotta Play Hardball to Win” (March 1984):

“To organize the open shop South, for example, will mean pitched battles with the Ku Klux Klan and cracker sheriffs. Can anyone imagine the AFL-CIO tops involved in, much less leading, this kind of fight? In white racist America the fate of organized labor and the oppressed black masses is closely bound together. The bureaucracy's accommodation to the racist status quo set the stage for the union-busting offensive of the Reagan years. And there will be no effective defense against this union-busting unless the labor movement becomes a powerful champion of black rights.”

For this perspective to become a reality will mean a sharp political struggle to oust the sellout labor lieutenants of capital, forging instead a militant, anti-racist and anti-capitalist leadership within the unions as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party. As long as capitalism remains, fascist murderers like the Klan and Nazis will be coddled and even cultivated by the bourgeois rulers, who hold the nightriders in reserve for defense of their profits and property. Socialist revolution is the only road to black freedom. ■

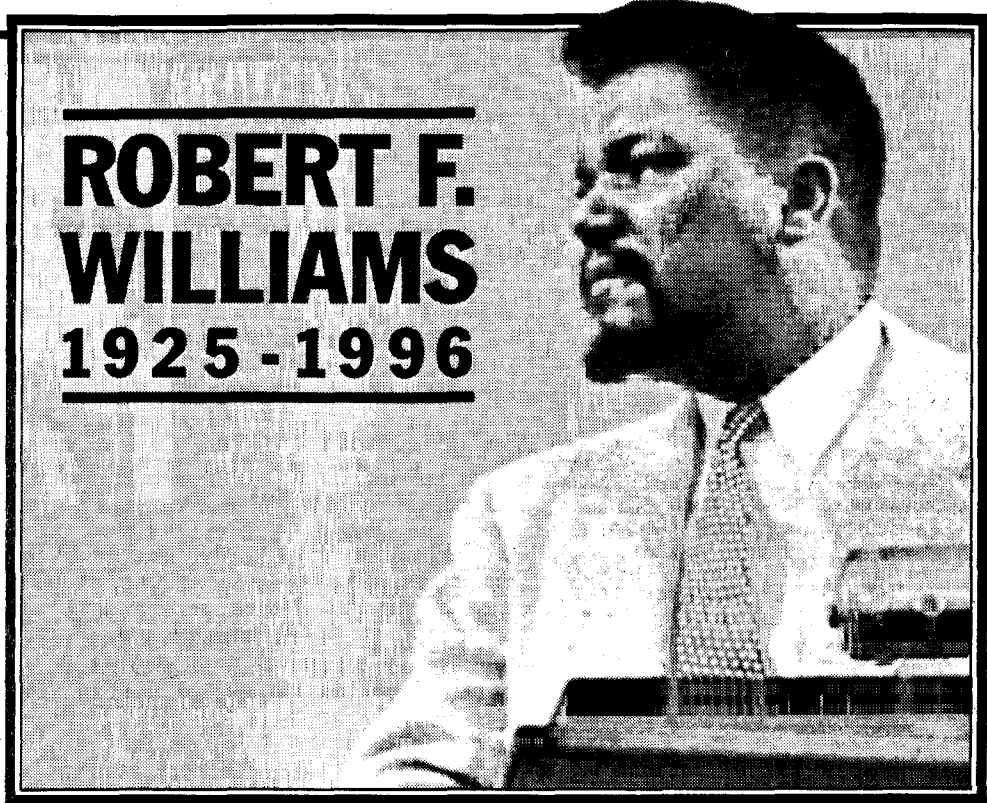
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Robert F. Williams died last month in Grand Rapids, Michigan at the age of 71. Today, his name is little known among black people as a whole or among young activists fighting racial oppression. Yet at a critical moment in modern American history, in the early to mid-1960s, Robert Williams, like Malcolm X, personified black militancy. By deed and by word, Williams, the author of *Negroes with Guns*, did much to break a generation of young civil rights activists from their liberal illusions in American "democracy" at home and U.S. imperialism abroad. And in doing so, he became a target for repression by the capitalist state.

Robert Franklin Williams was born in 1925, the son of a boilermaker, in Monroe, North Carolina. During World War II, still a teenager, he was drawn along with millions of other Southern blacks into booming war industries in the North where the acute labor shortage opened up jobs that had previously been closed to them. Williams was later drafted into the army, but the war ended before he was shipped overseas. Nonetheless, his brief experience in the armed forces awakened him to the yawning gulf between the democratic pretensions of the American government and the reality of the pervasive racism in the U.S.

