

Trotskyists Picket at UN, Wall Street

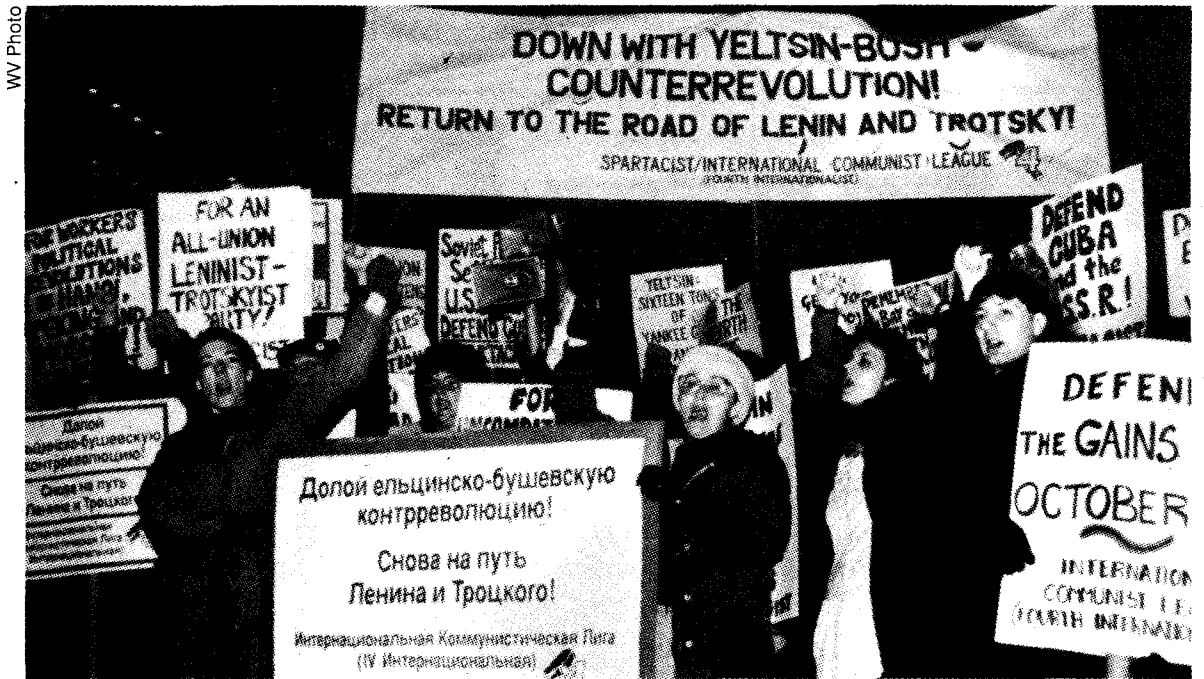
“Yeltsin Is a Tool of Wall Street Rule!”

The following press release was issued by the Spartacist League/U.S. about its protests against Boris Yeltsin when the capitalist-restorationist Russian leader visited the United Nations on January 31. TV coverage of the Trotskyist demonstration highlighted the SL slogan “Stalinism Is Dead, Communism Lives!” A protest has been called by our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France for February 6, when Yeltsin is scheduled to visit Paris.

The diplomatic debut of Russian president Boris Yeltsin at the UN Friday was met by demonstrators chanting, “Yeltsin is a tool of Wall Street rule!” The protest was called by the Spartacist League, which carried banners in Russian and English declaring: “Down With Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution! Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky!” The protesters angrily

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January 31—Spartacist protest outside Federal Reserve Bank where Yeltsin was feted by his Wall Street paymasters.



Black History Month

Education U.S.A.—Separate and Unequal

Carl Schurz High School, Chicago
Annual Expenditure Per Student: \$5,276
Number of Students: 3,100; Teachers: 184



Alcock/Chicago Sun-Times

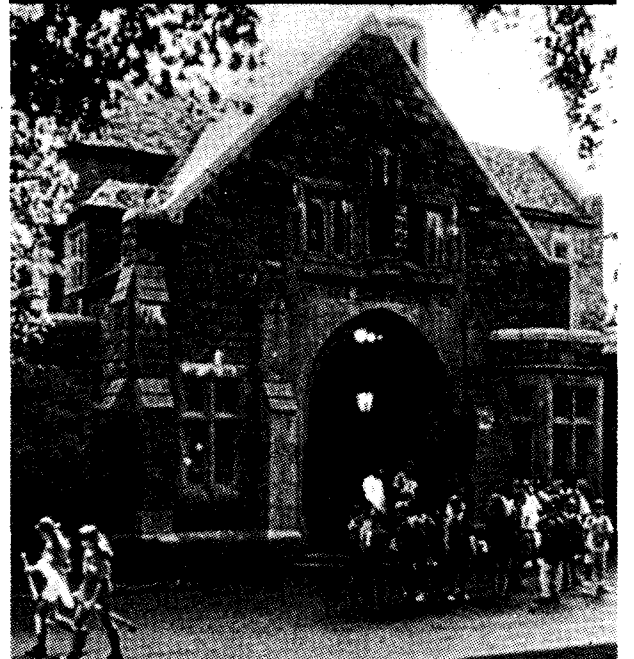
In his book *Savage Inequalities—Children in America's Schools*, Jonathan Kozol asks a 14-year-old black student what she has learned about the civil rights movement in her school. She replies: “Every year in February we are told to read the same old speech of Martin Luther King. We read it every year. ‘I have a dream’.... We have a school in East St. Louis named for Dr. King. The school is full of sewer water and the doors are locked with chains. Every student in the school is black. It’s like a terrible joke on history.”

Today the American ruling class is turning back the clock on public education by a century. Almost four decades since the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision struck down the doctrine of Jim Crow segregated education, schools in the North are more segregated than in the Deep South. Kozol writes, “In day-to-day fact, the 1954 *Brown* decision is now dead. Indeed, this nation has yet to live up to the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. Our schools are still separate, but they’re certainly not equal.” In this racist capitalist society *separate can never be equal*.

What grabs headlines are the eruptions of raw racist violence—cross-burnings on college lawns, black schoolchildren terrorized and painted with white shoe polish by a white gang on city streets. But the marauders take their cue from the government whose official

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Rye High School, Rye, N.Y.
Annual Expenditure Per Student: \$12,570
Number of Students: 536; Teachers: 73



Kachaturian/Time

Hysterical Liberals Join S.F. Anti-Gay Witchhunt Defend NAMBLA!

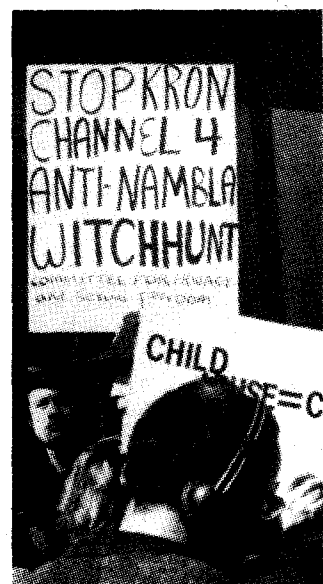
SAN FRANCISCO—A calculated and vicious campaign by a local TV station and the SFPD has whipped up a lynch mob atmosphere against the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA). The group, whose proclaimed purpose is to defend the civil rights of "men and boys involved in consensual sexual and other relationships with each other," has been maliciously slandered as child-molesting monsters. Howling at the head of the pack are frenzied liberals and "radical" lesbians and gays, themselves targets of reactionary bigots, who are throwing NAMBLA to the wolves. Not only is this vicious, cowardly and repulsive, it is dangerous. The beasts of capitalist reaction will not stop

there. Defense of NAMBLA against persecution is the elementary duty not just of socialists but of all who defend democratic rights.

KRON-TV launched an "investigative report" provocation culminating January 4 in a film crew barging into a regular monthly NAMBLA meeting held, as it had been for two years, in the Potrero Hill public library. The station broadcast the resulting film clip over and over, accompanied by "mug shots" of members and sensational, lying claims smearing them as convicted child molesters discussing how to molest children. In clear collusion with the cops, KRON is deliberately setting up its targets for repression—everything from firings



WV Photos
Skinhead fascists (left) tried to break up NAMBLA press conference/protest of KRON witchhunt.



to jail and potentially lethal violence.

KRON sent a provocateur, one Michael Echols, to infiltrate NAMBLA's meetings, armed with a hidden video camera. According to the gay paper *Bay Area Reporter* (16 January) in an article defending the group, KRON later went to local parents and asked them, "How do you feel about child molesters meeting in your library?" Despite NAMBLA's vehement denials, KRON has continued to broadcast charges that 13 NAMBLA members were "convicted child molesters."

This allegation originated with Captain Dairmuid Philpott of the SFPD, who refused to give names or any proof to the *Reporter*. The woman who KRON's witchhunting "reporters" claimed inspired their "story," Cathy Baxter, director of the San Francisco Child Abuse Council, categorically denied it. NAMBLA spokesman Renato Corazza charged that the witchhunt was started by the SF police (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 January). At the very least, KRON is eagerly acting as a kind of extralegal media hit squad for the cops.

When NAMBLA held a press conference and protest outside KRON's offices on January 20, counterdemonstrators attempted to break it up, trying to shout down NAMBLA speaker Bill Andriette. A group of self-described "survivors of incest and sexual abuse" from the gay and feminist milieu passed out an unsigned leaflet demanding NAMBLA "must be politically isolated and allowed to twist in the wind of their own hypocritical rhetoric." They were joined by five or six skinhead fascist thugs with a large Confederate flag and a program to make this vicious threat ominously real: "Death to Child Molesters," proclaimed their signs.

Quite likely many of the outraged liberals who want to kick NAMBLA out of the public library defend "free speech" for fascist scum like the skinheads. The Klan/Nazis are organized to kill—and not just a small persecuted group like NAMBLA, but all gays, blacks, Hispanics, socialists, certainly feminists and even liberals. It is the fascist killers who must be swept off the street with integrated class struggle!

"Their [NAMBLA's] inclusion in our community of liberation will only serve to discredit it," hissed the anonymous feminist leaflet. "Man-Boy Group Strains S.F. Tolerance," headlined the *Chronicle* (18 January), while liberal columnist Rob Morse wondered if NAMBLA is a "conspiracy by the right wing to smear gays and, yes, San Francisco." Roberta Achtenberg, "progressive" lesbian member of the Board of Supervisors, denounced NAMBLA as "pedophiles."

Liberals and the gay political milieu are acutely sensitive to the recent election of ex-police chief Frank Jordan as the new city mayor on a program to "clean up San Francisco." Whatever those gays who supported Jordan (as an alternative to discredited liberal incumbent Art Agnos, who did his share of racist, anti-working-class dirty work while in office) think that means, it's a

green light for SF cops—notorious for racist murder and gay-bashing—to crack down on all they regard as "perverts" (notwithstanding contingents of gay cops in the Gay Freedom Day parade). So in this presidential election year, this "community of liberation" opts to protect its "influence" in the racist, capitalist Democratic Party and appease its oppressors, by joining those oppressors in savaging someone weaker.

