

South African Workers Fight Mandela Austerity

Neo-Apartheid Regime Turns Guns on Strikers



Nic Bothma

South African police fire rubber bullets and tear gas at striking Cape Town municipal workers, October 24. Racist repression of black workers continues under ANC government.

Six months into the "Government of National Unity" between Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) and former apartheid leader F.W. De Klerk, this "power sharing" regime has been graphically shown to be a front for continuing racist capitalist rule.

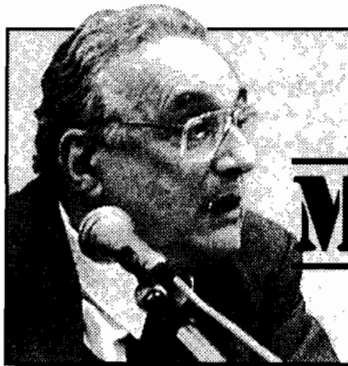
The ANC in office has broken strikes, evicted squatters and sent the apartheid army and police against black and union demonstrations. While President Mandela courts international capital, ANC ministers and parliamentarians have climbed on the "gravy train" of high salaries and government perks, and the ANC apparatus is now sitting pretty in the former Shell House. Meanwhile, close Mandela associates are trying to set up a fledgling black capitalist holding company with a hodgepodge of life insurance, media and communications companies ceded by the "verligte" (enlightened) apartheid capitalists like Anglo American, the giant mining conglomerate. But for the oppressed non-white majority there is no "gravy train"; tensions have grown along racial and ethnic lines as competition mounts for scarce jobs and resources.

The world bankers and business press are glowing over the ANC's conversion to "free market" economics and "fiscal responsibility." These now-bourgeois nationalists have ensconced themselves as junior partners in the exploitation of the black masses by imperialist and apartheid capital. In October, Mandela's top deputy, Thabo Mbeki, announced a sweeping austerity offensive, including massive layoffs with privatization of state-owned enterprises such as South African Airways, electrical utilities, railroads and oil explorations. Summing up the regime's first few months, a *Washington Post* (9 October) editorial hailed Mandela: "He has dealt with organized labor's strikes in a way that has cost him politically, since the unions are his allies, but has won him the essential respect and cooperation of the international banks."

In plain English, this has meant unleashing heavy repression and red-baiting against one of the biggest strike waves in South Africa's history. Thus the Mandela regime has set itself *against* the aspirations of the combative union movement which was the vanguard of the anti-apartheid struggle. In July, rubber bullets and police dogs were brought in against striking Pick 'n Pay supermarket workers in a hard-fought 24-day battle by the combative South African Commercial Catering & Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU). It was no surprise that the government called in the cops to back up the owners: Pick 'n Pay head Raymond Ackerman is a major financial backer of the ANC, and Mandela was "rankled" that Mr. Ackerman's stores had "borne the brunt of a raucous strike by store clerks" (*New York Times*, 12 September).

Shortly after came the 27-day auto workers strike in which 25,000 National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) strikers shut down the South African auto industry, including Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, Nissan, BMW, Toyota, Samcor and Delta. Workers were finally strong-armed by the government into going back to work only days before the opening of the fifth congress of the COSATU union federation. Simultaneously, police used stun grenades in an attempt to dislodge hundreds of striking miners occupying shafts of Anglo American's huge Kloof mine in Carltonville. But it was the bosses who were stunned when several thousand long-distance road haulers threw up blockades, paralyzing the major highways from Johannesburg to Durban and around Port Elizabeth in a wildcat truckers strike.

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A CENTRIST FOR ALL SEASONS MANDEL FACT SHEET

SEE PAGE 4



HOLIDAY APPEAL FOR CLASS-WAR PRISONERS

The cops and courts seek to ensure that those who fight the poverty and racism endemic to capitalism are "safely" housed in prison hellholes or their graves. In 1986, the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) revived an International Labor Defense (ILD) tradition of sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners as an expression of solidarity. In addition to its regular monthly support, the ILD raised extra funds during the holidays

for the prisoners and their families. Help build our program of monthly stipends to these victims of racist capitalist injustice.

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



TROTSKY

Reforge the Fourth International!

Under the leadership of Leon Trotsky, the Fourth International was formed in 1938 as a proletarian vanguard fundamentally counterposed to the social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies of the workers movement. Its cadre decimated during World War II, the Fourth International was destroyed in the early 1950s when its then-principal leaders, Michel Pablo and his lieutenant, Ernest Mandel, adopted a liquidationist perspective in response to the Cold War polar-



LENIN

ization between Western imperialism and the Stalinist-ruled workers states of the Sino-Soviet bloc. Our tendency originated in the early 1960s as the Revolutionary Tendency in the American Socialist Workers Party, fighting to reforge the Fourth International against Pabloite revisionism and other centrist groupings masquerading as Trotskyists.

For the past fifteen years the movement founded by Leon Trotsky has been rent by a profound theoretical, political, and organizational crisis. The surface manifestation of this crisis has been the disappearance of the Fourth International as a meaningful structure.... Superficial politicians hope to conjure the crisis away through an organizational formula—"unity" of all those grouplets willing to unite around a common-denominator program. This proposal obscures, and indeed aggravates, the fundamental political and theoretical causes of the crisis.

The emergence of Pabloite revisionism pointed to the underlying root of the crisis of our movement: abandonment of a working-class revolutionary perspective. Under the influence of the relative stabilization of capitalism in the industrial states of the West and of the partial success of petit-bourgeois movements in overthrowing imperialist rule in some of the backward countries, the revisionist tendency within the Trotskyist movement developed an orientation away from the proletariat and toward the petit-bourgeois leaderships. The conversion of Trotskyism into a left satellite of the existing labor and colonial-revolutionary leaderships, combined with a classically centrist verbal orthodoxy, was typified by Pablo—but by no means was confined to him or his organizational faction....

The essence of the debate within the Trotskyist movement is the question of the perspective of the proletariat and its revolutionary vanguard elements toward the existing petit-bourgeois leaderships of the labor movement, the deformed workers states, and the colonial revolution. The heart of the revolutionary perspective of Marxism is *in the struggle for the independence of the workers as a class from all non-proletarian forces*; the guiding political issue and theoretical criterion is *workers' democracy*, of which the supreme expression is workers' power. This applies to all countries where the proletariat has become capable of carrying on independent politics—only the forms in which the issue is posed vary from country to country.

—"Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International" (July 1963)



no credit

Mumia Abu-Jamal Must Not Die!

Death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is fighting for his life. Former Black Panther, well-known journalist, "Voice of the Voiceless," MOVE supporter Jamal was framed up on charges

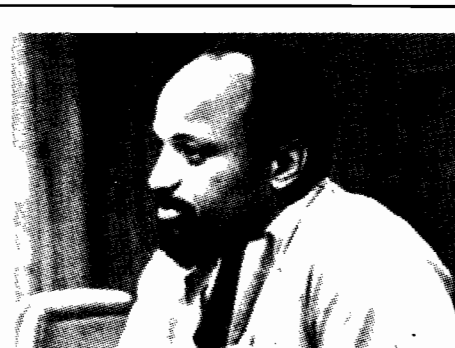
of killing a Philadelphia cop and sentenced to die for his political beliefs and defiance of the racist capitalist order.

December 9, the date of this year's New York benefit, marks the 13th anniversary of the morning Jamal was shot by a Philadelphia cop. Jamal was tried before a nearly all-white jury and sentenced by the judge known as the "King of Death Row" for sentencing more men and women to death row than any other sitting judge in the country.

The "New World Disorder" has meant speedup on death row. Jamal's case is what the racist death penalty is all about. The state nurtures a vicious vendetta against this fighter for justice and his executioners await. This past spring the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police pressured National Public Radio to cancel a series of commentaries by Jamal. They are trying to silence Jamal to make it easier to kill him.

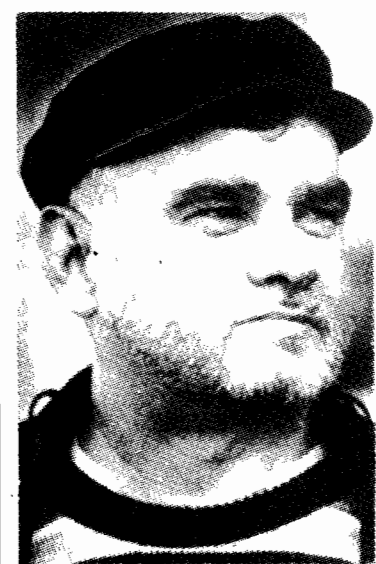
Jamal continues to fight from behind bars with his biting columns which are published in newspapers across the country, and his powerful voice tapes that ring out against racist injustice. All opponents of the racist death penalty must mobilize now to fight to stop the execution. Join the campaign!

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!



WV Photo

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), America's foremost class-war prisoner. 47 years old. Former Black Panther, highly decorated Vietnam vet—victim of racist FBI COINTELPRO frame-up. Geronimo has now served over 24 years for a crime the government knows he did not commit. In early January, FOX-TV in Los Angeles aired a three-part series which dramatically portrayed the compelling evidence of Geronimo's frame-up by the FBI and LAPD, including the likely perpetrators of the murder. The racist state fears him as a leader of militant resistance—a fighter for black liberation—and keeps him jailed despite the evidence of his innocence. He is at lone, CA.



Charleston Gazette

Jerry Dale Lowe, United Mine Workers (UMWA) member framed on federal charges in the 1993 shooting death of a scab contractor in Logan County, West Virginia, is the newest addition to the PDC stipend program. The scab was part of a convoy leaving the mine, shot in the back of the head from the direction of the bosses' thugs. Lowe was singled out by authorities because he was a militant defender of the picket line. He is currently at Charleston, WV.

Two more additions to our stipend program are **Jaan Laaman** and **Ray Luc Levasseur**. Arrested in 1984 and 1985, the Ohio 7 are radical activists with a shared history of opposition to racism and imperialism. They were sentenced to 45 years to life under RICO conspiracy laws on allegations of bank expropriations and bombings targeting symbols of U.S. imperialism in the late '70s and '80s. Jaan Laaman is at Leavenworth, KS and Ray Luc Levasseur is at Marion, IL.

Ed Poindexter, 51 years old. **David (Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa) Rice**, 48 years old. Former Black Panther supporters, former leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. Poindexter and Mondo were victims of racist FBI COINTELPRO, framed up for an explosion in 1970 which killed a cop. Both men were convicted on perjured testimony and sentenced to life. Poindexter was denied parole two years ago and is at Lino Lake, MN. Mondo is an award-winning writer and artist. He is at Lincoln, NE.

Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. Militant anti-racist, leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson. In prison for over 29 years, currently serving a life sentence at Crescent City, CA.

We send stipends to nine MOVE members who are in prisons scattered throughout Pennsylvania. They are serving sentences of 30-100 years. **Chuck Africa**, Somerset, PA **Debbie Sims Africa**, Muncy, PA **Delbert Orr Africa**, Dallas, PA **Edward Goodman Africa**, Camp Hill, PA **Janet Holloway Africa**, Muncy, PA **Janine Phillips Africa**, Muncy, PA **Merle Austin Africa**, Muncy, PA **Michael Davis Africa**, Huntingdon, PA **William Phillips Africa**, Bellefonte, PA This spring Ravenswood striker **Bob Buck** was finally released from prison, where he'd been since January 1992. MOVE members **Carlos Africa** and **Consuewella Africa** were released in December 1993.

