

## Economic Rivalry and Japan-Bashing



Fifty-year-old images of the U.S. war with Japan are suddenly flooding the media. "Day of Infamy" screams the front cover of *Time* (2 December) with a picture of the USS *Arizona* burning at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. A bellwether of thinking in high ruling-class circles, *Time* gives a blow-by-blow account of that event which brought the U.S. into World War II, as part of a 40-page special looking back on the war in nostalgic tones. *U.S. News & World Report* subtitles its special "America Fights Back," with images of G.I. Joe and Rosie the Riveter. Even the *New York Times Magazine* (3 November) throws somber rays of the rising sun across its cover, complaining that there is "little sound of remorse" in the "Mind of Japan."

On the anniversary of the war, the two

imperialist rivals/allies serve up self-serving images: Washington recalls Pearl Harbor, Tokyo talks of Hiroshima. While the Japanese Diet (parliament) is reportedly considering a resolution apologizing for the Pearl Harbor attack, George Bush declared that "no apology is required" for the U.S. dropping of atomic bombs. The media blitz takes its cue from the imperial president: Bush made a point of canceling a scheduled visit to Japan, supposedly to tend to pressing domestic affairs, and the White House squelched talk of Japanese officials attending the Pearl Harbor ceremony.

And behind it all are the growing economic frictions between the Americans and Japanese. The Pearl Harbor hoopla might be more accurately described as "Hysteria Over High-Grade Sony Prod-

ucts, Wrapped Up in the Stars and Stripes." As the U.S. economy now sinks into a bottomless pit, the bourgeoisie looks with envy on the Land of the Rising Sun. And they're not just worried about Japanese domination of the auto and consumer electronics markets through superior quality. They're worried about empire.

*National Geographic* (November 1991) runs a lead story, "Japan's Sun Rises Over the Pacific," complete with a map of the new "co-prosperity sphere" with tentacles reaching from Tokyo throughout East Asia. It lists the economic accomplishments of postwar Japanese capitalism:

"Nearly devoid of natural resources, Japan is now awash in one commodity: money...."

"Yen rolled out from Japan like a tsunami—to the U.S., Europe, and the rest of Asia. Japan became the world's biggest creditor nation. Then the world's biggest aid donor. And then one of the world's biggest foreign investors...."

"Today Japan, with a population less than half that of the U.S., boasts an economy almost two-thirds as large—and gaining."

Many "opinion-makers" in Washington recall that winning the last world war "solved" the last depression. The *Times*' Tokyo bureau chief, Steven R. Weisman, put it diplomatically:

"Anyone following Japanese-American frictions cannot help but note the parallels between the early 1940's and now. Fifty years after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Washington is still debating the wisdom of economic pressure on Tokyo. Will American trade sanctions  
*continued on page 10*

## Imperialist Troops Get Out!

# New World Disorder in Cambodia

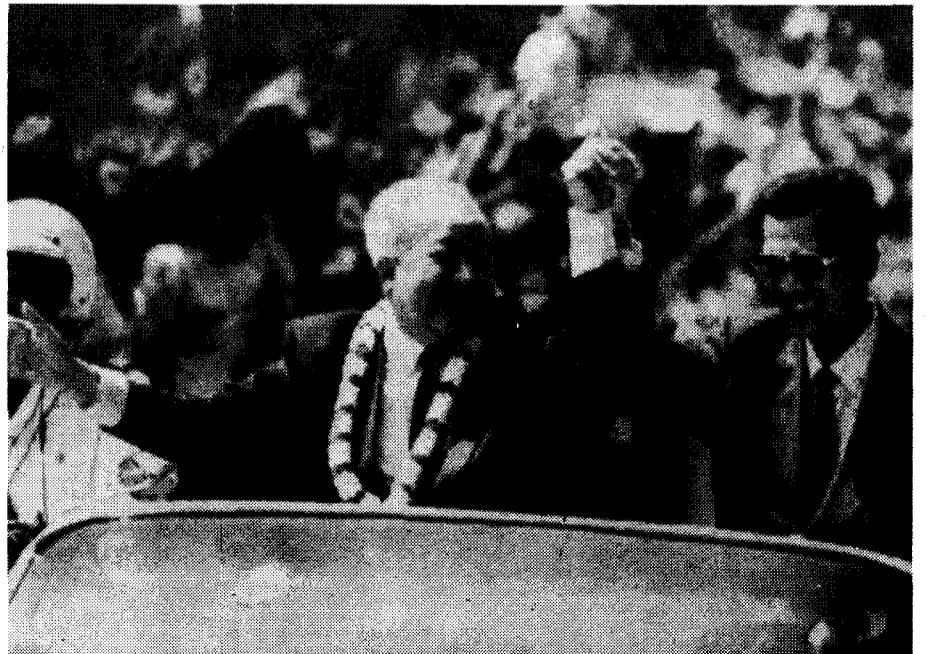
On November 14, "Peacock Prince" Norodom Sihanouk returned to his palace in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh after 12 years' exile. Sihanouk's return signaled the implementation of an imperialist-brokered "peace accord" aimed at ending the decade-long civil war which pitted the Vietnam-allied regime of Prime Minister Hun Sen against a U.S.-backed mélange dominated by the genocidal Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. Having succeeded with Gorbachev's collusion in extinguishing other "regional hot spots," Washington now seeks to extend its "New World Order" to Cambodia. Up to 11,000 UN "peace-keeping" troops have started flooding in, supposedly to supervise "free elections" and the installation of an interim "coalition" including the U.S.-backed forces.

Grotesquely, more than 16 years after the heroic Vietnamese people drove out the American invaders and their corrupt Saigon puppets, imperialist

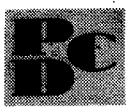
troops are once again on Indochinese soil. We say: *Get out—and stay out!*

The Cambodian people have not forgotten the horrors they suffered at the hands of Pol Pot, whose xenophobic regime murdered a million people before being toppled by Vietnamese forces in 1979. Hours after the arrival of Pol Pot aide Khieu Samphan, an angry crowd gathered outside his Phnom Penh villa and nearly lynched the despised Khmer Rouge leader. Hun Sen later issued a statement that the "unplanned violent demonstration" was "regrettable" and would hamper "the process of implementing the peace agreement," but his police remained conspicuously at a distance while the enraged crowd went about its business.

And the slimy Sihanouk, who went from being an exploiter of the starving Cambodian peasantry to a figurehead in the Khmer Rouge regime and then an ally in its terrorist war, moved  
*continued on page 5*



"Peacock Prince" Norodom Sihanouk returns to Phnom Penh, now allied with Cambodian prime minister Hun Sen (right) against Pol Pot.



# Partisan Defense Committee

## CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

### Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

"All through history those who have fought against oppression have constantly been faced with the dungeons of a ruling class. The greater the cause has been, and the deeper it has been rooted in the needs and sufferings of the masses, the more it has been menaced by the tortures of prison cells."

—James P. Cannon, "The Cause That Passes Through a Prison," September 1926

The state's answer to the strivings of the poor, exploited and oppressed is cops, courts and jail. Where the capitalist rulers once built automobiles they now

build prisons. Old penitentiaries—from Marion, Illinois to Trenton, New Jersey—are turned into high-tech torture chambers known as "Control Units." Across the country men and women are imprisoned for challenging the racist status quo, subjected daily to the most brutal and degrading treatment.

Support for these class-war prisoners is indispensable to the defense of all victims of racist terror and capitalist state repression. The Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) seeks to sear the injustice of these cases into the consciousness of the working masses—today and for generations to come. These brothers and sis-

ters behind bars must not be forgotten.

Six years ago we revived the tradition of the International Labor Defense (ILD) of sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners and extra gifts for them and their families during the holidays. This winter is our sixth Holiday Appeal for the prisoners. Last year we raised over \$9,700, giving us a solid financial basis for sending monthly stipends, and meeting requests for books, magazines, special items of clothing, as well as the holiday gifts. These modest gifts and holiday messages of solidarity are a reminder to these brothers and sisters that they are not forgotten, and that we are dedicated in every season to waging the fight for a powerful movement of legal and social defense in support of their battles against the racist frame-up system.

As James Cannon wrote for the Second Annual Conference of the ILD, "The class-conscious worker accords to the class-war prisoners a place of singular honor and esteem." We list below the 19 prisoners presently in the PDC's stipend program.

framed up in 1970 explosion which killed a cop. Both men were convicted on perjured testimony and sentenced to life terms. Mondo is at Lincoln, Nebraska.



LNS

Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin Six still in prison, leader of prison rights movement along with George Jackson, militant anti-racist. In prison over 26 years, currently serving a life sentence at Crescent City, California.



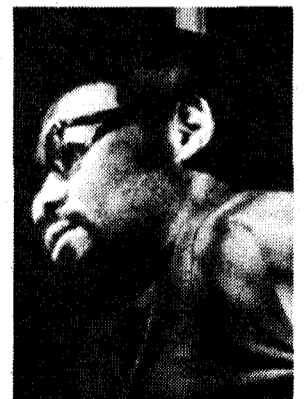
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Charles "Chuckie" Africa, shot in the 1978 cop attack on MOVE's Powelton Village home and convicted of killing a cop who died in the attack although the autopsy showed the bullet came from a cop's gun. One of nine MOVE members serving 30-100 years. Now in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Ramona Africa, 36 years old. Jailed for being the sole adult survivor of the hideous MOVE massacre, 13 May 1985. In prison at Muncy, Pennsylvania, due for release in 1992.

We send stipends to eleven other Africa family members in Pennsylvania prisons:

- Carlos Africa, Dallas, PA
- Consuwella Dotson Africa, Muncy, PA
- Debbie Sims Africa, Muncy, PA
- Delbert Orr Africa, Dallas, PA
- Edward Goodman Africa, Camp Hill, PA
- Janet Holloway Africa, Muncy, PA
- Janine Phillips Africa, Muncy, PA
- Merle Austin Africa, Muncy, PA
- Michael Davis Africa, Huntingdon, PA
- Susan Leon Africa, Muncy, PA
- William Phillips Africa, Bellefonte, PA



Committee to Free Rice/Poindexter

Ed Poindexter, 48 years old. Former Black Panther supporter, victim of racist COINTELPRO frame-up, sentenced to life. He has already served more than 19 years, and is now at Lino Lake, Minnesota.

Eddie McClelland, framed up in 1984 in the deaths of three members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. He was sentenced to three consecutive life terms without a jury or any evidence. He is in Maze Prison, Northern Ireland.

Send your contributions for the Holiday Appeal to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD



TROTSKY

#### WWII: Wall Street's War

As the American bourgeoisie, in recalling the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, wallows in an orgy of chauvinist hysteria aimed at preparing the way for trade war and a new inter-imperialist slaughter, we Trotskyists uphold the principled stand of our forebears of James P. Cannon's Socialist Workers Party. On the same day that the U.S. Congress declared war on Japan, 8 December 1941, a U.S. court sentenced Cannon and 17 other leaders of the SWP and the Minneapolis



LENIN

Teamsters for their internationalist opposition to the war drive. At its October 1942 convention, the SWP vowed, following Lenin's policy in World War I, to fight to turn the imperialist world war into proletarian world revolution.