NAMBLA's persecutors defend existing undemocratic "age of consent" laws, designed not to protect youth but to repress their sexuality with brutal state coercion. They equate any sexuality toward those arbitrarily labeled "underage" with "child abuse." The prevailing "child abuse" hysteria has nothing to do with protecting kids and a lot to do with creating a climate of fear of sex in general (and day-care centers in particular). The aim is to shore up the institution of the family, the central source of the special oppression of women in capitalist society and of the repressive morality and obedience to bourgeois "authority" which it inculcates. The same capitalist state which persecutes NAMBLA and day-care centers in the name of "child



WV Photo
Spartacists uphold right to privacy. Government out of the bedroom!

abuse," at the same time throws children into death row dungeons to await legal murder.

The guiding principle for sexual relations should be that of effective consent, nothing more than mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion—the state has no business interfering. As we wrote during a previous witchhunt of NAMBLA:

"Determining what is effective consent is always tricky, and particularly with youth there is a grey area. But such a judgment must be case by case, not categorical as it is with the reactionary age-of-consent laws. The act of sex itself is not *prima facie* evidence of abuse or coercion. And the NAMBLA activists are being witchhunted for things nowhere close to where their real interests and activities lie."
—"Defend NAMBLA!"
WV No. 321, 14 January 1983

With city authorities scheming to keep NAMBLA out of the libraries and put them in jail, defense of this most vulnerable group of a persecuted minority remains, as we said then, "the test of political decency." ■



TROTSKY

History and Class Society

Under capitalism, a central purpose of education is to ideologically justify the existence of a system based on exploitation and oppression. As a result, the history of the struggles of the oppressed and racial and national minorities is necessarily hidden or distorted. Communists fight against all manifestations of class, race and sex bias under capitalism, including in education. But we understand, as Karl Marx and Frederick Engels explained in the Communist Manifesto,

to, that only with the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and evolution toward classless, communist society will the full education and development of all truly become possible.

What else does the history of ideas prove than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

When people speak of ideas that revolutionize society they do but express the fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence....

The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, viz., the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder then that the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms.

The communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas....

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Strike Now to Save L.A. Longshore Jobs!

LOS ANGELES—Forty Southern Pacific railroad cops armed with automatic weapons and sniper rifles surrounded the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility (ICTF) in Carson last month as the company announced its "new order": on February 17 the SP will take over direct management of the facility, and all 350 employees, members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Allied Workers Division, are to be fired! In the "robber baron" style of its founder Leland Stanford, Southern Pacific negotiated a sweetheart deal with the Transport and Communications Union (TCU) to represent the new workforce, which will be slashed to 200. They are already in training at the Santa Fe Springs yard near L.A.

This vicious union-busting attack must be stopped cold by militant labor action. The ILWU leadership has called for a one-day shutdown of all West Coast ports on February 16 and is appealing to SP rail workers in Southern California and across the country to shut down their yards in sympathy. The ILWU membership must stand ready to reject any rotten compromise and organize to shut down the coast and cut off this major artery of U.S. trade. Use labor's muscle and win this one!

On January 31, some 200 protesting ILWUers jammed a Los Angeles city council meeting, and at a February 2 rally which drew longshoremen from as far away as Seattle, Tacoma and Stockton, 1,000 workers rallied at ILWU Local 13's Memorial Hall. "This is not just a battle for the ILWU—it's a battle for all unions," said Teamster George Chambers. "We're ready to fight," said Stockton dock worker Pete Fuller. After 32 (!) speeches, including a Congressman and a couple of mayors, the longshoremen and supporters went to the container facility.

The West Coast ports, particularly L.A./Long Beach, have become the major gateway for U.S. trade with Japan and the entire Pacific Rim. This gives the ILWU enormous power to turn off the spigot. The ILWU membership won this power by their militancy and their blood shed in the 1934 general strike. Southern Pacific is out to break the ILWU's hold on a vital link in this so-called "land bridge." The ICTF, where containers are loaded on rail cars, is the largest facility of its kind in the U.S. In 1990 the ICTF handled nearly 600,000 containers, and at peak times it handles as many as 3,000 containers a day (*Southern California Business*, May 1991). And if the SP gets away with this mass firing, employers up and down the coast will smell blood. The hiring hall and every position of power the union has will be under increased attack.

Southern Pacific is playing "divide and rule." Despite SP claims that it is bound by federal law to have its employees represented by a rail union, this is not a jurisdictional dispute between unions. The present workforce has been at ICTF since it opened in 1986, and in 1987 they elected the ILWU to represent them. These workers have remained on the job through several changes in management at the facility.

SP, which is the largest landholder west of the Mississippi, has been selling off property and junking operations to pay off the massive debt incurred in the \$1.8 billion leveraged buyout of the company by oil baron and junk bond artist Paul Anschutz, who also owns the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. (Anschutz was the model for the character of tycoon Blake Carrington in the TV series *Dynasty*.)

The stakes at ICTF are high not only for the ILWU but for all workers. If the Southern Pacific can junk its unionized workforce for another more to its liking, then this can happen to workers anywhere. SP already has a giant intermodal



February 2—Longshoremen outside Carson, California container facility protest Southern Pacific railroad's union-busting plans.

facility in the works for the Port of Oakland.

The ILWU has the power to grab the bosses by the throat by tying up shipping and freight. As recently as October 1990, longshoremen shut down the port of L.A. for 13 hours after cops barged into the hiring hall to arrest a union member. A 1985 attempt by a Vancouver, Washington contractor to use non-ILWU labor to load a barge collapsed when a thousand area ILWU members gave the union-busters a taste of class struggle. As the union paper, the *Dispatcher*, reported: "Within minutes, the yard looked like it had been hit by a tornado.... By the time police reinforcements had arrived, 15 minutes later, the pickets were marching out, six abreast."

The ILWU would not have to stand alone—even in largely "open shop" L.A. there have been hard-fought strikes and organizing drives by teachers, hotel workers and largely Hispanic union janitors. An appeal by the integrated ILWU for mass picketing in defense of jobs would strike a chord among workers and minorities, and give a huge boost to class struggle in depression-racked California. Railroad workers in particular have a stake in fighting alongside longshoremen. The rail unions, forced back to work by Bush and the Democratic Congress after an 18-hour strike last April, are facing the loss of 40,000 jobs. No

wonder that top bureaucrats in major rail unions, including the TCU, have been toppled in elections since July.

While ILWU president David Arian says, "We'll go to the mat on this one," there are press reports (*Long Beach Press-Telegram*, 31 January) that the ILWU tops are preparing the ground to cut a deal with the SP. Meanwhile, Arian is also proclaiming the death of the class struggle: in the 20 January ILWU *Dispatcher* Arian proclaims that "the days when we could win some measure of justice by simply establishing a picket line around a giant corporation like Southern Pacific are long gone. The courts, the Congress and the National Labor Relations Board have seen to that." So what happens when the PMA gets an injunction from their friendly judge? And at the February 2 Wilmington rally, Arian said: "I don't know if we can win this one." *This is defeatism*, and it is *dead wrong*. It throws away the power of the ILWU, turning instead to begging the capitalists and their politicians.

Arian says the ILWU must appeal for "the support of the shippers and their customers," and "work with the ports and with the City of Los Angeles." This is what's become known as the "corporate campaign," as tried and true a strategy for *defeat* as there ever was. It was the "corporate campaign" and consumer boycott that hogtied Hormel meat-

packers in 1986, while the International union tops and company ran scabs into the plant. Arian, as a leader of a crew of left-talking local union fakers called the National Rank and File Against Concessions, went to Minnesota to divert strikers into the losing boycott.

Arian won the presidency of the ILWU last fall posturing as a militant against the die-on-your-knees regime of Jimmy Herman. George Meany, the portrait of a labor traitor, used to brag that he never walked a picket line in his life. Arian, the "progressive" union leader, says the days of picket lines are "long gone."

Instead of picket lines, the "new school" of labor misleaders offer up the same old popular-front recipe of class collaboration that clobbered the ILWU in the "Modernization & Mechanization" contracts rammed through by ILWU president Harry Bridges in the 1960s. Communist Party-backed Bridges knew how to talk left as he tied the knots that kept waterfront labor lashed to the Democratic Party. The division of labor among the Republicans and Democrats and their trade-union flunkies has kept the American working class straitjacketed while the bosses wage a one-sided class war.

In little more than a decade, American workers' real wages have plummeted by 30 percent, and now the bureaucrats will once again sacrifice strike struggles to try to put a Democrat in the White House. The Democrats' program for '92? Racist appeals to middle-class white voters and rabid protectionism against Japan, calling on U.S. workers to sacrifice their living standards for U.S. bosses' profits. American workers need to throw out the sellout "leaders" who tie the unions to the Democrats and to predatory U.S. imperialism, from its trade war against Japan and Europe to its bloody slaughter in the Persian Gulf. We need a workers party fighting for a socialist revolution.

The strategic position of the ILWU in the U.S. economy gives West Coast longshoremen a unique opportunity. They have the power to teach a lesson to capitalist bloodsuckers like Anschutz. In doing so they can spark a counter-offensive by labor against the bosses' vicious union-busting drive. But the ILWU's going to have to play hardball to win! ■

2,000 Defend D.C. Abortion Clinics

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Spartacist League joined 2,000 abortion rights defenders who took to the streets before dawn on January 21-22, braving sub-freezing weather to defend local abortion clinics from attack by the anti-abortion terrorists of Operation Rescue. The fundamentalist bigots had tried to close the clinics on the anniversary of the Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion. The clinic defenders, mainly young women organized by the Washington Area Clinic Defense Force, were able to prevent the bigots from closing all but one of the clinics.

Meanwhile, emboldened by Bush's onslaught against women's rights and black rights, 70,000 bigots paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue and received a pep talk from their commander in chief via a telephone hookup with the White House. Many abortion rights groups such as NOW and the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) are gearing up to support the Democratic Party in '92, the same Democrats who overwhelmingly supported the Hyde Amendment, which outlawed federal funds for abortions for poor women.



Bush wants the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, but the right of women to have abortions must not be left in the hands of Congress or the judges in their black robes. What is needed are mass mobilizations of labor, women and minorities to stop the

anti-abortion crusade in the streets! A revolutionary workers party must be forged to champion the cause of all the oppressed, leading the fight for free abortion on demand and free quality health care for all! Women's liberation through socialist revolution!

Young Spartacus

Education U.S.A.— Separate and Unequal

Continued from page 1

policies are a rapid-fire rollback of black rights and an intensified resegregation of America. "Neighborhood schools" may not sound as bad as the "white academies" that mushroomed in the South following the *Brown* decision, but the effect is the same. A just-released report to the National School Boards Association by Harvard professor Gary Orfield on the "Status of School Desegregation: The Next Generation" reports:

"Segregation for Hispanics has increased dramatically during a period when the nation's Hispanic enrollment has soared.... Segregation has also grown slowly and steadily for blacks in those central cities that were desegregated under policies that left their surrounding suburbs unchanged."