WORKERS VANGUARD



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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: George Foster

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PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

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15 Years After the Greensboro Massacre

Fifteen years have passed since the Greensboro Massacre. It was the bloodiest fascist attack in the U.S. in decades. In broad daylight, a KKK/Nazi death squad drove up to a black housing project in Greensboro, North Carolina, where an anti-Klan rally was gathering. With cool deliberation, the killers took out their weapons, aimed, fired, and drove off. Five leftists, civil rights activists and union organizers lay dying in pools of blood, others were wounded or maimed for life. These were the opening shots of the Reagan years' war on labor and blacks, carried out under the Democratic Carter administration.

Greensboro was a conspiracy of the fascists and their capitalist state patrons. From the outset, the KKK and Nazis were aided and abetted by the government, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) agent who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations, to the "former" FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade of death and the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. Two successive all-white juries acquitted the Greensboro killers of all charges, affirming once again the meaning of "justice" in this racist capitalist system.

The Democratic Carter administration was up to its neck in the hideous crime in Greensboro. Today, it is Democratic president Clinton who sends in federal agencies to carry out state-planned and sanctioned killings. Clinton and Attorney General Reno launched the murderous 1993 BATF/FBI

assault on the small, integrated Texas-based Branch Davidian religious sect, slaughtering over 80 men, women and children at their commune outside Waco. Once again, the state's professional murderers walk free while the survivors and victims are jailed on bogus charges.

"Greensboro"—the name cries out for justice, for vengeance. When the liberals (who claimed it was a "shootout") say to ignore the fascists, when the lynchers say they want to parade in their white sheets in our neighborhoods, we remember Greensboro by mobilizing to stop them. Immediately after the 1979 massacre, when fascists sought to march in black Detroit, the Spartacist League organized a labor/black mobilization to stop them, as we have done from Washington and Philadelphia to Chicago and San Francisco. This past January, when the Klan called for desecrating a Martin Luther King statue in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's birthplace, we initiated and organized a labor/black mobilization against the fascists.

We honor the Greensboro martyrs—Cesar Cauce, Michael Nathan, Bill Sampson, Sandi Smith, James Waller—and rededicate ourselves to the fight against fascist terror. The working class in power, the third American revolution, will ensure there shall be *No More Greensboros!*



Greensboro survivor Nelson Johnson with comrade murdered by KKK/Nazis. Greensboro Daily News

3 November 1979

Defend Illinois Abortion Doctor!

CHICAGO—In an outrageous attack on civil liberties and the right to abortion, Dr. Richard Ragsdale, a Rockford, Illinois obstetrician-gynecologist, and his wife, Debra DeMars, are facing sinister child pornography charges. Their "crime"? Taking photos of their three-year-old foster daughter. This is a transparent attempt by a virulently anti-abortion state's attorney to close down Dr. Ragsdale's clinic, the only private abortion facility in northern Illinois.

At their November 1 arraignment, DeMars and Ragsdale, surrounded by bodyguards because of numerous death threats, pleaded not guilty to four bogus felony charges, which could result in as much as three years' imprisonment for Ragsdale and 15 years for his wife, who is accused of taking the pictures. The next hearing is scheduled for November 15; no trial date has yet been set.

These are the latest victims of the "family values" anti-abortion crusade which targets women, blacks, teens and doctors and clinic staff who provide abortions, contraceptives and sex information. The *Chicago Tribune* (24 September) noted that "ever since Dr. Richard Ragsdale initiated a lengthy legal battle to protect his Rockford abortion clinic, he has been simultaneously praised as a champion by women's rights activists and derided as a villain by abor-

tion protesters." Dr. Ragsdale and his wife are fighting this grotesque attempt to criminalize and smear them as "child pornographers."

Police arrested Ragsdale and DeMars on September 22 after a local photo service in Rockford turned over photos allegedly depicting his foster child as "partially clothed and in lewd positions." The child was ripped out of their custody, while the Ragsdale home was "exhaustively" searched by cops who dug through insulation looking for more photos. Their ten-year-old son was also taken from them and placed in his grandmother's custody, but has since been allowed to return home.

Paul Logli, the Winnebago County state's attorney and head of the Republican Party in northern Illinois, "has made no secret of his anti-abortion stance in his election campaigns," the *Tribune* reported. During this reactionary bigot's eight-year reign, Logli has been going after abortion rights and closing down "X-rated" movie houses. Dr. Ragsdale's arrest was an orchestrated frame-up. Wayne Webster, owner of the building which houses the Northern Illinois Women's Center, told *WV* that when Debra DeMars went to the photo shop to pick up her pictures, she was told they weren't ready. Later, the photo shop called Dr. Ragsdale at the clinic and told him the pictures were ready; when he came to pick them up, they had four squad cars waiting for him.

Webster called Ragsdale's arrest on a kiddie-porn morals charge "the dirtiest, filthiest, rottenest thing I've ever seen done to any human being in my life." He told CBS' *Eye on America* (30 September), "this is a conspiracy to close down a clinic, plain and simple." Dr. Ragsdale has been fighting for over a decade to keep his abortion clinic open, facing government harassment and the constant threat of anti-abortion fanatics who target his clinic. He has further enraged the reactionaries by his outspoken opposition to rulings denying abortions to women when Medicaid would not pay for them.

For years, Dr. Ragsdale operated his clinic within Rockford Memorial Hospital, but the hospital refused to renew his

lease because of picketing and other pressure tactics. When the clinic first attempted to relocate, the city of Rockford denied him a permit. After he defeated that attempt to shut him down, the state medical director tried to close down his clinic, claiming the outpatient facility failed to meet restrictive Illinois laws governing hospital procedures. Dr. Ragsdale won a legal challenge against this maneuver in 1989.

Of course, State's Attorney Logli claims that the reason for the frame-up arrests of Dr. Ragsdale and Debbie DeMars was "to protect children." So the state can steal your children and have you locked up for taking innocuous baby pictures of your kids. This is of a piece with the crusade against "satanic" day-care centers aimed at driving women back to the realm of *Kinder, Kirche, Küche* (children, church and kitchen), the program for women of Hitler's Third Reich. "Protecting the children" was also the battle cry used by Clinton and Attorney General Reno to justify the murderous immolation of 86 people, including

25 children, at a religious commune outside Waco, Texas in 1993.

The witchhunt against Dr. Ragsdale is part of a nationwide campaign against abortion rights, including the bombing of clinics and assassination of doctors, which has led to a massive cutback in available abortion services. Democratic Party feminists look to Clinton's "clinic access" law, calling on the racist, anti-woman cops to defend the clinics, which builds illusions in the very capitalist state which is going after Dr. Ragsdale. There must be mass mobilizations of women, blacks, workers and youth to keep the clinics open.

The outrageous frame-up of this courageous abortion provider must be fought by all defenders of women's rights and civil liberties. The Partisan Defense Committee has sent a letter of protest to State's Attorney Logli, and supporters of Richard Ragsdale and Debra DeMars have set up a fund for their defense. *WV* readers are urged to send checks made payable to "Women's Defense Fund," c/o Atty. Jerrold Beger, 910 Second Avenue, Suite 110, Rockford, IL 61104. The PDC and the Spartacist League demand: Drop the charges against Dr. Ragsdale and Ms. DeMars! Keep Rockford's only abortion clinic open! For free abortion on demand! ■

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—MARXIST LITERATURE—

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SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office:

Box 1377 GPO
New York, NY 10116
(212) 732-7860

Atlanta

Box 397
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(404) 521-9338

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Box 390840
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MANDEL FACT SHEET

"A centrist always remains in spiritual dependence on rightist groupings and is inclined to cringe before those who are more moderate, to remain silent on their opportunist sins and to cover up their actions before the workers."

—Leon Trotsky, "Centrism and the Fourth International" (February 1934)

On November 11, the International Communist League (ICL) will be debating Ernest Mandel, leader of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec). Mandel postures as, and is widely perceived to be, the foremost proponent of the views of Leon Trotsky. But for decades, Mandel has acted to *derail* the struggle for the revolutionary program of Trotsky's Fourth International.

The Fourth International, founded in 1938 as the world party of socialist revolution after the Stalinist degeneration of the Third International, declared as its key task the construction of a Leninist vanguard to lead the proletariat to power. Over the years, the hallmark of the politics of Mandel and the USec has been to reject the struggle for an independent proletarian vanguard party in favor of tailing a host of alien class forces.

Weakened by murderous Stalinist and Nazi repression during World War II, the Fourth International was destroyed from within in the early 1950s by a revisionist current led by Michel Pablo and his then-lieutenant, Ernest Germain (Mandel). Reacting impressionistically to the post-war resurgence of Stalinism and the creation of bureaucratically deformed workers states in East Europe and China, the Pabloites ordered the Trotskyist organizations to bury their program and dissolve into the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties, depriving the Fourth International of its reason for existence. After briefly opposing this liquidationist perspective, Mandel capitulated to Pablo.

The Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., along with groupings in France and Britain, fought Pablo's revisionism, although belatedly. Weakened by the McCarthyite witchhunting of the 1950s and the aging of its central cadre, the SWP reunited with the Pabloites in 1963 on the basis of political support to Fidel Castro. With the SWP moving rapidly in the direction of full-fledged reform-



Ernest Mandel (left) with his mentor Michel Pablo at 1988 Paris meeting.

mism, this "United" Secretariat was a bloc riven by conflicting opportunist appetites. At times this was expressed by having two or three different sections in a single country.

The Spartacist tendency originated in the fight against the SWP's abandonment of a Leninist perspective. As part of our political struggle to reforge a Fourth International that Trotsky would recognize as his own, we trace here Mandel's record on some key questions.

• **1952-53: Manuel alibis persecution of Chinese Trotskyists.** The victory of the 1949 Chinese Revolution led by Mao Tse-tung created a bureaucratically deformed workers state akin to Stalin's Soviet Union. The Pabloites declared that "the Fourth International and Chinese Trotskyists will give critical support to Mao Tse-tung's government." Meanwhile the Chinese Trotskyists, who had earlier suffered severe repression under Kuomintang dictator Chiang Kai-shek, were being thrown into Mao's prisons and, in some cases, executed.

Pablo suppressed a May 1953 appeal from the Chinese Trotskyists submitted by exiled leader Peng Shu-tse. Pablo slandered the Chinese comrades as "fugitives from the revolution," while Mandel denounced Peng as a "hopeless sectarian." Peng was instructed not to tell a group of Vietnamese Trotskyists about Mao's witchhunt. These comrades went off to try to enter the party of Ho Chi Minh—which was responsible for the assassination of Trotskyists after the 1945 Saigon insurrection—and were never heard from again.

In a 30 December 1953 letter to SWP leader James P. Cannon, Peng

had this to say about Mandel:

"Today his taking a position completely on the side of Pabloism in opposition to the struggle led by the SWP against revisionism and bureaucratism indicates how unconsciously he has fallen into Pablo's trap. I am still very sorrowful over his degeneration.... In sum, I have to make the following conclusion from my observations and experiences with Germain during these two years: In many respects, especially in his temperament, he resembles Bukharin. He often wavers between revolutionary conscience and the momentary consideration of power. When the latter is satisfied for a time, the former is cast aside."

• **1960-61: Mandel helps derail Belgian general strike.** In December 1960, Belgium was rocked by a general strike against the Christian Democratic government's austerity program. Mass workers' meetings raised the call, "Down with the Eyskens government!" In line with the Pabloite policy of "deep entry," Mandel was ensconced as editor of *La Gauche*, newspaper of the reformist Belgian Socialist Party's left wing, led by union bureaucrat André Renard. Where Trotskyists intervene with transitional demands that pose the need for workers to fight for power, Mandel's *La Gauche* (24 December 1960) called for "structural reforms" of the capitalist system and even endorsed the SP's joining a bourgeois coalition government if the austerity plan was abandoned.