Wanting an education, Williams used his benefits under the G.I. Bill to attend a number of Southern colleges, which were, of course, segregated at that time. When the benefits ran out, he had to quit college and look for work. He found it difficult to make a decent living in a country where black men were proverbially "the last hired and the first fired." When the Korean War broke out in the early 1950s, Williams decided to enlist in the Marines, not out of patriotism but because the armed forces offered him better economic opportunities than he had in civilian life. However, his outspoken opposition to racism in the Marine Corps antagonized his white officers and after a year he was given a "dishonorable discharge." This bitter experience impelled Williams into political struggle, which would dominate the rest of his life.

**ROBERT F.
WILLIAMS
1925 - 1996**



Militant

Courageous Fighter Against Racist Terror

In 1955 in his hometown of Monroe, Williams joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The local chapter was a tiny organization made up mostly of black middle-class professionals, "teachers and preachers." They elected Williams president, mainly so that they themselves would not be in the main line of fire of white racist retaliation. However, the boilermaker's son and ex-Marine refused to play by the accepted rules for Southern black community leaders. In his own words:

"One day I walked into a Negro pool-room in our town, interrupted a game by putting NAACP literature on the table and made a pitch. I recruited half of those present. This got our chapter off to a new start. We began a recruiting drive among laborers, farmers, domestic workers, the unemployed and any and all Negro people in the area. We ended up with a chapter that was unique in the

whole NAACP because of working class composition and a leadership that was not middle class."

— *Negroes with Guns* (1962)

This in itself marked quite a radical difference from the traditional political organization of a black Southern community. Even more radical changes were soon to follow.

Organizing Black Self-Defense

Williams joined the NAACP at a time when mass black protest was erupting throughout the South against legalized segregation, the so-called Jim Crow system. A main target for desegregation in Monroe was the town's only public swimming pool, which only whites could use. Black children had to swim in local creeks, where some drowned. The prospect of an integrated swimming pool touched the very core of racist pathology in the South—"race-mixing," particularly

the fear that white women might become sexually attracted to black males. Klansmen from the surrounding area descended on Monroe to protect the racial "purity" of the swimming pool. Motorcades of Klansmen, firing out of their car windows, sped through black neighborhoods.

Williams and his supporters responded in a way hitherto unheard of for a Southern black organization. They organized a defense guard, many of whose members were veterans of the armed forces. These were people, as Williams put it, "who didn't scare easy." The first encounter, in 1957, between the guard and the Klan is described by Robert Carl Cohen in his biography of Williams, *Black Crusader* (1972):

"The Klansmen had driven into the Black areas to terrorize them, but when they suddenly found themselves surrounded by armed Blacks they started smashing into each other's cars in a rush to get away. Instead of acting like 'n[-----]s,' hiding in their houses with the shutters closed and the lights out, the Blacks were roaming the streets with guns, shooting out the tires of the KKK cars, shattering their windshields with buckshot, and beating up those racists who tried to escape on foot.

"While there were no reports of anyone being killed or badly wounded, the Klan suffered a severe defeat."

Williams' efforts in organizing armed self-defense against racist terror blazed a trail for others active in the struggle for black rights in the South. One example was the formation of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which originated in Louisiana in 1964 as an armed defense guard for civil rights workers.

Those too young to have lived through the civil rights movement can scarcely appreciate the dramatic impact of what Williams and his supporters were doing in Monroe. All of the major black organizations, those sections of the Democratic and Republican parties which gave lip-service to black equality, the mass media—all were preaching incessantly that "nonviolent resistance" was the only acceptable way for blacks to oppose racist oppression, police brutality and Klan terror. Martin Luther King Jr. was already being elevated to the status of sainthood among blacks and white liberals. Thus it took not only physical courage but also great moral courage for Robert Williams to openly organize black self-defense in defiance of King, the NAACP's Roy Wilkins and the other "official" leaders of the civil rights movement.

In late 1958, Williams played a central role, along with radical black attorney Conrad Lynn, in defending David Simpson and Hanover Thompson, two young black children charged with rape



Armed black self-defense guards in Monroe, North Carolina beat back Klan attack in 1957.

Marzani & Munsell

for being kissed by a white girl in the infamous North Carolina "Kissing Case." This, too, offended the "moderate" NAACP national leadership, which initially refused to come to the defense of the children because it was deemed a "sex case"!