Kozol's book has received a lot of attention as part of the hubbub over the ignorance and functional illiteracy of growing numbers of American youth. A front-page *Newsday* headline blared, "Your Kids: Dumber, Fatter, More Murders, More Suicides." "Education reform" is a buzzword in the media, reflecting the concerns of at least a section of the ruling class that American schools seem unable to train the technicians and managers the U.S. needs to remain competitive with its imperialist rivals. In international competitions of industrialized countries, American students routinely rank second to last. Nearly one-quarter of all U.S. students don't graduate from high school. More than 90 percent of those that do graduate can't solve math problems much beyond basic addition, or read and understand newspaper editorials.

But Kozol has thrown a spotlight on what the media and the government would like to ignore: the *decline* of America's public schools simultaneous with the *increase* of racial segregation and class inequality. He offers no solution except that the government should throw more money into the squalid segregated dumps that pass for schools in American cities. Well, you can solve a lot of problems by throwing money at them. To get that money requires *breaking the power of the bourgeoisie* and to spend it effectively to create genuinely



New York City, April 1991—Spartacus Youth Club demands "Open Admissions and Free Tuition" in contingent of student strikers protesting fee hikes.

equal, integrated educational opportunity will take a *social revolution*.

From liberals like Jesse Jackson, we hear that the way to solve the problems of the poor and ameliorate the degradation of the ghetto is through education. From black nationalists and "politically correct" academics we hear that the way to end discrimination against oppressed

can you "reform" what passes for education in the ghetto without a revolutionary transformation of society.

In Mahwah, New Jersey, a third-grade teacher wondered why a bright young black child in her class only attended school once every four days. After school one day she visited his home and discovered the family had four sons and

rulers have stolen. In contrast, during World War II when there was a labor shortage and the war industries were booming, California shipyard owners recruited untrained and often semi-literate black youth from the rural South who learned to read and write, and became skilled apprentices in little more than three months.

The ruling class spends on educating those they exploit and oppress only what they can realize back in profit. Having taken the wrecking ball to the auto factories, gutted the steel mills and closed many of the mines, there are few jobs left for which to train the children of the working class and poor. And if educating the sons and daughters of white workers has increasingly become an expendable overhead for decaying American capitalism, the children of black workers and poor are deemed *an expendable population*. Once a reserve army of labor to be maintained, albeit minimally, today for the racist rulers the black ghetto poor are not worth "wasting" money on even to keep alive, much less educate.

A World Apart

Throughout his book, Kozol continually contrasts the rich potential of this country, and the suburban country club public schools, with the squalor that he finds in America's segregated and savagely unequal inner-city schools. His empirical evidence is powerful, especially when he lets the youth speak for themselves about how they view this society that has tossed them on the scrap heap. Take Camden, New Jersey—a factory town abandoned by the capitalists where 60 percent of the population is on welfare and the schools are 98 percent Hispanic and black—where one eleventh-grader explains: "So long as there are no white children in our school, we're going to be cheated. That's America.

Black History Month

minorities is through a curriculum of "multiculturalism" to build tolerance and self-esteem. From Harvard economist Robert Reich we hear that class structure and economic productivity are irrelevant, that what this country needs is an education system to train a generation of creative "symbolic analysts." This is all *crap*. You cannot eradicate race and class oppression through education, nor

one pair of shoes to share among them. Her pupil attended school when it was his turn to get the shoes. Throughout the CUNY university in New York City there are dozens of homeless students. They stay in the libraries until the lights go out, then look for a couch or hallway to sleep in, and wash up in the bathrooms before class in the morning. The problem for these youth is not in the classroom—it is race and class oppression which deprives them of jobs, housing, health care and every other social service.

Even such a just and basic demand as quality, integrated education is rendered meaningless if the capitalist class has no reason for giving most children such an education. As we wrote in "U.S. Economy Dead in the Water" (WV No. 541, 27 December 1991): "If every black person in their mid-20s had earned a master's in business administration from an Ivy League university, this degree would have as much value in the job market as a diploma from Martin Luther King Jr. High School in South Chicago or Atlanta." Today the bosses who destroyed and looted the industrial plant of this country sneer at the destitution and broken lives of those whose labor created all the wealth that the capitalist



Higgins/NY Times

Ghetto schools are prisons for minority youth: students at Brooklyn's Thomas Jefferson High punch in with ID cards, November 1991.

"Get sick, get well, hang around the inkwell..."

Twenty years of schooling and they put you on the day shift.

Look out kids, they keep it all hid."

—Bob Dylan, *Subterranean Homesick Blues*

Dylan was an optimist: today you can get neither schooling nor a full-time job, much less day shift.

California, the former "education state," now ranks 48th out of the 50 states in the money it spends on public schools. In Oakland, 91 percent of the student population is minority, mainly black, and 74 different languages are spoken. Across the state, of five million enrolled in public school, almost one in five speak little or no English. As Republican governor Pete Wilson takes the ax to public education, what bilingual education exists stands to be totally wiped out. Particularly hard hit by the budget cutbacks are the minorities, who make up over 40 percent of the state population, and an even greater proportion of the students at public schools. The black dropout rate in the Oakland high schools is over 50 percent.

Against this dismal backdrop, the Oakland school district has been embroiled in a raging fight over "multiculturalism." Four years ago, the state Board of Education adopted history and social studies curriculum guidelines to replace texts which, for example, did not cover non-Western world history from 500 AD to 1789 at all. Last year, the Oakland school board rejected a new set of history and social studies books published by Houghton Mifflin and approved by the state government, arguing that they at best trivialized the history of blacks and other minorities and at worst were racist. Though a majority of teachers had voted to accept the books, opponents complained they were simply "Eurocentrism" disguised as multiculturalism, and a committee

Furor Over Multiculturalism

Education in Oakland: No Money, No Books

was formed to write history from a real "multicultural" perspective.

But as summer ended, the rewriting committee was still fighting to forge a "consensus" on how to convey the history of each and every racial and ethnic group—and when school opened, students in Oakland had no history books at all! With the school year almost half over, kids in the fourth, fifth and seventh grades in Oakland still do not have any history books. Teachers are bringing in their own materials, or working the copy machines overtime trying to photocopy the now-contraband new texts while being threatened with violation of copyright laws for doing so. And the debate rages on.

Pain, Anger and Racism

The public school system of today cannot teach the "real history" of any oppressed group—and the younger the age, the more heavy-handed is the lying propaganda. The history of wars is written by the victors, not the vanquished; and the history of class struggle is written—or more accurately, obscured—by the ruling class. Certainly it is true, as some multiculturalists argue, that internalization of racist stereotypes is a bitter and crippling effect of racism. As we wrote about proposals for segregated "Afro-

centric" schools: "Black history and the struggles of oppressed peoples of all races are excluded and belittled in school textbooks. The social conscience and pride that comes from participation and leadership in struggles against racist oppression is not the education that the bourgeoisie wants you to get" ("For Quality, Integrated Education for All!" WV No. 517, 4 January 1991).

For an idea of what's involved in the dispute, take the issue of slavery in the U.S. The old California fifth-grade history textbook, *Our History* (1983), teaches the standard bourgeois lie about the Civil War that "the country did not go to war over slavery. It went to war over the issue of keeping the states united in order to preserve the nation." The post-Civil War era of

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Bay Area demonstration against 1991 school budget cutbacks protests "death of public education."

That's how it is." Among other snapshots from Kozol's *Savage Inequalities*:

• **East St. Louis:** In this 98 percent black city there is no garbage collection, and backyard dumps breed rats "the size of puppies." City Hall was lost to a creditor, and it was recently announced that all but 10 percent of the remaining 230 city workers would be laid off. Doctors warn of the danger of cholera and typhoid in a city where illness and disease among children is already rampant, and where there is no place to have a baby since the obstetrics wing of the only hospital was closed down. At Martin Luther King High School, there are 26 textbooks for 110 students, many missing the first hundred pages. Science labs are 30 to 50 years out of date, supplies of chalk and paper regularly run out, paychecks for teachers come two weeks late. Repeatedly, the whole school has shut

down when raw sewage backs up through the drains.

• **Chicago:** On an average morning in Chicago, 5,700 children in 190 classrooms come to school to find they have no teacher. The city's dropout rate of nearly 50 percent is regarded by some as a blessing. If over 200,000 of Chicago's total student population of 440,000 did not disappear during their secondary years, it is not clear who would teach them. Lathrop Elementary School has been without a library for 21 years and the books, abandoned and piled in the lunchroom, have sprouted mold.

• **New York City:** PS 261 in the South Bronx is housed in a former roller skating rink. There are no windows, no playground, and no reference books. Encyclopedias are "for the suburbs," a teacher explains. At Morris High School, waterfalls cascade down the stairs fol-

lowing a heavy rain. The blackboards are so cracked that teachers don't let the kids use them for fear they will cut themselves. At another high school in the area, five classrooms with 42 students each have no textbooks. Former Board of Education president Robert Wagner Jr. reported on a visit to a school "where there were five Haitian youngsters literally [having classes] in a urinal." Ninety percent of the male prison inmates in New York City are dropouts from the city's public schools.

• **New Jersey:** In Paterson, four elementary schools are housed in abandoned factories. One school has no cafeteria, the kids eat lunch in the boiler room; another has one physics section for 2,200 students. The former principal of Paterson's East Side High, Joe Clark, became the appropriate education "hero" of the Reagan years for policing the halls with a bullhorn and a baseball bat. According to one school official, "Two thirds of the kids that Clark threw out are now in the Passaic County Jail.... This is a very popular approach in the United States today. Don't even breathe a whisper of desegregation. Keep them in confinement so they can't subvert the education of the suburbs.... Carry a bat and tell them they're no good if they can't pass the state exam. Then, when they are ruined, throw them into prison. Will it surprise you to be told that Paterson destroyed a library because it needed space to build a jail?"

Private Property, Race and Class Privilege

As with his first book in 1967, *Death at an Early Age*, Jonathan Kozol has done the public a real service by telling it like it is in *Savage Inequalities*. But as a liberal—and surely one of the last admirable and honest liberals left in

America—Kozol has no viable solution to offer. He points to school funding based on property taxes as the root of inequality, but his answer is steeper income taxes for the rich to fund education for the poor. The problem is that so long as the means of production, distribution and finance are in private hands, the capitalists can and will sabotage any reforms that go against their interests.

In a capitalist society where public schools are primarily funded by local property taxes, even the term "public education" is an oxymoron. There are two "publics"—those who've got property and those who don't. And families from the red brick housing projects cannot provide a tax base for education comparable to that of families from the green lawns and white picket fences.

In 1968 in Texas, the issue of school funding through property taxes was challenged in a class action suit by poor, largely Hispanic parents. At the state level they won their case, and Texas experimented with what is derisively called a "Robin Hood" plan—taxes that take a few crumbs from the rich and give to the poor. The wealthiest and whitest of Texans stampeded the Supreme Court with their plight and even herded "concerned parents" in other posh enclaves like Beverly Hills to file *amicus* briefs in defense of class privilege. Echoing the credo of *Animal Farm* where "some are more equal than others," the Supreme Court ruled:

"The Equal Protection Clause [of the Constitution] does not require absolute equality...we have no indication...that the system fails to provide each child with an opportunity to acquire the basic minimal skills necessary."

Who determines the "basic minimal skills necessary" for ghetto youth is a ruling class which has no use for them

continued on page 6



Spartacist contingent in December 1974 pro-busing march in Boston.

Education...