Mandel shamelessly demonstrated his "spiritual dependence on rightist groupings." *La Gauche* (1 January 1961) headlined, "Organize the March on Brussels!" But when Renard objected, Mandel quickly capitulated. His tail between his legs, two weeks later Mandel wrote, "Since we find that the demand has not been taken up by the leaders, we submit; but we point out that at the moment our call appeared last week, no indications on this subject were yet known."

• **Mandel's USec enthuses over Third World guerrillaism.** While tailing the Stalinist and social-democratic bureaucracies in West Europe, the Pabloites cheered petty-bourgeois guerrillaism in the Third World, from Castroism in Cuba to the FLN in Algeria. The basis for the 1963 reunification explicitly hailed the "guerrilla road": "Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasants and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the Second World War" ("For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement—Statement by the Political Committee of the SWP," March 1963).

In counterposition, the forebears of the Spartacist League/U.S., the Revolutionary Tendency in the U.S. SWP, argued in a June 1963 "Draft Resolution on the World Movement": "Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat" ("Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," *Spartacist* No. 1, February-March 1964).

Carrying out the logic of the USec's line, Mandel visited Havana in the early '60s to advise the Guevara wing of the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy, while Pablo served as an official in the bourgeois nationalist Algerian FLN regime beginning in 1962, two years before his departure from the USec.

• **May 1968: French workers launch general strike; Mandelites embrace "student vanguard."** The titanic 1968 French general strike brought the proletariat into position for a direct struggle for power before their Communist Party misleaders betrayed this prerevolutionary situation in exchange for a handful of reforms. Again Mandel called for "structural reforms" of the capitalist state, arguing that "the masses cannot seize power in the factories and neighborhoods" (*Revolt in France* [August 1968]). Instead of advancing a program for proletarian power, the Mandelites fostered illusions in student vanguardism, later dubbed "Strategy of the 'Red University'."

• **Mandelites capitulate to the popular front.** The 1970 election of Chilean Socialist Salvador Allende at the head of the Unidad Popular (UP) coalition of workers and bourgeois parties was an acid test for the left. The Spartacists warned, "It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready" (*Spartacist*, November-December 1970).

As evidence of his loyalty to the capitalist order, Allende vowed not to touch the bourgeois officer corps. Our warning was tragically confirmed three years later when General Augusto Pinochet (appointed defense minister by Allende) led a bloody coup against the UP government in which tens of thousands of workers, peasants and leftists were slaughtered. Writing about a similar popular front in Spain which paved the way for Franco coming to power in the late '30s, Trotsky stressed:

"The left centrists seek to present this question as a tactical or even as a technical maneuver, so as to be able to peddle their wares in the shadow of the People's Front. In reality, the People's Front is the main question of proletarian class strategy for this epoch. It also offers the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism."

—"The Dutch Section and the International" (July 1936)

The USec's Chilean section hailed

Debate

"The Struggle for World Socialist Revolution Today"

- **Ernest Mandel**
Spokesman for the United Secretariat of the Fourth International
- **Joseph Seymour**
Central Committee, Spartacist League/U.S., International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

11 November 1994

7:30 p.m. at P.S. 41, 116 W. 11th Street (at 6th Avenue)

For more information call: (212) 732-7860

New York City

Defend NWROC Anti-Fascist Protesters!

In an outrageous police witchhunt against anti-fascist fighters, Marvetta Davis, a young black woman, and Jodi Masley face up to ten years in prison for protesting against Ku Klux Klan nightriders. The two supporters of the National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition (NWROC) have been charged with "inciting to violence" for their involvement in a protest against a KKK "recruitment rally" in Bowling Green, Ohio on June 18. As was the case in another anti-fascist protest that day in Toledo, anti-Klan demonstrators in Bowling Green were corralled into a police pen along with Klan supporters. Now, on the basis of KKK "witnesses" and police photographs of the pen, the cops allege that Davis spit at a Klansman, who was instigating racist terror.

Masley, who is currently fighting extradition to Ohio, was seized by state police outside Decatur, Illinois on a "Jane Doe" warrant after attending a labor rally there on October 15. As we reported last issue, she is the third participant in the Bowling Green anti-

fascist protest arrested on the basis of the cops' photographs of people entering the pen, and warrants are reportedly out for several others. This in itself is a compelling argument against submitting to the increasingly pervasive police tactic of setting up pens for anti-fascist protesters. The Spartacist League has consistently warned anti-fascist activists against entering these traps.

In contrast, NWROC and its sponsors, the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), have done the opposite, repeatedly urging anti-fascists to let themselves be herded into the cop pens—thus fostering dangerous illusions in the racist capitalist state as an arbiter in the struggle against fascist terror. In Bowling Green, NWROC complains of "criminal stupidity" or "provocation" by local cops in putting KKKers together in the pens with anti-Klan protesters, while "in other cities, police have separated the two groups." This "criticism" of the Bowling Green police is an unconscious self-condemnation by the RWL/NWROC!

We urge all readers of *Workers Vanguard* to join in the fight to stop the racist frame-up of Marvetta Davis and Jodi Masley. We print below a protest sent by the PDC to the Bowling Green prosecutor.

* * *

November 7, 1994

Alan R. Mayberry
Wood County Prosecutors Office
Bowling Green, OH

Dear Mr. Mayberry:

The Partisan Defense Committee vehemently condemns the felony charges lodged against Marvetta Davis of Detroit and Jodi Masley of Ann Arbor, Michigan in conjunction with the June 18 protest against a rally of the Ku Klux Klan. These two young women, supporters of the National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition, are accused of "inciting to violence" because they defended anti-Klan protesters (particularly blacks and other minorities) from dangerous fascists. We demand all charges be dropped

immediately!

If there was any incitement to violence, it issued from the Klan, aided by a conscious police policy that ensured that anti-fascists would be either attacked, intimidated or framed up for defending themselves. Not surprisingly, the only witnesses your office can scrounge up are Klan members and sympathizers whose idea of a trial for blacks and leftists is a tree and a lynch rope.

In the midst of an epidemic of Klan rallies spewing vile racist provocations across the state of Ohio, your office is engaged in an interstate witchhunt of these young women—hitting them with crippling \$15,000 bail and charges that could land them in prison for 10 years. Ten years because some Klansman ended up with some well-deserved spittle on him? Drop the charges against Davis and Masley and all anti-Klan protesters!

Yours truly,
Rena Herson
for the PDC

Allende's victory, denying that the UP was a popular front. In 1972, the USec admitted it was a popular front after all, only to reverse itself again the following year, as Mandel's faction in the USec lauded the UP because "it openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road of socialism, and that it openly based itself on the organized workers movement" ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, October 1973). Six years after the bloody Pinochet coup, at a public talk in Boston in 1979, Mandel still alibied the UP popular front, claiming: "What was decisive was that the workers were not armed.... You can discuss with Chilean workers today and you will not find one worker among a hundred thousand who will raise the question of the Radical ministers in the so-called popular-front character of the government." But the presence of bourgeois parties in the Allende government was a *guarantee* that it would maintain capitalist rule, ensuring that it would disarm the workers, politically and militarily.

Following the bloodbath in Chile, the USec only *deepened* its popular-frontist appetites. Beginning in 1974, Mandel's French section called for a vote to Mitterrand as the candidate of the popular-front Union of the Left. When this Cold War "Socialist" was elected president in 1981, the Mandelites hailed this as a "first victory" for the workers. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste said, "No to the NATO Popular Front!"

• **Iran, Afghanistan: Mandelites abet Islamic reaction.** In 1979, the USec supported Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic "revolution," which imprisoned women behind the *chador* (veil), killed homosexuals, crushed militant trade unionists and bloodily suppressed national minorities. Months later, at the same meeting in Boston, Mandel even dismissed the jailing of his own Iranian USec comrades: "So, some of our comrades are in jail—but our organization is legal. Our paper is legal.... Did you have legal demonstrations of tens of thousands of women in the street under the shah? You have that today."

In Afghanistan, where Soviet troops were fighting to prop up the reform-minded regime in Kabul against an Islamic fundamentalist rebellion backed to the hilt by the CIA, the Mandelites did not even have the fig leaf of Khomeini's supposed "anti-imperialism." We Spartacists greeted the December 1979 Soviet military intervention which opened the possibility of liberating Afghan women, declaring: "Hail Red

Army in Afghanistan! Extend the Social Gains of the October Revolution to Afghan Peoples!" In contrast, significant sections of the USec joined U.S. president Carter and West European Social Democrats in demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops. By 1981, Mandel and the USec as a whole had embraced this Soviet-defeatist line. From Iran to Algeria, as women and leftists have been persecuted by Islamic fundamentalists, Mandel & Co. cheered their tormentors.

• **Mandel's "Solidarity with Solidarność."** In the fall of 1981, Lech Walesa's Solidarność, supported by the CIA, Vatican and Western bankers, made a bid for power in Poland on a program of open capitalist restoration. We said, "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution!" The Mandelites lined up with pro-imperialist social democrats like Mitterrand against the Polish deformed workers state. An article in the 1 March 1982 *International Press* signed by Mandel, Pierre Frank and Livio Maitan praised Walesa's supposed "political revolution" as "one of the highest forms of proletarian activity and self-organization which the world has seen since the Russian revolution." This "self-organization" included millions of CIA dollars laundered through the AFL-CIO trade-union bureaucracy and German Social Democracy. Mandel's supporters boasted of their participation in this imperialist campaign.

Solidarność' victory in the 1989 Polish elections ushered in capitalist counter-revolution, bringing massive unemployment, the banning of abortion, racist attacks on Gypsies and other minorities. The USec hailed Solidarność' election, demanding the elimination of the remaining Stalinist ministers in the government with the call in the monthly journal of its French section for "all power to Solidarność." Later that year, the USec's unwavering support to anti-Soviet nationalist movements led it to publish a grotesque article in *International Viewpoint* (18 September 1989) describing the World War II Estonian Nazi "Forest Brothers" as "liberation" fighters against Stalinism! The USec's praise for these fascists is no accident: "democratic" counterrevolution in East Europe and the ex-USSR has been violently *anti-democratic*, unleashing every sort of vile, racist, chauvinist bigotry.

• **Mandelites on Yeltsin's barricades.** Boris Yeltsin's 1991 counter-coup against a failed putsch by the "gang of eight" former Gorbachev lieu-

tenants brought an openly capitalist-restorationist government to power in Moscow. The ICL said, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" Mandel, on the other hand, hailed the forces on Yeltsin's barricades, arguing that the putschists "had to be opposed by any means available" (*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, May 1992). An article in *International Viewpoint* (16 September 1991) made this pro-Yeltsin stand crystal clear: "It was necessary without hesitation to oppose the coup, and in this respect to struggle alongside Yeltsin."

Trotsky always linked the struggle for political revolution to oust the parasitic bureaucracy with intransigent Soviet defensism, insisting that "in the hour of mortal danger," the Fourth Internationalists "must remain on the last barricade" in defense of the gains of the October Revolution. The USec instead vicariously jumped on the barricades of counter-revolution. This is the dismal outcome of Mandel's abandonment of the Trotskyist program decades before. His ten-

gency's *modus operandi* has always been to tail every "mass movement" of the moment, from the Stalinist bureaucracies in the 1950s to "anti-Stalinist" capitalist restorationists in the 1980s.

