

## U.S.-Sponsored "Peace" Fraud Means Zionist Terror

# Israel Out of All Occupied Territories!

**Defend the  
Palestinian People!**

**For a Socialist  
Federation of  
the Near East!**

SEPTEMBER 15—The events directly preceding U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's trip to Israel are a stark reminder that the Near East remains a powder keg for nationalist slaughter and all-out war. For six weeks now, the Zionist rulers have subjected the Palestinian population of the Occupied Territories to a starvation blockade, confining residents to their towns and villages, preventing workers from going to their jobs, cutting off supplies of food and other necessities. At the same time, Israel has escalated air and artillery bombardment and murderous commando raids against southern Lebanon. And last month, the right-wing government of Likud prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans to construct a dam on land claimed by neighboring Syria.

Clinton sent his emissary to the Near East in the hope of reviving the fraudulent U.S.-sponsored "peace process" between Israel and Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority. While politely pleading with Netanyahu to be less provocative toward his Palestinian "peace partner," Albright arrogantly ordered Arafat to be more "relentless" in cracking down on Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other "terrorists." In fact, Arafat ordered a police sweep against alleged Hamas supporters on the eve of Albright's visit, and last year more than 900 were rounded up in a mass dragnet.

While the Clinton White House is far from happy with the current Israeli regime, whose flagrantly provocative actions have antagonized even such pliant U.S. client regimes as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Washington continues to funnel billions in arms and aid to the Zionist state. As the London *Independent* (24 June) recently documented, the bombs and missiles used in Israel's "Operation Grapes of Wrath" last year to bombard southern Lebanon and drive one-third of the country's people from their homes were almost all supplied by the Pentagon. Meanwhile, a CIA representative serves as "mediator" for "security" collaboration between Israel and Arafat's forces targeting Palestinian dissidents. We say: *Down with the bloody anti-Palestinian "Pax Ameri-*



Reuters

Israeli troops unleashed against Palestinian protesters in occupied West Bank.

*cana*—U.S. imperialist hands off the Near East!

At the time the agreement was signed on the White House lawn in 1993, numerous liberals and reformists echoed Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in hailing the Israel-PLO accord as a step toward Palestinian national liberation. In contrast, the International Communist League denounced this oppressor's "peace," which did "not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination" and instead placed "the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" ("Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto," WV No. 583, 10 September 1993).

### Arafat Fronts for Zionist Repression

In recent years, Arab areas of Gaza and the West Bank have been under an effec-

tively continual state of siege even when they are not formally sealed off. The latest closure, imposed as "collective punishment" for an Islamic fundamentalist terror bombing in Jerusalem in late July, has served only to exacerbate already widespread desperation among the Palestinians. The predictable response came on the eve of Albright's visit, when three more suicide bombers blew themselves up in a crowded pedestrian mall in Jerusalem, killing four other people.

We condemn such reprehensible acts of indiscriminate terror, which are directed not at the Zionist state's armed forces or its fascist "settler" auxiliaries but target all Jews, killing Arab residents as well. Such acts are in keeping with Hamas' vile anti-Semitic—and anti-woman—project, whose aim of creating a Khomeinist regime in the Occupied Territories mirrors the fascist religious Jewish reactionaries who seek to create a fully fledged Old

Testament theocracy in Israel.

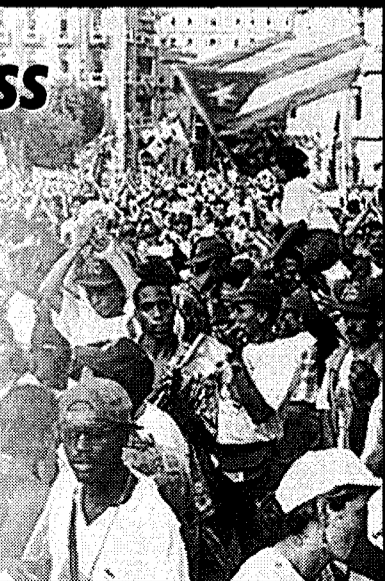
But it is the rankest hypocrisy for the far more powerful terrorist killers of the Israeli bourgeois state to scream about Arafat coddling Hamas and Islamic Jihad "terrorists." It was under Israeli sponsorship that Hamas came to prominence in the 1980s, deliberately nurtured as a counterweight to Arafat's Fatah group and other secular nationalist formations in and around the PLO. That Hamas now reportedly has the support of as much as one-third of the Palestinian population (including many former Fatah activists), whose workers and intelligentsia were until recently among the most cosmopolitan elements in the Near East, is a measure of the despair and frustration to which the masses of the Occupied Territories have been driven by the U.S.-sponsored "peace" accords.

Our warning at the time that the 1993

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Festival**



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Rationalism and the  
Origins of Marxism**



# Court Upholds NPR Censorship of Jamal

## Fight to Free Mumia!

The fight for freedom for death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is a focal point in the struggle against the whole system of racist repression in the U.S. A spokesman for the Black Panther Party in his youth, later a journalist and supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization, Mumia was sentenced to death in 1982 on false charges of killing a Philadelphia policeman. Today, as the appeal of his frame-up conviction and sentence sits before the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court, the struggle for Mumia's freedom is more urgent than ever.

As part of their efforts to silence forever this impassioned spokesman for the oppressed, the cops and courts are doing

what they can to gag Mumia now. On August 21, U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth dismissed a lawsuit by Jamal challenging the 1994 cancellation by National Public Radio (NPR) of a series of Mumia's commentaries from death row. After announcing its plans to air these broadcasts, NPR came under intense pressure from the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.), which for years has led a rabid campaign to kill Mumia and vilify his supporters. Joining the F.O.P.'s howls was Republican Bob Dole, who as Senate leader threatened to cut off NPR's funding. NPR caved in just days later.

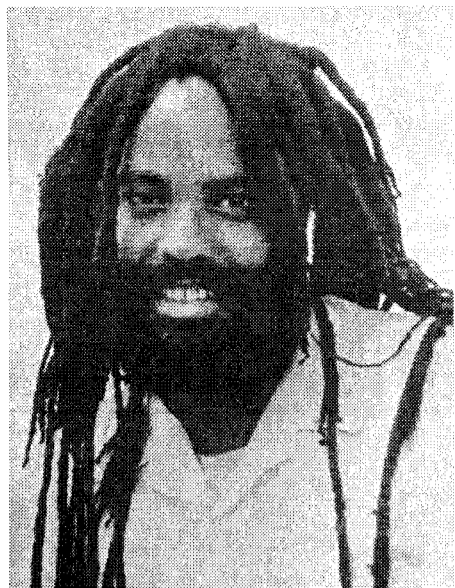
The District Court ruling is a serious blow, giving the seal of approval to the cops' efforts to take away one of Jamal's

most powerful weapons: his voice. As an award-winning radio journalist in Philadelphia, Mumia earned the title "voice of the voiceless" for his searing commentaries on police terror and the all-sided oppression of minorities and the poor. In the last several years, millions of people around the world have become acquainted with Mumia's case through reading his newspaper columns and his book of prison writings, *Live from Death Row*, which was published shortly before the signing of a death warrant against him in June 1995, which was later stayed. Jamal has subsequently published *Death Blossoms: Reflections from a Prisoner of Conscience*. Despite innumerable obstacles thrown up by the courts and state prison authorities, Mumia continues to speak out on behalf of the dispossessed of this society.

Meanwhile, the cops, courts and prosecutors continue to pursue their vendetta against Jamal to ensure his legal lynching. Earlier this summer, as part of the State Supreme Court's review of Jamal's 1995 Post-Conviction Relief (PCRA) appeal, an evidentiary hearing was held in the Philadelphia court of "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who presided over Mumia's original trial as well as the 1995 PCRA proceedings. The hearing centered on a new defense witness, Pamela Jenkins, who testified that police coerced the key prosecution witness at Mumia's 1982 trial. In response, Sabo baldly declared that *even if this evidence of police misconduct were true*, it did not warrant a new trial! Jamal's attorneys offered other witnesses and documents supporting Jenkins' testimony and pointing to other examples of the cops' frame-up methods. Sabo—notorious as a "prosecutor in robes" who has sent more people to death row than any other sitting judge in the U.S.—responded, "I don't care who you subpoenaed. They are quashed."

Mumia's case exemplifies the racist bourgeois *injustice* system. Jamal's 1982 "trial" was marked by racist jury-rigging, a "confession" concocted by the police, "witnesses" intimidated into retailing the cops' story and suppression of evidence of Mumia's innocence by police and prosecutors (see the Partisan Defense Committee pamphlet, *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*).