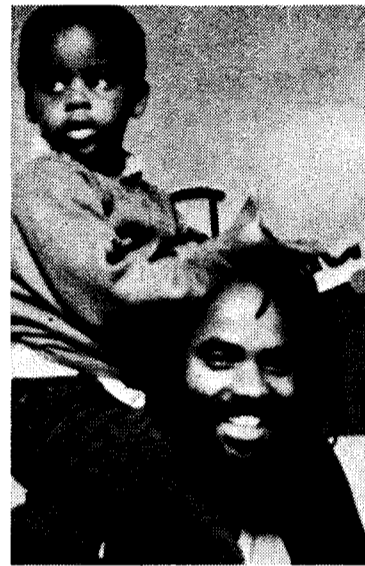
Long before its advent we warned the workers of the inescapable participation of the United States in this war and stated that such a war could only be an imperialist war. The actual entry of the United States into the conflict has not altered our position, but confirmed it. We do not and cannot give any support to this reactionary war undertaken on behalf of America's monopolists to ensure their world domination of markets, foreign concessions, sources of war materials and spheres of influence. This is Wall Street's war, not ours....

That this is the epoch not only of imperialist wars but also of proletarian revolutions was confirmed in 1917 when the Soviets became the state power in Russia, abolished private property and nationalized the means of production, including the land. It then became a class duty for every worker to defend the Soviet Union. That remains our duty today. We remain today as we have been from its birth unconditional defenders and devoted partisans of the Soviet Union. The war of the Soviet Union is our war, the war of the workers everywhere....

The outbreak of war between Japan and the United States came as a surprise to no informed person. The contest for supremacy in the Pacific has been brewing since these allied rivals crossed swords in Siberia at the close of the first world war.

The imperialist rulers of both camps are fighting tenaciously to maintain the existing system which has brought about the prevailing slaughter, misery, chaos and hopelessness. The rival monopolist cliques want to reconstruct the world for their selfish ends. They have not the slightest concern for the welfare of their own peoples or the oppressed in other lands. Each strives to conquer the world or a larger share of it for their own enrichment and power. Both imperialist blocs have the same predatory aims, although they employ different terms and slogans to justify their role in the war. Hitler's "New Order" is simply German capitalism's reedition of the old capitalist anarchy and oppression. The Anglo-American combine has no more radiant prospect to offer than a new and more monstrous Versailles treaty that can only lay the groundwork for a Third World War.

—SWP Political Resolution, "The Imperialist War and the Road to World Socialism" (October 1942)



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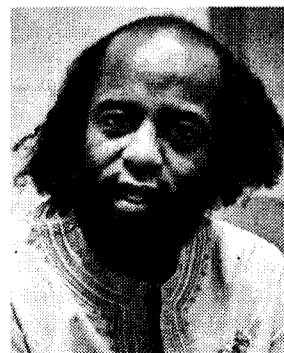
Mumia Abu-Jamal, 37 years old. MOVE supporter, former Black Panther, well-known journalist—"Voice of the Voiceless." Sentenced to death for his political beliefs. Currently at Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!



WW Photo

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), 44 years old. Former Black Panther, decorated Vietnam vet. Victim of FBI COINTELPRO frame-up. He has served over 20 years for a crime the government knows he could not have committed. He is currently in Tehachapi prison, California.



Nat Weinstein

Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (David Rice), 45 years old. He and Poindexter were victims of COINTELPRO,

### WORKERS VANGUARD



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

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

Workers Vanguard (USPS 098-770) published biweekly, except 2nd issue August and with 3-week interval December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116. Domestic subscriptions: \$7.00/24 issues. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers Vanguard, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.

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

No. 540

6 December 1991

## On the Yugoslav Civil War

Independence, Mo.  
November 1, 1991

Comrades,

I was surprised Yugoslavia did not make the headline in the *Workers Vanguard* No. 537 [25 October]. I have many friends of the "progressive-peacenik-green" ilk that are unconvinced that the Yugoslav Federal Army is to be supported. Instead, coverage of the relatively irrelevant Thomas nomination/confirmation took its place.

Who cares what the black-robed bigots are up to? I read the article of course in the event some idiot took sides in such a sick preppie game that I'd have to answer to.

I suppose I had hoped for a headline as: "Defeat Counter-Revolutionary Attack on Yugoslavia." Or, "Defend Yugoslavia Against Imperialist Attack." Because that's what it is!

Certainly, Yugoslavia is far more degenerated as a workers state than say, Cuba—or even North Korea—but Yugoslavian workers and farmers are much better off than the Italian or Greek masses. Let's support *Army!*

Why is SL shying from supporting the defense of Yugoslavia?

Comradely,  
David A. Johnson

*WV replies:* To begin with, on the squalid Clarence Thomas Supreme Court hearings, this was not just some irrelevant "preppie game." As we noted in our headline, it intersected "Sex, Race and Reaction" in America and thus touched quite a few raw nerves in this racist, sexist country. And, as we wrote, the protracted fight over Thomas' nomination was over abortion rights. A Leninist party, as a tribune of the people that fights all forms of oppression, must take on questions of all-sided social oppression, even when refracted through bourgeois politics. What the black-robed bigots are up to is revving up the legal lynching machinery, which is not a matter of indifference to the working class.

Concerning Yugoslavia, we refer readers to "Serbia-Croatia War Ripping Apart Yugoslavia" in *WV* No. 535 (27 September) and an earlier article, "Bloody Nationalist Warfare and Counterrevolution: Yugoslavia Shattering" in *WV* No. 531

(19 July). We argue there that proletarian internationalists have no side in this fratricidal conflict. A blatant negative confirmation of this is the stand taken by Ernest Mandel's anti-Trotskyist "United Secretariat." They not only support Croatia under the ultrarightist bourgeois-nationalist Tadjman regime, but also call for the "downfall" of Milosevic's Serbia through "economic and political isolation of the regime in Belgrade by Europe as a whole" (*International Viewpoint*, 16 September). In other words, Mandel's "NATO socialists" are calling for imperialist intervention!

Croatian and Serbian nationalists and their imperialist godfathers."

There is no question that the Croatian secessionist regime is counterrevolutionary and aims to make Croatia a neocolony of the German Fourth Reich. Certainly, the Serbian communities have every reason to fear living under the right-wing nationalist government of Franjo Tadjman, a notorious apologist for the clerical-fascist Ustashi regime, which under the protection of the Nazi Wehrmacht massacred hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. But the sum total of Milosevic's program is

that Serbian refugee families are being moved into formerly Croatian homes and farms.

What this forced population transfer underscores is that the army/Milosevic campaign is not to preserve the Yugoslav workers state but, in fact, is speeding its demise through an explosion of nationalist rancor and bloodletting. While claiming to stand for the rights of the Serbian minority in Croatia, Milosevic is himself a bloody oppressor of the non-Serbian peoples over whom he has gained sway. He rode to power by trampling on the Albanians of Kosovo. And he did away with regional autonomy for the large Hungarian population in the province of Vojvodina. The Slavic Muslims of Bosnia—the largest ethnic group in that republic—rightly fear they will



David Rose



Der Spiegel

Croatian militiamen (left), including Ustashi fascists, battle Serbian irregulars (right), who call themselves Chetniks after the anti-Communist monarchists in World War II.

In fact, should NATO forces intervene decisively on the side of Croatia, Trotskyists would bloc militarily with Belgrade against imperialism. But that is not what is happening now. Comrade Johnson would side with the federal army, arguing that it is defending the Yugoslav workers state against counterrevolution. Unfortunately, the military high command is not fighting to preserve socialized property as the basis of a federated workers state, but has reluctantly subordinated itself to Milosevic's project of founding a "Greater Serbia" on the ruins of Yugoslavia. As we noted in July, "The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is now being ripped apart by the same forces defeated by Tito's Communist partisans in World War II—the fratricidal

that "it is the legitimate right and the interest of the Serbian people to live in one state—this is the beginning and the end." To this end, the Serbian strongman has no qualms about blocking with latter-day Chetniks, the Serbian equivalent of the Croatian Ustasha, many of whom also collaborated with the Nazis.

What about the army? Last year the Yugoslav Stalinist bureaucracy totally fragmented along national lines after decades of centrifugal pressures fueled by "market socialism." The federal army—whose origins go back to Tito's Communist partisans—was left as the only remaining central (pan-Yugoslav) institution with any authority. However, the military leadership, itself politically divided, had no program to prevent the breakup of Yugoslavia as real political power passed into the hands of the mutually hostile, nationalist regimes of the republics. For his part, Milosevic has repeatedly declared his willingness to accept Croatia's secession provided that its Serbian-populated regions are detached and incorporated into an enlarged Serbian-dominated state. And if you look at what has happened on the ground, *this* is the program the army leadership is pursuing.

If the federal army leadership were seeking to militarily defeat the Croatian secessionists, they would have struck at the capital. And up until last week they had enough military force in the Zagreb barracks to flatten the Croatian capital in 24 hours and overthrow the Tadjman government. *But they didn't.* Since July, the war has consisted of territory-grabbing. First came the breakaway of majority Serbian areas on the fringes of Croatia. Then, by going after the Adriatic seaport of Dubrovnik, the army obtained for Serbia an outlet to the sea and a prime hard-currency-generating tourist region. By taking Slavonia, it has gained a breadbasket. The sieges of Vukovar and Osijek, which could have been taken weeks ago, were designed to drive out the Croatian population. And now the *New York Times* (30 November) reports

become an oppressed people in a Greater Serbia dominated by Milosevic. Thus, Bosnian Muslims have obstructed the movement of federal army units and Serbian irregulars into Croatia.

While Milosevic is not at the moment singing the praises of the Western capitalist powers, since Berlin and Washington now favor the Croats, the Serbian demagogue is in no sense committed to maintaining socialized property. A former head of the Yugoslav central bank, Milosevic has long been an advocate of a capitalist market economy. Last year his party voted in the federal parliament for a law allowing for the wholesale privatization of socialized enterprises. And this spring he summed up his economic program as "a completely free flow of labour, goods and capital" (*Review of International Affairs*, 20 June).

One Yugoslav observer noted that "after resisting for some time, the army is riding with Milosevic" (*New York Times*, 1 October). Yet there remains a certain sentiment in the officer corps to restore the old Titoist order. Both Defense Minister Kadjevic, who is half Serb and half Croat, and his Slovene deputy, Admiral Stane Brovet, have reportedly voiced opposition to the Serbian-nationalist demagogue as well as to his Croatian counterpart. But the high command has neither the perspective nor the capacity to mobilize the working class to overthrow the warring nationalist regimes. As we wrote in September:

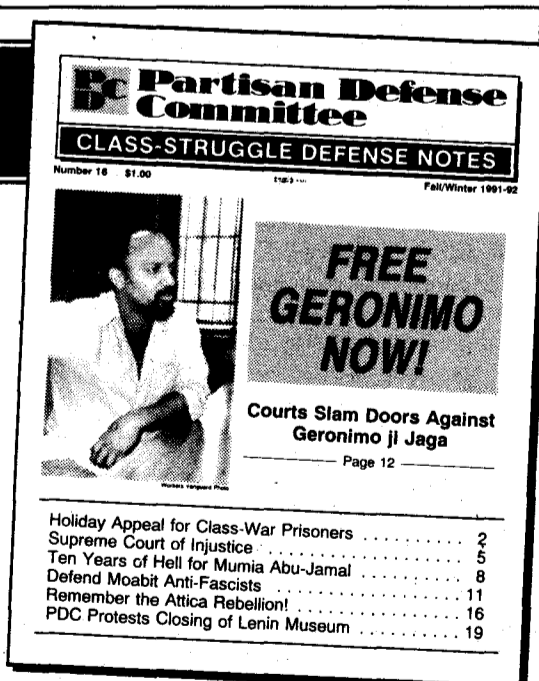
"Class-conscious workers throughout Yugoslavia must fight the forces of fratricidal nationalism, and aim to overthrow both the fascistic regime of Franjo Tadjman in Croatia and the Great Serbian chauvinist regime of Slobodan Milosevic. Officers and soldiers in the federal army who stand for socialism must oppose both the drive for a Greater Serbia and those who would transform Yugoslavia and its constituent republics into neocolonies of the (German-dominated) West European Common Market. Only the struggle for a Socialist Federation of the Balkans within a Socialist United States of Europe can save Yugoslavia from becoming once again an arena of nationalist genocide and imperialist subjugation." ■

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**CLASS-STRUGGLE  
DEFENSE NOTES!**

**No. 16  
Fall/Winter 1991-92**

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## On Magic Johnson and AIDS

### PL, WL: Idiots and Bigots

Following basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson's announcement that he had tested positive for HIV, we wrote in our last issue: "His composure and bravery in publicly announcing his infection with the AIDS virus—a death sentence for its overwhelmingly gay, black and Hispanic victims who also suffer a plague of bigotry—was met with an unusual outpouring of support." But we added: "Stars don't come bigger than Magic, and now even against him the backlash has begun."