Although the United Secretariat claims to be the Fourth International, for years Mandel has offered to junk the "label" of Trotskyism in pursuit of unity with larger reformist organizations. In 1991, he sought to broker another reformist realignment by calling for "overcoming all the differences that separate the Communist parties and the ex-Communist parties on the one hand, and the Social Democratic parties on the other" (*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, April 1991). Mandel dismisses "Trotskyism" and the "Fourth International" as expendable "labels," because for the last 40-plus years he has been fighting against the *program* of Trotsky's party. But for those who seek to struggle for world socialism, Trotskyism represents the only road forward for humanity. *Reforge the Fourth International!* ■

Spartacist Events

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

ATLANTA

Alternate Thursdays, 5:30 p.m.
November 17: *Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!*; Georgia State University, University Center, Room 204
For more information: (404) 521-9338

BERKELEY

Tuesday, November 22, 7 p.m.
Building the Revolutionary Party;
204 Dwinelle, UC Berkeley
For more information: (510) 839-0851

BOSTON

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m., November 19:
Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!; Sever Hall, Room 101, Harvard University, Harvard Yard, Cambridge
For more information: (617) 492-3928

CHICAGO

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
November 17: *Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!*; Spartacist Public Office, 161 W. Harrison, 10th floor
For more information: (312) 663-0715

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m., November 15:
The Russian Revolution of 1917—How the Working Class Took Power; November 29:
How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled; Rolfe Hall, Room 3118, UCLA
For more information: (213) 380-8239

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Saturdays, 3 p.m.
November 19: *The Revolution Betrayed*;
Spartacist Public Office, 41 Warren St., between Church St. and West Broadway
For more information: (212) 267-1025

SAN FRANCISCO

Alternate Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
November 17: *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*; Student Union, Room B112, San Francisco State University
For more information: (415) 777-9367

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.
November 12: *The Russian Revolution*;
November 26: *The Revolution Betrayed—How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*; Howard University
For more information: (202) 872-8240

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum

VANCOUVER

For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Anti-Immigrant Racism! Stop the Deportations!
Speaker: John Masters, Editor, *Spartacist Canada*. Friday, November 25, 7:30 p.m., Britannia Community Centre, Room L3, 1661 Napier Street (off Commercial Drive)
Friday, November 25, 12:30 p.m., University of British Columbia, SUB, Room 211; sponsored by the Friends of the Spartacus Youth Club.
For more information: (604) 687-0353

Popular Frontism and the Strong State

ITALY



350,000 workers demonstrate in Milano during October 14 general strike against Berlusconi government's austerity attacks. Livio Senigalliesi

The Working Class Under Attack

The following article is adapted from Spartaco No. 44, September 1994, published by our comrades of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia. Part One appeared in WV No. 609 (28 October).

The main aim of the Italian capitalists is to go after the hard-won gains of the workers movement. As part of the deal

PART TWO OF TWO

to piece off the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and the unions in the postwar period, Italian capital agreed to various mechanisms to ensure labor peace. These have grown increasingly expensive, and now they urgently want to do away with them. The *scala mobile* (inflation adjustment escalator) was introduced in 1946, immediately after the defeat of the workers' near-revolution the year before. Sim-

ilarly, after the 1969 "hot autumn" of worker and student struggles, there was a huge expansion of social services, introduction of the *cassa integrazione* (supplemental unemployment benefits) for temporary layoffs, etc. This was paid for with budget deficits, financed by huge emissions of BOTs (treasury bills). The interest costs on this debt continue to rise, contributing to inflation.

The result was that in 1992 total labor costs (wages plus social benefits) in Italy were US\$21 an hour, the *second highest in the Common Market after Germany* (\$27/hour) and well ahead of the U.S. (\$16), according to the Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft. But the lira was chained to the D-mark through the European Monetary System (EMS), making it impossible to devalue, and pricing Italian exports out of the market (since with a relatively low level of automation,

Italian labor costs per unit of output became correspondingly much higher). The bourgeoisie declared war on the workers in mid-late 1992. The *scala mobile* was eliminated, the lira was unhooked from the EMS and devalued by 25 percent against the D-mark, and industry carried out hundreds of thousands of layoffs.

The result has been a massive assault on the living standards of the Italian working class. Even according to official figures, unemployment is currently at a record high of 11.6 percent of the workforce—over 14 percent according to the Economist Intelligence Unit—and rising. From mid-1992 (before the Amato government's austerity package) to the end of 1993, the civilian labor force lost more than 1.5 million jobs, a whopping 7 percent of the total, the highest recorded job loss of any West

European country in the last 15 years.

The result of this onslaught was an induced recession that led to a fall of the Gross Domestic Product in 1993 for the first time since 1975. Private consumption fell by over 2 percent, real wages by 3.7 percent. But the most significant aspect of this attack on the workers' livelihoods is that it was negotiated with the full cooperation of the reformist union tops. This *betrayal* is what gave rise to the militant outbursts of bitter anger by the trade-union ranks, pelting their own leaders with worthless coins, rotten vegetables and bolts in the "hot autumn" of 1992. And that response is what the sellout bureaucrats and bosses fear today.

So the onslaught against the Italian working class was already well underway when the right-wing coalition triumphed in the March elections. Now business interests want to escalate the attack, particularly against pensions and the National Health System. Meanwhile, massive unemployment (over 20 million jobless in Europe according to official statistics) is blamed on the supposed "rigidity" of the labor market. What these capitalist ideologues are saying, in their economist jargon, is that they want to break the unions' power to raise wages. They want to consign youth to poverty-level jobs, to slash unemployment insurance, social security, health and welfare benefits, in fact to *increase* "cyclical" unemployment, so that wages would fall to the point where, supposedly, with the price of this commodity cheap enough, the labor market would "clear" and unemployment would disappear.

In fact, this would not eliminate unemployment at all, but create a mass of impoverished workers who can then be used as potential scabs to batter the unions and *raise profits*. This plan for massive wage-gouging has become official policy for the leading capitalist powers. And it is already being implemented in the U.S., from Reagan to Clinton. Thus according to the OECD statistics from 1982 to 1993, the profit rate (rate of return on capital in the business sector) in the U.S. rose from 12.5 percent to 18.3 percent, *almost a 50 percent rise*, while in Italy it remained pretty much unchanged, going from 11.9 percent to 12.3 percent.

Now Italian bosses (at the head of the queue of the West European bourgeoisies) are pushing to climb on the gravy train. In the name of "competitiveness," the imperialist bourgeoisies are competing with each other to counter the long-term tendency to decline in the rate of profit by jacking up the rate of exploitation through driving down wages and eliminating every form of social welfare benefits and gains for workers. "Globalization" of the economy means a global war on the working class.

Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution

The Europe-wide capitalist offensive against the "welfare state" is built on the lie that if social benefits for the masses are slashed, the trains will run on time—as they mythically did under

Reuters



10,000 demonstrate in Rome (left) on April 25 on 49th anniversary of the overthrow of the fascist regime. Italian rulers now seek strong state, unleashing police against militant workers movement. Spartaco

Mussolini—and cheaply. We say: the working class must throw back the attacks against wages, pensions, the health system, education, the privatizations and the assault on the unions. But the answer is not to return to a nonexistent “social” capitalism, with its bloated state apparatus of legions of ticket-punching officials, but to set up a regime based on the power of soviets, of democratically elected workers councils which combine deliberative and executive functions. This could truly provide the highest quality health care for all, and ensure a dignified old age in comfort and prosperity rather than penury.

The fact that a bonapartist danger is posed does not at all mean that it can be fought with a simply (bourgeois) “democratic” program. That an “anti-party” and anti-political mood could gain such force is evidence of the perceived bankruptcy of the Italian parliamentary regime. The working class can offer the prospect of relief for the hard-pressed petty bourgeoisie from the crushing weight of state parasitism (of which the Mafia is a concomitant element), but not in the manner of the PDS and RC reformists with their fantasies of a “judicial road to power.” The Paris Commune, the dictatorship of the proletariat, was the answer to Louis Bonaparte’s tawdry Second Empire, not a return to the exhausted Second Republic. As Marx wrote:

“The Commune made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality, by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure—the standing army and State functionarism.... But neither cheap Government nor the ‘true Republic’ was its ultimate aim; they were its mere concomitants.”
—*The Civil War in France*
(1871)

It is by overturning capitalism that this oppressive state machinery can be removed. Thus today the fight must be for an Italian republic of soviets in a Socialist United States of Europe. A workers revolution in Italy must be extended throughout Europe, particularly to the industrial powerhouse of Germany, and the other imperialist centers, which will do everything they can to crush it. The dogma of building “socialism in one country” was a nationalist lie when put forward by Stalin/Bukharin as the “program” of the conservative bureaucracy that betrayed the internationalist program of the October Revolution. Today, following the collapse of Stalinist rule throughout East Europe under the economic pressure of imperialism, its bankruptcy must be clear to all.

The counterpart of “socialism in one country” in the USSR was the “popular front” abroad, binding the working class to supposedly “democratic” sectors of the bourgeoisie. This was used to head off workers revolution in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and the Italian *Resistenza*, and has blocked sharp class struggle ever since. Thus today the “Pole of the Progressives” led by the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) and Rifondazione Comunista (RC) is acting as a loyal parliamentary opposition to the right-wing government, trying to establish its credentials as an alternative leadership for the “strong state” the bourgeoisie seeks. The first thing that D’Alema did after replacing Occhetto at the head of the PDS was to totally surrender to the new government’s anti-worker program, saying “yes” to the sub-minimum “starting salary” for youth, “yes” to financing private education, “no” to defending jobs “to the end.”

Then there are the COBAS (Rank and File Committees), bringing together some of the most combative sections of the working class in strategic factories in the North. At Alfa Romeo, the COBAS even outvoted the candidates of the FIOM/CGIL leadership in union elections. Yet although during the March parliamentary elections Rifondazione Comunista dropped COBAS candidate Calini (an oppositionist inside RC) in order to further class collaboration, the COBAS still decided to vote for the coalition of the “Progressives”! These union opposi-

tion forces try to box in the workers’ struggles within the limits of militant syndicalism. But in this period of economic decay, every important demand of the working class inevitably goes beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and comes up against the bourgeois state. And thus the COBAS have no program, either electorally or through labor struggle, to fight the reformist misleaders. This made it possible for the CGIL Metal Workers federation to sign a sellout contract this year without even a token strike, for the first time since World War II.

To answer the provocations by this government pledged to war on the workers’ gains requires a revolutionary pro-



Anti-fascist partisans celebrate fall of Mussolini, April 1945. Stalinist PCI disarmed resistance fighters, quelling workers revolution.

gram. Berlusconi himself understands this well. In the uproar over the “conflict of interests” between his role as premier and his ownership of the three main private TV chains, he challenged the opposition to put up or shut up: “One way for me not to remain the owner of Fininvest would be to collectivize it, to expropriate it. If someone wants to, let them put this forward” (*La Repubblica*, 4 August)! But, of course, none of the leaders of the pusillanimous “progressive” left accepted the challenge, for like Berlusconi they are committed to privatization rather than collectivization, to defense of the interests of capital rather than defense of the workers.

It’s not that the will to fight is lacking among the working masses and youth. In June, tens of thousands demonstrated to protest attacks on public education, and over 50,000 health workers went into the streets to defend their contract. On July 2, some 10,000 demonstrated for gay pride, which should be a message to despots like the fascist Buscaroli, who campaigned for the European Union elections calling for concentration camps for gays. A few days earlier, on June 28, porters in the port of Genova went on strike, refusing to unload the *Achille Lauro* (infamous as the cruise liner where an elderly Jewish man was killed by Palestinian nationalists) when Fini and his fascist pals returned from a Mediterranean cruise in which they revisited the site of the El Alamein WW II battle.