(continued from page 5)

except as part-time hamburger flippers in minimum-wage fast food joints.

The civil rights movement attempted to remove the formal legal inequalities imposed on black people in America. But the strategy of pressuring the government for legal reforms could not answer the systemic racism, the forcible segregation of blacks at the bottom of the economy, that is the bedrock of American capitalism. The civil rights movement could not even integrate the schools. The *Brown* decision ushered in court-ordered desegregation in the South where schools had been segregated by law. But the *de facto* segregation of Northern cities, where blacks were legally "equal" yet systematically discriminated against in housing, jobs and education, was a nut that the liberal-led civil rights movement could not crack. It took 19 years after the *Brown* decision for the government to even establish guidelines for integrating the schools above the Mason-Dixon line.

Take 1954, add 19, and you're in the streets of Boston and Louisville in 1973-74 where the racial integration of public schools in the North exploded in the busing crisis. Although totally inadequate even as a solution to school segregation, busing was at least a minimal attempt to allow the black poor a share in the benefits of American capitalist society. *And it was smashed*—by the liberal Democrats in Congress and by the Supreme Court, while racist mobs attacked black schoolchildren in the streets. During the months of mounting crisis in Boston, reformist outfits like the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party looked to the racist government and called for federal troops—the armed fist of the capitalist state—to protect black schoolchildren. In contrast, the Spartacist League fought for *labor/black defense* to protect the democratic rights and the lives of black people and to force the implementation of the busing program. And while the limited Boston plan bused kids from the poorest black neighborhoods to the poorest white neighborhoods within the city, we also called for *extending* busing across district lines to the suburbs where the good schools are.

Under the Nixon administration, desegregation efforts ground to a halt with the 1974 *Milliken v. Bradley* Supreme Court decision which effectively stopped any city-suburban busing. Under Democrats and Republicans, it's been a steady retreat since. Yet, as Gary Orfield reports, "The very strong political leadership against integration policies apparently had less effect on public attitudes than did the actual experience of students and families in integrated schools." He cites a new national survey by the *Boston Globe* which showed that when asked whether they would back busing if it was the only way to integrate schools, whites said yes by a 48-41 majority, blacks agreed 76-21, and Hispanics supported busing 82-18. New cases



"Books in all branches of knowledge" cries out 1925 Soviet literacy poster.

Aleksandr Rodchenko

before the Supreme Court threaten to end what public busing desegregation programs remain, and voluntary city-suburban programs like METCO in Boston can't possibly serve the mass of the population.

Bush League Education "Reform"

Cynically proclaiming himself to be "the education president," George Bush sneers that "dollars don't educate students." Arguing that the problem with public schools is they are not "competitive" enough, Bush's solution is to subordinate public education to "the magic of the marketplace" and let public funds "follow the students" into the schools of their "choice"—including private schools. In other words, rich schools will be rewarded for being rich, and schools for the minority poor will be stripped of their already inadequate funds and told to somehow "improve" without money if they want to survive. It's pure "social Darwinism"—survival of the "fittest" and devil take the hindmost. And in racist, capitalist America the hindmost are black and, increasingly, Hispanic children in the ghettos and barrios, while the mass of white working people scramble to survive and their children also get a substandard education.

Within the public school system, "magnet schools" are held up as an example of the benefits of "choice." Originally sold as pilot projects to elevate education in the ghettos, in reality magnets were designed to stem "white flight" from the cities and are increasingly the preserve of the children of yuppies. Magnet schools are highly competitive institutions whose students are selected through qualifying exams and test scores. These magnets don't attract the poor, but offer an upper layer an adequate education, while those who can't make the grade go down the tubes. In Chicago in 1989, a "fine arts" magnet school was built especially for a new "middle income" condominium near a

black housing project. Kozol reports the children from the black housing project were not even allowed to apply to the magnet school until the third grade. Instead, they were sent to "a small, prefabricated metal building surrounded on three sides by junkyards."

Another idea bandied about by the Bush administration is the establishment of a national examination to improve, through competition, the performance of American youth. As Kozol quipped, "Any farmer in Vermont could tell the President that you don't fatten your lambs by weighing them." But Bush wants to starve the lambs and this proposal is the "justification" for a government policy of killer cuts. Forget about paychecks for teachers, and books and science equipment for students... just test rich and poor "equally," and when the poor flunk, well then, that supposedly proves the ruling class shouldn't waste its money on the swelling ranks of the underclass.

"Voluntary" Segregation

While the government prepares to completely pull the plug on funding for inner-city schools and make *de facto* separate and unequal education official government policy, black politicians and cultural nationalists obscenely accommodate this attack on black rights with demands for "Afrocentric" schools exclusively for young black men. These proposals are a cynical *withdrawal* from struggle serving only to bolster the racist status quo. As we argued in "For Quality, Integrated Education for All!" (*Women and Revolution* No. 39, Summer 1991):

"Self-segregation of black males will only serve to reinforce and legitimize the social segregation that already exists. Just as freedom fighters in South Africa reject the program for bantustan education pushed by the apartheid racists, we denounce a plan to segregate black male youth in holding pens in the name of 'African American immersion'!... Kenneth Clark, the black sociologist whose research guided the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, hit the nail on the head in denouncing schools for black males as 'prep schools for correctional institutions'."

A defeatist, separatist mood has always grown in periods of political reaction and racist rollback. At the college level, more and more black students are choosing to go back to traditionally all-black schools. And on the individual level, who can find fault with a black coed who doesn't feel safe on a mostly white campus where racist attacks have become commonplace. But the entrenched racism of this society is not susceptible to individual or psychological solutions; it requires the concrete collective action of *class struggle*. And that requires a struggle to oust the misleaders of the labor movement who've done little to defend the black population (or the unions themselves) from the attacks coming down.

It is revealing to see who today's proponents of black-only schools hark back to for inspiration. In *Savage Inequalities*,

Jonathan Kozol notes that among black parents and school officials favoring segregated schools for black males, "Booker T. Washington was cited with increasing frequency, Du Bois never, and Martin Luther King only with cautious selectivity." As the voice of accommodation to the racist defeat of Radical Reconstruction, Booker T. Washington founded the Tuskegee Institute to train blacks in manual and domestic skills, while his own children went to the best schools his money could buy!

However "militant" the rhetoric, who's behind the proposals for segregated schools are Booker T. Washingtons of the second mobilization. "Community control" of institutions in what is essentially an apartheid system only masks the *class* nature of racist capitalism. The cynical calculation of the ruling class in selecting its front men was explained to Kozol by a New York City social worker: "The presence of a white man at the head of a large urban system that is warehousing black children would be quite suggestive and provocative. An effort is made to find a suitable black person. Failing that, an Asian or Hispanic."

The Black Panthers vs. Cultural Nationalism

What is left today of the '60s civil rights movement are the heirs of the liberal-pacifist King tradition along with hustlers and cultural nationalists who present themselves as though they, along with Malcolm X and the Black Panther Party, were some kind of happy family. But Malcolm spoke in militant opposition to King's dead-end strategy of pressuring the Dixiecrat Democratic Party. Though many Panther leaders—those not murdered or jailed by the capitalist state—eventually were co-opted to Democratic Party ethnic constituency politics, the Panthers initially advanced a gut-level opposition to racist capitalism.

The proposal for "Afrocentric" education is hardly a new one. In the 1960s the Black Panthers made scathing attacks on the "cultural nationalists" who they derided as "pork chop" nationalists—i.e., people who used the slogan of "Black Power" to secure their own advancement:

"Cultural nationalism manifests itself in many ways but all of these manifestations are essentially grounded in one fact; a universal denial and ignoring of the present political, social and economic realities and a concentration on the past as a frame of reference.... Because cultural nationalism offers no challenge or offense against the prevailing order; the influx of 'Black and Proud' actors, movie stars, social workers, teachers, probation officers and politicians is tremendous.... The power structure, after the mandatory struggle, condones and even worships, this new found pride."

—*The Black Panther*,
2 February 1969

The battle between the Panthers and the "cultural nationalists" of Ron Karenga's "United Slaves" organization was drawn in blood over the black studies programs at UCLA. Karenga's "US" had control over these programs which centered on the glorification of "African heritage." As the Panthers increasingly won the allegiance of militant black students, Karenga saw them as a threat to his "Afrocentric" preserve. Coincident with the launching of the FBI's COINTELPRO campaign to destroy the Panthers, which was coordinated with the local cops, L.A. Panther leader Bunchy Carter and others were murdered by Karenga's dubious outfit.

The *New York Times* (5 January 1991) cites Karenga as one of the major influences behind the concept of segregated "Afrocentric" schools, noting: "For all its currency, the conflict over the proposal to start a small 'African centered' high school mainly for black boys in New York City has a past that is as old as the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school wars of the late 1960's and the move prompted by that upheaval toward community control of the schools." In New York, the campaign for "community control" was funded by the Ford Foun-

A Spartacist Pamphlet 1 \$

Black History and the Class Struggle
No. 8

South Africa and Permanent Revolution

Send \$1 per copy to Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

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dation and backed by the city fathers to quiet the ghettos, decentralize and cut school funding, and break the teachers union.

In 1968 the United Federation of Teachers struck against the dismissal of union leaders at the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school. In the name of "community control," black nationalists, New Leftists and liberals set the black ghetto poor against the teachers. The UFT bureaucracy, led by the social-democratic Cold Warrior Albert Shanker, used inflammatory racist code words such as "mob rule" and was indifferent to the needs of the black community. So-called socialists like the Communist Party, Progressive Labor and the Socialist Workers Party actively scabbed.

The Spartacist League uniquely swam against the stream, and without blunting our denunciation of the racist union tops, we called for a victory to the strike. In a leaflet titled, "Beware Liberal Union Busters!" we called for a "radical alliance of teachers with the doubly oppressed black and Puerto Rican working people." Such an alliance, we wrote, "must begin by pointing out that the central problem of black education lies not in the classroom but in the political-economic system of capitalism. The capitalist system needs the product of the ghetto schools not as creative human beings but as a pool of low-skilled and unemployed workers to keep the general wage level down. The Black Nationalists have not seen through the liberal myth that 'becoming educated' is the way out of the ghetto for the mass of black and Puerto Rican youth."

The ingrained racism of the labor tops, with their reactionary politics and white job-trusting policies, was and is a barrier to bridging the gap between organized labor and the ghetto poor through united struggle against their common enemy for a decent education for *all* children. The refusal of the unions to struggle for black rights contributed not only to the increased immiseration of the inner cities but also to the suicidal narrowing and weakening of the trade unions.