This mockery of justice has continued



Jennifer Beach

Mumia Abu-Jamal

right up through Jamal's current appeal. There is a growing mountain of evidence of Mumia's innocence. But all of this weighs absolutely nothing on the rigged scales of American racist "justice." As the defense papers on Sabo's latest ruling against Mumia state:

"The simple reality is that the judge has colluded with the prosecution from the outset to secure a conviction and death sentence, assisting the prosecution in its misconduct and in concealing that misconduct. At trial, the court would not let Jamal represent himself, saddled him with an unprepared and ineffective counsel, manipulated the jury composition, and tailored its rulings to prevent the jury from hearing key defense evidence. The court has engaged in the same obstructionist maneuvers throughout these PCRA proceedings, denying discovery, quashing defense subpoenas right and left, and precluding evidence and claims."

The papers conclude by demanding that the frame-up conviction and death sentence be overturned, insisting that at the minimum there be a new full PCRA hearing in front of a new judge, with full right of discovery of evidence for the defense.

Sabo's blatant bias, along with the decision upholding NPR's censorship of Mumia, show in a crystal-clear way that *Mumia did not, cannot and will not get justice in the racist capitalist courts*. From the time the Spartacist League and PDC first took up Jamal's cause more than a decade ago, we have stressed that what is needed is mass social protest centered on the power of organized labor to demand freedom for Mumia and abolition of the racist death penalty.

The PDC, a class-struggle legal and social defense organization which takes up cases and causes in the interests of the whole of the working people, has brought Jamal's case to the labor movement from the U.S. to Latin America, Japan, Europe and South Africa. As we wrote in an article on Jamal in a WV supplement (27 August) on the lessons of

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TROTSKY

### Marxism and Historical Progress

*The current reactionary ideological offensive around the supposed "death of communism" has been extended back to attacks on the rational humanism of the Enlightenment and the ideals of the French Revolution. In its own way, the imperialist bourgeoisie thereby acknowledges that Marxism embodies the principles of scientific rationality as the basis for liberating mankind from all forms of social oppression. In 1913, Lenin explained that Marxism is rooted in the progressive ideas generated by the struggle against feudal backwardness, religious obscurantism and monarchical absolutism.*

The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is comprehensive and harmonious, and provides men with an integral world outlook irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression. It is the legitimate successor to the best that man produced in the nineteenth century, as represented by German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism....

The stormy revolutions which everywhere in Europe, and especially in France, accompanied the fall of feudalism, of serfdom, more and more clearly revealed the *struggle of classes* as the basis and the driving force of all development.

Not a single victory of political freedom over the feudal class was won except against desperate resistance. Not a single capitalist country evolved on a more or less free and democratic basis except by a life-and-death struggle between the various classes of capitalist society.

The genius of Marx lies in his having been the first to deduce from this the lesson world history teaches and to apply that lesson consistently. The deduction he made is the doctrine of the *class struggle*.

People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. Champions of reforms and improvements will always be fooled by the defenders of the old order until they realise that every old institution, however barbarous and rotten it may appear to be, is kept going by the forces of certain ruling classes. And there is *only one* way of smashing the resistance of those classes, and that is to find, in the very society which surrounds us, the forces which can—and, owing to their social position, *must*—constitute the power capable of sweeping away the old and creating the new, and to enlighten and organise those forces for the struggle.

Marx's philosophical materialism alone has shown the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have hitherto languished. Marx's economic theory alone has explained the true position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism.

—V.I. Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism" (March 1913)



LENIN

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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WV Photo

When NPR censors banned Mumia's commentaries from the airwaves, Partisan Defense Committee organized June 1994 protest speakout chaired by Ossie Davis in New York City.

WORKERS VANGUARD



We reprint below, in slightly edited form, an article which appeared in *Australasian Spartacist* No. 161 (Spring 1997), publication of the *Spartacist League/Australia*.

The election of the vile racist bigot Pauline Hanson to the Australian Parliament last year was a sharp pointer to the reactionary social climate fostered by the capitalist rulers' assaults on immigrants, Aborigines and working people. Hanson won election to the formerly "safe" Labor Party seat of Oxley, Queensland, calling for an end to immigration until Australia's unemployment "problem" is "solved" and for reversing the pitifully minimal social programs and land rights rulings gained by the brutally oppressed Aborigines over the last two decades.

With the official (vastly understated) jobless rate at close to 9 percent and youth unemployment over three times that, Hanson's racist scapegoating and calls for higher tariffs to save "Aussie jobs" have found an audience among both economically insecure shopkeepers and farmers and among many backward white workers. Her fascist ravings that Australia is being "swamped" by Asians and that "multiculturalism" is "sapping the lifeblood of the nation" proved too embarrassing for the right-wing Liberal Party, which withdrew its endorsement of her before the elections. And the Australian bourgeoisie isn't too happy that her tirades against Asian people and cultures have already lost them business in the booming markets of Asia. On the other hand, the launching of Hanson's One Nation party has become a rallying point for outright fascists like National Action, which sells Hanson T-shirts and writings from their "bookshop" bunkers, while on the streets there has been a dramatic rise in racist assaults.

The vaulting of this certified racist pig from her Ipswich fish-and-chips shop into Parliament was part of the right-wing shift that brought John Howard's "Conservative Coalition" to power over the Labor Party. Howard's Tory regime has already moved to impose drastic restrictions on immigration, block even token measures benefiting Aborigines and enforce strikebreaking laws. But it was the previous 13 years of Labor Party governments which paved the way for Howard and Hanson. On behalf of the capitalist rulers, the Labor Party oversaw the smashing of militant unions like the Builders Labourers Federation and imposed austerity measures on working people. Under Labor, killings of Aborigines in police custody soared, while thousands of immigrants were deported or locked up in concentration camps.

Hanson is but the most naked face of Australia's deeply racist capitalist profit system. By targeting in the first instance the most vulnerable sectors of society like immigrants and Aborigines, the ruling class seeks to divide the working class and weaken the trade unions in order to slash wages, working conditions

# Fascists March Behind Pauline Hanson

## Australian Politician Rides Wave of Racist Reaction



**May 4 protest in Perth, Western Australia, against vile racist bigot Pauline Hanson (right), who is embraced by fascist skinheads.**

Neil Eliot

and social benefits. This is not unique to Australia. Around the world, the capitalist rulers have launched vicious attacks against immigrants and others as a wedge to destroy trade-union rights and social welfare programs as they drive up the rate of exploitation.

While skinheads and other fascists have been openly welcomed at meetings launching the One Nation party, these events have also been met with protest demonstrations drawing hundreds, sometimes thousands, of radical youth, Chinese, Vietnamese and South Asian immigrants, Aborigines and trade unionists. Earlier this year, a militant demonstration of some 700 anti-racist protesters in Tasmania shut down a One Nation founding meeting. The demonstrations peaked on 7 July with an outpouring of well over a thousand protesters in the heavily immigrant Melbourne suburb of Dandenong.

The reformist left have centred many of these protests around calls to "fight the right," chanting "Howard and Hanson have got to go!" This is nothing but an attempt to *derail* the fight against racist reaction into the dead-end of the Labor Party "lesser evil." In contrast, the Spartacist League has called for building a revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed. Our contingents at anti-Hanson protests have raised such slogans as: "Bipartisan war on minorities emboldens Hanson, [viru-

lently racist former Labor parliamentarian] Campbell—For workers action against bosses' racist attacks!" and "Full citizenship rights for all immigrants—Close the deportation camps!" We fight for socialist revolution to get rid of the capitalist system of exploitation which has given rise to Hanson's filth. Key to this perspective is splitting the proletarian base of the Labor Party—a bourgeois workers party—from the racist, pro-capitalist Labor parliament and trade-union tops.

### Assault on Democratic Rights

In response to the large, voluble demonstrations against Hanson, the government has increasingly turned to brutal cop repression, with phalanxes of hundreds of cops and charges by mounted police against protesters. Dozens of arrests have been made, including of five anti-racist protesters at Dandenong. We say: Drop all charges against anti-racist protesters!

Following the Dandenong rally, where a fracas led to the wounding of a Hansonite bigot, the bourgeois press launched a smear campaign labelling leftist protesters as "violent." The Melbourne *Herald Sun* (9 July) referred to "the Militant Organisation, the Socialist Left and Spartacus [sic]" as "familiar faces to the police"—an ominous threat to set up leftists for stepped-up repression.

The targeting of anti-Hanson demonstrators as "violent" is only the latest in a

series of moves by the bourgeois state to curtail the democratic rights of the left, minorities and the trade-union movement. In 1992, the then Labor government of Joan Kirner in Victoria staged early morning Gestapo-style raids on seven students, including members of the International Socialist Organisation (ISO). This was accompanied by a smear campaign blaming leftist groups for "violence" at student protests against education cutbacks, naming the ISO, Left Alliance and the "Spartacist" League.