But such combative anti-fascist and working-class actions do not have the support of, and are often actively opposed by, the PDS and RC leaders. Where the popular front tells workers to take thousands of layoffs in the name of “shared sacrifices,” a class-struggle leadership must put forward a program of transitional demands and slogans to transform defensive struggles into a proletarian offensive capable of smashing the right and leading the way to a workers government. Against the mass unemployment and attacks on the living standards of the working class, it’s necessary to defend every job and to fight not just to win back the *sliding scale of wages* (protection against inflation) but also to

institute a *sliding scale of hours*, to divide all available work with no loss in pay among those needing it, both Italian and immigrant.

This would also answer Berlusconi’s demagogic attempts to impose a lower starting wage for new hires. This is an open invitation for the employers to sack older workers who have a family to feed and have sweated for decades; it would be a way of driving out of the factories the unionized workers and particularly those militants who have played a leading role in workers’ struggles. But a concerted fight against this, raising such a program to unite the interests of young and old workers against capital, could bring hundreds of thousands into struggle

assaults on darker-skinned “foreigners,” Marxists call for *full citizenship rights for immigrants*. With the upsurge in irredentist demagogy, especially against Slovenia and Croatia over Istria, it is especially important to *defend autonomy for national minorities*, such as German-speakers in the South Tirol (Alto Adige) and Slavs in the Friuli-Giulia and Trieste areas. (The PCI was notorious for its chauvinist attitude toward Slavs in Trieste.) Genuine communists must also *mobilize against the foreign adventures of ragtag Italian imperialism*, in Somalia, Mozambique and now Rwanda.

As well, for a party that seeks to promote the participation and leadership of women in the class struggle and the fight for women’s liberation, it is urgent to fight for free abortion on demand, including for minors and immigrants; for quality free public health service for all; and for the *complete separation of church and state*—rip up the Lateran Treaties, no extraterritoriality for the Vatican, the Roman Catholic church should have the same democratic rights as all other religious institutions. The working class must take up the demands for full and free access to all public education, with adequate stipends for students. In short, it is necessary to put forward a program to guide social struggles of all the oppressed toward the fundamental question of proletarian power.

But the entire panorama of the Italian pseudo-left, from the PDS/RC reformists to the opposition inside Rifondazione Comunista led by the ostensible Trotskyists Maitan, Grisolia and Ferrando, limit themselves to a program of economism and are unable to put forward an alternative to class collaboration. The supporters of the “second motion” (against joining the “Pole of the Progressives”) at the January RC conference grouped around the magazine *Proposta* (edited by Grisolia and Ferrando) subsequently placed themselves to the right of sectors of the working class, saying it “would be an error” not to vote for the candidates of the popular front, including the openly bourgeois candidates.

The absence of a genuinely Bolshevik party in Italy has meant that the most militant working class in Europe has remained trapped in the false “alternatives” of class-collaborationist parliamentarism and militant syndicalism, which has no program for revolutionary political struggle against the bourgeoisie and its reformist labor lieutenants. The centrists and reformists of the second order disarm the working class and keep it tied to the popular front. What is necessary is to build a Leninist party which relentlessly fights for working-class political independence, seeking to split the base from the tops of the bourgeois workers parties, as part of the struggle for socialist revolution. The workers must be organized to fight for their own class rule—the dictatorship of the proletariat, which, as Marx said, in freeing itself frees society as a whole. The Lega Trotskista is dedicated to building such a party. ■

as the marches against the sub-minimum “youth wage” in France did this spring. In marches and strikes, the *organization of pickets and workers defense guards* can protect against cops and scabs and open the way to militant workers mobilizations to disperse the fascists.

The need for massive *working-class mobilizations to stop fascist terror* was sharply posed in Vicenza in May. The PDS and RC leadership were utterly indifferent, limiting themselves to verbal protests. When a number of *autonomo* (semi-anarchist) militants responded to the Nazi skinhead provocation, attacking the local offices of the MSI and denouncing the fascists in the government as the inspirers of the killer skinheads, RC president and “anti-fascist partisan” Armando Cossutta responded by denouncing the *autonomi*. We demand: *Hands off Autonomia Operaia and other anti-fascist militants!*

The defense of immigrant workers is a crucial issue for a revolutionary party acting as a tribune of the people in defending all victims of oppression. While the PDS and RC have even joined in the racist anti-immigrant furor, and are not to be seen in protests over fascist

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Resistenza operaia per schiacciare l'offensiva capitalista!

Non si ferma lo Stato forte con il fronte popolare!

FERMIAMO!

South Africa...

(continued from page 1)

We have written that the "ANC/De Klerk Deal Is Betrayal of Black Freedom" (WV No. 599, 29 April). The bloody reality of the "new" South Africa was brought home when, on October 24, a phalanx of police in Cape Town stormed a demonstration of 5,000 striking municipal workers outside the civic center, firing tear gas, rubber bullets and birdshot pointblank into the crowd. Some 60 strikers, members of the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) were injured, but ten police were also sent to the hospital as marchers fought back with their fists, stones and bottles.

While ANC members of parliament have protested the shooting and "investigations" have been launched into the Cape Town assault, this incident graphically shows that the structures of white supremacy are still intact. Like a page out of a Marxist textbook, these bloody incidents demonstrate how the nationalist "popular front" alliance of the ANC, COSATU and the reformist South African Communist Party (SACP) shackles the workers movement in the interest of the capitalist masters of neo-apartheid. There is no "power sharing" between the black toilers and a capitalist state defending the interests of the white Randlords. It is urgently necessary to break the COSATU/ANC/SACP class-collaborationist "alliance" and to forge a revolutionary workers party which can champion the cause of all the oppressed in a fight for workers revolution.

Truckers' Blockade

The fourth part of our series, "South Africa Powder Keg" (WV No. 606, 16 September) quoted the *Weekly Mail's* description of the August truck drivers' blockade as "a remarkable sign of worker solidarity, cutting across racial lines as black, white, Indian and coloured workers vented their frustrations jointly." This action, which mobilized the largely unorganized black truckers, was led by the militant "Turning Wheel International Workers' Movement," a split-off from the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU). As we go to press, Turning Wheel is mounting a "go slow" protest and refusal to work overtime in an effort to win an 8-hour day in the trucking industry. On November 3, the owners' association obtained a court order interdicting any "interference" with or "obstruction" of road traffic, and many drivers are being threatened with dismissal.

In a series of dramatic actions, beginning on August 22-24, some 2,000-3,000 truckers blockaded the main-N-3 highway at the Mooi River toll plaza in Natal. Their demands were for a big pay increase, an industrial bargaining council and reinstatement of fired drivers. The media screeched about the "highway siege" led by shadowy "revolutionaries" cutting off the "lifeline" to the cities. Trucks containing highly inflammable substances "sat like powder kegs on the

As striking Natal truck drivers blockaded key highway at Mooi River toll plaza on September 20, Mandela/De Klerk government called out cops and troops to break workers' protest.



Jodi Bieber



N-3 highway between Durban and Johannesburg," wrote the *Weekend Argus* (28 August). The blockade was lifted after an agreement with the trucking industry bosses, as the TGWU tops scrambled to climb on board.

Weeks later, charging the Motor Transport Owners association with bad faith in carrying out the Mooi River Accord, on September 19 the truckers again launched a blockade, this time blocking both the Johannesburg-Durban and Port Elizabeth-Cape Town routes. On September 20, cops and soldiers in troop carriers descended on the unarmed striking drivers at the Mooi River plaza and sealed them off. Using tear gas and rifle butts, placing pistols with silencers at the heads of sleeping drivers, they forced the workers to lift the blockade. At least one striker was shot, and a number of workers were arrested. A Turning Wheel press release angrily declared, "The Government of National Unity has shown its true colours. It is a government which sides with the rich against the poor. It is a bosses' government."

The truckers' bold actions ignited a redbaiting frenzy stretching from the government to the press to COSATU union bureaucrats. The *Sunday Tribune* (28 August) denounced "The Heavy Lefties" and declared, "Mooi River Blockade the Brainchild of Clandestine Extremists." The *Weekend Argus* vituperated about "Militant, ultra-Left Trotskyites—many with international revolutionary connections." Turning Wheel was "allegedly linked to the Workers List Party and the Workers Organisation for a Socialist South Africa [sic]." The paper "discovered" that "Ultra-leftists believe in the theory of 'permanent revolution' and would regard the ANC government as 'sellouts'."

We gave critical support to the Workers List Party (WLP) in the April elections, noting that it drew a crude class line and that a vote for it was seen in South Africa as a vote for a workers party rather than for the ANC. While the ANC/SACP have viciously redbaited the

WLP, its platform is nothing more than left-reformist. It did not call for socialist revolution, or even clearly state opposition to the ANC. The Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), the centrist organization which initiated the WLP, projects a broad Labourite party embracing "all pro-worker, pro-democracy, and pro-socialism forces."

Meanwhile, COSATU bureaucrats called the truckers' demands "selfish" and warned of "agents provocateurs." TGWU national organizer Thulani Dlamini reportedly charged that the blockade was "linked to a revolutionary party that aimed to bring down the government" and "undermine the Reconstruction and Development Programme." Nonetheless, support for the action at the base of the trade-union movement was palpable. Even COSATU's *Shopsteward* (October/November 1994) reported favorably on the August action, noting that Turning Wheel was formed as the official union "acknowledged certain organizational weaknesses" in addressing the needs of long-distance truck drivers and their grievances.

Turning Wheel leader Richard Madime said, "Maybe what angers our detractors is that we are aligned to the Workers List Party—which is seen as 'communist inspired.' If that is what they are beefing about, tough luck. We have a right to exist just like all other unions" (*Sowetan*, 23 September). The government repression of the truckers is a blow against the entire South African union movement. What's posed is the need to mobilize all of labor—including, in particular, fighting within the unions in COSATU to break the straitjacket tying them to the ANC—to support the truckers and other strikers against the bosses and their government.

Break the ANC/COSATU/SACP Alliance!

At the COSATU Congress in early September, Nelson Mandela told the workers to ease up on strikes, because they are frightening foreign investors. "Tighten your belts," he told them. Black workers don't have belts to tighten, one worker retorted. COSATU president John Gomomo criticized the line coming from the media and the government which denounces the union federation as "a labour elite, a small, well-paid group of workers protecting our interests against the millions of unemployed and rural poor." Gomomo responded, "Tell that to our unemployed families in the townships and villages, with whom we share our meagre wage packets" (*Weekend Star*, 10 September).

While Mandela escaped the wrath of angry workers at the Congress, sparks flew against Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel. COSATU general secretary Sam Shilowa launched a blistering attack on Manuel for being "provocative, contemptuous, a destroyer of jobs, a union-basher and a strike-breaker"

(*Financial Mail*, 9 September). On Friday, September 2, Manuel announced that import duties would be cut by 20 percent. This was a major blow to the four-week-old auto strike, greatly strengthening the hand of the employers. NUMSA and COSATU denounced the move, but by Monday the strike had folded.

Everyone saw behind the government's action the spectre of plant closures. And as COSATU deputy president Connie September said, "When you close down a plant in the motor industry, you close down a township." In fact, slashing tariffs could put the entire auto industry in jeopardy, given the relatively higher pay of South African auto workers—won through sharp class battles—compared to Thai or Brazilian workers, for instance. Indeed, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the ANC is prepared to deliberately sacrifice this industry in order to get rid of the most radical, combative and strategic union in South Africa. Already NUMSA has seen its membership plummet from 275,000 to 170,000, and its leaders such as SACP Central Committee member Moses Mayekiso have been co-opted into parliament or the government.