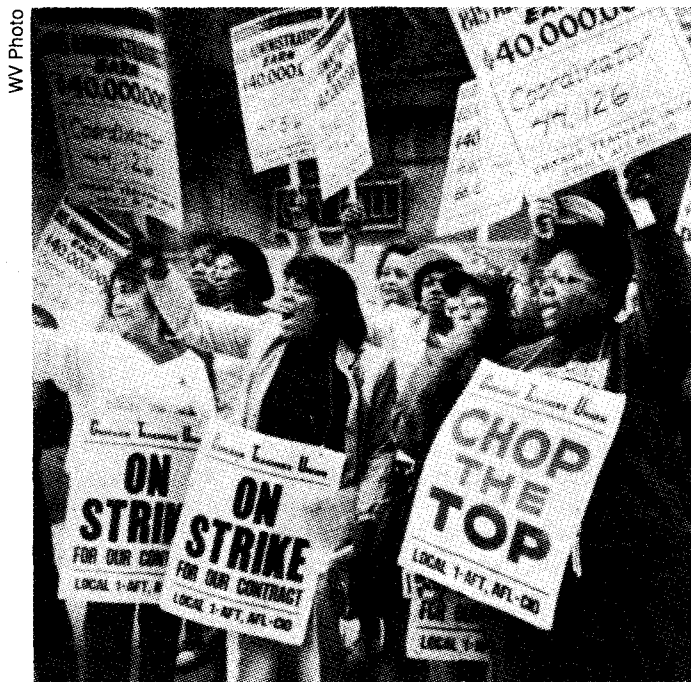
Today America's rulers throw the nationalist slogan of "community control" back in the faces of the ghetto poor. Arguing that the problem is not with the financing of public schools in the inner city, they preach that it is the fault of "community" mismanagement, poor "family values," etc. This finds its echo among the black nationalists, whose

appeals for segregated "Afrocentric" schools reduce the question of racist oppression to one of bad "ideas," "curriculum" and "values."

Reading, Writing and Revolution

Public education is a historic gain of the working class, won through hard struggle. It is a sign of the utter decay of capitalism that conditions are being rolled back to the 19th century, when Marx and Engels called for public education as a vital democratic demand aimed at breaking the old aristocratic private school system and the hold of the church. The tenth demand of the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* called for "Free education for all children in public

Chicago teachers strike, 1987. Black Democratic mayors like Harold Washington acted as Reagan's enforcers in vicious slashing of school budgets.



schools." This gain fueled the growth of dynamic American capitalism a century ago as wave after wave of immigrants arrived and went to school.

That was *then*. Now, as a 1983 report on education ("A Nation at Risk") stated, "For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills [and economic attainment] of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents." Tens of millions of people are struggling to hang on to their nominal status of "middle class" and get their kids a decent education. And millions are losing. Moreover, on every index of economic distress and poverty—whether it's unemployment, food stamps or welfare—

the majority are white. But like everything in capitalist America, the attack on education has a racist edge.

Black people have never been treated as equal even to the hideously oppressed and penniless waves of diverse immigrants to the USA. It took the Civil War to establish public education for black people in this country; to smash the slave system in which teaching black-skinned people to read or write was a crime punishable by death. Since the victory of Northern capitalism in the Civil War and the defeat of Radical Reconstruction, the black population has been compacted as a doubly oppressed *race-color caste*. While a thin layer of blacks have made it into the middle class, their hold is very tenuous—massive layoffs of public

employees threaten them in particular—and for the mass of the black population social mobility is exactly zero.

In this country, the color line is the dividing line. Light-skinned Hispanics can move up—like some millionaire Cuban *gusanos* in Miami—but most dark-skinned Puerto Ricans in New York or Mexicans in Texas are entrenched in poverty. Native American Indians are relegated to lives of impoverishment and discrimination. Child labor is back with a vengeance in the textile sweatshops as a new wave of desperately impoverished Asian immigrants try to eke out an existence in a country whose language and culture is unknown to them. On the other end, the elderly

who frugally saved for retirement now see much of their life savings go out the window with the cut in interest rates.

The situation desperately cries out for a massive class-struggle fight on behalf of *all* the children of the working class and poor. Although blacks, Koreans, Arabs, Hispanics are all oppressed, "the people united" is by no means a pre-ordained outcome as each struggles for a piece of the shrinking American pie. Today, racist bourgeois politicians appeal to Hispanics as a swing group against blacks, while black nationalist demagogues like Louis Farrakhan and Al Sharpton whip up hatred against Jewish, Korean and Arab people.

The answer lies in building a party like Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks. Before the 1917 Revolution, tsarist Russia was a prison house of peoples of many ethnicities and many languages. By building a revolutionary party based on the social power of labor, with a clear political program to bring that ethnically diverse working class to power, the Bolsheviks shattered the old order of the landlords and the capitalists.

Knowledge is an essential weapon in the fight for social equality, and therefore education as a means to eliminate the distinction between mental and manual labor was a key goal of the Bolsheviks. They abolished child labor, instituted compulsory education for all children and made literacy mandatory for everyone through the age of 50, reducing the workday by two hours for anyone doing such study. Tuition was abolished, along with all academic titles. With the political counterrevolution led by Stalin, many of the Bolsheviks' education reforms were reversed as schools were again devoted to instilling servility. Education via catechism became the norm and a major pedagogic text was entitled *I Want to Be Like Stalin!*

Despite Stalinist betrayal, the tremendous achievements in literacy and education, not only in the Soviet Union, but throughout Eastern Europe, China and Cuba, show that a revolutionary transformation of society is the genuine prerequisite to achieving education for the masses. Today, we need a workers party to fight as a tribune of the people for the interests of all the oppressed. Only the destruction of the capitalist system and the creation of a workers America will strike at the heart of racism and achieve equality through *revolutionary integration* into a socialist society. ■

Oakland...

(continued from page 5)

Reconstruction is portrayed as "extremist," with standard derogatory caricatures of "carpetbaggers" and "scalawags" who simply "added to the angry feelings" between North and South. The new state-approved text, *America Will Be* (1991), includes 50 pages on slavery in the South, but deals with Reconstruction by skipping it entirely, and concludes with gooey idealism that "Slavery went against America's ideal of freedom. For this reason it had to end."

One Bay Area group, Communities United against Racism in Education (CURE), published a critique of the Houghton Mifflin textbooks. It notes that *America Will Be* introduces the term "racism" only in relation to treatment of European immigrants in the late 1800s. But in criticizing the text, CURE objects to use of the term "slave" rather than "African people held in captivity" or "Black people forced to work for no pay" or "African people stolen from their families and societies." The content of the state-approved texts generally seems to be sappy liberalism, and since they uphold the present racist capitalist system, they *must* lie. But attempts to liberate blacks through terminology or rewriting school books is pure idealism.

Slavery, of course, was written into the U.S. Constitution, and it took a sec-

ond American revolution, the Civil War, to overthrow it. Karl Marx and Marxists have written much on this crucial issue in American history. The Spartacist League's *Black History and the Class Struggle* pamphlet series has highlighted the history of fighters like John Brown, Frederick Douglass, Toussaint L'Ouverture and others. This revolutionary history will not be taught in the schools until after a victorious socialist revolution. Those who think that they can force the state to present a "socially and culturally relevant curriculum" in the voice of different oppressed groups in fact share the bourgeois liberal myth that American society is just a conglomeration of "constituencies."

And this view can be reactionary. Thus CURE complains that the books state that "most experts support" the position that the first Indians in America came over the Bering land bridge from Asia, without giving "equal time" to "traditional Native beliefs" which say they sprang from the earth and have always been here. Columnist David Kirp remarked, "It goes unnoticed that other creationists, the fundamentalists, offer much the same criticism about how evolution is taught" (*San Francisco Examiner Image* magazine, 24 February 1991).

Most American public school textbooks are rank exercises in ruling-class ideology. They're shot through with vintage Cold War anti-Communism. Thus the 1983 fifth-grade text wrote:

"Americans had long been worried about the worldwide growth of communism. The take-over of Cuba by Fidel (fee-dell) Castro in 1959 added to those fears." Where they see "takeover," the workers and peasants of Cuba see social revolution.

The new California guidelines are no exception, emphasizing the "centrality of Western civilizations as the source of American political institutions, laws and

ideology." California school superintendent Bill Honig is perfectly clear on what's allowed. He says, "If everything becomes hostile race and class warfare, we are going to lose this country. The issue is not multiculturalism. We agree with that. The question is, Are you also going to talk about the political and moral values that are essential for us to live together?" ("Class Struggle," continued on page 8

Black History Month Spartacist Forums

Red and Black in Racist America Communism and the Fight for Black Liberation

Speaker: Brian Manning, Spartacist League

Saturday, February 8, 2:00 p.m.
Undergraduate Library Lecture Room
Howard University
For more information: (202) 872-8240

Friday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.
Room N-404, Borough of Manhattan
Community College
For more information: (212) 267-1025

WASHINGTON, D.C.

NEW YORK

Yeltsin...

(continued from page 1)

denounced Yeltsin's attempt to introduce capitalism in the Soviet Union. This evening the Trotskyists will protest as Yeltsin hobnobs with Wall Street financiers at the Federal Reserve Bank.

"Yeltsin is visiting New York to pay his respects to his paymasters in Wall Street and to his godfather George Bush," said Spartacist spokesman Len Meyers. "I have just returned from Moscow where the working people are getting their first real taste of what restoration of capitalism would mean. They are suffering today under starvation policies designed by Washington and implemented by Yeltsin. They are now facing the same homelessness and unemployment we see around us here."

The meeting of heads of government at the UN was called to consecrate Washington's "New World Order," though "allies" such as Germany and Japan have their own ideas of what this order should look like. The seeds are already being sown for new interimperialist conflicts.

"Working people, blacks and other minorities in this country got a good

taste of what this 'New World Order' is all about last year," said New York transit worker Mary Jo Marino, "when we were sent to slaughter Iraqis. Now you're seeing the repercussions of the dismantling of the USSR. Our brothers in Cuba are now in the cross hairs of Yankee imperialism, because the Soviet Union has pulled out aid." "Our duty here to the

Soviet workers," she said, "is to bring out the working class to fight the main enemy, which is right here at home."

A speaker brought greetings from Soviet supporters of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). "Today in the Soviet Union we face the greatest hour of danger. Yeltsin is carrying out the culmination of the

politics of Stalinism, of betrayal, of subservience to imperialism. He is preparing the immiseration of the working people."

The demonstrators chanted, "Yeltsin and Kravchuk out the door—Lenin and Trotsky's who we're for!" Yeltsin, Ukrainian leader Leonid Kravchuk and their counterrevolutionary counterparts in the other republics are trying to tear apart the multinational Soviet working class through nationalist fratricide and anti-Semitism, fueled by Gorbachev's perestroika, prepared by more than six decades of Stalinist betrayal and today brought to fever pitch by the competing nationalist governments in Moscow, Kiev and elsewhere.

Spartacist spokesman Meyers concluded: "Yeltsin wants to put the Soviet Union on the auction block. But the Soviet Union belongs to the working people the world over, and we say *it is not up for sale!* We fight to defend the gains of the October Revolution. The International Communist League is fighting to build the new Bolshevik party to lead the workers political revolution to sweep away the counterrevolutionaries and return the Soviet Union to the internationalist path of its founders Lenin and Trotsky." ■



Yeltsin and Bush at UN Security Council, January 31. "New World Order" means hunger, nationalist slaughter, war.

Oakland...

(continued from page 7)

New York Times Magazine, 29 September 1991). What he means is accepting the ruling class' rules that allow *them* to live in peace, while thousands live in misery.

History Isn't Nice

"The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs. But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, viz., the exploitation of one part of society by the other."