Vice President Quayle whined that instead of "safe sex," Magic should have advocated "no sex." Fascistic ideologue Patrick Buchanan thundered about the "moral distinction" between Magic and "innocent" victims of AIDS like the virginal Kimberly Bergalis. Into this chorus of idiocy and bigotry fall two so-called "socialist" groups, David North's Workers League and the Stalinist Progressive Labor Party, which rival the ruling-class reactionaries in their lack of basic human decency.

Despite the abysmal state of AIDS education in the United States, there is virtually no one who fails to recognize that gay, black and Hispanic people have suffered disproportionately high death tolls from this disease. Yet an editorial in the Workers League's *Bulletin* (15 November) on "The Case of Magic Johnson: Capitalism and the AIDS Crisis" manages to spill over 1,700 words on the subject without once mentioning the word "gay" or "homosexual," or "black" or "racism" or "bigotry"! And that's quite an accomplishment...akin to writing a treatise on the Holocaust without ever mentioning the word "Jew"!

The Workers League's idea of "class-angling" a social issue is "colorblind" commentaries that pander to the worst reactionary prejudices.

Back in 1972, the then-leader of the Workers League Tim Wohlforth shrieked to a shocked gathering of the Buffalo Marxist Caucus (a group of young socialists which subsequently fused with the Spartacist League): "The working class hates faggots, women's libbers and hippies, and so do we!" From its earliest days the WL has put forward a program for a "labor party" geared to the prejudices of the conservative, racist AFL-CIO bureaucrats, with a blind eye—if not open, sneering hostility—to all questions of fighting special oppression. On the life-and-death issue of AIDS, the Workers League merely chides the genocidal U.S. government for promoting "bourgeois individualism" by making a big deal of Magic Johnson's announcement. Meanwhile, the WL partakes of the worst racism and anti-gay bigotry that the ruling class has manipulated to stigmatize people with AIDS, thus crippling the search for a cure to the disease.

While the Workers League ostentatiously ignores the vicious persecution of homosexuals and racial minorities which is integral to the bourgeoisie's policy of malign neglect of the AIDS crisis, the puritanical Stalinists of the Progressive Labor Party (PL) make their dimwitted bigotry explicit. Under the shockingly mean-spirited headline "The Fight Against AIDS Needs Science Not Magic!" PL's *Challenge* (20 November) brainlessly denounces Magic Johnson up and down for everything from his salary

- 20 November 1991

### CHALLENGE

The Revolutionary Communist Newspaper

#### How Communists Deal with Social Diseases

#### The Fight Against AIDS Needs Science Not Magic!

AIDS education is a sick joke that won't get any healthier now that Magic Johnson—the Lakers basketball star—has signed on to it. In fact it doesn't need "magic" or "showtime." What it needs is science and communist leadership.

The U.S. boasts the second biggest film industry in the world. It has probably the biggest and definitely the most technically advanced T.V. industry. All this is supported by a...

EDITORIAL

#### The Case of Magic Johnson Capitalism and the AIDS Crisis

### Bulletin

- 15 November 1991



to his purchase of a life insurance policy, concluding that he's a member of the ruling class (as if George Bush phones black athletes like Magic Johnson before carpetbombing Iraq), and says, "Let us rid ourselves of all these multi-millionaires like Magic Johnson who profit from our exploitation!"

Consistent with PL's grotesque Stalinist belief that under communism, homosexuality (which they consider a disease of capitalism) will be wiped out and everyone will live in happy monogamous families, *Challenge* trumpets the totally discredited theories of virologist Peter Duesberg which blame AIDS on "deviant behavior." According to Duesberg via PL, the HIV virus has nothing to do with AIDS, which is caused rather by "malnutrition" and "psychoactive drugs," and "among homosexuals, a combination of both could be the cause."

Buying into the government's racist war on drugs, which has unleashed a storm of cop terror in the ghettos, PL denounces needle exchange programs which could drastically reduce the now-exponential spread of AIDS in urban wastelands, with a dumb quip about

"clean needles" for "dirty drugs." As for sex, PL howls that the government is inconsistent in its message, pushing "safe sex" in press conferences and Madonna and *Hustler* magazine in the marketplace. Politics makes strange bedfellows, and the Stalinists of PL have the same wet dream as the Moral Majority bigots: they believe American society must be "morally regenerated" to total conformity—by force.

As we said in our article, "Magic Johnson and the AIDS Crisis": "AIDS is caused by a virus, not by 'sin,' and not by sex—any kind of sex" (WV No. 539, 22 November). But this government thinks gay, black and Hispanic victims of AIDS deserve to die. The search for a cure is hampered not only by a medical system run for profit but by the triumph of hysteria and bigotry over science. This situation cries out for a Leninist party to champion the cause of all the oppressed. The intersection of race, class and sex which characterizes the AIDS crisis calls out every base hatred in this capitalist society. It is a litmus test for socialists. Progressive Labor and the Workers League both flunk abysmally: no heart, no brains, no program. ■

## BT "Forgets" Support to Gang of Eight

After deserting the ranks of Trotskyism at the onset of Cold War II, for the past decade the self-styled "Bolshevik Tendency" has been driven by a monomaniacal obsession with our organization. Their guiding principle, as we noted in our article "BT Writes Off the Soviet Union" (WV No. 535, 27 September), has been to use "any stick to beat the dog," in this case the Spartacist League and the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). So after years of denouncing "Spartacist Stalinophilia" because we did not flinch in our unconditional defense of the gains of the October Revolution—including our emphatic calls for military support to Stalinist forces fighting against counterrevolu-

tion—this fall the BT attacked us for refusing to support the impotent August coup in the Soviet Union.

Thus at a series of SL forums in the Bay Area titled "Defeat Yeltsin/Bush Counterrevolution in USSR!" BTers have ludicrously tried to present the toothless Gorbachevite coup plotters as the last-ditch defenders against counterrevolution. At UC Berkeley, a prominent BT spokesman even denounced us for saying that the coup makers had left "Washington's darling Yeltsin untouched." Presenting a scenario as farcical as the pathetic coup attempt they retrospectively claim to have backed, the BTer argued:

"They made every attempt to pick him

up. They tried to arrest him at his dacha outside Moscow, missed him. They tried to get him at the Kremlin, and in fact the guard at the Kremlin that did not allow Yeltsin to enter had not been informed that he should have been detained. They then tried to get him once again in Moscow, he then made it to his little White House and of course things happened, the troops went over, they refused to fire, but the coupists obviously had every intention of picking him up and shooting him."

As one SL speaker from the floor retorted: "These are the people that didn't want to hail the Red Army in Afghanistan but want to hail the Keystone Cops in Moscow."

Of course, as we noted, the BT's cynical, after-the-fact support to the failed coup is their way of finally being able to dump Soviet defensism altogether—which they have longed to do for years—by declaring the triumph of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. Moreover, their clarion call for "military support" to Yanayev & Co.'s "Emergency Committee" is very much a sometime thing, to be played for select audiences—i.e., at SL forums—and conveniently dropped from the program in the popular-front haunts the BT frequents. So when called upon at an October 13 meeting in San Francisco on "The Collapse of the USSR and the Crisis of the U.S. Left," the BT didn't breathe a word of its putative "support" to the coup.

The meeting, whose featured speaker was *People's Weekly World* former Moscow correspondent Carl Bloice, was clearly part of a factional tour to

rally anti-Gus Hall forces in the fast-decomposing CP. While Hall is under siege for reportedly backing the "Emergency Committee," Bloice defended Gorbachev and repeatedly condemned the coup as "unconstitutional and undemocratic." While the chair of the meeting quite consciously refused to call on SLers, she did call on some of the slimier self-proclaimed "Trotskyists," including the BT. So carried away was he in ranting on about "the Stalinist jackboot on the necks of the workers," that the BTer neglected to mention their own oh-so-martial support to the coup committee.

#### RTT Didn't Notice BT "Opposition" to Solidarność

A month later in a "debate" on "Stalinism and Counterrevolution: The U.S.S.R. Today," the same BTer was lecturing the Revolutionary Trotskyist Tendency on the "contradictory nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy"! Obviously this lecture wasn't given to the ex-Morenoite RTT when they joined forces with the BT some years back in what was heralded as a "principled fusion" in the pages of the BT's press *1917*. The BT (which is always shrieking about the "demise" of the ICL) has never said a word about the rapid demise of this much-vaunted "fusion." For its part, the RTT snivels that they did not "study the Fusion Document as carefully as they should have, partly because of exhaustion!"

Apparently after finally getting a good night's sleep, they woke up to discover that the BT supposedly echoed the SL call to "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution" in Poland in 1981—while the

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# Why They Didn't Go After Yeltsin

## Soviet Union: X-Ray of a Coup



Members of "gang of eight" announce state of emergency at press conference on August 19.

Novosti

What happened in Moscow on those crucial three days in August? Gorbachev already has his instant book out, Yeltsin's is on the way and CNN has an instant video in the stores—all rehashing the neatly packaged "official" story. But slowly information has trickled out about what the coup plotters sought and what they really did...

The botched coup attempt opened the floodgates of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. The imperialist media cheered how the Russian people, newly awakened by "democracy," rose up against Stalinist "tyranny" and Communist "totalitarianism." The authors of the coup fiasco—all of them lieutenants of Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, indeed virtually his entire top echelon of cabinet officials—were painted as hard-bitten hardliners intent on a ruthless crackdown against Gorbachev's "democratic" reforms. The aim of this propaganda exercise is to portray the coup and the pro-imperialist countercoup spearheaded by Russian president Boris Yeltsin as a grand anti-Communist morality play in which KGB and military heavies were overwhelmed by the forces of "democracy" who rose up in a "second Russian Revolution."

While the Western press lionized Yeltsin, various "leftists" tried to give a "working-class" cover to counterrevolution with headlines like "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup" (American SWP), "Workers' Action Decisive in Coup Defeat" (British WRP) and "USSR: Victory to Workers' Resistance" (British SWP). In opposing the pro-imperialist countercoup and raising the call "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" we noted that, in fact, the barricades outside Yeltsin's "White House" only had a couple of thousand "yuppies, students and assorted Russian nationalists, including fascists and priests." Even the less starry-eyed observers in the media were forced to deal with the fact that the masses did not flock behind Yeltsin. The anti-coup demonstrations were no bigger than numerous other "democrat" mobilizations in the last year. Yeltsin's call for a general strike was a complete flop (see "Who Was on Yeltsin's Barricades?" WV No. 535, 27 September).