At the time, the police announced the establishment of a "special investigation unit aimed at cracking the violent socialist organisations," i.e., the resurfacing of the notorious cop "Red Squad" (see "Student Anger Mounts at Keating's Austerity," *Australasian Spartacist* No. 145, Winter 1992). Since then, the state has victimised a range of leftists and minorities for "speech crimes," including the ongoing attempt to prosecute radical former editors of the student newspaper *Rabelais* for printing a tongue-in-cheek article advising how to shoplift. The aim of these repressive moves is to intimidate all who seek to fight for the rights of workers and the oppressed.

Hanson and her mob are especially feeding off the Howard regime's efforts to vastly curtail immigration and cut the state's meagre benefits for the brutalised

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# Zionist Terror...

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"peace" deal would lead to "PLO cops, armed and paid by Israel, shooting down young Palestinian rebels on behalf of the Zionist state terrorists" has been amply confirmed. Arafat's puppet regime is effectively a police state, with Palestinian cops replacing Israeli occupation forces as torturers and tormentors. This repression is particularly directed against the Palestinian working people. Thus, when West Bank teachers walked out for two months earlier this year in the first workers strike under Arafat's regime, Palestinian cops were deployed to arrest union leaders and break the strike.

Particularly since Netanyahu's election 16 months ago, Israel has gone out of its way to grind down and provoke the Palestinian masses, from last year's opening of a pedestrian tunnel under a Muslim holy site in Jerusalem and the ensuing coldblooded slaughter of more than 60 Arab protesters to the decision last spring to construct yet another Jewish housing development in Arab East Jerusalem. In the past year, Israel has also revoked "residency permits" for over a thousand Palestinians who were lifelong residents of Jerusalem. Land seizures and the bulldozing of Arab homes and businesses have continued apace. The vaunted deal placing the West Bank town of Hebron under Palestinian "autonomy" handed a fifth of this Arab city of 100,000 over to several hundred gun-toting Zionist "settler" fanatics while dividing the remainder into two Palestinian ghettos surrounded by Israeli military checkpoints.

Such measures are aimed at rooting out any Arab population concentration within the ever-expanding boundaries of "Greater Jerusalem" and ensuring that the Palestinian Authority retains nomi-



AP photos

**Right-wing prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu (above) has stepped up land seizures and other provocations against Palestinians. Israeli cops evict Bedouin to make way for new Zionist settlement near Jerusalem.**



nal suzerainty over only a handful of isolated Arab cantons in the West Bank. This, in fact, was the aim of the 1993 "peace" accords promoted by the former Israeli government headed by "Labor," a thoroughly bourgeois party which was the architect of the Zionist state's expansionist project and presided over the 1967 conquest of the Occupied Territories.

## Near East Flashpoint

Erected on the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Arabs from their homes and homeland—first in 1947-48 and again in 1967—and encircled by hostile Arab regimes, Israel has been a highly militarized garrison-state from its creation. This makes Israeli Jewish society keenly sensitive to any hint of military defeat at the hands of Arab forces. Thus the uproar over the deaths of a dozen members of an elite Israeli naval unit,

"Flotilla 13," during a commando raid in Lebanon earlier this month.

The rising death toll in Israel's 15-year occupation of its southern Lebanon "security zone" has led even ultrachauvinist politicians like Ariel Sharon—who headed the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and ordered the massacre of hundreds of unarmed Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps—to call for withdrawal of Zionist forces from that country. We demand that Israeli troops and "settlers" get out of southern Lebanon, the Golan Heights and Gaza and the West Bank!

The Near East has historically been a powder keg for imperialist conflict and war, and Zionist provocations are pushing it ever more in that direction. There will be no peace in this volatile region under capitalist rule. The Zionist state's very existence is premised on the national oppression of the Palestinian people. In neighboring Jordan, the Hashemite kingdom lords it over a predominantly Palestinian population, while hundreds of thousands of "stateless" Palestinians have languished for two generations in wretched refugee camps policed by the Arab bourgeoisies.

The International Communist League has consistently championed the national rights of the Palestinian people. But unlike the plethora of phony "leftists" who tailed petty-bourgeois Palestinian nationalism right into the embrace of the anti-Palestinian "Pax Americana," Trotskyists fight for a proletarian class perspective in the Near East. The Palestinian masses clearly cannot wrest freedom from the Zionist state through military confrontation, much less by relying on the "good offices" of U.S. imperialism. And the Arab bourgeoisies and feudal sheikdoms, despite the myth of a classless "Arab Revolution" promoted by groups like the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat in the 1960s and '70s, are no less the enemy of the Palestinian people—and all the workers and oppressed of the region—than are the Zionist butchers. To justify tailing after the Arab bourgeoisies and revanchist nationalists, these "leftists" equated the Hebrew-speaking masses with the Zionist rulers and denied that an "oppressor people" has any national rights, effectively calling for a reversal of the terms of oppression.

Like Cyprus, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka and the former Yugoslavia, among other places, Israel/Palestine is a case of interpenetrated peoples, of two or more peoples claiming the same territory. In such situations, under capitalism—in which the state power is necessarily dominated by a single nation—the democratic right of national self-determination cannot be achieved for one people without violating the national rights of the other.

The recent history of the Balkans offers stark confirmation of this, both in the positive and in the negative. It was only as a result of a social revolution—

albeit deformed from its inception under the leadership of Tito's Stalinists—that the diverse South Slav peoples were able to amicably coexist. On the other hand, the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the Yugoslav deformed workers state was accompanied by an all-sided nationalist slaughter, as each people sought to compact a homogenous bourgeois nation-state by driving the others from "its" territory through pogroms and forced population transfers.

This has been true not only for the more numerous and militarily powerful Serbs, who were singled out for vilification by the Western press, but for the Croats and Bosnian Muslims as well. Indeed, Bosnia has provided an object lesson in what happens when the terms of oppression are reversed. As territorial control shifted from one side to another in the past few years, chauvinists among the Bosnian Muslims, when given the opportunity, have been no less ruthless in terrorizing and evicting Bosnian Serbs than the Serbs had been in driving out Muslims.

In the Near East, the conflicting national claims of the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab masses can only be equitably resolved by sweeping away all the bourgeoisies of the region. It is necessary to explode the Zionist state from within by breaking the Hebrew-speaking workers from the grip of racialist chauvinism and winning them to the cause of proletarian revolution in league with their Arab class brothers and sisters. Decades of Zionist state terror and murderous nationalism on all sides have poisoned relations between Hebrew-speaking and Arab workers. But there is a rich history of proletarian



Alfred/Sipa

**Yasir Arafat runs Palestinian Authority as police state for Zionist rulers.**

class unity in this region which points the way forward.

The early Communist parties in Iraq, Egypt and other Arab countries were marked by significant numbers of Jews and other minorities in their ranks and leaderships. And in the years before the creation of the Zionist state, there were numerous instances of class unity in British-controlled Palestine as well. In September 1945, only two years before the outbreak of nationalist slaughter, hundreds of Arab and Jewish strikers marched through the streets of Tel Aviv chanting "Long live unity between Arab and Jewish workers" and "The Arab and Jewish workers are brothers" while, as the Hebrew-language daily *Ha'aretz* reported at the time, "masses of people crowded both sides of the streets to watch this extraordinary sight" (quoted in Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies*, University of California Press [1996]).

We fight for Trotskyist parties which will reappropriate this history of united class struggle as part of the struggle to win the working masses—standing at the head of the peasantry and numerous oppressed nationalities—of the region to the banner of proletarian internationalism. **For a socialist federation of the Near East!**

## Spartacist Events

### BOSTON

*Eyewitness Report*

#### Cuban Revolution in Danger

Saturday, September 27, 7:30 p.m.  
Room 3-343, MIT, Cambridge

For more information: (617) 666-9453

### CHICAGO

#### Unchain Labor's Power— Those Who Labor Must Rule!

Saturday, September 27, 7 p.m.  
Location to be announced

#### China on the Brink: Workers Political Revolution or Capitalist Enslavement?

Saturday, October 11, 3 p.m.  
University of Chicago  
Location to be announced.