At the Congress, and for the last few months, there has been constant debate over the ANC/SACP/COSATU "triple alliance." The *Weekly Mail* (14 October) recently discussed deep-going rifts within the ANC itself, saying, "it is predicted that 'a lot of heads will roll'—mostly those of people seen as 'leftwingers,' including members of the South African Communist Party and former trade unionists." The right wing around Thabo Mbeki, loyal to the International Monetary Fund bankers' cartel, are reportedly prepared to purge even such conservative elements as Cyril Ramaphosa, who was promoted by Harry Oppenheimer and Anglo American to be head of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

Going into the COSATU Congress, *The Shopsteward* (August/September 1994) ran a special section, "The Alliance: What's in It for the Workers?" The editors argued the SACP line—that the unions must be centrally involved in the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in order to get the workers' "voice" heard. But it also reported NUMSA's position that formal coalition with the ANC government should be terminated, and the Workers List Party's call for breaking the alliance and building a "mass workers party." Disputes over the nationalist popular front may come to a head at COSATU's "conference on socialism and the RDP," finally being held as we go to press. While there is much talk of junking the ANC/SACP/COSATU alliance, this impulse toward class independence must be directed to forging a class-struggle leadership in the unions and a revolutionary workers party.

Contradictions of Neo-Apartheid

We have repeatedly stressed that the ANC-led nationalist movement could not achieve any semblance of "democracy" for the nonwhite masses while maintaining South African capitalism, which has always (long before the formal institution in 1948 of the apartheid system euphemistically known as "separate development") been based on the *super-exploitation of black labor*, centrally in the (increasingly depleted) gold mines, where this is the only way to realize any profit. This is the economic bedrock of white supremacy, and the fundamental reason why apartheid could not be reformed away through negotiations and elections: The impossible contradictions of the *neo-apartheid* system are nowhere so sharp as when it comes to the army and police, those "special bodies of armed men" (Engels) who constitute the heart of the capitalist state. In defending the present property system, they necessarily enforce the subjugation of the black majority.

A blow-up over "integration" of the

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former black guerrilla "armies" into the apartheid army has been brewing. Some 21,000 soldiers of the ANC armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation," or MK), and 6,000 Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) guerrillas are due to be assimilated into the "reformed" South African National Defence Force (SANDF) by 1996. Foot-dragging by the SANDF top brass over rank, salaries, housing and other issues for thousands of their former enemies sparked a mutiny of some 7,000 former guerrillas who were AWOL in mid-October, refusing to return to base. On November 7, ANC/SACP defense minister (and former MK commander) Joe Modise ordered dismissal of more than 2,200 soldiers who refused to return despite the intervention of Mandela.

The incongruity of trying to "integrate" black anti-apartheid activists into the army and police of their historic oppressors was brought home in an incident reported in the London *Independent* (1 November). An Afrikaner traffic policeman was only doing what came naturally when, riding down a busy Pretoria street on a Saturday night, he spotted a car double-parked outside a Kentucky Fried Chicken take-out restaurant. He stopped and rudely shouted at the black driver to "Remove the bloody car!" When the man complained there was no need for such rude behavior, the policeman grabbed the driver by the throat and packed him off to the police station. Only at the precinct did the white cop make the appalling discovery that his black victim was none other than Sydney Mufamadi, the minister of police!

In addition to brutal repression, white minority domination was maintained by the manipulation of racial, ethnic and tribal divisions. This legacy is ever-present, particularly from the bloody feuding pitting Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Zulu paramilitary Inkatha movement (armed and instigated by the apartheid authorities) against the ANC, whose leadership is heavily Xhosa. Buthelezi is currently home affairs (interior) minister in the Government of National Unity, from which position he has been leading a chauvinist campaign (also supported by the ANC leadership) against "illegal" immigrants. This has included placing electric fencing along the borders with Mozambique and Zimbabwe. But Buthelezi's hold on the rural Zulu population has been challenged by the ANC (already dominant in the urban townships around Durban), which has allied with the traditional Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini. This conflict blew up in late September, when Buthelezi and his armed entourage roughed up the king's man, Prince Sifiso Zulu, on a live SABC television broadcast.

Ethnic tensions have escalated particularly over the question of housing. On September 15, the townships west of Johannesburg exploded in demonstrations, strikes and running street battles with police as residents demanded lower rent and service charges and for their arrears to be wiped off the books. These were townships formerly designated as "coloured" (mixed-race) areas under the apartheid regime's Group Areas Act. Rent boycotts in black townships were a major tactic in the anti-apartheid struggle. For at least a decade, residents in Soweto and Sharpeville and scores of other townships have made no payments for rent or utilities, in protest against the miserable shacks with meager or no water and electricity services to which apartheid rule consigned black people. Now, under the Mandela regime, they're still living in the shacks, but the ANC, rather than leading the protests, is trying to get the rent paid.

Joe Slovo, head of the South African Communist Party, is now the minister of housing, from which position he has been vituperating about "ending the culture of non-payment." The government, in agreement with the banks, has already agreed to write off debts in black townships like Soweto. So residents in the "coloured" townships were simply de-

manding the same. When the provincial housing minister, after condemning the protests, agreed to scrap rent arrears in black, coloured and Indian townships, Slovo went ballistic, warning that people who boycott rent or mortgage payments would be evicted from their homes. The *Weekly Mail* (21 October) headlined, "Slovo, the Boycott-Buster" and asked, "Can He Win?"

The battle over the boycotters has exacerbated ethnic tensions. Provincial premier Tokyo Sexwale tore into coloured community organizers, saying their rent protests were an excuse for "racism" and that he wanted to "vomit" when "others try to use (our) legitimate grievances" (*Cape Times*, 19 September). The coloured townships resounded



Jacobus Ryliff
Johannesburg family left homeless after their shantytown was razed, as ANC government housing minister, Communist Party head Joe Slovo, oversees eviction of township squatters.

in a justified cold fury against these obscene remarks. A letter to the editor from coloured residents in Coronationville noted:

"Our children also burnt the flag and were detained without trial. Many still bear the scars of those turbulent years.... "It is disturbing that our actions should cause you to vomit when we are only following (mildly) the precedent you have set for many years.... "We did not vomit when we voted you into power, knowing there would be no instant solutions, but you promised equality for all, except it seems us (the shadow people)."

—Johannesburg Citizen
(28 September)

As tensions mounted, the government backed down and agreed to scrap the demand for payment of arrears in the townships.

The coloured townships in the Witwatersrand voted for the ANC, but in the Western Cape province, including Cape Town, the country's second-largest city and site of the national parliament, the ANC lost badly to De Klerk's National Party because the coloured population voted for the Nats. An article in the *New York Review of Books* (20 October) by William Finnegan probes the reasons underlying this major defeat for the ANC. In the election, the party of violent, racist Afrikaner nationalism which had ruled the country since 1948 became, according to its own publicity, a party of "liberal reformers." At the same time, the Nats launched a smear campaign against the ANC, stressing its traditional theme of the "black peril" (*swartgevaar*), but this time appealing to the coloureds' rather than whites' fear of black Africans.

At the same time, Finnegan writes, the ANC made a number of "serious political mistakes." Thus, many coloureds in the 1980s joined the United Democratic Front (UDF), which they saw as a broad umbrella organization generally supportive of the ANC. They were upset when the ANC leadership summarily dissolved the UDF without consulting its constituent groups, as if it were merely an ANC front. But the most important factor was the flood of new black African arrivals in the Western Cape, spurred

by repeal of the pass laws in 1986. Cape Town's black population more than tripled between 1982 and 1992. Many in the Afrikaans-speaking coloured population, who had been given precedence over blacks in employment and housing under apartheid laws, felt threatened. While the ANC did nothing to reassure them, and Xhosa tribalists like Winnie Mandela whipped up tensions with the relatively conservative coloured community, at bottom what is going on is a sharp competition for scarce resources in capitalist South Africa.

The ANC was perceived as an organization dedicated to advancing the black African population, and so long as the struggle is confined to the limits of capitalism—which means grinding poverty

and "ethnic cleansing" until the national framework is transcended and the enormous wealth, land and resources of South Africa are taken from the white capitalist ruling class.

The way out of this cruel dilemma can only be through building an integrated Bolshevik workers party that fights for a workers revolution centered on the black majority. Its ranks and leaders must be drawn from throughout the multiracial and ethnically diverse South African society, including those whites who are prepared to live in a black-centered workers republic based on genuine equality and integration. And despite the treachery of the SACP, whose leaders now hold key ministries of the capitalist state, South Africa is one of the few places in the world today where the workers and poor identify with the goal of communism. But the struggle cannot be limited to a narrow national framework or it will be defeated. South Africa is the industrial powerhouse of the continent, and indeed many of those who toil in the hellish mines producing its wealth are "foreigners." It is only by aiding the famine- and poverty-stricken masses throughout Africa to build up their own production that a workers South Africa can cease to act as a besieged fortress.

Above all, particularly in this epoch of "globalization," a socialist revolution must be extended to the imperialist centers and their other "production sites." The government's slashing of tariffs during the recent auto strike underscores not only the role of the new ANC rulers but also the futility of limiting the workers' struggles to the national terrain. And Western imperialists would respond to workers revolution in South Africa with military intervention and economic blockade, just as they did to the Russian Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. To defeat the inevitable imperialist onslaught would require mobilizing the working masses in North America and West Europe.

The internationalism symbolized by South African miners' aid to their British class brothers and sisters during the 1984-85 British coal strike is what is needed to win against the tremendous power of international capital. And this solidarity must go in the other direction as well: it is the duty of American and European workers to come to the aid of their South African comrades in struggle. So long as the workers are pulling the cart of nationalism, they cannot achieve *amandla* (freedom). ANC Ltd. will not be their liberators. The South African workers revolution shall inscribe on its red banners: *those who labor must rule.* ■

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Correspondence for:

Spartacist League of Australia	Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473 Sydney, NSW, 2001, Australia
Spartacist League/Britain	Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041 London NW5 3EU, England
Trotskyist League of Canada/ Ligue trotskyste du Canada	Trotskyist League, Box 7198, Station A Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1X8, Canada
Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands	SpAD, Postfach 5 55 10127 Berlin, Germany
Ligue trotskyste de France	Le Bolchévik, BP 135-10 75463 Paris Cedex 10, France
Spartacist Group India/Lanka	write to Spartacist, New York
Dublin Spartacist Group	PO Box 2944, Dublin 1 Republic of Ireland
Lega trotskista d'Italia	Walter Fidacaro C.P. 1591, 20101 Milano, Italy
Spartacist Group Japan	Spartacist Group Japan PO Box 49, Akabane Yubinkyoku Kita-ku, Tokyo 115, Japan
Grupo Espartaquista de México	P. Linares, Apdo. Postal 453 06002 México 1, D.F., Mexico
Spartakusowska Grupa Polski	Platforma Spartakusowców Skrytka Poczтовая 148 02-588 Warszawa 48, Poland
Spartacist League/U.S.	Spartacist League, Box 1377 GPO New York, NY 10116, USA
Spartacist/Moscow	121019 Moscow g-19 A/Ya 19, Russia

Prop 187...

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body at some schools could be summarily expelled as "illegals" for the "crime" of struggling to get an education in the decaying California schools. The protests have included organized rallies and marches initiated by high school MEChA chapters and other student groups, but more often they have been spontaneous walkouts. At one school after another, students have scrambled over gates locked by administrators, unfurled Mexican or Salvadoran flags and marched chanting to nearby schools to rally support. L.A. students carried signs reading, "No to 187, No to Ethnic Cleansing!" while a San Diego march featured signs that read, "Nazis Out of Office!" and "Governor Adolf Wilson?"