But many asked, how could the combined chiefs of the Soviet military, internal security police and KGB be so incompetent and so impotent as to simply bungle their coup attempt every step of the way? Why did they fail to deploy politically reliable military units to take down the barricades, why did they fail to cut off Yeltsin's communications (both his phone lines to Bush and the radio transmissions from the "White House")? Above all, why did they fail to arrest their chief nemesis? The tabloids ran stories of perpetually drunken coup plotters

and jokes about the gang that couldn't shoot straight. But even the most inept banana republic conspirators know that the first rule of coup-making is to dispose of your enemies. Interviewed in the CIA think tank's *Harriman Institute Forum* (August 1991), Soviet "expert" John Copp remarked: "Their lack of ruthlessness was something I never would have expected from the conservative elements of the CPSU.... The list of mistakes made by the junta is almost interminable."

Since the coup, Moscow has been teeming with conspiracy theories aimed at making sense of the coup leaders' failure to move against Yeltsin. Russian social democrat Boris Kagarlitsky, reflecting a common opinion, argues that Yeltsin was in on the coup and then double-crossed his putative partners. But it requires no conspiracy theory to explain the impotence of the "gang of eight." We noted at the time that this was a "perestroika coup," which "wouldn't stop Yeltsin, and was therefore doomed to failure." Enough information has since become available to demonstrate

a military assault. An article in the Yeltsinite *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (September 1991) conceded: "In the first hours of the nineteenth, the 'White House' government building could easily have been seized by just a few platoons of ordinary motorized troops, to say nothing of paratroopers or commandos." The Russian business newspaper *Kuranty* (22 August) described how, even on Tuesday evening, with the coup already unraveling, "the situation of democracy's defenders is desperate: 1,500 'people's volunteers,' 300 armed professionals, 300 Afghan War veterans..." (*Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 18 September). The "armed professionals" were apparently hired out by a Moscow rent-a-cop outfit called Alisa and paid for out of the pockets of private businessmen—i.e., speculators and black marketeers.

Bourgeois commentators who acknowledge the weakness of the popular support for Yeltsin claim his strength lay in the fact that the "democracy" forces won over troops sent to attack them and thus paralyzed the plotters. Tanks and

welcomed tanks from the elite Taman Guards division as they took up positions to protect Russia's democratically elected leaders." This story of ten tanks breaking ranks and going over to the Yeltsinites was repeated in various versions throughout the Western and pro-Yeltsin Russian press. According to the *New York Times* (22 August), it happened at 11:30 p.m. on the night of August 19: "Ten tanks from an elite Soviet division move to Russian Parliament building in support of Mr. Yeltsin." *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (22 August) wrote that the "White House" had issued a report no later than 1 p.m. on the 19th that "a battalion of the Taman Division has gone over to the side of the legal Russian government."

While some troop units were certainly pro-Yeltsin, it never came to a split in the armed forces because, as we noted, "The coup was not so much by the military, which largely stayed out of the fray, but by top administrative and party hacks of the central apparat" (WV No. 533, 30 August). When Yeltsinite demonstrators surrounded the tanks of the Taman division imploring them not to fire on the "White House," the tank commanders assured them they would not, as they had no such orders. So where were the much-ballyhooed "defections"? A senior Yeltsin military aide later admitted that in trying to win over a troop commander on the streets of Moscow on August 20, "I also told him a lie—that some storm troops had come to the White House and had come over to our side" (*New Yorker*, 4 November). This lie was heard 'round the world.

A paratroop unit including eight armored vehicles from the Tula division led by Major General Lebed did arrive at the "White House" late Monday evening to stand guard and left early the next morning. In the *Harriman Institute Forum* interview, John Copp remarks with astonishment: "The idea of entrusting the suppression of the Muscovite populace and the arrest of Boris Yeltsin to the commander of the Tula division, who was known as a supporter of both radical reform and Yeltsin, is ludicrous." It would be ludicrous...if it were true. But was the Tula unit sent to arrest Yeltsin? Lebed was known as a pal of Yeltsin's. And as the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reports: "Lebed publicly declared that he and the paratroopers accompanying him had arrived by order of their commander, General Grachev [head of the Airborne Forces], to defend Russia's legitimate government."

Was Grachev acting on his own account? *Der Spiegel* (7 October) has published excerpts from the interrogations of the chief coup plotters immediately after their arrest. On August 22, Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov explained to his interrogators that units



On Yeltsin's barricades: Russian Orthodox priest blesses "democrats."

Der Spiegel

that the coup leaders had no intention of doing away with Yeltsin and the pro-capitalist forces, but rather were out to do exactly what they assured the West: impose sufficient order to continue the moves toward a capitalist market economy without plunging the country into chaos. With this aim, they saw Yeltsin not as an enemy to be removed, but as a potential ally, however problematic.

### Lie Heard 'Round the World

As we have noted before, the barricades outside Yeltsin's headquarters never posed even a modest obstacle to

troops stationed outside Yeltsin's "White House" were supposedly meant to storm it but refused when confronted by demonstrators. One unit of armored vehicles supposedly "turned" against their commanders and joined the Yeltsin barricades. An elite unit—alternatively from the Interior Ministry's Omon black beret forces, paratroop units or KGB Alpha commandos—was allegedly assigned to dispose of Yeltsin but refused to follow through.

The 20 August *Los Angeles Times* claimed: "In the early hours today ...thousands of cheering Muscovites

outside the "White House" were rotated: "There was one battalion from the Tula division and its commander, the former commander of this division and personal friend of Yeltsin, thus withdrew this battalion," which was replaced with another one from the same division.

### How Many Divisions Did Yeltsin Have?

The *New York Times* and other papers have run stories from various commanders and officers of the KGB Alpha commando, claiming they were ordered to take Yeltsin but refused. Subsequently, Grachev has claimed that his forces were ordered to seize the Russian president, but he too refused. Every one of the coup leaders categorically insisted, in the *Spiegel* excerpts, that no such order was given. And Robert Cullen, writing in the *New Yorker* (4 November), comments: "The Alpha Group's post-coup interviews, in fact, have only one thing in common: in each case, the officer doing the talking tries to take credit for being the hero whose refusal to obey orders foiled the coup."

Had the coup committee intended to seize Yeltsin, by the account of Yeltsin's own aides they could have done so long before a single demonstrator stood outside the "White House." At the time of the emergency decree in the early hours of August 19, Yeltsin was at his dacha in the Moscow suburb of Arkhangelskoye. His military adviser Konstantin Kobets, who was with him, later ascribed would-be Tsar Boris' unhindered return to "divine intervention"! But coup leader and former KGB head Vladimir Kryuchkov says they knew where Yeltsin was and where he was going ("we were in the picture") but made no attempt to stop him. Indeed, when Yeltsin got to the "White House" on Monday morning, the tank company from the Taman division was already stationed there, but as the *New Yorker* noted, "no one prevented the Russian leaders from entering their building."

The "gang of eight" declared from the outset that Yeltsin was not their enemy, even as he was issuing decrees for their arrest as early as the morning of the 19th. At the coup committee's press conference that day, acting president Yanayev emphasized that they wanted to work with Yeltsin: "I think that, if we had the willingness of the Russian leadership to engage in such cooperation, we would be able to find ways for this kind of interaction." Likewise, Kryuchkov insisted to his interrogators: "Our emergency committee undertook not a single step, not a single action, that was in any way directed against the Russian leadership and against Russia." Asked, "Did you give either a secret or verbal order that the Russian leadership should be arrested?", Kryuchkov replied with a categorical no, adding: "I always said, they should sleep in peace and let others sleep as well" (*Der Spiegel*).

There is no evidence whatsoever that the two divisions—hardly a force capable of subduing a rebellious city of ten million—deployed by the coup committee in Moscow had orders to take offensive action of any kind. Yazov told his interrogators that when he sent the tanks into the capital he gave explicit orders that no "weapons be deployed. They were simply supposed to block off the streets." The Moscow Military District chief of staff confirms this, saying their only orders were "to enter the city and stay there." When asked on the first day of the coup if troops had been given orders to fire, a defense ministry spokesman insisted "that no one has given or will give such a mission to our units." The *U.S. News & World Report* (2 September) observed: "their demonstrations of power were all for show."

In fact, the coup leaders wanted to avoid any confrontation with Yeltsin, with the aspiring Russian bourgeoisie, above all, with the imperialists. They counted, not without justification, on



Gamma-Liaison

**Contrary to imperialist media lies, tanks (above) from unit commanded by Yeltsin friend were sent to "White House" not to arrest counterrevolutionary leader but to guard him. Workers' mobilization was needed to smash Yeltsin/Gorbachev counterrevolutionary counter-coup.**

passive support or at least neutrality from the overwhelming mass of the population, fed up with the general slide into chaos: rising unemployment and food shortages, pervasive black marketeering and free enterprise "cooperativist" extortion rackets. Valentin Pavlov, another of the "gang of eight," said under interrogation that they wanted "no confrontation" and "no bloodshed." Kryuchkov added that it was clear from the start, "if it came to a confrontation or suchlike, that we would then immediately resign or have to go completely different ways."

When it did come to a confrontation, just after midnight on August 21, this was provoked not by the coup committee but by the Yeltsinites. The incident in which three Yeltsin supporters died as they supposedly threw themselves against tanks about to storm the barricades has been turned into the mythic high point of the "second Russian Revolution." But that ain't the way it happened!

According to an account in the Moscow business weekly *Commersant* (26 August) by the commander of the motorized unit, APCs going through an underpass to leave the area for routine patrol duty found their exit blocked. When they tried to turn around they were again blocked by trolleybuses dragged in by the Yeltsinites using a nearby crane. *U.S. News & World Report* (2 September) recounted, "Soviet tanks from the Dzerzhinsky and Taman divisions became entangled in the human chain around Yeltsin's White House and protesters swarmed over the first tank. A second tank tried to maneuver around and was pelted with Molotov cocktails."

### Perestroika Coup—Formula for a Sure Loser

Yeltsin and his shock troops for capitalist counterrevolution took the offen-



Gamma

**Anti-communist "democrats" burn red flag.**

sive because, unlike the dithering "gang of eight," they knew exactly what they wanted: a forced march toward capitalist restoration and imperialist colonization. As for the coup leaders, while Yazov swore last year to fellow "patriots" in the military that "our hatred of private ownership unites us," Pavlov was an explicit advocate of the capitalist market and the architect of last spring's onerous price increases. And the initial 18 August proclamation of the state of emergency vowed, "In the process of developing a mixed national economy, we will support private enterprise, providing it with the necessary possibilities for developing production and the service sphere."

The coup committee promised to "unswervingly observe all the commitments" made to the imperialists, and even fired off a special "Message to Heads of State" promising that their "temporary measures" would "in no way signify a renunciation of the course aimed at profound reforms in all spheres" and "in no way affect the international commitments that the Soviet Union has assumed." At the coup committee's press conference the next day, economic spokesman Tizyakov again insisted: "We are not rejecting the reforms aimed at moving toward a market." And in the committee's "Resolution No. 1," it declared: "Favorable conditions are to be created for increasing the real contribution of all types of entrepreneurial activity..." As *WV* wrote in the wake of the botched coup: "Their avowed program was martial law to keep the USSR from breaking apart, which comes down to perestroika minus glasnost: the introduction of the market but not so fast, and shut up."