The effectiveness of Williams' actions in Monroe between 1957 and 1961 was a powerful answer to the argument by liberals and reformists that for blacks to resort to armed self-defense could only be suicidal adventurism. The Spartacist League originated in that period as the Revolutionary Tendency in the Socialist Workers Party, in opposition to the SWP's centrist departure from Trotskyism, marked by its adulation of the Stalinist Castro regime in Cuba and its capitulation to black nationalism. The RT fought for the SWP to intervene in the civil rights struggle with a Marxist program, raising a series of demands which would challenge the bourgeois order, including: "For *organized* self-defense movements in southern cities—for the tactics of Robert F. Williams" ("The Negro Struggle and the Crisis of Leadership" [August 1963], reprinted in "What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism," *Marxist Bulletin No. 5* [Revised]).

Williams faced not only open and declared enemies in the KKK but also insidious enemies on his "own" side, those whom Malcolm X called "the white man's puppet Negro 'leaders'." National and state officials of the NAACP attacked Williams for supposedly provoking racist violence and for running a "personal dictatorship" in Monroe. To this he replied: "The bourgeois elements who have complained about me aren't offering constructive, alternative ways to end segregation. Their sole purpose is to

weaken our resolve in order to placate their racist employers." At one point the national leadership of the NAACP suspended him from the organization for "advocating violence." Yet the effect of these political attacks on a man who had stood up to Klan violence was to enhance Williams' authority among blacks who were beginning to revolt against King's "turn the other cheek" pacifism and Wilkins' groveling before the white racist ruling class.

Taking Refuge in Castro's Cuba

Since neither the KKK nightriders nor the "respectable" black leaders could stop Williams, this country's racist ruling class resorted to its ultimate weapon: the armed power of the state. In the summer of 1961, Monroe became a major focus of the Freedom Rides, a South-wide campaign to integrate restaurants and other public facilities. Thousands of Klansmen and other white-supremacists, many from out of state, converged on Monroe, savagely attacking the Freedom Riders and any local black people they got their hands on.

As the white racists were rioting in downtown Monroe, an elderly white couple happened to mistakenly drive into the black neighborhood. Their car was stopped by angry blacks who took them for Klan supporters. Williams intervened and escorted the couple into his house to protect them as angry blacks were defending themselves against whites who roared past with guns blazing. At this point, he got a phone call from the local chief of police, who threatened Williams that in 30 minutes he would be hanging in the courthouse square.

Fearing for his life, Williams and his family fled Monroe using back roads and

made their way North. The FBI now got into the act, as Williams was charged with kidnapping the white couple whom he had, in fact, rescued from a nasty situation. After living underground for several months, Williams and his family managed to get to Cuba. In the face of unremitting U.S. imperialist hostility in the aftermath of the 1959 overthrow of the corrupt Batista dictatorship by Castro's petty-bourgeois guerrilla forces, in 1960-61 the Castro regime expropriated the domestic and foreign capitalists. Williams had previously visited Castro's Cuba, where he was "made to feel that I was a member of the human race for the first time in my life."

Shortly after Williams and his family fled to Cuba, an independent left-wing publishing company, Marzani & Munsell, brought out *Negroes with Guns*, Williams' account of his experiences in Monroe and his general political views. From Cuba he continued to publish the *Crusader*, a newsletter he had begun in North Carolina. And through Castro's personal intervention, Williams was given a radio program, Radio Free Dixie, with which to broadcast his message of black liberation back into the United States.

Williams' activities in Havana were in their own way just as significant as his work in Monroe. The liberal idealistic youth—black and white—who rallied to the civil rights movement were still largely imbued with the anti-Communist attitudes of the Cold War/McCarthyite period of the 1950s. That a man of Williams' background and experience, who had never professed a belief in Communism, could find in Castro's Cuba not only a refuge from U.S. government persecution but also a platform to attack racist American society helped dispel such anti-Communist prejudices. American radicals who visited Cuba at this time could look forward to meeting and talking with Robert Williams, an interesting and rewarding experience.