On November 7, just one day before the vote on Prop. 187, garment workers from a dozen shops joined with students and others in a midday demonstration of up to 2,000 at L.A. City Hall. The Latin American Truckers Association (LATA) tied up traffic at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, cutting the number of truckloads by a third to a half. Later, a 70-strong convoy barreled down the freeways, their air horns blaring, and circled City Hall. The *troqueros* festooned their cabs with signs reading (in Spanish), "No on Prop 187!" "For Workers Unity!" and "The Working Class Has No Borders!" Addressing the protesters, one trucker vowed that LATA will shut down the port of Los Angeles if Prop. 187 passes.

This is a small taste of the labor action that's needed to combat the anti-immigrant backlash in California. Whatever the outcome at the polls, the racist onslaught against immigrants won't go away. While calling to vote "no" on Prop. 187, we emphasized the need to "Mobilize California Labor to Smash Anti-Immigrant Racism!" (WV No. 608, 14 October). It is necessary to overcome the ruling class' efforts to "divide and rule," and to break with the capitalist parties to which the labor bureaucracy chains the unions. The Democrats, from Clinton to Kathleen Brown, as well as right-wing Republicans like Pete Wilson, are enemies of minorities and labor. And for the past two years there has been a *hipartisan* campaign of immigrant-bashing.

As we go to press, California goes to the polls under threat of police-state measures against anti-Prop. 187 protests. The notorious racists of the LAPD are on "tactical alert," and Chief Willie Williams has ordered a "maximum deployment" of forces. The California National Guard has activated its units throughout the state to be "ready" for election day. With SWAT teams and red-white-and-blue bunting, this jingoist U.S. election day looks rather like the typical gunpoint "democracy" of less stable regimes south of the border. Yet despite these tactics and the threat of firings, hundreds of undocumented garment workers walked out of the sweatshops today to join protests against Prop. 187. These gutsy workers produce millions in profits (and taxes!), yet are deprived of the elementary right to vote. They certainly can't win through the ballot box but only through class struggle, united with other sectors of the multiethnic working class.

Break with the Democrats!

With racist pro-187 organizers baiting the majority Latino student demonstrators as "un-American" and "violent," Democratic politicians like L.A. County supervisor Gloria Molina and City Councilman Richard Alatorre scolded students for "alienating voters" and urged them to go door-to-door for the Democrats instead of walking out of school. As politicians on both sides shed crocodile tears about students missing class, they give the green light to the cops to attack protesters. A Belmont High organizer said: "The students have been beaten, batonned, stepped on and

pepper-sprayed." But the protests continue to spread. On October 29, several hundred students who marched to the Van Nuys Civic Center were met by an LAPD SWAT team and scores of riot cops armed with shotguns, who roughed up protesters and then herded them onto buses. On November 2, a dozen students in Compton were arrested for "inciting a riot." In Moreno Valley, the school board ordered police to conduct a "truancy sweep" of neighborhoods and malls, detaining 180 youths.

The provisions of Prop. 187 would attempt to make teachers act as finks for the hated *migra* immigration cops. Over 1,000 teachers in the L.A. Unified School District have already signed a pledge refusing to finger students if Prop. 187 passes, and teachers have par-



A 70-truck convoy of Latino truckers formed up at the Port of Los Angeles, November 7. Sign on cab reads: "Long Live the Immigrant Workers' Struggle—United Against Racism and Discrimination."

ticipated in many of the protests with signs reading, "I don't want to be an agent for the INS!" But instead of joining with the student protests, the UTLA union tops have ordered teachers "not to involve yourself in any way with organizing a student walkout." To mobilize the union, a struggle must be waged to dump the bureaucracy which seeks to divert the outrage over this racist referendum into support for the Democratic Party.

The October 16 anti-Prop. 187 demonstration brought out over 80,000 largely Latino workers, as well as Asian, black and white people, and included contingents from key unions like SEIU Locals 660 (county workers) and 399 (Kaiser Hospitals and "Justice for Janitors"), ILGWU (garment workers) and HERE 11 (hotel workers). But politically, the rally featured scores of Democratic speakers, a former INS district director, and former right-wing Republican gubernatorial candidate Ron Unz. United Farm Workers union leader Dolores Huerta led chants of "Viva Kathleen Brown!" from the podium. Reformist groups, including the Workers World Party and Socialist Workers Party, have gone all out doing donkey work for the coalition endorsed by L.A. County sheriff Sherman Block, whose deputies terrorize and murder minorities and beat protesting students.

The California bourgeoisie, aware that the proletarian and plebeian masses are seething, is always trying to divide the population along racial and ethnic lines (including trying to line up "legal" immigrants against newer arrivals). The multiethnic upheaval that L.A. experienced following the 1992 acquittal of the cops who brutally beat black motorist Rodney King sent shivers down the bourgeoisie's back. And when it comes to racist immigrant-bashing, the Democrats are every bit as venal as the Republicans who overtly campaign for a whiter America. The Democrats oppose Prop. 187 as *not tough enough* on illegal immigration. California Democratic Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein both support the militarization of the

Mexican border, and Feinstein says she opposes Prop. 187 because it "makes no provision whatsoever to deport illegal aliens and reduce their number!"

While Republican governor Wilson hopes to ride a tide of anti-immigrant racism back to the governor's mansion and threatens to institute an apartheid-style pass system, his Democratic opponent Kathleen Brown revved up her flagging campaign by bringing the nation's chief immigrant-bashers, President Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno, to California to hype "Operation Gatekeeper"—which threw a line of Border Patrol cops behind a 12-foot-high metal fence along the San Diego border area. And the "official" racism emanating from the Republicrats has emboldened murderous racist youth gangs in rural

mented, it could throw over 100,000 students out of L.A.-area schools, more than 400,000 statewide. For immigrant workers, the obstacles to struggle are much greater, from the constant threat of *migra* raids to the opposition of their own union leaderships which are tied to the anti-immigrant Democratic Party. A class-struggle opposition must be forged in struggle against these sellouts, to defend the unions against the cops and courts of the capitalist state. In addition to the predominantly Latino service industry unions, the heavy battalions of labor in longshore and the Teamsters, which have a growing Latino component, must join the fight.

Since Prop. 187 is widely understood to be directed against Mexicans and Central Americans, Mexican and Salvadoran flags have been prominent in the anti-Prop. 187 demonstrations as a sign of pride in the face of the racist anti-immigrant frenzy. But the dominant theme has been anti-racist rather than nationalist. At the November 7 City Hall protest, some Chicano nationalist "Brown Berets" initially tried to block a Spartacus Youth Club member from speaking on the grounds that "This is a Latino struggle." This narrow-minded sectoralism was quickly squelched by youthful demonstrators who countered, "Bullshit! This is blacks and whites and everyone together against 187 and racism!" Later a Spartacist League spokesman addressed the crowd calling for integrated class struggle against the Democrats and Republicans. Representatives of Progressive Labor (who helped mobilize the garment workers) and the Revolutionary Communist Party also spoke.

Other organizations have pushed demonstrators to carry American flags—the symbol of U.S. imperialist oppression around the globe! Yesterday, however, American flags on the steps of City Hall appeared *upside down*—to the chagrin of those who wish to harness this wave of protest to the Democratic Party. Prop. 187 has sparked angry demonstrations of thousands in Mexico City as well as in border cities from Tijuana to Reynosa, posing the immediate possibility of struggle that spans the border. But the ruling PRI and populist PRD opposition parties seek to channel this anger into a Mexican nationalist campaign of empty gestures. What's needed is *internationalist* working-class struggle, linking the fight for immigrant rights here to the fight for workers revolution throughout the Americas.

While the student protesters have been mostly Latino, the walkouts and rallies have included some black, white and Asian students and workers. One Japanese American anti-187 organizer noted, "I worry that the kind of anti-ethnic hysteria driving 187 is akin to the anti-ethnic hysteria that swept the country after Pearl Harbor" (*New York Times*, 1 November). Recognizing that anti-immigrant racism and a strengthening of cop repression means increased racist terror against blacks first and foremost, black organizations such as the Urban League and the L.A. branch of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference have also been actively opposing Prop. 187.

The Spartacus Youth Club has participated in the anti-187 demonstrations, raising our class-struggle program. When Kathleen Brown appeared recently at UCLA, SYC members raised a banner outside the event reading, "No to Proposition 187! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Break with the Racist Democrats and Republicans! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!" At a rally called by "The Student Movement" in L.A.'s Elysian Park, SYC supporter James Fitzgerald said: "This racism isn't going to be defeated at the ballot box! The only way we're going to destroy this racism is by breaking with the Democrats, by breaking with the Republicans. The only way we're going to destroy this blatant and flagrant racism of the bourgeois ruling class is through a unified class struggle!" ■

San Diego county to run nighttime raids on camps of undocumented farm workers in the area.

Students: Ally with Labor!

What is urgently posed is the need for united class struggle to defend immigrant rights. Students need to ally with the militant, heavily Latino L.A.-area unions and others who stand against Prop. 187, such as health workers, teachers and the California Labor Federation. In San Jose on November 4, an anti-Prop. 187 rally and march initiated by SEIU Local 1877 ("Justice for Janitors") and other unions turned out 5,000 demonstrators, including 500 high school students who walked out to join the protest. But in L.A., SEIU Local 399 has focused its energies on "getting out the vote." The rights of *all* immigrants and minorities are under attack, and labor has the muscle to turn the spirited student protests into a broader working-class offensive to smash the bourgeoisie's war on immigrants.

The Reaganite politicians and California's agribusiness billionaires literally amassed their riches off the sweat of immigrant labor in the fields. They needed cheap labor and they got it. Now, with California's economy in depression, "illegal" immigrants are being scapegoated, just as they were in the 1930s and '50s. But the difference now is that Latino immigrants work not only as migrant farm laborers at the mercy of the growers but in many other industries as well. In the last decade, Mexican and Central American workers have engaged in militant, somewhat successful union organizing in Southern California. These include the Local 399 janitors which organized the Century City complex, drywall and other construction workers, hotel workers and independent truckers.

While the ruling class has put up with some boisterous youth protests, they are very vigilant about repressing attempts to organize labor struggles which might affect the source of their profits. But the Prop. 187 threat affects the entire Latino population, not just the most directly targeted students. If passed and imple-

News Strike...

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focus to the Army Street plant in San Francisco. SF mayor (and former city police chief) Frank Jordan has his cops out in full force gooning for the newspaper bosses. All leave for the SFPD has been canceled. Early in the strike, four Muni buses full of riot cops were deployed at the Army Street plant, where picketers have been penned in with police barricades. A court order, which union tops already pledged to honor before the strike, limits pickets to four, who are supposed to stay 10-20 feet away from the plant entrance.

Cops single out union spokesmen—a union rep who works in the plate room at Army Street was handcuffed and thrown in a paddy wagon while attempting to retrieve picket signs from his car. More than a dozen strikers have been arrested, including four on felony charges. Yet the union bureaucrats lecture strikers that “if the cops tell you to move, then move, and remember they are on our side.” Like hell! The cops are the armed fist of the capitalist state and they exist to guard the bosses’ property and profits against the workers.

Sock 'Em with the Muscle of Bay Area Labor!

This is class war, and for labor to prevail means going up against the press barons, their mayor, their cops, their strikebreaking thugs, their judges, their anti-labor laws. To do that requires bringing to bear the muscle of Bay Area organized labor in mass picket lines that no scab would dare to cross, to “hot-cargo” (refuse to handle) newsprint and ink headed for the struck newspapers, to stop the printing and distribution of any scab papers. Labor’s power is there for the asking—mobilizing it is a question of leadership.

When the strike deadline passed at midnight on October 31, the union tops still kept workers on the job. But workers got the jump hours earlier when rallying outside the newspaper offices in downtown SF. Longshoremen brought word that newsprint was being unloaded at Pier 27. Pressmen, Teamsters and other unionists quickly set up a picket line at the pier, and members of International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU) Local 10 stopped working the ship. When the strike was delayed and the lines came down, however, the rest of the cargo was offloaded to the warehouse. Labor must see to it that not one roll of newsprint leaves the harbor.