—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848)

Ironically, the principal historian for the Houghton Mifflin books, UCLA professor Gary Nash, has a reputation as a left-liberal "multiculturalist." But he does like a happy ending. "You can turn American history into a story of unremitting oppression of exploited minorities," Nash told an interviewer, "That's just as distorted as the old view." He's one of those types Marx described in the *Communist Manifesto* as "a part of the bourgeoisie...desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society. To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind." California's full of them—and we can add today's "multiculturalists" to this list.

Karl Marx was profoundly right when he wrote that "being determines con-

sciousness." The black cultural nationalists and liberal multiculturalists stand this on its head and argue that consciousness determines being—i.e., that changing the ideas that kids are taught in school will somehow change the reality of racial oppression and discrimination in society at large. American children increasingly are unable to read, write or do basic arithmetic, because this capitalist society has no work for them to do, and callously throws away millions of young lives. That is not the least of the reasons why the bourgeoisie is incompetent and unfit to rule this planet. ■

Korean Workers...

(continued from page 12)

The next day the company tried to march a thousand scabs and managers into the plant. They were decisively repulsed by a mass union defense guard, sporting red headbands and calling themselves "righteous self-defense fighters," who ran off the scabs with a barrage of nuts and bolts. Thousands of other workers, armed with steel pipes, stood guard at all 14 gates, dug in behind barricades constructed of fire engines, cars and parts, including tires and doors. These were no Mickey Mouse "symbolic" or "informational" leaky pickets—Hyundai workers were playing hardball: their picket lines unequivocally said "Don't Cross!" With their plant occupation, one of labor's most potent weapons, the workers directly challenged the capitalists' property "rights."

But five days later the union leaders called off the strike under the pressure of an unyielding management, who hard-

lined the negotiations and prepared a massive military assault to oust the strikers. The government mobilized 12,000 riot cops in the Ulsan area, with reportedly over 30,000 combat troops in reserve. As the government prepared to unleash its assault forces, including ten helicopter units by air and six police boats by sea, the workers escaped overnight in small groups. In the wake of the strike, hundreds of workers face victimization at the hands of the brutal South Korean regime. Hands off Hyundai workers and union leaders! Release the jailed militants!

To win against the giant *chaebols* like Hyundai requires a sweeping mobilization of workers power. The "big four"—Hyundai, Daewoo, Samsung and Lucky Goldstar—account for over half of the country's GNP. Hyundai produces 70 percent of all auto exports. Strikes must be spread throughout Hyundai's industrial empire, especially appealing to the militant shipyard workers who staged a plant occupation in 1990 (see "Hyundai Workers Battle Troops," *WV* No. 501, 4 May 1990). Calls to dock and transport workers to refuse to handle Hyundai automobiles and on workers in supplier industries to choke off parts can shut down Hyundai's operations—nothing in and nothing out—and undercut the bourgeoisie's strategy of massing their armed forces at one location.

Militant "hot-cargo" actions must be spread internationally to Japanese workers employed by the parent Japanese corporations who operate the "free trade" zone in Massan, and to the American working class. Support to Hyundai workers would cut across the vicious protectionism spewed by the "AFL-CIA" sellouts.

American workers must also fight for the withdrawal of the 40,000 U.S. troops, whose military power props up the bloodsoaked South Korean police state. Hyundai has close ties to U.S. imperialism and was a major contractor for the Pentagon in its bloody war against Vietnam. The combative South Korean proletariat has repeatedly shown its fighting capacity; what they don't have is a revolutionary leadership to organize the working class in a fight for power. Such a program would be popular among militant workers who hate the *chaebols* and the corrupt Roh regime.

Despite the fact that in the last three years over 1,000 labor unions have been decertified and a massive police force has been built—with plans to expand by over 50 percent in the next five years—South Korea has had wave upon wave of militant strikes, pro-North Korea demonstrations and now the formation of openly socialist political parties

(which are prohibited by law).

During the sit-down strike three trade unionists were arrested, "suspected of having attempted to establish a political party for workers, tentatively named 'Workers Party,' with a pro-communist platform" (*Korea Times*, 19 January). The Workers Party, which was launched at a Seoul rally on the 19th, has reportedly organized underground networks of several hundred labor activists in eleven cities, including Ulsan. Police were also going after a second leftist group, the Socialist Workers League, in conjunction with the Hyundai strike. Last year cops claim to have uncovered "revolutionary underground rings" of the SWL, imprisoning for life the group's leader, Park Ki Pyong. The international working class must come to the aid of these victimized socialists, who face torture at the hands of the notorious South Korean police.

While the bourgeois opposition continues to push for installing a democratic façade on the brutal South Korean police state, they stand with U.S. imperialism and support the continued presence of U.S. troops. The working class must junk any illusions in these parliamentary hustlers or in the pipe dream of creating a stable bourgeois democracy. Only socialist revolution can end the brutal South Korean capitalist regime, and this requires the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist party, both working underground and participating in the fight for the legal existence of the workers movement, to lead this struggle.

The combative Korean workers in the South and the deformed workers state in the North are major thorns in the side of Bush's "New World Order." The dude ranch cowboy in the White House along with a chorus of newly bold Japanese imperialists want to reverse the verdict of the Korean War—in which over three million Koreans were massacred. They're demanding that the North Korean deformed workers state roll over and play dead and submit to extensive nuclear inspections, like defeated Iraq. The bosses in New York and Tokyo, along with their henchmen in Seoul, would like to annex North Korea in a replay of the Fourth Reich's *Anschluss* of the DDR.

Militant class struggle in South Korea can spike imperialism's drive for a bloody capitalist reunification of Korea. For military defense of North Korea against imperialist attack! U.S. troops out of South Korea! For revolutionary reunification of Korea through political revolution in the North to oust the Stalinist cult of Kim Il Sung's dynasty, and socialist revolution in the South to crush the repressive capitalist dictatorship! ■

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Algeria...

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mass of jobless youth—overthrow the army/FLN regime and sweep away the reactionary FIS" (*Le Bolchévik* No. 112, July-August 1991).

Algeria is balanced on a razor's edge as the bloody officer corps faces off against the sinister fundamentalist movement. The National Liberation Front, which has monopolized power since gaining independence from French imperialism [in 1962], is at the end of its rope. The Islamic fundamentalist FIS feeds off the economic misery of the masses. Whatever Algeria has in the way of bourgeois democrats, modern petty bourgeoisie and reformists, all look for salvation to the army, barely camouflaged behind a "High State Council." Today the military command is poised, looking for the slightest pretext to decree a state of siege and throttle the opposition. In the guise of exorcising the fundamentalist danger, this will slam shut the limited political opening which Algeria has experienced since October 1988—not only elections, but also the opportunity for activity, debate and regroupment on the left. If the FIS seems hesitant to throw its forces into the streets, this is because it is far from sure of winning a civil war. Still, it would be wrong to ignore the continuing possibility of an entente between the army (or a part of it) and the Islamic fundamentalists—or of the army appropriating the program of the FIS. The situation could shift at any moment.

In the first round of voting last December 26, the FIS won 188 seats, far outdistancing the ruling FLN, which obtained only 15 seats, and virtually assuring themselves a strong majority after the second round. The FIS had campaigned on the slogan, "No Laws, No Constitution, Only the Laws of God and the Koran." FIS leaders triumphantly demanded that their opponents "announce your repentance publicly." The terrifying prospect of a party taking power which is determined to impose its obscurantist "order" by terror—the prison of the veil and the total exclusion of women from social life, the stoning of women accused of adultery and cutting off the hands of thieves, the oppression of Berber-speakers, the crushing of the workers movement—raised the spectre across North Africa of a repeat of Khomeini's Iran.

There are nevertheless considerable differences between Iran 1979 and Algeria 1992. To take power after a bloody contest with the shah's army which ended in an accord, Khomeini was able, in order to gather behind him a movement of millions, to count on two key trump cards which the FIS lacks: the support of a well-organized clergy linked to an influential sector of the bourgeoisie, and above all the criminal (and suicidal) support of the entire Iranian "left," from the Stalinists of the Tudeh (CP) to the pseudo-Trotskyists linked to the international organizations supported by the Algerian PT (Workers Party) and PST (Socialist Workers Party).

Fundamentalist leader Abassi Madani, since jailed by military, addresses supporters in Algiers.



In Algeria, the threat of the FIS taking power has introduced into the society a deep *bipolarization*. On the one hand, leading up to the elections, the FIS twice organized sinister mass demonstrations of over 100,000 in the capital. On the other hand, spurred by fear of the FIS victory, 300,000 people demonstrated on January 2 against the FIS—possibly the largest demonstration in Algeria since independence. The demonstration, whose

women, the working class and linguistic minorities to their uniformed bourgeois oppressors, will not crush fundamentalist reaction. The only way is to resolutely fight for workers power, notably by forming workers self-defense groups and militias to put the fundamentalist thugs out of action and for self-defense against army repression, and by forming organs of workers power (soviets) and putting on the agenda the fight for a workers

tariat. Socialist revolution in Algeria will tend to, and must necessarily, extend to all of the Maghreb (North Africa). For the Socialist United States of the Maghreb! And its shock wave will spread to the former colonial power, France, where workers of Algerian and North African origin are a key part of the working class. By breaking the chains of imperialist oppression, world proletarian revolution will make it possible to address the tasks of economic, social and cultural development, in the framework of international economic planning.

The Army and the Fundamentalists

The FIS leadership tested its strength last June against the army—and lost. The worsening of living conditions for the people led the country to the point of explosion, with strikes in the spring by key industrial sectors. The fundamentalists' call during the legislative election campaign for an "unlimited" general strike was totally ignored by the working class (except city workers in the municipalities controlled by the FIS). FIS leaders Abassi Madani and Ali Belhaj were arrested (they still await trial before a military court), along with thousands of supporters, as the army raided mosques, offices and homes. While the organized working class turned its back on the FIS, the population of the poor quarters erected barricades and fought running battles with the army, which brought in tanks and shot down dozens of people.

Some six months later, faced with the prospect of an FIS majority in parliament, FLN leaders began to negotiate over the terms of an agreement for "cohabitation" (joint rule) with the fundamentalists, among whose conditions was a purge of the army chiefs. Moreover, growing agitation against the FIS worried the military commanders. *Le Monde* (12-13 January) noted: "Work stoppages are foreseen in the coming days. Gathering at the House of the People, several hundred women demanded that the elections be annulled and issued a call for a national strike." In the name of preserving "national unity," the military high command decided to move in to prevent the danger of "chaos." Chadli obediently "resigned" and a hastily put together "High Security Council" took over, composed of a number of "personalities" practically unknown to the immense majority of Algerians, and whose only merit is in not having taken part in the corruption. The real power on the Council is represented by the army's man, General Khaled Nezzar, who was responsible for the state of siege that began last June.

All political parties have been thrown into opposition, including the FLN, which didn't hesitate to denounce the new regime as "anti-constitutional." The

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Women on Algerian street. Fundamentalists seek to force the oppression of the veil and seclusion on emancipated women.

slogan was "save democracy," was called by the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS), a bourgeois opposition party essentially based in the Berber-speaking areas, which won 25 seats in December's first-round elections. The demonstration was also supported by a popular-front coalition of class collaboration, the National Committee to Save Algeria (CNSA), which extends from the main trade-union federation, the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA), long controlled (and still partially today) by the FLN, to the public and private employers associations and the Stalinist party (PAGS). This coalition was quickly joined by dozens of professional associations (teachers, doctors, engineers, journalists), women's groups, sports groups. They wanted to "save democracy." How? By annulling the election results and banning fundamentalist parties—a barely veiled call for army intervention.