Nevertheless, the aspiring Soviet yuppies and their imperialist patrons put their money on Yeltsin, literally. Operating out of a "White House" office, the CIA's Radio Liberty transmitted Yeltsin's appeals throughout the Soviet Union. Profit-gouging housing speculators took time off from selling vacant public apartments for small fortunes to put in a few hours on the barricades. Brokers at the Russian commodities exchange "passed a hat" and sent several million rubles in cash to the "White House." The Moscow Pizza Hut even shipped free pizzas to the barricades! "The businessmen's money," crowed one Yeltsinite to the *New Yorker*, "bought the buses and trolleys that became part of the barricades around the White House. It bought truckloads of sand and concrete to reinforce them. It bought weapons, cigarettes, food, medical supplies, and private security guards to help in the building's defense."

In the flush of "victory," a group of Moscow business associations demanded that, in return for services rendered, they "should receive a legitimate place in the structure of state power and directly influence the course of economic reforms," according to *Izvestia* (23 August):

"On the night that an attack was feared, among those forming a living chain were



Der Spiegel

hundreds of businessmen... And the commercial banks, emptying their tills, brought *suitcases* (no, I didn't misspeak) filled with cash for purchases of food and medicine. The Bank of Foreign Commerce alone delivered 70 kilograms of money, totaling 1.1 million rubles, and on the whole it "invested" 10 million rubles in defending the House of Government.

"In short, at the hour of testing Russian business stood together with the people. That alone has earned it the right to have its own political voice..."

—*Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 2 October

### Stalinism—A Dead End

Simply empirically describing the social forces aligned behind Yeltsin reinforces our post-coup statement:

"The coup plotters were not only irresolute but didn't want to unleash the forces that could have defeated the more extreme counterrevolutionaries, for that could have led to a civil war if the Yeltsinites really fought back. And in an armed struggle pitting outright restorationists against recalcitrant elements of the bureaucracy, defense of the collectivized economy would have been placed on the agenda whatever the Stalinists' intentions."

—*WV* No. 535, 27 September

It was precisely the fear of civil war that paralyzed the Stalinists. At a key moment, not one section of the disintegrating Stalinist bureaucracy proved capable of lifting a finger against the restorationist forces.

Soyuz leader Colonel Viktor Alksnis, who looks to such "hardline" regimes as Pinochet's Chile, initially saw the coup as "positive" but distanced himself from the manifestly irresolute plotters while muttering that they hadn't been "constitutionally" ordained. The Moscow Workers Council, organized by the United Front of Toolers (OFT) and others from the "patriot" milieu, issued a call during the coup to "form workers militias for the preservation of socialized property...for the control of the carrying out of the orders and instructions of the State Committee." But one of the coup committee's instructions was against public mobilizations. This was flouted by the Yeltsinites. However, Nina Andreyeva's *Yedinstvo*, the OFT and their ilk dutifully sat on their hands while the counterrevolutionary rabble took to the streets. Had even a couple of Moscow factories, like the giant Zil automobile works, been mobilized, pro-socialist workers could have made short shrift of Yeltsin's ragtag defenders.

While they refused to rally the multinational Soviet proletariat, about the only open support the Stalinist "patriots" received came from notorious Russian nationalists. Notably, two early supporters of the coup were General Albert Makashov and the Liberal Democratic Party of V.V. Zhirinovsky, candidates in last June's Russian presidential elections who particularly appealed to anti-Semitic reaction. An order signed by Makashov as commander of the Volga-Urals Military District during the coup called for detaining "cosmopolitans" and

*continued on page 8*

# Soviet Union...

(continued from page 7)

for using the document "Address to the People" as the basis to "intensify patriotic work among soldiers and officers." The 23 July "Address to the People," published in the "patriot" flagship organ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, was seen by many as a prelude to the coup. Signed by, among others, Afghanistan forces commander Boris Gromov, Soyuz chairman Yuri Blokhov, coup committee members Starodubtsev and Tizyakov, and fascistic anti-Semites Yuri Bondarev and Valentin Rasputin, the document is shot through with reactionary Great Russian chauvinism:

"We appeal to the Orthodox Church, which, having gone through Calvary, is slowly, after all the beatings, rising from the grave...."

"We appeal to parties, both large and small, to liberals and monarchists, to centralists and local-autonomy advocates...."

"Women, who are denying themselves the highest natural right—to continue the family by bearing descendants...."

"Russia—our only beloved!—is calling for help."

This nationalist, sexist crap is antithetical to a real program to defend the gains of the internationalist October Revolution.

## For a Trotskyist Party in the Soviet Union!

In the immediate aftermath of the coup, we wrote: "As the crowd of yuppies, students and assorted Russian nationalists, including fascists and priests, gathered at the start of the coup outside the Russian parliament; Yeltsin's 'White House,' a call on Moscow workers to clean out this counterrevolutionary rabble was in order." But the Stalinists could not and would not mobilize the workers to defeat the counterrevolutionary forces because, at bottom, they fear a conscious and organized proletariat



Moscow, November 7—Up to 90,000 turned out on Revolution Day, saying yes to Lenin, no to Yeltsin/Gorbachev drive to capitalist restoration.

more than they fear capitalist restoration.

The Stalinist bureaucracy, as Leon Trotsky pointed out nearly 60 years ago, is a parasitic growth on the proletarian property forms issuing out of the October Revolution and simultaneously acts as a transmission belt for imperialist pressure on the workers state. While seeking above all to appease hostile imperialism, this privileged caste has at times—simply in order to assure its survival—been forced to defend the social foundations upon which it rests, albeit by its own bureaucratic methods. In recent years, with the Soviet proletariat relatively quiescent and under the relentless pressure of imperialism, only

one pole of the Stalinist bureaucracy has expressed itself, a burgeoning pro-capitalist wing. But had the workers of Moscow taken to the streets to sweep away the Yeltsinites, the bureaucracy would have polarized, with some section going over to the side of the insurgent workers.

Even more importantly, *independent working-class action would have been a launching pad for proletarian political revolution* to crush the capitalist-restorationist forces and sweep the bureaucracy away. The ignominious collapse of the Stalinist bureaucracy last August only serves to underscore Trotsky's perspective, in his incisive 1933

# TWU...

(continued from page 12)

Kiepper who should be up on Murder One for deliberately and knowingly running this deathtrap of a subway system.

Hall did nothing when the TWU contract expired seven months ago, but he didn't waste any time implementing this attack on the union. Hall even brags that the TWU plan will set the "pattern" for the rest of the labor movement! When the TWU tops tried to ram through drug testing for the TA two years ago, the Committee for a Fighting TWU, a class-struggle opposition in the union, declared:

"The TA always finds a scapegoat for the 'accidents' that kill and maim workers and passengers on this 80-year-old rattletrap railroad run by union-busting liars and thieves.... Drug testing is a union-busting weapon in the arsenal of the hypocritical 'war on drugs' pushed by the Democrats and directed by 'Poppy' Bush."

For years now the TA has been using drug testing to harass and abuse train operators and conductors. The bosses blame transit workers for the deadly conditions that exist in the NYC subways. As one transit militant put it, "Instead of pumping in billions of needed dollars to rebuild the system they want to drain the veins of the TWUers." Where the TA spends money is making sure the Tribeca yuppies get marble in the Franklin Street station—and buying over twenty grand worth of drug-laced urine from a Jersey company to use in testing (or fixing tests)!

The TA has no business telling workers how to live their lives, and their urine tests are notoriously inaccurate. Hundreds of TWUers have been framed up and fired on the basis of faulty tests. Everything from ginseng tea to poppy-seed bagels can result in a positive test and put you on the street. Black

workers are doubly at risk—the skin pigment melanin shows up as marijuana in urine screens. The TA rides roughshod over workers on the job—now it wants to be Big Brother off the job as well. What's next, Delta Airlines-style "interviews" grilling workers about their sex lives?

Transit workers must fight to smash this union-busting move. The government, the TA and Sonny Hall should butt out of people's lives! Stop the drug and alcohol testing!

Along with witchhunting its employees, TA policy is to substitute workers' and riders' blood for money. Because of deep job cuts, and the miserable pay, transit workers are forced to work exhausting and dangerous overtime. The Clark Street tunnel fire last year claimed the lives of two passengers and injured hundreds. The fans that could have removed the toxic fumes were ordered in 1977 and *still* have not been installed.

Other transit systems around the country have modern computer switching and speed controls. At Union Square, even the antiquated signals and tripping devices the TA does have were positioned so they couldn't stop the derailment. But despite an unusual safety board demand that the TA "immediately" correct such devices at Union Square and elsewhere, the TA says it won't finish doing so for *20 years!*

If the union tops are capitalism's labor lieutenants, Hall & Co. are the Transit Authority's MPs. They sabotaged any action against the firing of 300 "provisional" track workers and the ripping up of the seniority rights of the rest. Last spring a TWU official declared at a motormen's division meeting that the TA "has the right" to impose the deadly "one-person train operation." Meanwhile, workers who can't wear a respirator because of high blood pressure are sent home without pay, instead of being given another job.

As the TWU faces these attacks,

transit workers are now voting in local union elections. But "New Directions," the ragtag "opposition" supported by reformists like Solidarity and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, is virtually indistinguishable from the Hall gang. And in a dangerous move which puts the TWU even further under the thumb of the capitalist government, New Directions candidate for president Tim Schermerhorn has *sued the union in the bosses' courts* over the drug testing plan. It is criminal idiocy to pretend that the judges who enforce the Taylor Law and hand out strikebreaking injunctions are going to protect transit workers! *Government out of the unions!*

The New Directions wannabe bureaucrats didn't even oppose working without a contract last April—not surprising since they knuckle under to the Taylor Law and never call for a strike. Even Hall hypocritically challenged them: "Why not use the 'S' word—STRIKE." Their program is silent on fighting the special oppression of black and Hispanic workers—in a union, a city, where minority workers face racist violence on and off the job every day.

And you certainly won't hear a call to use working-class power from New Directions—that would threaten the Democratic Party's stranglehold on New York. These "Rainbow Democrats" (just like Hall, they backed Jesse Jackson) only whine that the union shouldn't "rely solely on the Democratic and Republican parties." So they want to "rely" on the capitalist parties only a little bit?

It is the same Democratic Party politicians who are carrying out Wall Street's assault on the unions and minorities of NYC. When Dinkins proposes to eliminate one out of every fifteen full-time city jobs, banker Felix Rohatyn, who is withholding hundreds of millions in big MAC funds, demands more cuts. Just the annual *interest* paid by the city to the bloodsucking banks is almost \$3 billion, the TA's debt service is \$167 mil-

article on "The Class Nature of the Soviet State":

"A real civil war could develop not between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the resurgent proletariat but between the proletariat and the active forces of the counterrevolution. In the event of an open clash between the two mass camps, there cannot even be talk of the bureaucracy playing an independent role. Its polar flanks would be flung to the different sides of the barricade. The fate of the subsequent development would be determined, of course, by the outcome of the struggle. The victory of the revolutionary camp, in any case, is conceivable only under the leadership of a proletarian party, which would naturally be raised to power by victory over the counterrevolution."