*Spartacus Youth Club Class Series*  
Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m., Next  
classes, September 20: **The State**;  
October 4: **Imperialism: The Highest  
Stage of Capitalism**;

328 South Jefferson, Suite 904  
Information and readings: (312) 454-4930

### NEW YORK CITY

#### China on the Brink: Workers Political Revolution or Capitalist Enslavement?

Saturday, October 18, 3 p.m.  
Location to be announced

*Spartacus Youth Club Class Series*  
Alternate Mondays, 7 p.m.  
Next classes, September 22:  
**The Origins of Marxism**; October 6:  
**The Capitalist State and Revolution**;

41 Warren St. (one block below Cham-  
bers St., near Church St.)  
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

### OAKLAND

*Spartacus Youth Club Class Series*

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Next  
classes, September 30: **The Marxist  
Understanding of the State**;

204 Wheeler, UC Berkeley  
Information and readings:  
(415) 777-9367 or (510) 839-0851

### SAN FRANCISCO

*Spartacus Youth Club Class Series*

Alternate Thursdays, 6 p.m. Next  
class, September 25: **The Marxist  
Understanding of the State**;

SFSU Student Union, Room C114  
Information and readings:  
(415) 777-9367 or (510) 839-0851

### Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Events

### TORONTO

#### China on the Brink: Workers Political Revolution or Capitalist Enslavement?

Saturday, October 4, 7:30 p.m.  
St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor Street W.

*Spartacus Youth Club Class Series*  
Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Next  
class, September 24: **The Principles  
of Marxism**; International Student  
Centre, 33 St. George Street  
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138

### VANCOUVER

*Eyewitness Report*

#### South Africa: The Struggle for Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution

Friday, October 3, 7:30 p.m.  
Britannia Community Centre,  
Room L4, 1661 Napier Street  
For more information: (604) 687-0353



# Young Spartacus

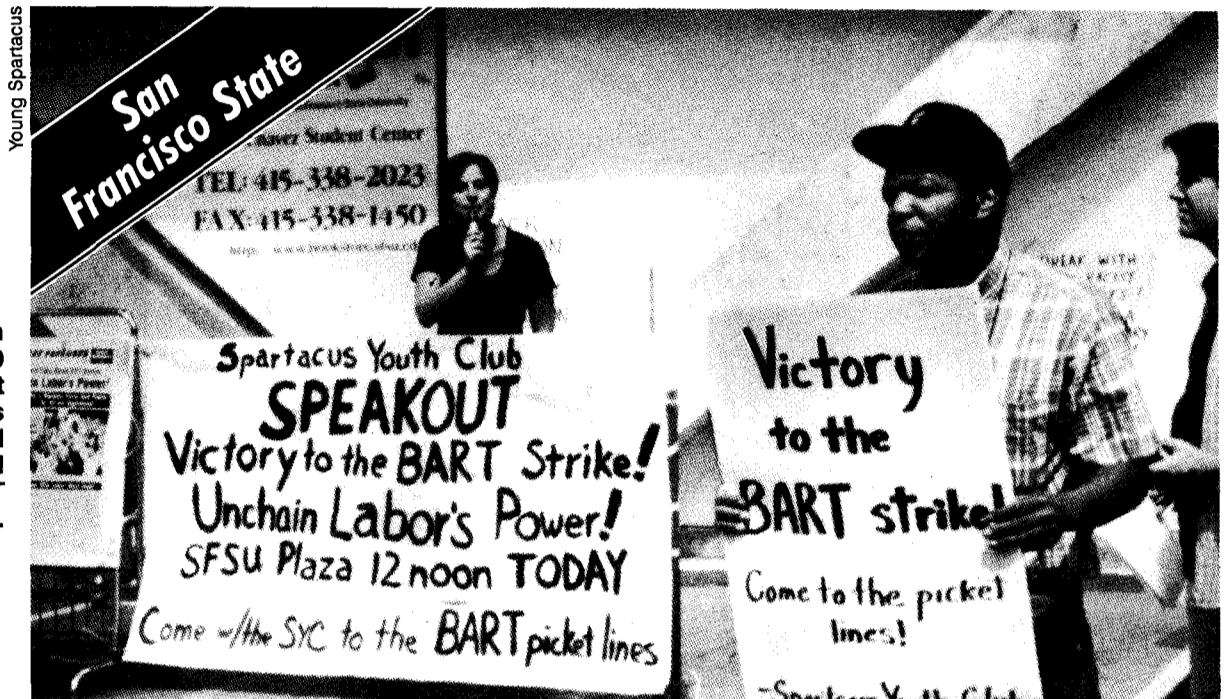
## SYC Builds Campus Support for BART Strike

SAN FRANCISCO—On September 9, the Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) at San Francisco State University rallied students to the side of striking Bay Area transit workers with the call: "Victory to the BART strike! Unchain labor's power!" Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) workers struck for six days, fighting for equal pay for equal work (see article on page 12), a crucial issue to all workers which moved many to support the successful Teamsters strike against UPS last month. The two-tier system in which newer workers—predominantly women, minorities and youth—are paid less for doing the same work is nothing but a vehicle to divide the working class, pitting one worker against another for the benefit of the bosses.

At the speakout, the SYC called on students to help build the BART picket lines. We made the point that because the multiracial working class produces all wealth in this society and can stop production, it has tremendous social power to change society. Nicole, an SYC supporter at SF State, explained:

"Students who want to fight racism and exploitation need to understand that the power to win that struggle lies only with the multiracial working class. Right now BART union workers are on strike demanding equal pay for equal work. If they win this it will be an important victory against the capitalists' attempt to divide society along racial and sexual lines. We as students need to ally ourselves with these workers and help win their strike, not by appealing to our capitalist administrator [SFSU president]

SYC spokesman at September 9 campus speakout addresses students on need to stand behind striking BART transit workers.



Corrigan or Democrat strikebreaker Willie Brown [mayor of San Francisco]—these are the class enemies of the workers. Instead students should come with us to the picket line which is where labor's battles are won."

Many students at SF State work to put themselves through school and are in fact many of those "new hires" working on lower wage scales at places like UPS. What the recent strikes at UPS and BART make clear is that racist capitalist America is fundamentally divided between two hostile classes: workers who are forced to

sell their labor power in order to survive and the property-owning capitalist class to whom their labor power is sold.

Throughout California, once known as the "Education State," public education has been gutted as rising fees, bolstered by Proposition 209's outright elimination of affirmative action programs, drive minorities, immigrants, the working class and the poor out of school. Don Cane, a Spartacist League speaker at the rally, highlighted the need for labor to mobilize in the interests of all the

oppressed: "Many of you might say, 'What does labor have to do with students and what do students have to do with labor?' What is important about the UPS strike and the BART strike is that they show the way that the multiracial working class of this country can struggle against this racist capitalist system. Just imagine the power of a BART strike that denounced Prop. 209 and a UPS strike that denounced the racist purge of the universities, that defended the rights

*continued on page 9*

## Eyewitness Report from Havana Youth Festival

**Defend Cuba—U.S. Hands Off!  
For Proletarian Political Revolution!**

From July 28 to August 5, Havana and other Cuban cities hosted the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students, where some 12,000 youth from over 130 countries gathered in solidarity with Cuba. Despite the U.S. government's attempt to prevent young people from traveling to the festival, about 800 youths came from the U.S., making this the biggest foreign delegation (see our protest letter against this attempted exclusion in Workers Vanguard No. 672, 8 August). Other delegates came mainly from Latin America and West Europe, with large delegations from Asia and Africa. Two International Communist League comrades, one from the Grupo Espartaquista de México, and the author of this report, Charles from

the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste of Canada, attended the festival and saw firsthand the intense economic pressures and extreme social contradictions facing the Cuban deformed workers state.