So those whose political horizon does not extend beyond a hypothetical democratic bourgeois state flee in panic into the embrace of the bloody butchers of October 1988! But "unity" which in the name of parliamentary reformism ties

and peasants government which would expropriate the bourgeoisie and cancel the imperialist debt. When the proletariat intervenes resolutely under its own banner in the struggle for power, it will be able to break, or at least neutralize, the FIS' influence over a section of the plebeian masses whose desperation is manipulated by these demagogues. But to achieve this, the working class must free itself from the perfidious bonds of class collaboration. It needs an intransigent revolutionary general staff, a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party.

Algeria is a classic—negative—confirmation of Trotsky's theory and program of permanent revolution, of which the October Revolution is the classic victorious example: in the countries of belated bourgeois development, and particularly in the neocolonial countries, only the working class led by a Bolshevik party can put itself at the head of the oppressed to achieve the democratic tasks and national liberation, by overthrowing the "national" bourgeoisie—which is ruining the country, starving and repressing the masses on behalf of the imperialist bloodsuckers—and installing the dictatorship of the prole-

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Algeria...

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FIS leaders, meanwhile, have refrained until now from calling demonstrations and have adopted a more "conciliatory" attitude, persuaded in part by a series of arrests. The first declaration of the FIS leadership after the cancellation of elections called on the Algerian people "to arm themselves with vigilance and prudence" (*Le Monde*, 15 January). This was interpreted by some as an appeal for insurrection (e.g., the 14 January *Alger Républicain* headlined, "The FIS Wants to Lead the Country into Civil War"). But the FIS leadership announced that it was going to call on the courts to evaluate the "constitutionality" of the military coup!

Formed barely two years ago by the fusion of a conglomerate of reactionary fundamentalist groups, the FIS lacks—for the moment—the organization and cadres necessary to take and keep power. Unlike Iran, where the (180,000-strong) Shi'ite clergy provided Khomeini with a ready-made party apparatus, Algeria's fundamentalists were drawn from disparate university groups and circles centered on various mosques, until the youth upsurge of October 1988 allowed them to acquire a base among the youth.

Clearly the FIS leaders are, at least for now, hesitating to launch a direct confrontation with the army, but they will have a tough time (if that's really their intention) keeping a leash on their unruly troops for long. This is particularly true of "hardline" elements who are itching for an armed confrontation, such as those who call themselves "Afghans"—the hundreds of Algerian reactionaries who fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Army, the modernizing nationalists, and women freed from the veil. On November 28, on the eve of the elec-



Pelissier/Reuters

2 January 1992—300,000 marched in Algiers against fundamentalist electoral victory and to "save democracy."

with violence, to impose Koranic prohibitions against alcohol and enforce observance of religious holidays, among both its members and the general population. In the 1958 "Battle of the Veils," wearing the *ha'ik* (facial veil), a symbol of female seclusion, became a nationalist banner against Western influence. A considerable number of the *ulema* (Muslim religious authorities) joined the FLN, and some became leaders.

After coming to power, the FLN declared Islam to be the state religion; the government Ministry of Religious Affairs controls the mosques, paying the salaries of the personnel and training the imams. The FLN's preaching of "Islamic socialism" was taken up by its supporters such as Stalinist leader Bashir Hajj Ali,

on the *shari'a* (Koranic law), allowing polygamy, permitting men to divorce by simply "repudiating" a wife, requiring a married woman to grant her husband "obedience," and relegating women to the status of permanent minors, subject to the guardianship of their fathers and husbands. We Trotskyists demand: *Abolition of the Family Code, the complete separation of church and state! Imams, cops, judges out of the bedroom! No to the imposition of the veil!*

The fundamentalists were able to recruit and mobilize in the mosques and schools—often in physical confrontations with leftist or Berber-speaking opponents—largely as a result of FLN-sponsored drives for greater Islamic conformity. In the early 1970s, the FLN launched an "Arabization" campaign to impose the use of classical Arabic in education and the state administration. Directed above all against the Berber-speaking people (of the Kabylia region), the policy of forced "Arabization" also, by limiting the teaching of French, can only further cut off Algerian youth from international culture, as well as from Algerian immigrant workers and their children in France. However, since classical Arabic is quite different from the Algerian dialect, much of the population can only understand the government's Arab-language broadcasts with difficulty, or not at all, and watch French television instead. For equality of all languages in use, including French!

To implement this "Arabic only" campaign the government hired teachers in the Near East, many of whom were part of the reactionary Muslim Brotherhood. The fundamentalists then seized upon the grievances of students studying in Arabic who were protesting the lack of career openings in a country where French is the working language for practically all administrative jobs in nationalized industry and government. Also in the 1970s, the government proposed a Family Code, and debates around this became a launching pad for the fundamentalist sects, which attacked, often violently, leftist and feminist opponents. By the early '80s, groups of fundamentalists were carrying out attacks on women in Western dress, destroying liquor stores and raiding restaurants which stayed open during Ramadan. FIS leader Ali Belhaj declared:

"The natural place of women is the home.... If we are in a true Islamic society, the woman is not destined to work. Thus she will not leave the home, so that she can devote herself to the great mission of educating the men. Woman is a reproducer of men."

—*Horizons*, 23 February 1989

The breakthrough for Algerian fundamentalists from circles centered in the universities and around the mosques to an organized force with the beginning of a mass base came with the spontaneous upsurge of Algiers youth in Octo-

ber 1988. Fundamentalist groups organized several of the large demonstrations of plebeian youth which were fired upon by the police. Several fundamentalist leaders including the demagogic preacher Ali Belhaj were called upon by President Benjedid to present the grievances of the insurgent youth. This laid the basis for the formation of the FIS and its legalization by the government. Having sown the seeds, through vicious repression and demagogically playing the Islamic card, the FLN is now reaping the whirlwind of fundamentalist frenzy.

In Algeria, the woman question is the decisive front where the battle will be fought between the forces of reaction and the only progressive class, the proletariat, mobilized under the leadership of a vanguard party. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

The FLN and the Army in the Service of the Bloodsucking IMF

Under the regime of the bourgeois nationalists of the FLN, the most appalling expressions of social backwardness coexist with a powerful proletariat centered in manufacturing, oil, steel and other modern industries. Last April these workers demonstrated their social power in a two-day general strike against the government's vicious austerity program, shutting down the country. It is desperately necessary to forge a Trotskyist party, rooted in this combative proletariat, to mobilize this power in the struggle for workers revolution.

Algeria is caught in the vise of imperialist extortion and exploitation which is squeezing the lifeblood out of the population. The imperialists who destroyed Iraq, and who eagerly proclaim the "death of Communism" in the East, see the way open to untrammelled and even more brutal exploitation of the neocolonial countries.

Some \$8 billion a year—fully two-thirds of oil and gas revenues, the only source of hard currency—is poured into the coffers of international banks as service on Algeria's enormous debt (nearly \$25 billion). The other third goes for food, most of which must be imported. Consequently there is no hard currency to pay for maintenance technicians and the spare parts which must be imported from the imperialist countries that built most of Algeria's "turnkey" factories. As a result, even according to official figures, unemployment is at least 23 percent. IMF-imposed reforms aimed at "rationalizing" and privatizing part of the public sector are already provoking new layoffs.

Recently, the bloodsuckers of the IMF imposed on Algeria an end to food subsidies and a 75 percent devaluation of the dinar, which will further drive up the cost of food and other necessities. With the 1962 Treaty of Evian, the FLN regime which emerged from the war of independence established neocolonial ties with the former metropole, France. Algeria's natural gas and oil production, particularly after the oil "price explosion" of the 1970s, financed an ambitious industrialization program. But with oil prices falling in the '80s, the imperialist pillage threw the country into a downward economic spiral.

Cities like Algiers are choking with a generation who spend their lives hanging out on street corners or selling T-shirts on the sidewalk, while the millionaire profiteers of Algerian "socialism" cruise in their Mercedes limousines. The Algerian bourgeoisie denies a whole social layer, hundreds of thousands of desperate youth, the right to a real education (less than 4 percent of each generation get through the *baccalauréat* [the exam which opens the door to technical training and college]). This provides a ready audience for the demagogic populism of the FIS—and their promise of vengeance against the corrupt mandarins of the FLN.

In the former colonial metropole, the



Chesnot/Sipa

Algerian and Moroccan immigrant workers in France, concentrated in key industries including auto, are among most militant sectors of working class.

tion campaign, a group of "Afghans" was responsible for an attack on the Algerian-Tunisian border post of Guemmar, killing and savagely mutilating three gendarmes. The army struck back, killing two dozen fundamentalists and arresting a hundred. Since the military takeover there have been scattered reports of armed attacks. If the Red Army, pulled out of Afghanistan by the traitor Gorbachev, had settled accounts with the mullahs, these "Afghans" would not be spreading their reactionary terror in Algeria today!

The FLN, Islamic Fundamentalism and the Woman Question

The thoroughly discredited FLN regime tried to stave off its demise by posing as the last barrier able to prevent the victory of medieval barbarism—and then sought an agreement with the FIS. Yet from the beginning of the struggle against French colonialism, the FLN in the name of Arab nationalism glorified Islamic traditions. During the war of independence, the FLN sought, sometimes

who counseled his followers to have "the Qur'an in one hand and *Das Kapital* in the other" (see James Piscatori [ed.], *Islam in the Political Process* [1983]). Government decrees prohibited sales of alcohol to Muslims. During the month of Ramadan, anyone who "looks Arab" and goes to one of the few restaurants which stay open during this month of fasting risks having to show his identity card to the police.

Under the FLN, Islamic law has been wielded most forcefully against women. The discrimination and social pressures make it very rare for Algerian women to escape the confines of domestic slavery and take jobs outside the home. Thus although more than 10,000 women participated in the guerrilla struggle (according to Djamilia Amrane, *Les femmes algériennes dans la guerre* [1991]), today women are barely 7 percent of the workforce. Until the law was overturned last fall, married women in practice did not have the right to vote since their husbands could—and did—vote "by proxy" in their stead. The latest Family Code, adopted in June 1984, is largely based

victory of the Islamic fundamentalists served as a pretext for racist campaigns. The French imperialist bourgeoisie and its social-democratic lackeys now in power, whose hands are covered with the blood of the two million Algerians killed during the war of independence, and of hundreds of Algerian workers massacred in the heart of Paris in October 1961, today cry out about the danger to "democracy"! This same bourgeoisie, which aided Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan with all its strength, which supports the worst nationalist reactionaries in East Europe, sees in every North African "immigrant" worker a dangerous fundamentalist.

And the fascists whip up the spectre of a new wave of immigration fleeing an Islamic Algeria and swamping France. The fascist rag *Minute* spews out its racist hate under the headline "Every Vote Must Go to the FIS!": "Thanks to the FIS, the Algerians will resemble Arabs, and be increasingly less like the French. The chasm will therefore expand in France between the French and North African emigrants." Later it says: "above all, not one more Algerian immigrant!" (*Le Monde*, 11-12 January).