Trotsky's warnings that the Stalinist bureaucracy would prepare the way for capitalist restoration have come to pass. But while the Soviet proletariat is confused and disoriented, it is far from defeated. In October, some 50,000 workers turned out in Moscow in a protest against rising prices and falling wages, and on Revolution Day, November 7, up to 90,000 marched to Red Square denouncing Gorbachev and Yeltsin. Now Yeltsin has announced his long-expected "shock treatment" of massive layoffs and uncontrolled prices for basic necessities, to begin what already promises to be a harsh and bitter winter. But while Stalinist "patriots" seek to channel anti-capitalist sentiment into vile Russian nationalism, the Trotskyist program of the International Communist League is gaining a hearing among Soviet workers—as witnessed by the enthusiastic reception from large sections of the November 7 demonstration for our internationalist slogans, and the hand-over-fist sales of several thousand pieces of ICL literature.

In the Soviet Union today, the task of the hour is forging the nucleus of a Leninist-Trotskyist party capable of leading the struggles ahead with an internationalist program for victory over the counterrevolution. ■

lion. But they make sure tottering Citibank and Chase get paid.

New York is on the crumbling edge of decaying American capitalism. From bridges and subways to health care and housing, as the country goes to hell, the workers and poor are being squeezed to pay for trillions in war buildup and S&L bailouts. The union tops hire out, pretty much openly, as company cops whose chief task is to prevent class struggle. And their reformist shadows don't have any answers because they don't want to fight the capitalist system.

NYC transit workers are strategically positioned to lead a fight against the capitalist looters. But as Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the first victorious workers revolution in the world, pointed out over 50 years ago, the only way trade unions in the epoch of capitalist decay can be truly democratic and independent of the bosses is through fighting for a revolutionary class-struggle leadership. ■

## Corrections

In WV No. 535 (27 September), the article "Serbia-Croatia War Ripping Apart Yugoslavia" incorrectly stated that Croatian Ustashi fascist leader Ante Pavelic was executed for war crimes. A reference in the book by Milovan Djilas, *With Tito and the Partisans*, indicates that Pavelic escaped from Yugoslavia at the end of World War II and took refuge in Argentina and Spain, and allegedly died in Madrid in 1959.

In WV No. 538 (8 November), the article "Polish Elections: Protest Against Walesa 'Shock Treatment'" mistakenly referred to the Liberal-Democratic Congress of economic czar Balcerowicz. The LDC is headed by Walesa prime minister Bielecki.



# What Did Kirov Workers Do on August 20th?

The bourgeois press has presented the giant Kirov metal works in Leningrad as a bastion of support for capitalist-restorationist Boris Yeltsin and his ally, Leningrad mayor Anatoly Sobchak. Various leftist cheerleaders for Yeltsinite counterrevolution have also written of a "Kirov workers strike" to buttress their lie that the Soviet working class supposedly mobilized to oppose the Moscow coup last August. We have received the following communication from a former Kirov worker telling what actually happened at the plant during those three days.

First thing in the morning Mayor A.A. Sobchak, President Yeltsin's accomplice in the coming counterrevolutionary coup d'état, came to the Kirov complex. Provisional director Krikunov was sitting in the plant office. The discussion was plenty nasty, sharp, and in the old days it would have ended with Sobchak giving the ultimatum, "Either do it or leave your party card on the table!"

Krikunov had to submit and endorse the mayor's order for the plant strike. A short meeting was held in front of the office next to Lenin's monument. After the meeting there was a bus brought around to go to Palace Square. Engineers and those workers who were willing went "by their own means."

How many people left work and how many of those who left got to Palace Square was not possible to count and nobody even tried. But it was advertised all over the Soviet Union that "a column of Kirov plant workers" came out to a meeting to support Yeltsin and Sobchak.

It's more than eleven kilometers from the plant's location at Strike Prospect to Palace Square and it would have taken at least an hour and a half to get there. If you go there by metro to the nearest station, Nevsky Prospect, it's still practically impossible to get any number of people from there to Palace Square along the perpetually crowded Nevsky Prospect.

Nevertheless, the "Kirovers" were supposedly present in a 150,000-strong crowd of "democracy" defenders, idlers and curiosity-seekers. The plant office workers somehow made it back by the end of the day. They could have been anywhere, but one place they could not have been was Palace Square.

Where were the workers? Some departments, such as the assembly line, took a break in the morning and into the evening shifts. Some worked as usual. Those who answered Sobchak's call were above all staff and management. Where were the workers when they got their day-pass cards and left the territory

of the plant? The question is not a terribly pressing question for victorious "democracy."

They say that Sobchak threatened to base himself in the Kirov plant if the "putschists" captured the Marinsky Palace. Supposedly, the plant was his reserve headquarters. Let's look at what was actually going on. Neither the administration nor the trade-union committee knew anything about any "headquarters." At one point they wanted to phone Sobchak for some reason or other. But in any case they did not manage because nobody knew his telephone number.

Now in point of fact the headquarters in case of having to go "underground"

their number which was undoubtedly known to the Lensoviet (city council). It would appear that the only orders that they received were for a partial strike and the call to bring out the maximum number of people to Palace Square.

In the electrical brigade where a committee leader (a worker) left his work for others to do for the whole day, his workmates complained bitterly. So it turns out that the brigade where a local (Lech) "Walesa" was working didn't go on strike either. That was the way Sobchak's "headquarters" worked on August 20!

The administration supported the Yeltsinites that day—although not en-

machine operator in a department of 100 machinists. Out of that workforce only two went to Palace Square. The next day "M" asked those who went to that demonstration:

—How was it?

—A bunch of bullshit. Nothing good. Only talk.

At the famous LenVest (a joint venture) one shift was allowed to go to the meeting and the other was prevented from entering the plant by management switching off all the lights. Nevertheless piece-workers stayed on to work while staffers went home.

Transport, shops and city services witnessed neither strikes nor calls for strikes.

If on August 20 in Leningrad less than 150,000 participated in a meeting in support of Yeltsin's dictatorship it means that (if we exclude kids and the elderly) something like 2,850,000 people didn't actively support the counterrevolutionary coup d'état. For every "activist" (and not all the people who came were rightist activists) there are 19 people who are "passive."

Why did an absolute majority of the population behave so indifferently to the so-called "August Revolution"? And isn't it more accurate to call it a counterrevolutionary coup d'état of Yeltsin and Gorbachev?

It seems to us that the main reasons for the apathy of the broad masses are:

1. Nonstop worsening of living standards.
2. People are fed up with quasi-democracy.
3. Their estimation of the two putsches is nothing more than a squabble between ruling fractions of the bureaucracy.
4. Illusions about capitalism (the market).
5. Long pent-up hatred of the CPSU.
6. Disorganization of the working class.

The CPSU leadership led by the bastard Gorbachev betrayed rank-and-file party members as well as the working class in general. If only there was a workers Marxist-Leninist party the attempted reactionary coup d'état would have failed.

How is it going now in the Kirov plant in November? Wages have not been able to keep up with prices even though the price of the K-701M tractor has increased over the last two and a half years from 21,000 rubles to 200,000 rubles. There are cuts of the workforce on the main assembly line of 50 workers. Even so since August the rest have nothing to do. The waste of whole shifts has become commonplace due to the lack of parts and because of the disorganization of production. They have raised salaries on two occasions since March so wages are not linked to quantity, to say nothing about quality, of work. Of course Yeltsin's promises from March of this year turned out to be a lie.

Vanya, a railway worker  
Leningrad  
November 1991

## Defeat Yeltsin-Gorbachev-Bush Counterrevolution!

### Lenin-Trotsky Fund Needs Your Support!

The resources of the International Communist League are sparse, our current tasks mammoth. We have recently printed 70,000 copies of the Russian translation of "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" We have reprinted the first Russian-language *Biulleten Spartakovtsev*, "What Is Trotskyism" (pictured at right), of which 25,000 have already been sold throughout the Soviet Union. As sales of thousands of copies of the special supplement and the Spartacist bulletin on Revolution Day show, pro-socialist Soviet workers are thirsting for Trotskyist literature. But economic realities dictate that we must heavily subsidize our publications to keep them affordable. Printing costs, travel and other expenses mean that an internationalist intervention in the Soviet Union costs money. Help forge the Trotskyist



nucleus needed to lead the Soviet working people in struggle against counterrevolution.

**Make donations payable/send to: Spartacist, Box 1377 GPO, New York, New York 10116. Earmark: "Lenin-Trotsky Fund" (or simply "L-T Fund").**

did indeed exist! It worked unofficially, and consisted of certain leaders of a so-called working "Committee for Yeltsin's Defense." It was organized in March and consisted of 67 representatives of various departments and offices. These people at that time represented 1,200 workers. That is only 3 percent of the workforce. From March to August the only thing that was known about the committee was that they gathered several times and discussed something. No information got to the workers, not to the brigades, not even in the main departments.

So on August 20 members of this committee were on telephone duty at

thrustfully. The CPSU party committee and the trade-union committee didn't do anything and the overwhelming majority of the workers in fact did not support the strike. Nor did they come out to defend Sobchak and his Lensoviet windbags.

At the same time among the white-collar workers the "support of democracy" was more widespread. The Petrograd Borough of the Leningrad Admiralty Association on August 20 forced its workers to go to the Palace Square meeting. Otherwise they threatened to withhold the day's pay. Those who refused to be idlers got to lose their day's wages! My friend "M" is a milling

know the BT isn't serious in hailing the flopped coup.

So it's small wonder that the BT was incapable of taking out the Solidarność-lovers of the RTT—who are quite clear about which side of the barricades they are on. Despite their calls for "independent mobilization of the working class" during the Moscow coup, and their professed opposition to their fraternal allies in the British Workers Power group, which was for a "united front" with the counterrevolutionary Yeltsin, the "principled" centrists of the RTT argue: "...no united front with Yeltsin was permissible. That does not mean that a common struggle against the coup could not be waged alongside the workers, soldiers and others who had illusions

in Yeltsin"! So it is wrong to unite with Yeltsin but right to fight together with those who stood with him!

Now that the forces of Yeltsinite counterrevolution are ascendant in the Soviet Union, we read in the "Revolutionary Trotskyist Tendency Resolution on the Coup in the USSR" that "the workers who actively supported Yeltsin were the rearguard of the working class, not its vanguard. They supported Yeltsin mainly because he promised them material improvement under capitalism." But from tailing Solidarność to hailing the rabble which gathered behind Yeltsin, the traitors who would besmirch the name of Trotskyism have long had their noses firmly planted in the rear of the forces for capitalist counterrevolution.

As the imperialists celebrate the "death of Communism," the fake-left is also positively gleeful over the collapse of Stalinism in the Soviet Union. As they see it, the thorny issue of the Russian question has been removed from the agenda and now they can get down to some real pro-Democratic Party popular-front "unity." The BT, which has written off the Soviet Union as no longer any kind of workers state, more than shares this view. So again one is struck by its peculiar obsession with the Spartacists at the expense of fulfilling their obviously antithetical political appetites.

In its perverted fashion, the BT pays tribute to the revolutionary consistency of the International Communist League. ■

## BT "Forgets"...

(continued from page 4)

RTTers joined with the AFL-CIO and sundry other pro-imperialist forces in "defense of Solidarność and the working class against the Stalinists." As an SL speaker noted from the floor during this "debate," it's not surprising the RTT didn't notice the BT's paper position on Solidarność given their cozy cohabitation in the pop-front milieu in which "Solidarity with Solidarność" has been the *sine qua non*. Like their copycat call to "Break the Blockade of Iraq" a year ago, which the BT dropped in seeking an "antiwar" coalition with pro-"sanctions" liberals, its pop-front pals

# Pearl Harbor...

(continued from page 1)

provoke Japan into greater intransigence or retaliation?"