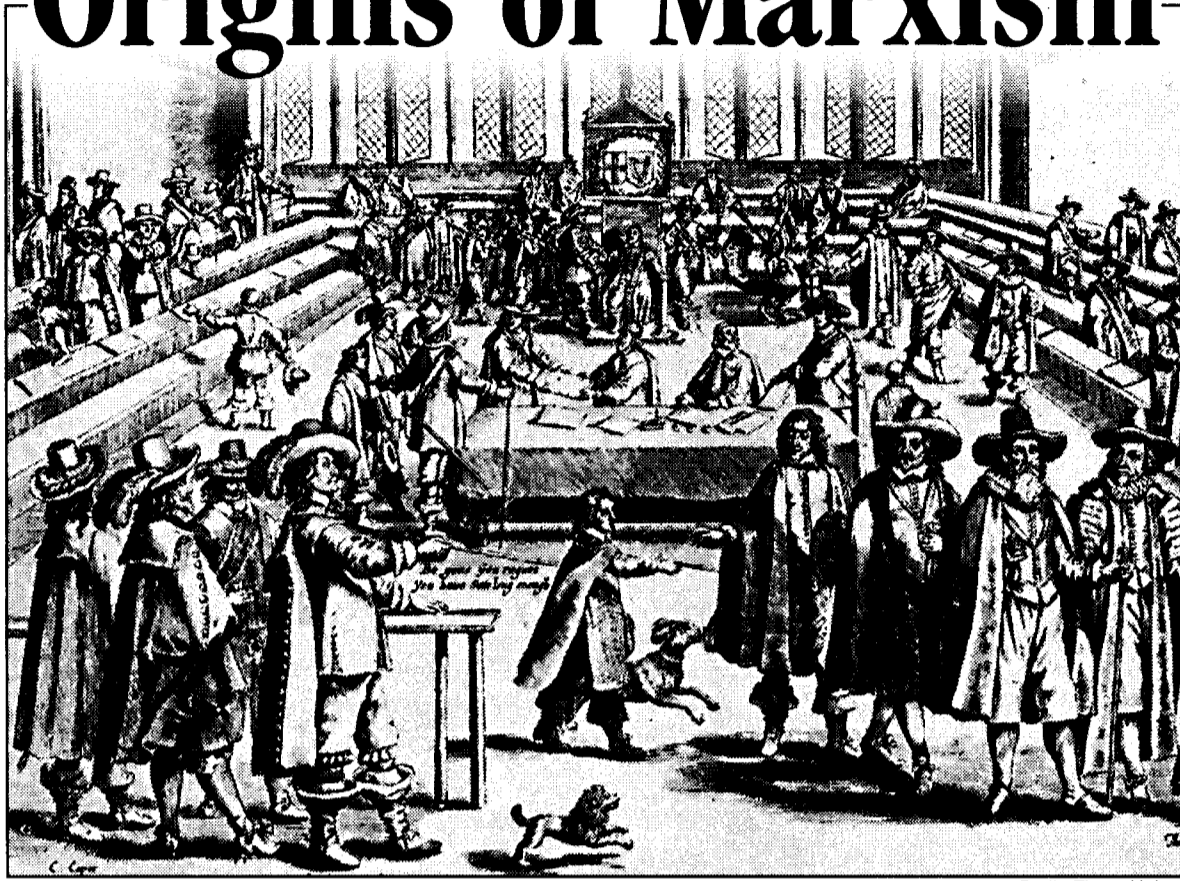
Cuba obviously suffers from three and a half decades of the cruel U.S. blockade. Havana, where I stayed, is in dire need of infrastructure repair. The fuel shortage remains acute, leading to a poor and polluting transit system and two- to three-hour power outages daily. Since there is a scarcity of buses, the government has converted giant trucks, formerly used to transport the sugarcane harvest, into buses called *camellos*. Waits are often as long as two hours. And many food

*continued on page 8*



World Youth Festival participants rally at University of Havana, July 28.

# Enlightenment Rationalism and the Origins of Marxism



Oliver Cromwell confronts Parliament in 1663, during short-lived English republic following execution of King Charles I.

Radio Times Hulton

We print below the second part of a presentation on the Enlightenment given by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour this summer as part of a series of internal SL classes on the origins of Marxism. Part One was published in WV No. 673 (5 September).

## PART TWO

As I noted previously, the Enlightenment was an intellectual link between the English and French bourgeois-democratic revolutions. In the mid-17th century, England underwent a full-blooded revolution—the king was executed, the reactionaries driven into exile and a short-lived republic established under Oliver Cromwell. Toward the end of the 17th century, England had a semi-revolution. The existing king, who appeared to be moving toward absolutism and its ideological handmaiden, the Roman Catholic church, was deposed under threat of civil war and replaced by a Protestant king. When the dust settled around 1700, England had a bourgeois political order which proved quite stable. The main locus of political power shifted over time from the king's court to a parliament elected by wealthy property owners. Two bourgeois parties emerged, the Whigs and Tories, which would subsequently alternate holding governmental power.

The Enlightenment originated in England at this time—its principal figures being Isaac Newton and John Locke—as an ideological justification for the new bourgeois order. It can be characterized as liberal in that it was self-defined as occupying a middle ground between right and left. The right was represented by the absolutist monarchies of continental Europe—backed by the Roman Catholic church—which were seen as a powerful threat to the new English bourgeois state.

At the same time, the early English Enlightenment saw potential enemies on the left as well. During the English Revolution and Civil War, radical democratic tendencies had emerged among the working class which appeared threatening to the propertied classes, even to the most radical elements of the bourgeoisie represented by Cromwell. There's a good book on this subject, *Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War*, by David Petegorsky. So English bourgeois intellectuals in the post-revolutionary era of Newton and Locke were acutely aware of and afraid of social leveling from below. Locke was the first major thinker to declare that property was a natural right.

The basic principle of the early English Enlightenment was the promotion

of advances in science and technology. This entailed a wide tolerance of intellectual discourse. Closely related was religious tolerance, especially since the English propertied classes—landlords, merchants, bankers—belonged to several different Christian sects and more than a few were privately nonbelievers. Voltaire, who visited England in the 1720s, reported in his usual wise-ass style:

“Enter the London stock exchange, that place more respectable than many a court. You will see the deputies of all nations gathered there for the service of mankind. There the Jew, the Mohammedan, and the Christian deal with each other as if they were of the same religion, and give the name of infidel only to those who go bankrupt.”

—quoted in Peter Gay, *Voltaire's Politics: The Poet as Realist* (1959)

The second phase of the Enlightenment took place when a current of French intellectuals, the most important being Montesquieu and the young Voltaire, sought to import, so to speak, the institutions and ideological climate of England into their own country. After his visit to England, Voltaire wrote a book, *Lettres Philosophiques*, presenting a highly favorable picture of England with its constitutional monarchy, religious toleration and public respect for scientists and philosophers. Here is what

happened to Voltaire and his book:

“The government issued a *lettre de cachet* for Voltaire's arrest...arrested the printer, and confiscated copies of the book. And on 10 June 1734, on orders of the parlement of Paris, the common hangman solemnly lacerated and burned the *Lettres philosophiques* in the courtyard of the *Palais de justice* as ‘scandalous, contrary to religion, good morals, and the respect due to authority’.”

—Voltaire's *Politics: The Poet as Realist*

This incident reveals why the Enlightenment in France had quite a different nature and radical political effect than in England. Newton and Locke were the intellectual representatives of an *already completed* bourgeois-democratic revolution. Voltaire, Montesquieu and Diderot were confronting a social and political order still dominated by the feudal nobility. The French nobility successfully resisted paying any significant level of taxation right down to the storming of the Bastille in 1789.

The England of Newton and Locke was possible only because there had previously been an England of Cromwell based on the revolutionary mobilization of the lower classes against monarchical absolutism and the old feudal order. Of course, the French *philosophes* did not understand this. They wanted to eat the cake of the bourgeois-democratic revolution without having to bake it. They wanted an intellectual climate which promoted scientific knowledge and technological innovation. They wanted religious toleration. They wanted a prosperous, dynamic economy. They wanted a more humane and just legal system. They wanted a government responsive to the interests of the productive classes.

But they didn't get any of these things. The efforts of the *philosophes* to reform France along English lines was continually frustrated and so resulted in a radicalization of this movement. Contrary to the usual pattern, the old Voltaire was more radical than the young Voltaire. The older he got, the more strongly he denounced the existing social and political order in France and the rest of continental Europe.

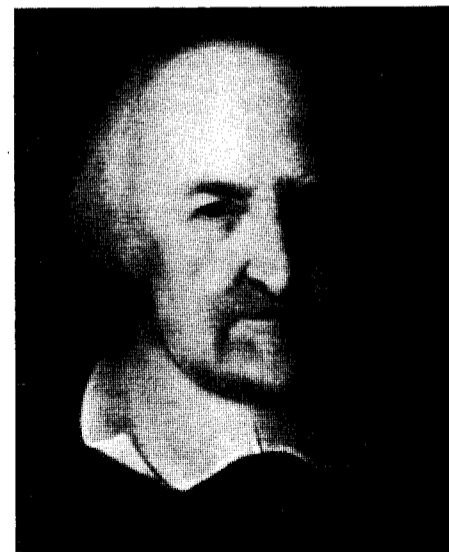
Thus the direction of motion of the Enlightenment in its central country, France, was steadily and strongly *to the left* at both the philosophical and political levels. Newton and Locke sought to reconcile scientific empiricism with Protestant Christianity. Half a century later, French *philosophes* such as Holbach openly advocated atheism and a thoroughgoing materialism. Locke declared property to be a natural right. Half a century later, Rousseau argued that property was a great perversion of natural right and the root of all evil in the modern world. In this way, Enlightenment thought helped prepare the ground for the French Revolution and the birth of the communist movement.

### The Challenge of Thomas Hobbes

The great British naturalist, Charles Darwin, observed that you always learn more from the exception than from the norm. The norm in the age of the Enlightenment was for philosophical and political radicalism to go together. All countries in Europe, even the most liberal (England and Holland) had state churches. So anyone who advocated radical changes at the political level necessarily had to attack the authority and legitimacy of the state churches, if not the Christian religion in general. Atheism was conventionally associated with

republicanism and social leveling. The notion of “godless communism,” if not yet the term, was current in the 17th and 18th centuries.