For worker/"immigrant" mobilizations to smash the fascists! Full citizenship rights for "immigrant" workers and their families! "Immigrant" workers have a strategic place in French industry, constituting a real bridge between the working class of this country and those of the other shore of the Mediterranean. That is why we fight in France to build a multi-ethnic vanguard workers party.

For a Trotskyist Party in Algeria!

Despite the failure of the regime's "industrialization" policies, Algeria did produce a relatively numerous industrial proletariat. Thus more than 20 percent of the labor force works in industry, concentrated in the petroleum/gas port of Arzew (near Oran), the manufacturing centers of Rouiba, Reghaïa and El Harrach (near Algiers), and the industrial pole around Annaba, including Skikda (oil and gas) and El Hadjar (steel and cement), not to mention the oil and gas producing areas of Hassi Messaoud and Hassi R'Mel. These areas were shut down solid during the general strike against IMF austerity last April, and largely did not join the FIS-called "general strike" in June. In the December voting, in the absence of detailed figures by election district, as far as can be determined, these industrial centers had the highest rates of abstention and FLN candidates were generally ahead of the FIS.

By and large, the Algerian proletariat has not fallen prey to the reactionary demagoguery of the Islamic fundamentalists, whose program is the destruction of the organizations of the working class. Workers have driven organizers for the fundamentalists' "Islamic Workers Union" out of their plants. It is necessary for revolutionaries to fight within the UGTA against the corrupt and sclerotic leadership. The Algerian working class must build class-struggle unions and forge in struggle a union federation that is independent of the state and democratic in its functioning—which is only possible under a revolutionary leadership.

For all purely trade-union struggles are inescapably destined to defeat. In the course of their struggle against inflation and unemployment, which especially hits women and youth, and for a sliding scale of wages and hours, against the military dictatorship and the FIS gangsters, the Algerian proletariat must also arm itself with combat organs such as strike pickets, self-defense groups, strike committees or factory committees: its embryonic soviets.

To break the infernal stranglehold of imperialist exploitation and put the productive forces to work, to smash the fundamentalist danger and to put an end to

Down With Theocratic Censorship! Egyptian Court Bans Novel, Convicts Author Alla Hamed

Egyptian novelist Alla Hamed, together with his publisher and book distributor, were sentenced to eight years in prison on charges of "blasphemy" against Islam in his book The Distance in a Man's Mind. Last spring a government court dismissed the charge but referred the case to a special emergency security court. On December 25, after a 30-minute hearing and one-hour recess the special court issued its guilty verdict. The Partisan Defense Committee has sent a letter of protest to the Egyptian embassy demanding the charges be dismissed.

1 February 1992
Embassy of Egypt

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

The conviction of novelist Alla Hamed by an Egyptian special security court and the sentence of eight years in prison for "blasphemy" in his novel *The Distance in a Man's Mind* is an international outrage. The Partisan Defense Committee demands that all charges against the author, as well as his publisher and book distributor, be immediately dropped!

The sentence imposed by the court established under decade-old "emergency decrees" represents shameful pandering to the ultraright Islamic religious reactionaries. This shocking

sentence recalls the decades-long attempt to silence Egyptian feminist author Nawal El-Saadawi, imprisoned for months under the Sadat regime, and whose book *The Hidden Face of Eve* is still banned in Egypt.

Book-banning and the imprisonment of writers under religious cover has a long tradition in the West, notoriously the Inquisition and Index of literature prohibited by the Vatican. Moreover, the final subjugation of Moorish Spain by the Christian monarchy five centuries ago was accompanied by a royal decree ordering the burning of Arab books, destroying the works of such illustrious Muslim authors as the historian Ibn Khaldun and the geographer Ibn Batuta.

Like the murderous attempt to silence Salman Rushdie launched by the Iranian theocracy, this new state assault against Alla Hamed is another deadly thrust against human freedom everywhere. Theocratic diktats, whether emanating from Ayatollah or Pope, from the Israeli Zionist regime or "born again" Christian bigots targeting women in the USA, are all equally loathsome.

No to book-banning! Dismiss all charges now!

Paul Cooperstein, for the
Partisan Defense Committee

the military dictatorship, a proletarian revolution is necessary. In this crucial hour, the Algerian proletariat desperately lacks a revolutionary leadership.

The miserable Stalinists of the PAGS, who have historically cowered in the shadow of the FLN, and who today are thrown into deep crisis and splitting, explicitly turn their back on the proletariat and see in the "modernist bourgeoisie" the only alternative to the "archaic bourgeoisie." Meanwhile, they applaud the army's seizure of power for which they fervently prayed!

The social democrats of the PT (Workers Party), which falsely claims to be Trotskyist, already gave ignominious support to the "unlimited general strike" called by the FIS last June. Having learned well their lessons from their mentor Lambert, who supported Khomeini's seizure of power in Iran and called to extend the "Islamic Revolution" to the Soviet Central Asian republics, these political bandits called for a boycott of the Algerian elections and called upon the fundamentalists to take power directly together with the UGTA and the FFS! Honest militants who have been ensnared in this organization, which doesn't hesitate to bloc with the worst enemies of human progress, must leave the PT, quickly and without leaving a forwarding address!

A second group of some importance which also falsely claims to be Trotskyist is the PST (Socialist Workers Party), sympathizing section of the "International" of Mandel and Krivine. This organization is marked by the political support which its "ancestors" gave to the petty-bourgeois nationalist FLN regime of Ben Bella. This current, known as Pabloism (after Michel Pablo, one of its leaders, who went so far as to become an adviser of the Ben Bella government), long ago abandoned any confidence in the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat and abandoned the struggle to build a revolutionary party on the Trotskyist program of socialist revolution.

Above all since it was legalized (which allowed these self-proclaimed "revolutionaries" to receive funds from the Algerian bourgeois state), the PST has been characterized by crass opportunism. Leon Trotsky remarked that parliamentary cretinism is even more miserable and criminal in countries lacking a true parliament. The PST is the living illustration of this, having in the space of nine months held a congress and a national conference to decide its attitude toward the elections which were twice annulled!

Its program can be summed up in a few words: legislative elections with full proportional representation, "the only way to prevent the victory of the FIS,

which is a minority" (*El Khatwa* No. 1, September 1990)! And a "workers' and people's front," a term which indicates the desire to constitute on a reformist program blocs with bourgeois forces such as the FFS. Like opportunists everywhere, the PST invokes the need to "defend democracy" to cover a policy of alliance with a so-called "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie. The title of its declaration of 6 June 1990 on the municipal elections summarizes its whole program of class collaboration: "After the elections, only a true democracy will be able to avoid the FLN and the FIS."

Certainly the Algerian proletariat must fight to the end and with total independence, with its own class methods, for concrete democratic rights—but not to install any sort of "democratic" bourgeois regime, which is illusory in a backward country like Algeria. Such a parliamentary "democracy" is a criminal trap to divert the exploited and oppressed from the only road, in this imperialist epoch, to carry out the democratic tasks and achieve national and social liberation: the struggle to install their own class power.

It is hardly surprising that groups, like the PST, which support the "democratic" counterrevolution of Yeltsin are to be found in Algeria behind a bourgeois-democratic program which criminally leads the exploited and oppressed masses to defeat. One cannot at the same time support Yeltsin, the agent of the IMF in Moscow, and pretend to fight against the IMF and its agents in Algiers. In Moscow only the ICL, basing its program on the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat, is fighting for the mobilization of the workers for workers political revolution to overthrow Yeltsin. In Algeria, at the time of the "opening" after the October 1988 revolts, a Trotskyist party, provided it was armed with a revolutionary program and will, would have extended its influence among Algerian workers and women.

The abominable situation in which the proletariat and all Algerian women find themselves constitutes an utter condemnation of the treacherous working-class organizations such as the PAGS and the PST (one hardly dares to mention the PT). Much time has been lost, many opportunities spoiled, but it's not over. Armed with a program of steel, a Trotskyist party could seize the opportunities which will inevitably open up in the coming period. Such a party remains to be built. Forward to a section in Algeria of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)! Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Algeria: Army and Fundamentalists Face Off



Pelissier/Reuters



Hocine Zaouar

January 12—Army takes over, occupying streets of Algiers in response to electoral victory by religious fundamentalists of the Islamic Salvation Front (right).

The following article is excerpted from *Le Bolchévik* No. 116 (January-February 1992), published by our comrades of the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, section of the *International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)*.

1988: Algeria is shaken by a wave of workers strikes; in October, youth deprived of a future revolt against IMF-imposed austerity and FLN dictatorship. The revolt is crushed by the army; more than 500 are killed. **June 1990:** Victory of the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in municipal voting.

No Popular Front Illusions! For Workers Revolution!

5 June 1991: After the FIS unleashes a political general strike, a state of siege is declared, parliamentary elections are put off, the army arrests the top leaders of the FIS, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhaj, and several thousand activists of

this reactionary party. **11 January 1992:** After the FIS wins the highest number of parliamentary seats in the first round of legislative elections, president Chadli Benjedid is forced to resign, the elections are annulled, and the army takes

power directly to keep the fundamentalists out.

As we wrote after the installation of the state of siege last year: "...the country is on the edge of civil war. Beyond the ups and downs of 'multipartyism,' of 'establishing democracy,' the question is posed of who shall rule: either the Islamic fundamentalists or the army (or a combination of the two), or workers power. The Algerian working class must join the fight under its own flag and—drawing in the women, the landless peasants, the agricultural workers, the

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Korean Workers Need a Bolshevik Party Sharp Class Battle at Hyundai

TOKYO, February 1—Class warfare erupted in Ulsan, South Korea in mid-January with a massive sit-down strike at Hyundai's largest auto plant. Since late last year the Hyundai workers union has been demanding a 150 percent bonus to offset the high rate of inflation and counter the bourgeoisie's plans to take a hard line against wage increases this year. In disputes leading up to the strike, dozens of workers were arrested, eleven leaders were sacked, and the union has been fighting for their reinstatement. The current labor battle was fought as the South Korean proletariat demands its right to participate in political and trade-union activity independent of the corporations and rigid state control. Last November the largest labor demonstration in South Korea's history was held in Seoul, where 40-50,000 workers marched demanding the right to organize independent trade unions and calling for the overthrow of the hated Roh Tae Woo regime.

Trade-union independence from the *chaebols* (the giant monopolies that dominate the Korean economy) and their police state can only be attained through class-struggle measures. The auto workers' sit-down strike at Hyundai could have sparked such an all-out fight. On January 9, the cops tried to abduct Cha Chang Hwa, a young woman union supporter who was teaching auto workers militant labor songs. Militant unionists blocked the cops and 10,000 production workers staged a protest strike in an impressive defense of their union and this woman supporter. With management refusing to budge on the wages issue, the union voted to strike on January 14, after which Hyundai tried to lock them out. But the workers turned the tables when 10,000 of them seized the main auto plant and threw the bosses out instead. Workers seized the central computer room controlling all of Hyundai's automotive operations.

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Chung/Reuters

Militant Hyundai workers defend plant occupation in Ulsan, South Korea.