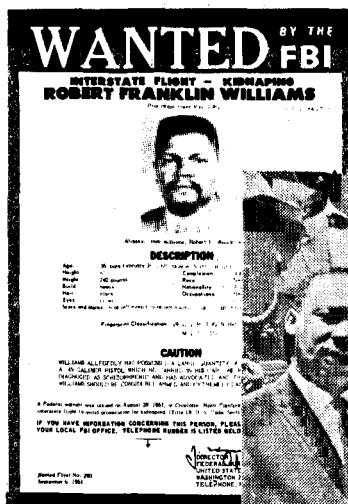
In the mid-1960s, Castro's Cuba, following the lead of the Brezhnev regime in the USSR, its main protector, was pushing for better relations with Washington in the name of "détente." Williams' scathing attacks on liberal Democrats and mainstream black leaders like King thus became an embarrassment for the Cuban Stalinist regime. Cuban officials began to obstruct his activities and demanded that they be allowed to censor his newsletter and radio program. Fed up with battling the Cuban bureaucracy, in 1966 Williams went to China where the Mao Zedong regime was still posturing as a militant opponent of American imperialism.

Although Williams was treated well in China, he keenly felt the distance from his homeland, then in the throes of mass black radicalization. In 1969, Williams decided to return to the United States despite the legal threat hanging over him. North Carolina authorities attempted to extradite him from Michigan, where he had settled, on the old kidnapping charges. This entailed a court battle lasting several years. Finally, the charges were dropped. In the course of defending him at the time, *Workers Vanguard* ran an interview with Williams, publicizing his activities in Monroe (see "Black Self-Defense and the Civil Rights Movement," *WV* No. 92, 16 January 1976).

At the time Williams fled to Cuba, he had been in the vanguard of black militancy. When he returned eight years later, his views had become far more widely accepted among black activists, finding their most significant organizational expression in the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. Furthermore, by

Leninist" posture. Under the guns of murderous FBI/cop repression, some Panther leaders, like Bobby Seale and Eldridge Cleaver, soon sold out to the white racist rulers while some, like Huey Newton, dropped out of politics. Others, like Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal, were framed up and thrown into prison. In the climate of growing racist reaction of the late 1970s-'80s, Williams remained a principled champion of black rights. He involved himself in a wide range of causes, and consistently supported united-front labor/black mobilizations which were initiated and organized by the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee against the Klan, Nazis and other racist terrorists.

Like other black radicals of the 1960s, Williams' political consciousness was shaped by the deep and deepening racial divide in American society, which he regarded as unchangeable. While in Havana, he expressed the opinion to a senior Cuban official that as long as white workers "have jobs and can buy



"Moderate" civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. hobnobbed with Robert Kennedy and Democratic president Lyndon Johnson while Robert F. Williams was in exile in Cuba to escape FBI vendetta.



the late 1960s it was common for American radicals of the most diverse tendencies to claim the authority of "Marxism-Leninism" for whatever program they espoused.

Williams was a mature activist who was not concerned with political trendiness. Though he was always willing to work with communists, he described himself as a "revolutionary black nationalist" but not a Marxist. This ideological position limited Williams' influence among the most left-wing black militants in the early 1970s, but it was more seriously held than the Panthers' "Marxist-

automobiles and homes, they've no real reason to rise up against the capitalists. Only those, like us Blacks, who are the victims of severe economic discrimination and racism, have the motivation to want to overthrow the system" (quoted in *Black Crusader*). The idea that in the course of class struggle white workers could overcome their racist prejudices and recognize their common interests with blacks was alien to Williams' outlook. Yet within the limits of that outlook, Robert F. Williams was a heroic and honorable fighter against black oppression. ■

NYC Transit "Workfare" Deal Enslaving the Poor, Busting the Unions

Jobs for All at Union Wages!

On September 18, the New York City Transit Authority (TA) and the Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 leadership announced a new contract proposal in which hundreds of unionized cleaners will be replaced by desperately poor welfare recipients forced into slave-labor "workfare." This betrayal by the Local 100 tops is not only a vicious attack on overwhelmingly minority welfare recipients but is a dagger pointed straight at the heart of the TWU—and all NYC municipal unions.

In reporting the "workfare" deal, the *New York Times* carried a front-page feature on Local 100 president Willie James, who was recently appointed by TWU International president (and former Local 100 head) Sonny Hall. The *Times* played up the fact that James is the local's first black president and that his mother had worked her way off welfare. This cynical "pull yourself up by the bootstraps" theme is constantly being hammered at the ghetto and barrio masses by America's racist rulers as they prepare to eliminate the last shreds of any social "safety net" for the poor.