Union workers on garbage trucks, utility service vehicles and city buses honk their horns in solidarity as they pass the picket lines. Workers across the city understand that this is their fight. Hotel and Restaurant Local 2 is currently on strike at the fancy Mark Hopkins Hotel. Just a month ago, BART workers were in open rebellion, as their union misleaders colluded with BART management to ram a sellout contract down their throats. Muni public transit drivers are in negotiations with a city government—from SF mayor Jordan to the “liberal” Board of Supervisors—that wants to drive down their wages and conditions.

The Army Street printing plant is within easy reach of tens of thousands of organized workers: SF airport workers and Machinists from the United Airlines maintenance base, longshoremen, transit workers, Teamster truckers, city and hospital workers. A mass picket that seals off the plant and terminates their scab paper would be greeted with enthusiasm by the Bay Area working class. What stands in the way of organizing the power of labor in San Francisco—which has been known as a strong union town since the 1934 SF General Strike which smashed employer strikebreaking and murderous cop assaults against longshore picket lines—are the labor misleaders.

A field representative of the AFL-CIO from Washington who runs newspaper

strikes, George Curtin, was quoted saying, “If unions are busted in San Francisco, it will send a message across this country that even in a strong union town, you can bust your unions.” That’s right. Yet over the last year, the union tops of the Conference of Newspaper Unions (CNU), with the direct intervention of the AFL-CIO’s “Strategic Approaches Committee,” gave the newspaper bosses the high ground before labor’s troops were even allowed to enter the battle.

While keeping newspaper workers chained to the job without a contract, the CNU criminally allowed management all the time they needed to prepare their strikebreaking. Offices and printing plants have been turned into armed camps complete with barbed wire, video cameras and legions of security guards. Just before the strike deadline, nearly 200 Huffmaster Security thugs were flown in from Detroit.

The union bureaucrats allowed these professional scabherders to move into the 5th and Mission editorial offices and the SFNA’s three printing plants. Months ago, they allowed management to pressure pressmen to withdraw from the union. CNU union officials have tried in every way to deflect strike sentiment with scare tactics, retailing company threats that one of the papers might buy out the other or go under, and that half the workforce would be laid off.

Now they appeal to the “good graces” of Mayor Jordan—whose cops are mobilized in full force—to operate as the “mediator” in meaningless negotiations. They use the death of striker Kent Wilson to preach for “peace” on the picket lines and “compromise” with the bosses, whose strikebreaking tactics led to the death of this union militant. But Wilson died desperately fighting the scab distribution that the union tops should have cut off at the source—the printing plants.

What is needed to win this strike is a leadership with the determination to fight, armed with a political understanding of what that takes. The CNU and AFL-CIO union bureaucrats, who are lying prostrate before the press bosses, their strikebreakers and the government’s union-busting laws, are leading the strike down the tubes. There is no shortage of courage, determination and militancy on the part of the strikers. But the treacherous union tops fear this militancy and are deliberately dispersing the strike forces all over the Bay Area. What is vital at this point is to stop the printing and distribution of the scab rag. Right now that means concentrating forces at the Army Street printing and distribution plant. The striking SF newspaper unions should hold a mass meeting to elect a strike committee of those militants who want to fight back and win!

For Class-Struggle Leadership of the Labor Movement!

Jack Henning of the state AFL-CIO and SF Labor Council head Walter John-



Line of cops protects scab trucks at Evans Street Chronicle plant.

Honor Kent Wilson—Labor Martyr

SAN FRANCISCO—The vicious union-busting drive by the SF newspaper bosses has claimed its first victim. Forty-five-year-old Kent Wilson, a newspaper driver for 23 years and a member of Teamsters Local 921, was killed defending his union on the picket line.

At 1:30 a.m. on Sunday, November 6, during heavy rains, strike pickets from the Conference of Newspaper Unions confronted scabs delivering papers to a distribution center in Mountain View, about 35 miles south of San Francisco. During the confrontation, Wilson was hit with a high-voltage shock from a power transformer in what police say was

an attempt to cut power to the building. He is survived by his wife, Carol. His father was a union distributor for 40 years.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Kent Wilson’s family and his union brothers and sisters. We share their outrage against the arrogant media barons who trample on the working people whose labor created their wealth. Kent Wilson died in the line of duty, courageously fighting as best he could to thwart the strikebreakers and their criminal plans. Mobilize the power of Bay Area labor to shut the scab papers down tight! Honor the memory of Kent Wilson, labor martyr!

son—the darlings of the reformist left—mouth empty “solidarity” slogans while not lifting a finger to mobilize Bay Area labor on the picket lines. The “corporate campaign” and consumer boycott being pushed by the union tops are impotent and dangerous diversions. So far it has meant collecting pledges to cancel subscriptions, while begging big corporations to withhold advertising.

While the union tops tout the pulling of advertising by some major retailers like Macy’s, this is only because militants on the picket lines have cut into circulation by going after the scabs. If there were no scab paper, there would be no place to advertise! Now, at the height of the holiday advertising season, the unions should shut down the San Jose *Mercury News* as well! The union-produced *San Francisco Free Press* must be turned into a daily strike paper. Instead of a sheet promoting the fortunes of the Democratic Party’s candidates in the November 8 elections, it should be an organizing tool for winning the strike—with no capitalist advertising!

It’s not just that the union bureaucrats are incompetent; the problem is political—they are in bed with the capitalist class. They aim to “mediate” the conflict between capital and labor in order to maintain the status quo. But today, with the ruling class on a drive to slash wages and boost “productivity” over the body of organized labor, “mediating” means helping to drive down the living standards of the workers. From knifing the PATCO and Greyhound strikes in the ’80s to today, the bureaucracy acts as labor cops for the companies. The consequence has been a 20 percent drop in real wages and a decline in unionization to less than 16 percent of the workforce.

The SF newspaper strike takes place in the context of large protests of high school and college students as well as unions against the viciously anti-immigrant Proposition 187—which

would deny education, welfare and health care to “illegal” immigrants. On November 7, a two-mile-long convoy of Latino truck drivers in Los Angeles—with signs reading “No on Prop. 187,” “For Workers Unity” and “The Working Class Has No Borders”—shut off much of the traffic at the L.A.-Long Beach ports. Worried about a repeat of the multiracial explosion that erupted after the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King, the National Guard has been put on alert to put down any opposition if Prop. 187 passes.

Union-busting and anti-immigrant racism go hand in hand. It’s all part of the racist, strikebreaking rulers’ game of keeping those at the bottom divided and pitted against each other. To win, labor must champion the rights of all the oppressed. The anti-immigrant racism pushed by both Republicans and Democrats is aimed at poisoning and defeating working-class struggle. A fighting alliance must be forged with black, Latino and Asian workers to counteract the bosses’ cynical attempts to pit unemployed minority workers against the newspaper unions (particularly in the historically job-trusting printing trades). A class-conscious labor movement would fight to create jobs through a shorter workweek with no loss in pay—and for union-run, minority recruitment and training programs at full union scale and at the bosses’ expense. Make the unions one united fist—for one industrial union in the printing industry! Organize the unorganized!

The union tops have preached reliance on the capitalist state and appeals to so-called “friends of labor” in the Democratic Party—like Kathleen Brown, Democratic candidate for governor. Brown showed up at the newspaper picket lines to pronounce herself “solid with the workers”—and tell them to keep the peace, while scabberding police break their strike. Meanwhile, Brown and Democratic Senators Feinstein and Boxer are competing with labor-hating Republican Pete Wilson in immigrant-bashing, calling for militarizing the border with Mexico. Now the newspaper unions’ *Free Press* (7 November) has endorsed Brown.

The labor bureaucracy are the agents of capitalist rule. That’s why they can’t and won’t fight for the working class. Instead, they seek to tie labor to their exploiters through support to the Democratic Party. The workers need their own party, one which will fight for their interests and the interests of all the oppressed. Working people created all the wealth of this country. To claim the fruits of their labor and employ them to benefit the majority of this society, rather than for the profits of the few, requires breaking the power of the capitalist rulers. The multiracial working class has the numbers and the social power to do this. What’s needed is a leadership that will fight as a tribune of all the oppressed, organizing the power of labor in its own interests and for its own rule through socialist revolution. ■

WV Photo

California: Explosive Protests Over Anti-Immigrant Prop 187

LOS ANGELES, November 8—Nearly every day for the last three weeks, thousands of college, high school and junior high students have streamed out of Southern California schools and campuses in militant walkouts and marches against the racist, anti-immigrant Proposition 187. This reactionary ballot initiative, which is being voted on in today's California elections, would deprive "illegal" immigrants of government social services, including medical care and education. The largest student protests to date took place on November 2, as over 10,000 from L.A., particularly the San Fernando Valley, as well as students in San Diego and the Bay Area took to the streets, braving massive police mobilizations as well as disciplinary action by school administrations. And now local rulers are getting nervous, carrying out a citywide police alert in L.A. in response to a march by garment workers and a convoy by Latino truckers against Prop. 187.

Latino, Asian, black and other high school and college students are outraged by the threat of Prop. 187. If it passes, up to 60 percent of the student
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Los Angeles: Up to 2,000 high school and junior high students and garment workers marched to City Hall on November 7 to protest racist Prop. 187. WV Photo

Mobilize S.F. Labor to Win the Newspaper Strike!

For Mass Pickets to Shut Down Chronicle/Examiner!

SAN FRANCISCO, November 7—The 2,600 newspaper workers who produce and distribute the only two major dailies in this city went on strike November 1 to defend their livelihoods against a calculated union-busting assault. The rich and arrogant owners—the Hearsts of the afternoon *Examiner* and the Thieriot/DeYoung families who own the morning *Chronicle*—have invested heavily in strikebreaking preparations and are trying to put out scab rags under the protection of out-of-town rent-a-thugs and cops. Already, one striker, Kent Wilson, a 45-year-old Teamster driver, has died in the fight to save his union (see box, page 11).

The employers have targeted especially the delivery drivers of Teamsters Local 921 with plans to slash 150 to 200 jobs. They want to introduce part-time work, low wages and benefits, speed up drivers with multiple duties, and fire hundreds of youth carriers who work with the Teamsters. In short, it's an out-

and-out case of union-busting. The press barons brought in the notorious Tennessee firm of King and Ballou, who ran strikebreaking operations for the Tribune company at the New York *Daily News* during a hard-fought strike in 1990-91. The same bosses used similar tactics in 1986 to smash a strike by craft unions at the *Chicago Tribune*.

This strike is a showdown battle for the working class in the Bay Area and nationally. After a year of being kept on the job without a contract, the newspaper workers were itching to fight back. At the main printing plant for the *Chronicle*, across the bay in Union City, unionists took care of business the night the strike finally began. Outnumbered cops were unable to protect the scab trucks. The next morning, the president of the San Francisco Newspaper Agency (SFNA), which puts out the two papers in a joint operating agreement, whined that his scabs were injured and their cars damaged.



Workers picketing *Chronicle/Examiner* editorial offices as November 1 strike deadline expired. WV Photo

Reportedly, transmission lines to the Union City plant are down, and striking unions are calling on the Communications Workers repairmen not to cross their lines. As one veteran of some tough newspaper strikes put it, winning a strike is more than waving around a picket sign—you have to take the scabs and

"throw them overboard." What's needed is to mobilize the full power of Bay Area unions in mass pickets to shut the papers down!

Having difficulty getting the scab sheets out at Union City and the smaller Richmond plant, the bosses shifted their

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