The situation today is different from before World War II. Then the Japanese were economically weak and lashed out militarily. Today the Americans are economically weak and militarily assertive, but the Japanese are also economically very vulnerable. And the U.S. and Japanese economies are deeply intermeshed. There is tension and rivalry, and also a lot of cooperation. But the drive for trade advantage can be dangerous, particularly since the Stalinist collapse in Moscow has undercut the unifying strategic axis of obsessive anti-Sovietism.

Already over 100,000 Iraqis were slaughtered when the U.S., goaded by the economic dynamism of Japan and Germany, launched its one-sided Persian Gulf war to secure a stranglehold over world oil supplies, implicitly threatening import-dependent Japan with oil cutoffs if it didn't kowtow to the U.S. Tokyo reluctantly contributed a few billion to the U.S. war, and began taking the wraps off its "defense force." In Tokyo a fist-fight broke out in a Diet committee this week as the government pushed through a bill authorizing the dispatch of Japanese troops to foreign duty for the first time since World War II, under the guise of "UN peacekeeping."

Today even mainstream American bourgeois analysts are worrying about the "calamity" of "all-out trade war." Karel van Wolferen, in a lengthy *New York Times* (2 December) op-ed page essay, warns of a collision set off by "Japan's single-minded, politically driven and evidently unstoppable economic expansion." And a widely read book by American liberal academics George Friedman and Meredith LeBard, *The Coming War With Japan* (1991), bluntly states: "As in the 1930s, both [Japan and the U.S.] will engage in a cold war against each other which will, in extremis, spill over into a hot war." In the interlocking economic conflict, they say, war will become "historically unavoidable." But the spectre of imperialist

## Roundup of Japanese Americans in California during World War II for "internment" in concentration camps.



limited Japan's naval growth to an inferior status vis-à-vis the U.S. and Britain, laying the basis for a grudge which was ultimately answered at Pearl Harbor (so much for imperialist "disarmament" conferences as the road to peace). As an island totally dependent on imports for raw materials, Japan was vulnerable to an embargo—in 1937 Japan got 80 percent of its oil from California. And as President Franklin Roosevelt prepared to take the U.S. to war, he began tightening the screws, first abrogating the American-Japanese Treaty on Commerce and Navigation in 1939, then moving on to an embargo on scrap iron exports in 1940. With the Japanese invasion of Indochina in 1941, FDR imposed a freeze on Japanese assets in the U.S., leading to a de facto embargo on oil to Japan.

Secretary of War Stimson even noted in his diary a meeting with Roosevelt two weeks before Pearl Harbor, in which FDR suggested that "we were likely to be attacked" by Japan very soon and "the question was how we should maneuver them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much

can Henry Luce (publisher of *Time*) proclaimed the "American Century."

## Racist War

The U.S. bourgeoisie's war on Japan was fueled by a deepgoing racism. Ernie Pyle, the GI reporter who described the war at the front to Americans at home, reflected the racist attitude when he transferred from Europe to the Pacific in 1945: "In Europe we felt that our enemies, horrible and deadly as they were, were still people," he wrote. "But out here I soon gathered that the Japanese were looked upon as something sub-human and repulsive; the way some people feel about cockroaches or mice." The media often pictured the "Japs" in racist lingo as ape-like creatures. In 1942 some 120,000 Japanese Americans were rounded up by FDR's troops and sent to concentration camps, while their land and possessions were stolen. But this genuine infamy merited only one whitewashing page in *Time's* 40-page special, and nary a mention in *Newsweek*.

As we wrote in reviewing John Dower's book, *War Without Mercy* (1986), which documented the pervasive racism:

"The racist attitude permeated not only the media but the scientific-military establishment as well. One of the reasons the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a 'surprise' was that many Western military leaders could not believe the Japanese were capable of designing and manufacturing such a powerful plane as the Mitsubishi Zero, even though the plane was effectively used against the Chinese in 1940. Moreover, American 'scientists' believed the Japanese as a race suffered from defects of the tubes of the inner ear and were generally myopic, hence they could not make good pilots! The curator of the Division of Physical Anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution even claimed in a letter to FDR that the Japanese were 'as bad as they were' because their skulls were 'some 2,000 years less developed than ours'."

—WV No. 459, 12 August 1988

In fact, the Pacific War was a perfectly racist war on both sides, virtually devoid of ideology. While the most common American epithet for the Japanese was "yellow monkeys," the Japanese described their enemy as cowards, mongrels, beasts and hairy barbarians. Racism served as the rationale for virtually limitless brutality by both belligerents. American soldiers found it amusing to tell Japanese prisoners they could escape—and tuck a live grenade in their back pocket. On the Japanese side, atrocities such as bayoneting American prisoners were justified by the notion that anyone who surrendered was a coward utterly without honor, and thus deserved to die.

Cherished notions of Japanese "racial purity" and superiority fueled the savagery of the war on China. *War Without Mercy* describes the 1937 Rape of Nanking: after it was taken, "for the next six weeks Japanese troops engaged in the widespread execution, rape, and random murder of Chinese men and women both in the captured city and outlying communities. The total number of Chinese

killed is controversial, but a middle-range estimate puts the combined deaths from both the shelling and subsequent atrocities at two hundred thousand."

The American ruling class consciously planned not merely to defeat Japan but to inflict genocidal mass murder. U.S. Chief of Staff George Marshall, bragging about his bomber forces early in the war, looked forward to mounting "incendiary attacks to burn up the wood and paper structures of the densely populated Japanese cities." In 1945 his sinister designs were carried out, as the U.S. launched massive firebomb raids on Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe and Nagoya. In a single raid over Tokyo in March 1945 some 100,000 people perished. By August, 58 cities had been destroyed by firebombing. Then came 6 and 9 August 1945, when the U.S. A-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, slaughtering over 200,000 people and leaving tens of thousands to suffer excruciating burns, radiation sickness, cancer and genetic disorders.

The nuclear targets had been selected according to criteria drawn up by Secretary of War Stimson, who stipulated that there should be a "war plant employing a large number of workers closely surrounded by workers' houses." It was deliberate mass murder of civilians (including many Korean forced laborers), unlike Pearl Harbor, a naval base, where 2,300 U.S. servicemen died.

## Revolutionary Opposition to Imperialist War

Throughout the war, the reformist American Communist Party, following Stalin's line of "anti-fascist" alliance with the imperialist Allies, supported the "war effort," denouncing strikers and Trotskyists as "Hitlerite fifth columnists." The CP even expelled its own Japanese American members as they were being sent off to concentration camps, and eventually cheered the A-bombing of Japan. The very day that Congress declared war on Japan, the CP's *Daily Worker* (8 December 1941) proclaimed, "Communists Pledge Government Their All in Country's Defense." In contrast, on that same day, 18 leaders of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party and the Minneapolis Teamsters union were sent to federal prison for their revolutionary internationalist opposition to the imperialist slaughter. As SWP leader James P. Cannon remarked:

"Nothing could better symbolize our irreconcilable opposition to the imperialist war, and to the capitalist state preparing and waging the war; and nothing, also, could better symbolize our enemies' recognition of our attitude than this unexpungeable fact: that they declared war and sentenced the party leaders to prison on the same day and at the same hour—December 8, 1941."

—"The Workers and the Second World War" (October 1942)

The SWP defended coal strikers and blacks fighting for equal rights, and opposed the racist roundup of Japanese Americans, which it denounced as "a repressive measure, based purely on racial discrimination and motivated chiefly by the desires of Big Business for additional profits, which is presented as a necessary part of the 'war for democracy'" (*Militant*, 30 May 1942). At the same time the Trotskyists stood on the side of the Soviet Union in its war against Nazi Germany.

We of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) continue the fight to banish the scourge of war through the fight for international socialist revolution. Our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan fight against resurgent right-wing nationalism as we in the U.S. oppose chauvinist protectionism and Japan-bashing war propaganda. As we wrote in "The Agony of Japanese Americans in U.S. Concentration Camps" (WV No. 139, 7 January 1977): "The Spartacist League stands in solidarity with the revolutionary tradition of the Trotskyists who, in the face of terrible persecution themselves, courageously stood up for the rights of the oppressed against all odds and opposed the imperialist war aims of the U.S." ■



## Frenzied right-wingers hail Japanese dead in World War II, as imperialist tensions escalate.

World War III is by no means "unavoidable," if the world proletariat overthrows these decadent ruling classes.

## Reviving Old Myths and Grudges

A central myth which served well to whip up war fever in the U.S. in 1941 was that the Japanese had launched a "sneak attack" on a totally unsuspecting, innocent United States. *The Coming War With Japan* has documented once again that the attack was no surprise but simply the logical culmination of the pressures and provocations Japan was subjected to as a result of calculated policy in Washington: "the U.S. tried to restrain Japanese political influence and military power by threatening to stop sales of raw materials. This threat heightened Japan's sense of vulnerability, causing it to become even more aggressive."

The Naval Limitation Treaty of 1922

danger to ourselves." Many bourgeois commentators are now noting that FDR received decoded transcripts of Japanese transmissions on the evening of 6 December 1941 and reportedly muttered something like, "This means war." But the U.S. Navy evidently never got the message.

Right-wingers like John Toland in his book *Infamy* have suggested that FDR knew that the attack was coming at Pearl Harbor and deliberately did nothing; the subsequent attack would and did make a previously pacifist population eager to go to war. Whether or not this was the case (Roosevelt was certainly capable of such cynicism), the whole thing amounts to a factional dispute within the American ruling class as to how to go to war. Strategically they were united: Democratic Secretary of War Knox declared that "the United States must police the world for the next 100 years," Republi-

# Marchers Protest Cop Execution of Tomás Vizueta

On November 16 angry protesters marched through the predominantly Hispanic Washington Heights area of Manhattan with placards denouncing the coldblooded execution of Tomás Vizueta, a young Ecuadoran killed by the New York City police, and other recent victims of cop terror. SL signs said: "We Will Not Forget the Murder of Tomás Vizueta" and "Stop Racist Cop Terror!" Some bystanders yelled out their solidarity with the march and condemnation of the NYC police, notorious for their vicious hatred and arrogant contempt toward minorities.

As the protesters finished their march at the entrance to the 34th Precinct, they were met by a cordon of uniformed cops who tried to force the marchers across the street. As Laura Nieves, the mother of another recent victim of police terror, Federico Pereira, was addressing the marchers, the cops attempted to provoke a bloody confrontation, closing in from all directions with metal barriers. The crowd stood their ground firmly while some shouted angrily at the cops. The father of the victim, Tomás Vizueta Sr., shaken by the provocation he had just witnessed, denounced his son's death at the hands of Dinkins' killer cops and mentioned the names of

other recent victims of the police.

In the early morning hours of October 5, two cops from the 34th Precinct stopped 22-year-old Tomás Vizueta at 188th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. They told him to raise his arms. When he did, killer cop McCormack shot Tomás in the leg, then in the stomach. When Vizueta fell to the ground, McCormack shot him in the head killing him instantly. Witnesses later saw a cop with a briefcase who took out a gun, placed it on Tomás' hand and removed it quickly, wrapping it in a red cloth. Following their standard practice, the police are claiming their dead victim had a gun.