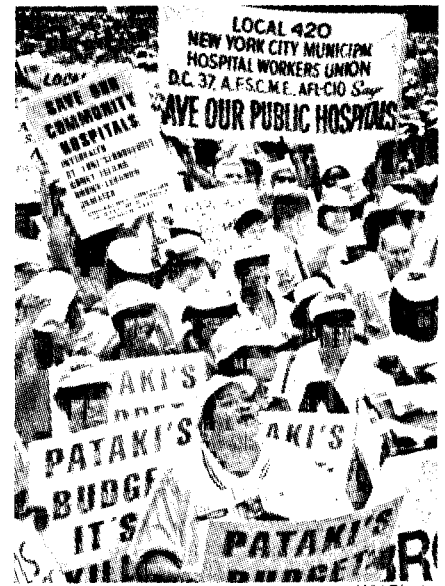
From the standpoint of the American ruling class, "communism is dead" and the unions are toothless. With the union leaders acting more like low-wage labor contractors than even labor lieutenants of capital, the capitalist rulers see no need for "New Deal" or "Great Society" entitlement programs and other "welfare state" sops to workers, blacks and other minorities. Except instead of a Reagan or Bush leading the attacks, it's the racist, cop-loving "law and order" Democrat Clinton, working hand in hand with Dole and Gingrich, who just consigned millions of babies and mothers, poor people and immigrants, to starvation, sickness, homelessness and death. And the AFL-CIO tops devote all their efforts and millions of dollars in union funds to get Clinton re-elected.

A lot of the TWU ranks understand the danger of the latest contract proposal, and they're making that clear at angry meetings in subway barns and bus depots around the city. But they also know that they can expect nothing from the union tops. From Sonny Hall and Willie James on up to the "new voice" AFL-CIO leadership of John Sweeney and their predecessors, the labor bureaucracy has presided over and pushed through large-scale destruction of jobs, massive cuts in real wages and the decimation of the unions themselves. Now the union misleaders have also taken on the role of overseers for the capitalist rulers' union-busting slave-labor programs.

Any serious effort to beat back the all-sided attacks on workers, minorities and the poor necessarily entails a political struggle to oust the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy which "demands" only what is acceptable to the racist ruling class. What is required is a fight for *jobs for all*—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay—and full cost-of-living escalator clauses in union contracts. New York needs a *massive program of public works at union wages*—for quality, integrated housing and schools; for free quality health care for all, for massive reconstruction of roads, bridges and tunnels, for everything we need for a decent life. It is necessary to demand *equal pay for equal work*. The city wants to bring in hundreds of poor people to clean the filthy subway stations? Fine. They should be hired at *union wages with full union protection!* The TWU should lead a fight to *organize the unorganized!*

Even to defend the most basic right of the working class—to a job at decent pay—leads directly to challenging the capitalist profit system. As revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Program (1938) during the devastation of the Great Depression:

"The question is one of guarding the proletariat from decay, demoralization and



WV Photo

Hospital workers rally against layoffs, killer cuts in New York City, June 12.

ruin. The question is one of life or death of the only creative and progressive class, and by that token, of the future of mankind. If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish."

Rip Up the Sellout!

James & Co. are trying to sell the proposed contract by pointing to a purported "no layoffs" clause. But the agreement explicitly states that 500 cleaners' jobs will be slashed through attrition. Particularly in the Stations Department, where hundreds of token booth clerk and other jobs are already threatened with elimination, management has been stepping up disciplinary actions—victimizations—aimed at driving out workers. The new deal would come down hardest on the most vulnerable sectors of the TA's workforce, particularly women and younger black and Hispanic workers for whom cleaners' positions are often the avenue into better-paying transit jobs. It would also place some TWU members in the position of being straw bosses over the slave-labor crews, under a contract provision creating a new union job category of "lead cleaner" at higher pay than other TWU cleaners.

We have warned that "the widespread creation of phony 'workfare' programs has meant a direct attack on municipal unions" (WV No. 649, 2 August). This could not be clearer than with the latest TWU deal. The effect of the contract would be to pit the union *against* predominantly black and Hispanic welfare

recipients. This would inflame racist reaction, which the capitalist rulers have long used to divide the working class in order to drive down wages and increase the rate of exploitation of all workers. *The labor movement must be mobilized on behalf of all the oppressed: union rights and black rights either march forward together or fall back separately.*

This is particularly obvious in the case of Local 100, with its heavily black and Hispanic membership. Moreover, the TWU is potentially one of the most powerful unions in the U.S. Local 100 can shut down the finance center of American capitalism by stopping the subways. This puts the union in a strategic position to fight not only for its own membership but to lead all of city labor and the millions of unorganized working people and minorities who are all being slammed by hospital closings, school cutbacks and the axing of social services.