There was, however, a significant exception: Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes was a materialist, effectively an atheist and an advocate of royal absolutism of the most absolute sort. It is difficult to convey to you how utterly aberrant and con-

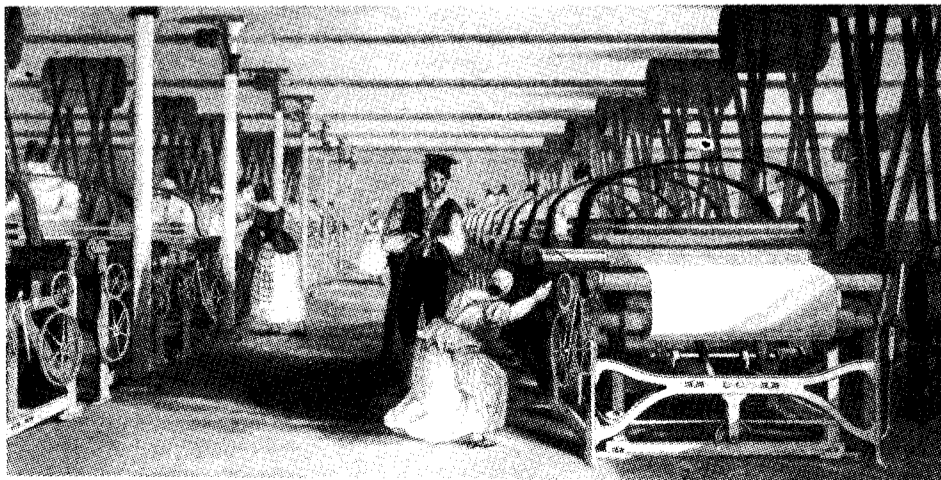


National Portrait Gallery, London

Thomas Hobbes, 17th-century English philosopher.

tradictory Hobbes was in the framework of the late 17th century. It's hard to think of a present-day analogy, even hypothetically. The best I can come up with is to imagine a big-time corporate operator like Donald Trump or Michael Milken who says he's a Marxist and what he's doing is making capitalism more efficient to ease the transition to communism. Hobbes represented that magnitude of contradiction in his time.

As a young man Hobbes served as assistant to Francis Bacon, the leading materialist philosopher of the era. But the shaping, indeed a traumatic, experience of his life was the English Revolution and Civil War. This was not like the American Civil War in which there were two well-organized sides, each with recognized governments. The English Civil



T. Allom

Richard Arkwright's textile factories utilizing the power loom exemplified the technological dynamism of early English capitalism.



War involved several political factions, including the Scottish nobility, each with its own armed force. And on occasion they shifted sides so that yesterday's ally became today's enemy. Many people saw England beset by murderous anarchy, with men fighting only to acquire wealth and power without regard for any professed religious and political principles.

The condition of revolutionary turmoil also allowed the emergence of left-wing groups based on the working classes, which were well represented for a time in Cromwell's New Model Army, the main revolutionary force. There was a famous debate in the New Model Army about allowing the lower classes to vote for parliament. Cromwell's son-in-law, Henry Ireton, spoke against this, arguing:

"All the main thing I speak for, is because I would have an eye to property....  
"You may have such men chosen or at least the major part of them (as have no local or permanent interest) why may not these men vote against all property?"

—quoted in Petegorsky, *Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War* (1940)

Hence the propertied classes felt themselves threatened by what would later be called "Red Republicanism."

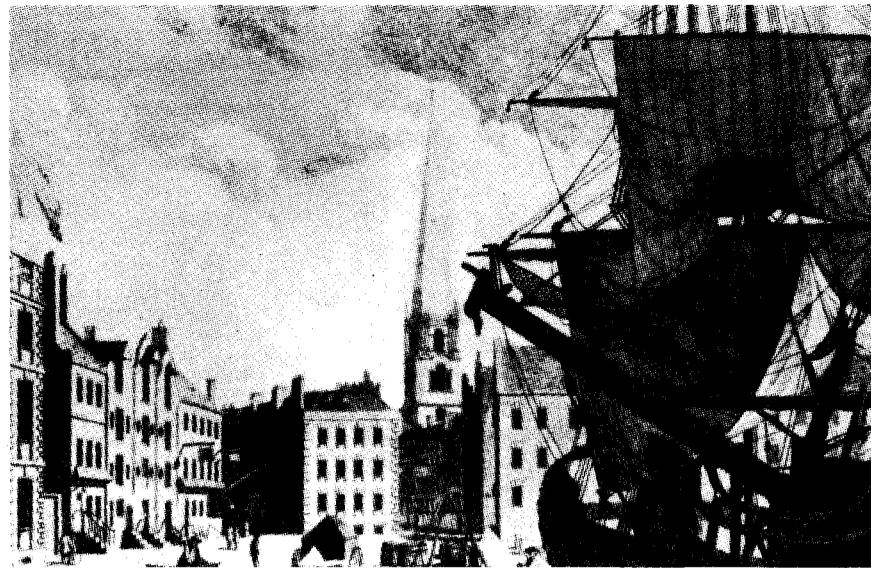
Hobbes, who was a member of a well-to-do capitalist family—they manufactured and merchandised gloves—shared the fears of his class in this regard. His political doctrines represented a bourgeois, not an aristocratic, reaction against the threat of social revolution from below. He maintained that men were by nature murderously selfish with an unlimited appetite for wealth and power. Here is his famous description of the so-called "state of nature": "No arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (*Leviathan* [1651]). To prevent a reversion to the state of nature so described, Hobbes advocated a government exercising total and undivided political power which would suppress all political factionalism lest this engender civil war.

Hobbes constituted a far more formidable intellectual challenge to Enlightenment political thought than did the adherents of the divine right of kings, since from thoroughly materialist premises he reached the same reactionary conclusion. The Enlightenment had to confront the proposition that the innate selfishness of man was an insuperable barrier to a benevolent society with a wide latitude of individual freedom. There were three basic answers to Hobbes among Enlightenment thinkers: that given by Holbach, that given by Adam Smith and that given by Rousseau.

## Social Morality Versus Egoism

Holbach argued that man is a social animal; he does not and cannot exist in individual isolation. Hence men have a vital interest in behaving so as to gain the respect and approval of other members of society and avoid their disrespect and hostility: "Does not everyone see, that he has the greatest interest in meriting the approbation, esteem, and benevolence of the beings who surround him, and in abstaining from everything, by which he may incur the censure, contempt, and resentment of society?" (*Common Sense, or Natural Ideas Opposed to the Supernatural* [1772], excerpted in Isaac Kramnick, ed., *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* [1995]).

Holbach's reasoning, however, contains an obvious fallacy which deprived it of much influence both at the time and subsequently. True, man does live in society, but society also divides men into different classes, castes, nations, religions, etc. Men are thus surrounded, to use Holbach's phrase, by members of their own class, nation, religion, etc. A French merchant, for example, may have an interest in gaining the esteem of his fellow merchants but he does so by going partners with them in the slave trade. He has no interest in gaining the esteem or avoiding



Viollet

Brutal slave trade was key to development of English capitalism and thriving ports such as Liverpool (right). The most progressive Enlightenment thinkers opposed slavery.

the resentment of the black Africans he is enslaving. Quite the contrary.

The fundamental problem facing Enlightenment political thought was: Why should a man respect the natural rights of all other men even when it is not in his individual material interests to do so? This question was posed in the clearest and sharpest way in one of the most interesting and unusual works of the Enlightenment, *Rameau's Nephew* by Diderot. It takes the form of a fictitious dialogue between Rousseau and a cynical, amoral con man. The latter, Rameau's nephew, more than holds his own in the argument; nothing Diderot says fazes him. He sums up his personal philosophy thus: "I say hurrah for wisdom and philosophy—the wisdom of Solomon: to drink good wines, gorge on choice food, tumble pretty women, sleep in downy beds—outside of that, all is vanity." To the extent that Rameau's nephew feels the need to justify his behavior in terms of general philosophical principles, which isn't

ety as a whole through a certain set of institutions.

These institutions were those which formed a competitive capitalist market economy. Within this system men could acquire wealth only by producing more efficiently than their competitors, thereby increasing the total goods available and benefiting all members of society, even the poorest. Take, for example, Sir Richard Arkwright, the leading cotton textile magnate of the day and a pioneer of the factory system. Arkwright, who came from a working-class background, may have been motivated solely by a desire to acquire wealth for himself and his heirs, perhaps for social respectability. But to achieve this goal, Arkwright invented and employed machinery which radically reduced the labor time needed to produce cotton textiles, thereby leading to a reduction in the cost of clothing for everyone.

Adam Smith was the primary theorist of classic bourgeois liberalism. This doc-

to improve productivity than capitalists employing wage labor in a competitive environment. The idea that a society based on free labor was superior—economically as well as morally—to one based on slave labor would become the main ideological doctrine of the North in the American Civil War. There's a good book on this subject: *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men* by Eric Foner.