Tomás had lived in the country for only eight months. Collections were made among his friends to allow his parents to bury him in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

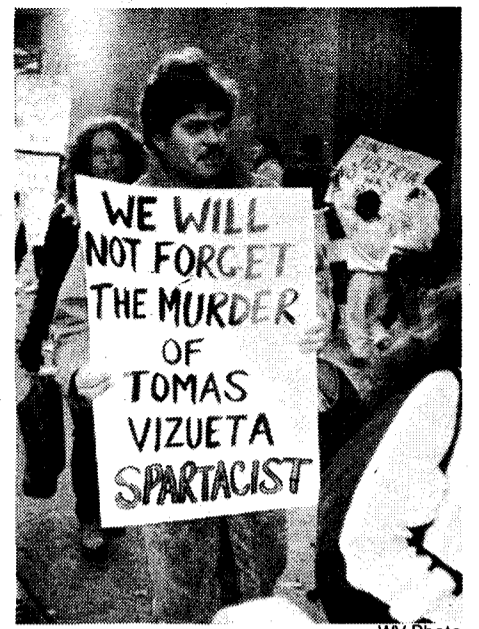
At a Spartacist forum at predominantly Hispanic Hostos Community College in the South Bronx on November 14, Tomás Vizueta Sr. gave powerful testimony of the tragedy of losing his son at the hands of the racist NYPD. In an interview with WV, he recalled reading in the papers how thousands of Iraqi soldiers had been buried alive by the American army: "I think that is a slaughter, mass murder, and it's similar to what's happening to us here in this city and in

the United States.... It seems like this could be a strategy, after this apparent victory of the U.S. in the Middle East, they are seeking to subjugate the peoples," as was the case with his son. "My son represents the aspirations of Ecuadoran youth who migrate to *El Norte* and Europe for economic reasons due to underdevelopment and the IMF's austerity policy in my country."

At the protest two days later, Thomas Stickel, the lawyer representing the families of Luis Lebrón, David Cotto, Federico Pereira and Tomás Vizueta, all of them killed by the cops, stressed that the Vizueta case was not an isolated occurrence, pointing to a Spartacist placard listing victims of police killings. And in hearings before the Human Rights Commission, Stickel noted the extremely high percentage of Hispanics killed by the cops in recent years:

"Fifty-six percent of all deaths while in police custody are Hispanics, while that community represents just 24 percent of the total population of the city. Each time the police see a Hispanic they think he is a drug dealer. And they think that all drug dealers should be executed; this way they are the accusers, juries, judges and street-corner executioners."

—*El Diario/La Prensa*,  
20 November



WV Photo  
**Protest at 34th Precinct in Washington Heights, NYC, November 16.**

The ongoing siege of the minority population in New York City underlines the need for labor/black/Hispanic mobilization against deadly terror by the cops and racist mobs. The labor movement in this city, with its heavy component of black and Hispanic unionists, must take the lead in defending the beleaguered ghettos and barrios, and demand *full citizenship rights for all immigrant workers*. The ferocious attack against minorities in this country is the domestic side of Bush's "New World Order." To stop the wholesale killings will ultimately take a socialist revolution led by an internationalist workers party. ■

## Haitian Refugees...

(continued from page 12)

"Voyage of the Damned," in which about a thousand Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany on board the *St. Louis* were barred from entering the U.S. in 1939 and were forced to return to Europe.

In this case, the Coast Guard initially repatriated by force all Haitians picked up at sea and dumped them on the docks of Port-au-Prince where they faced victimization at the hands of Haiti's bloody rulers. However, when a federal judge last week ordered a temporary halt to the repatriations, the Coast Guard loaded up the refugees by the hundreds on the decks of their boats where, as on slave ships, they survived in the rain and sweltering heat without adequate food or medical care.

Other Haitians have been thrown into makeshift "holding camps," which were set up (after Washington showered local governments with blood money) in Venezuela, Belize, Trinidad and Honduras. Here the refugees are penned in by concertina wire and guarded by soldiers toting automatic rifles. At the Guantánamo naval base in Cuba where some 3,500 refugees have been crammed on the decks of boats anchored in the bay, the U.S. is constructing a tent city to hold the refugees so that the ships can load up further cargoes of desperate human beings.

It is no accident that the U.S. has been centering its activity on Guantánamo Bay. (One of its first acts after the Haitian coup was to rush 500 Marines to the base.) The imperialists' real target in the region is Cuba, as they dream of crushing the gains of the revolution and restoring a new Batista in Havana. Anyone who wants to aid the Haitian masses had better be aware of what Washington is up to here. It is the duty of all those who defend the downtrodden peoples of the region to raise the banner of defense of Cuba against Yankee imperialism.

The racist treatment meted out by the U.S. to Haitian refugees has provoked outrage on the part of Haitians in the U.S. Demonstrations have taken place in Brooklyn and, almost daily, in Miami's

**Coast Guard seizes boatload of desperate Haitian refugees who brave death by drowning to escape starvation and massacres by kill-crazed army.**



Little Haiti. Haitians are at the bottom of the list of those granted asylum in the U.S., and immigration authorities have used every rotten trick in the book to keep it that way. In the early '80s they rejected Haitians with the spurious claim that they had a high risk of bringing in AIDS. Today they claim that the Haitians are simply fleeing poverty and therefore do not qualify for refugee status.

The racism and anti-Communism underlying U.S. policy is underscored by the contrast between the abuse meted out to Haitians and the open-arm reception accorded any flotsam that drifts in from Cuba. Cuban *gusanos* are automatically declared political refugees and, in accordance with a 1966 anti-Castro law, granted permanent resident status. This year alone 2,000 Cubans have been admitted.

Haitian refugees are up against a 1981 treaty signed by President Reagan and the then puppet dictator "Baby Doc" Duvalier which allows the U.S. to patrol Haiti's coastal waters and return any Haitians it picks up. Thus Haitians are denied the right to appeal which is accorded to those already in the U.S. who apply for refugee status. Of the 24,000 refugees from the terror regimes in Haiti who were intercepted by the Coast Guard through the end of 1990, a grand total of five (5) were granted political asylum!

Yet Washington has pursued a virtual open-door policy with regard to the Tonton Macoute terrorists. When the hated strongman Prosper Avril was driven out

of Haiti by a popular uprising in March 1990, he was flown on a U.S. military transport to Miami where he now resides in a luxurious mansion in a country club suburb. So many Duvalierist butchers have been welcomed to Miami that the southwest quarter of the city has been dubbed by Haitians the "Macoute zone." These sinister goons have sown deadly terror among Miami's Haitian community, targeting prominent supporters of Aristide. Creole-language radio commentators Jean-Claude Olivier and Fritz Dor were gunned down in the weeks following the December 1990 election of the popular radical priest.

### No to U.S. Intervention in the Caribbean!

The massive flight of those risking death to escape from Haiti gives an idea of the dreadful ordeal the population is enduring under the regime of General Raoul Cedras. In the weeks following the coup, the sadistic killers in uniform wantonly machine-gunned hundreds in the poor quarters of the cities, provoking a massive flight from urban areas to the countryside.

To bring down the hated military gangsters requires a revolutionary mobilization of the Haitian working population, in alliance with the proletariat of North America where Haitian workers are strongly represented. Yet Aristide, in the hope of being returned to office, has held out his hand to the imperialist tormentors of the Haitian people. In order to curry favor with Bush, *Aristide has*

*pointedly refused to oppose the 1981 agreement granting the U.S. Coast Guard the "right" to patrol the Haitian coast.* As the wave of refugees rose, Aristide obediently went on the Voice of America calling on Haitians to "stay at home."

The Haitian left has followed Aristide in counting on the U.S. imperialists to introduce democracy in Haiti. After explaining why a U.S. military intervention in Haiti would not be a good thing, *Haiti Progrès* (23 October) concludes that it is necessary to "remain mobilized in order to force Washington to impose the sanctions" decreed by the OAS under U.S. leadership! But how do they suppose sanctions will be "imposed" without the intervention of U.S. warships?

No doubt many Haitians, having already endured unspeakable suffering, are prepared to submit to additional hardships caused by the sanctions in the hope that restoring Aristide to office would be a step toward democracy. However, it is a cruel hoax to pretend, as do Aristide and his leftist camp followers, that the imperialist jackals will do anything to alleviate the misery of the Haitian masses. A "government of national unity" such as Aristide is touting, if it came about, could only be window-dressing for continued rule by the sadistic killers in uniform.

To achieve even a semblance of democracy in Haiti will require a social revolution, led by an internationalist workers party, that uproots the Macoute cancer by overturning the capitalist system. ■

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Hundreds Drown at Sea

# Down With Racist Ban on Haitian Refugees!

### U.S. Out of Guantánamo! Defend Cuba!

Desperate to flee the reign of terror unleashed by the Haitian military since it threw out President Jean-Bertrand Aristide last September, thousands of Haiti's poor and oppressed have sought to make the perilous journey to a hoped-for refuge in the United States. Packed into leaky fishing boats and battered by tropical storms, hundreds have perished in the shark-infested waters. Those who survive are prevented from reaching U.S. soil by a fleet of Coast Guard cutters ringing their island country. Over 5,000 refugees have been plucked from their boats and forced back to Haiti or dumped in detention centers around the Caribbean, including the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo, Cuba.

In one tragic shipwreck as many as 135 Haitian refugees drowned when their sailboat capsized in a storm off eastern Cuba. Cuban rescue services immediately launched a massive search by air and sea for survivors, and a special camp was set up at Cape Maisí, the easternmost point in Cuba, to provide food and medical care. Yet the U.S. Coast Guard, which cynically professes

Haitian refugees picked up at sea by U.S. Coast Guard are dumped on docks of Port-au-Prince where they face persecution at hands of murderous military regime.



to be "rescuing" Haitian refugees, kept its boats safely at anchor because of the high seas, and declared it "could not confirm" the disaster.

Recently the INS ran a lottery granting permanent resident visas to 40,000 overwhelmingly white applicants, but Haitians are undergoing a special kind of life-and-death lottery. As many as half of those who try to make the

week-long run to Florida, with gusting winds sometimes whipping up seas ten feet high, may be perishing unnoticed. Yet as one Haitian declared as he prepared to board a rickety boat: "Many people have told us we will never make it, because the boats never arrive. But everywhere we went the soldiers were arresting people and going through neighborhoods and shoot-

ing. I couldn't take it anymore" (*New York Times*, 24 November).

### U.S. Immigration Policy: Racism and Anti-Communism

In an article titled "Passengers from Nowhere," the Miami-based *Haiti en Marche* (20 November) noted how the plight of the Haitian refugees recalls the

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# Drug Testing Witchhunt in the TWU



Over a thousand transit workers protest November 19 at TA headquarters to demand a contract.

## Rip Out the Turnstiles! For Free Mass Transit!

Sonny Hall just can't say no to the TA. The president of Transport Workers Union Local 100 and his compliant executive board have joined with the Transit Authority in imposing drug and alcohol testing on thousands of New York City transit workers. And there won't be anything "random" about it. Union militants, black and Hispanic workers, anyone on the TA's hit list, look out—they want to put you "out of service." When the TA kills another track worker, or drags another rider down a platform, they'll test first...and you try to get your job back later.

To top it off, the MTA is proposing to stick it to the working people who have to ride the trains by hiking the fare to

as much as \$1.50! It's high time the TWU demanded *free mass transit*—stop fare gouging, rip out the turnstiles!

Last August, there was a tragic derailment at Union Square in which five passengers died. Even before the results from the drug test on the motorman involved came back, Hall held a press conference to announce that he had agreed "in principle" to "random" drug and alcohol testing of thousands of workers in "safety sensitive" jobs. The motorman, Robert Ray, who showed high blood alcohol but no drugs in a test taken 13 hours after the accident, has been indicted on charges of *murder*. It is MTA chairman Stangl and TA chief

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