The unions should be in the forefront of organizing mass protests against the epidemic of cop terror in the ghettos and barrios which accompanies the racist cutbacks. The racist cops who cut down black and Hispanic youth also attack Teamsters' and other workers' picket lines. Labor must demand full citizenship rights for immigrants, who have been at the top of the government's hit list under the anti-welfare and "counter-terrorism" laws. And it is necessary to combat any manifestations of racist backwardness within the unions. In the case of the TWU, that means fighting to put a stop to the racist ethnic-baiting on the rise inside transit workplaces, promoted by the TA's divide-and-rule policies which pit blacks and Hispanics against Jews, South Asians against West Indians, and U.S.-born workers against immigrants. This is *poison* to the cause of labor!

Transit workers are being told to vote on the contract by mail. This is a standard procedure by the union bureaucrats to diffuse anger over the sellout which undermines the whole purpose of the union. There should be a mass meeting of the entire Local 100 membership to *vote down the sellout* and begin to prepare union action against TA threats of widespread layoffs and "privatization" of everything from bus maintenance to transit construction.

The decisive question is one of leadership. It is clear what Hall and James have to offer—more givebacks and concessions. Before the "workfare" deal, the Local 100 tops had already caved in on speed-up and safety conditions. Most recent was the beginning of "one person train operation" (OPTO) on September 1 on selected subway lines—a deadly dan-

gerous cutback in conductors' jobs which management had sought for years.

Some TWU members look to the "New Directions" caucus in Local 100 as an opposition to the Hall/James leadership. After maintaining a stony silence on the "workfare" deal in workplace meetings last week, New Directions has now come out with a leaflet calling for a "No" vote on the contract. But then what? New Directions is itself an integral part of the Local 100 bureaucracy, controlling a significant section of the union executive board. They have consistently cringed from calling for strikes over past contract battles. Moreover, New Directions has repeatedly hauled the union into the bosses' courts to settle what should be internal union affairs, while supporting a "job action" by sadistic Riker's Island prison guards.

This is a violation of the most elementary principles of the labor movement. Labor must clean its own house—cops and courts out of the union movement! The cops and courts are central institutions of the racist capitalist state, which is nothing other than an apparatus of repression of the working class and the oppressed. The precondition for any real struggle by the unions against the bosses is the *complete independence of the labor movement from the capitalist state*. New Directions, like the various other reformist "oppositions" within the unions, share the same pro-capitalist outlook as the AFL-CIO tops, squabbling only over the spoils of power. To transform the unions from secondary instruments of the capitalist class for the subordination and disciplining of the workers into organizations that actually defend the interests of the working class, it is necessary to forge a *class-struggle leadership* of the labor movement.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