## Rousseau: Primary Theorist of the Left

Getting back to the Enlightenment. If Adam Smith was the primary theorist of classic bourgeois liberalism, Rousseau was the primary theorist of the left as it emerged from the French Revolution a decade after Rousseau's death. Rousseau argued that Hobbes falsely attributed to human nature the vices engendered by society: "All these philosophers talking ceaselessly of need, greed, oppression, desire and pride have transported into the state of nature concepts formed in society" (*A Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* [1755]).

Rousseau maintained that man was originally *pre-social*, existing as an individual hunter-gatherer with only casual and transitory contact with his fellow men. The idea of a pre-social man, while having no basis in anthropological fact, nonetheless had profoundly revolutionary implications, even though Rousseau himself did not draw out these implications. All attempts to justify the existing social and political order on the basis of tradition were thrown out the window, since the oldest tradition of all was that of pre-social individualism. Thus all social institutions—property, organized religion, monarchy, feudalism—could be justified in Rousseauian terms only if they contributed to the well-being and happiness of the people. And the people always had the right to tear up and renegotiate the "social contract," as Rousseau stated in his work of that name:

"When it happens that a people sets up a hereditary Government, either monarchical in one family or hereditary in one class of citizens, it is in no sense entering into a binding undertaking, but only giving a provisional form to the administration, until it decides to order things differently."

In 1789, the French people decided, so to speak, to order things differently.

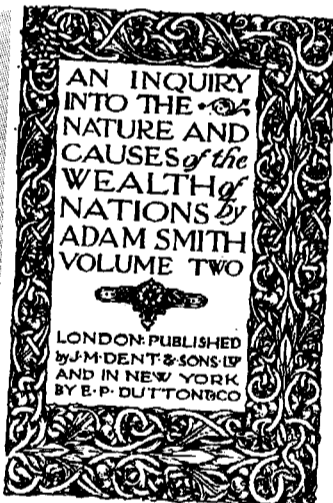
Rousseau also held that while man was originally pre-social, he was not thereby indifferent to his fellow men. In addition to the instinct for self-preservation, there exists an instinctual compassion for the suffering of others: "I believe I can discern two principles antecedent to reason: the first gives us an ardent interest in our own wellbeing and our own preservation, the second inspires in us a natural aversion to seeing any other sentient being perish or suffer, especially if it is one of our kind."

How then did natural man—free, independent and compassionate—turn into civilized man, driven by greed, envy and ambition and subject to oppression at the

*continued on page 9*



Der Spiegel



Adam Smith maintained that a competitive, capitalist market economy would maximize labor productivity and the "wealth of nations."

very much, these principles are strictly Hobbesian: "In Nature all species live off one another; in society all classes do the same."

The genius and intellectual honesty of Diderot was such that he recognized the fundamental contradiction of Enlightenment rationalism though he could not resolve it. A materialist understanding of the world does not necessarily lead to a benevolent attitude toward humanity. In the language of the day, reason and virtue do not always go together. Diderot once wrote to his friend and lover, Sophie Volland: "To do good, to know the true—that's what distinguishes one man from another. The rest is nothing." But this was a personal philosophy. He was intelligent and honest enough to understand that most men did not share it and he could not convince them to do so.

## Adam Smith and Classic Bourgeois Liberalism

A far more influential and historically significant response to Hobbes was that of Adam Smith. Smith agreed with Hobbes that men were naturally selfish and acquisitive, which did not exclude altruistic feelings either. But he argued that individual selfishness could be channeled to serve the interests of soci-

trine held that inequalities in income and wealth and social conflict over the division of wealth were the necessary cost, so to speak, for a technologically dynamic economy combined with a high level of individual freedom.

Today, especially in the U.S., Adam Smith is identified with the "free market" right wing. However, in the late 18th century and for many decades after, classic bourgeois liberalism had its progressive aspects and even revolutionary implications. Personal wealth was justified insofar as one contributed to production, to the "wealth of nations" in Smith's term. This might apply to British manufacturers, merchants or even enterprising landlords. But it did not apply to the landed nobility of France and other continental countries, living off rent from the peasantry, who did nothing to acquire their wealth except to be born.

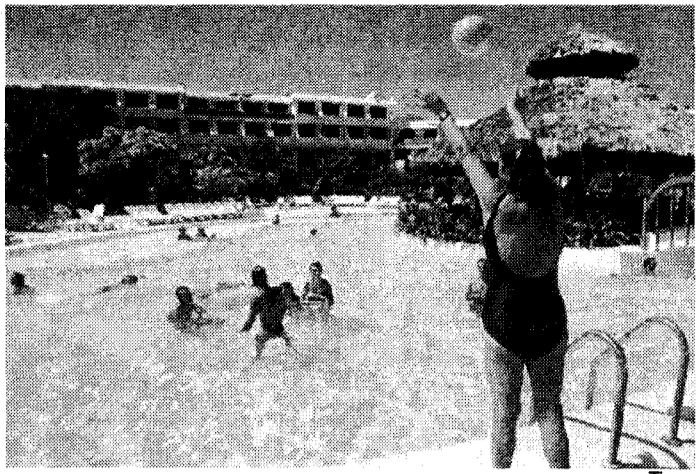
Adam Smith was also an early and influential opponent of slavery in Britain's American colonies. He opposed slavery on economic as well as moral grounds. He argued that slaves had no incentive to work efficiently since unlike free wage laborers they could not, through hard work and frugality, ever rise above their servile condition. At the same time, slaveowners had far less incentive

## Cuba...

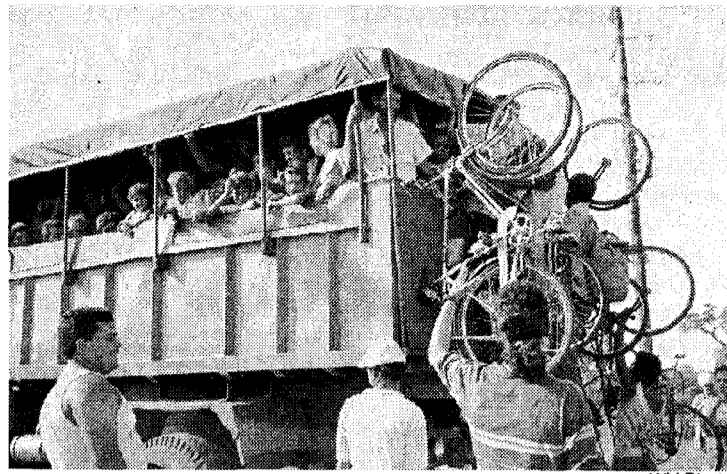
(continued from page 5)

products, like meat and fruit, are only available at expensive private markets. The average worker's monthly ration includes only 4 kilograms of rice, 4 kilos of beans and three kilos of coffee. This highlights the urgency of our demand: **Down with the U.S. imperialist embargo!**

I immediately noticed the economic disparity which is becoming ever greater. The Cuban festival organizers, centrally the youth group of the Communist Party, housed many foreign delegates, especially from big investor countries like Canada, in posh neighborhoods. My host was a computer programmer who delighted in telling me about the latest edition of Microsoft Windows and lived in Playa Miramar, a ritzy neighborhood with many foreign embassies. Cubans living there have access to dollars—through private dealings or otherwise. Their homes often have air conditioning, VCRs, computers. Some even have maids. When supplies are available, they buy fish, pork, good fruit. In other parts of town, however, I saw people living in cramped quarters and houses falling apart. On a state salary of 200 pesos (US\$9) a month or less, daily life for Cuban workers is a struggle, while those who have access to the newly legalized dollar economy—entrepreneurs, black marketeers or those with relatives abroad—can live more comfortably. The introduction of market mechanisms like legalizing the dollar has sharply increased inequality.



Time



WV Photo

**Introduction of dollar economy has exacerbated economic inequality. While foreign tourists frolic (left), Cuban workers must wait hours for transportation in crowded trucks.**

"Defend Canadian sovereignty!"

Economic inequality also exacerbates race distinctions—Miramar, for instance, is overwhelmingly white, while most black people live in run-down neighborhoods. This is particularly egregious, as blacks (who constitute as much as half of the population) are among the strongest supporters of the revolution, while most of the counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms) who fled the revolution were white. That it is mainly the (largely white) relatives of these exiles back home who benefit from the U.S. dollars also aggravates racial tensions.

### Cuba in the Post-Soviet World

Although the U.S. embargo is certainly starving Cuba, the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union paved the way for the present dire situation there. As

Soviet Union "one of the most progressive things that has happened in decades" (*Militant*, 11 November 1996). The *Militant* (6 September 1991) backed Boris Yeltsin's counterrevolution, exclaiming, "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup." In contrast, the ICL called for proletarian political revolution to sweep away Yeltsin counterrevolution, and after the consolidation of a capitalist state, for socialist revolution.