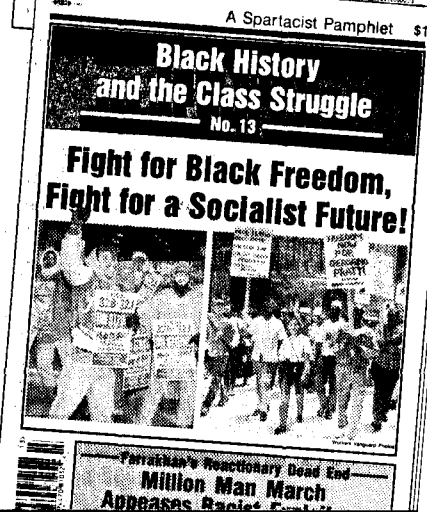
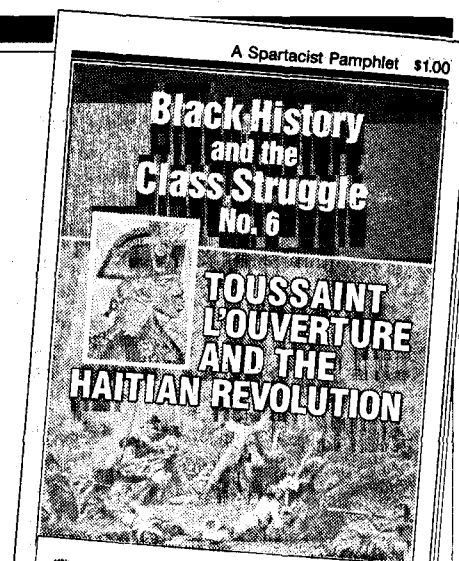
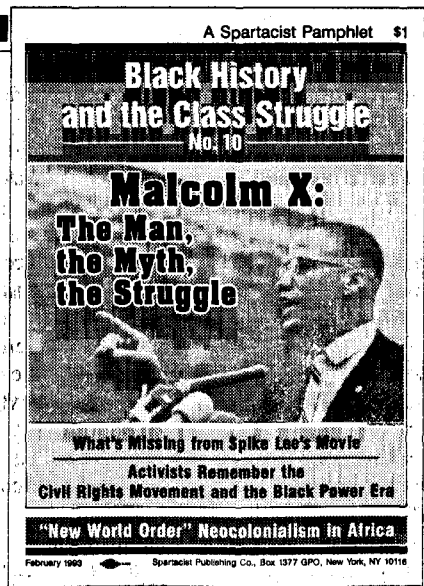
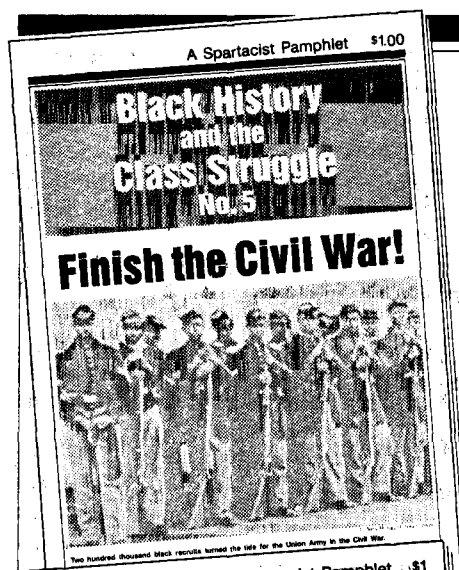
City and state governments around the country are watching what happens with the transit "workfare" agreement. If a powerful union like the TWU accepts it, then everyone else is fair game. Republican New York City mayor Giuliani, who has waged his own brutal war on the homeless and welfare recipients, reacted angrily to the proposal because it blew the cover off the sweetheart deal cooked up with AFSCME District Council 37 city workers chief, Stanley Hill, which pretends that union jobs will not be sacrificed to "workfare." The truth is that more than 20,000 formerly unionized city jobs are now being done by "workfare" crews getting miserly welfare benefits. Meanwhile, city hospitals are laying

off thousands of nurses and other workers, and the public schools are abysmally overcrowded and in dangerous disrepair. There is plenty of seething anger among city workers, teachers and hospital workers over the state of New York City.

But particularly in this election year, the labor traitors, who are shelling out tens of millions of dollars for the reelection of welfare-basher Clinton, intend to make sure the union ranks don't do anything which could embarrass the Democrats. Reflecting pressure from outraged union members, Stanley Hill is now pleading for a "moratorium" on "workfare." But all the DC 37 tops can offer to back this up is a "threat" to support Giuliani's Democratic opponent in next year's NYC mayoral election. And the public employees unions have announced a moratorium on even their pitiful efforts to beg ("lobby") Congress to "amend" the anti-welfare law until after November.

Labor needs a leadership that knows workers' interests are counterposed to those of their exploiters; that the Democrats are no "friends of labor" but represent the bosses just as much as the more openly anti-union Republicans; that the government—with its arsenal of anti-labor weapons like New York State's Taylor Law banning public workers strikes—is nothing but the executive committee of the capitalist class. The fight to mobilize the unions and the oppressed in struggle needs a political expression: not a phony "Labor Party" of the sort now being touted by sections of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which acts as a shill for the Democrats, but a *revolutionary workers party*. A successful fight to defend and improve the present conditions of the working class can only be waged as part of the struggle to get rid of the entire capitalist system.

The destruction of social welfare systems is occurring not only in the U.S. but around the world, as the capitalists attempt to cut "overhead" expenses and drive down wages to sharpen their competitive edge against each other. But these policies are creating enormous pressure at the base of society: people don't like the idea that there is no future for themselves and their kids. As Leon Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Program, by fighting for demands like a shorter workweek at no loss in pay and a sliding scale of wages, "the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery." The need for socialist revolution to break the power of the corrupt, racist ruling class and rebuild this society for the benefit of all is posed ever more sharply today. ■



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