The SWP's embrace of Castroism in the early 1960s was one of the decisive factors marking its break with Trotskyism, which we fought within the SWP as the Revolutionary Tendency, forerunner of the Spartacist League. Unconditional military defense of, and a perspective of proletarian political revolution in deformed workers states from Cuba to Vietnam still remain integral to our Trotskyist program. Today, the SWP seeks to attract radical-minded youth by proclaiming itself the most consistent defender of the Cuban Revolution. In fact, as its support to the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union makes clear, the SWP's politics are counterposed to genuine defense of the Cuban workers state.

### Defend Cuba Through Proletarian Political Revolution!

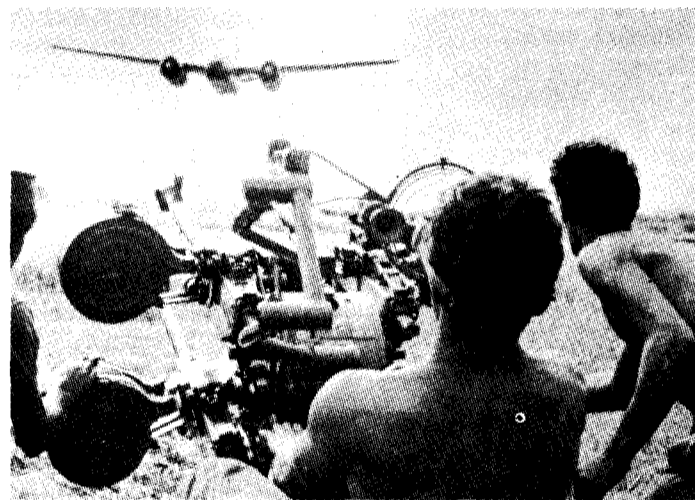
Everywhere I went, I saw billboards celebrating Castro's fallen comrade-in-arms, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, and the festival delegates snapped up thousands of Che books, T-shirts, posters, cigarette lighters, you name it. The foreign "socialists" who uncritically tail Castro lapped up this quasi-religious adulation of Fidel and Che. Castro's various appearances during the festival were greeted with chants of "Fi-del, Fi-del" or "Fi-Fi-Fi, Del-Del-Del, Viva Fidel!" But Castro and the bureaucracy he heads are strangling the revolution, above all through their anti-revolutionary Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country."

The Cuban Revolution, on one small island 90 miles off Florida, could not survive for long in isolation. Following the 1959 Revolution, despite overtures by Castro to appease them, U.S. imperialism hard-lined it against the victorious 26th of July Movement. Castro and Che

responded with sweeping nationalizations of the U.S.-owned sugar plantations, banks and other firms and by grabbing the lifeline offered by the Soviet Union, the other Soviet-bloc countries and China. Consequently, they consummated the overthrow of the old dictatorship with a *social revolution*, collectivizing everything down to local ice cream vendors. Modeling itself on the Soviet Union and the Stalinist countries in East Europe, Cuba became a *deformed workers state*: the bourgeoisie was expropriated and the economy collectivized under central planning, yet political power rests in the hands of a Stalinist bureaucracy instead of the working class.

The elimination of capitalist class rule meant enormous gains for Cuba's working people. Aside from the necessary military defense against imperialism—and the bureaucracy's privileges—the resources of Cuban society were invested in a centralized, planned economy, with everyone guaranteed a job, housing, food, education. The Cuban health care system, despite the crippling effects of the U.S. blockade, is still the best among "developing countries." The revolution also greatly helped women: great attention is paid to prenatal care and the infant mortality rate is lower than in parts of the industrialized world, like Harlem. Cubans enjoy one of the highest literacy rates in the world. In fact, the Cubans' level of general culture—thanks to making education a basic right—is amazing. For example, my host had read all of the classics of literature, adventure and detective novels by the age of fifteen, when he turned to more "serious stuff" like politics and science. A friend of his, still in his mid-twenties, is fluent in Spanish, English, German, Russian and Polish. These are all results of a planned economy which, by eliminating private property and profit, lays the basis not just for satisfying basic human needs but also for developing human potential.

Similarly, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, by placing the working class in state power, laid the basis for a planned economy and the tremendous development of Soviet productive forces. However, unlike the Cuban Revolution, which was led by



Editorial Letras Cubanas

**Bay of Pigs, 1961: Heroic Cuban soldiers and workers militia crushed invasion attempt by CIA *gusanos*.**

Through such "reforms," the ruling Cuban bureaucracy is strangling the revolution and paving the road toward capitalist restoration. What is necessary is the construction of an *internationalist* Trotskyist party in Cuba to place political power in the hands of the workers through overthrowing the *nationalist* bureaucracy through political revolution. The ICL seeks to forge such a party as part of our struggle for international socialism, including—and especially important for Cuba—in the "belly of the beast," the U.S. This is the only way to safeguard the Cuban Revolution.

In contrast, the various Stalinist Communist parties not only applaud Cuban president Fidel Castro's nationalism, but also the nationalist hype of their own bourgeoisies. Each delegation was identified by its national flag, so much so that the closing ceremony at Pan American Stadium resembled a World Cup soccer game. For its part, the American Communist Party declared that "the U.S. delegation carrying the [American] flag...sent an especially powerful message" (*People's Weekly World*, 30 August). Coming with the English-Canadian delegation (which was organized by the Communist Party), I had to make a point of refusing to carry the bloody Canadian flag! The Canadian CP supports the chauvinist crusade of the Canadian ruling class against Quebec's independence. And, in "fighting" against the U.S. Helms-Burton bill, which seeks among other things to ban representatives from companies which trade with Cuba from entering the U.S., they join liberals in calling to

our pamphlet, *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled* (1993), noted:

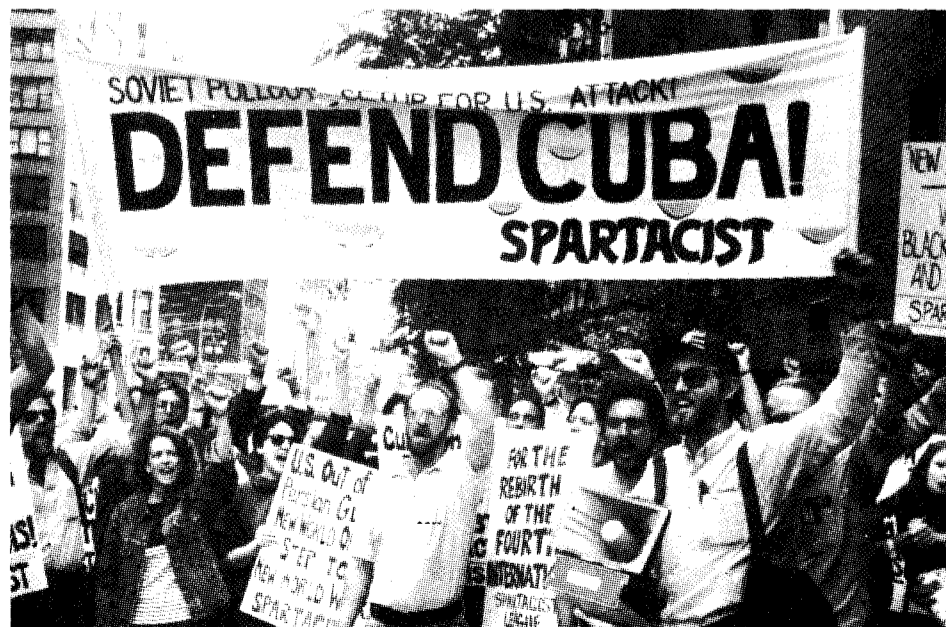
"The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former USSR is an unparalleled defeat for working people all over the world, decisively altering the political landscape on this planet. The Soviet masses have been plunged into desperate poverty unknown since the darkest days of the war against Nazi Germany."

This also plunged Cuba—which depended on massive Soviet assistance and trade—into mortal economic danger, as the Cuban economy shrank by *one-third* between 1991 and 1994.

But much of the liberal North American "Cuba Solidarity" milieu, even its supposedly "socialist" component, is willfully blind to the devastating impact of the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. The clearest and most idiotic example is provided by the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and its Canadian affiliate, the Communist League, who were among the biggest builders for the festival in North America. In its 25 August *Militant*, the SWP argues:

"The return of Hong Kong to China, opposition by workers and farmers to the capitalist demands for 'sacrifice' in Argentina, the United States, France and other capitalist countries, and resistance to the effects of 'market reforms' from Albania to Yugoslavia and Russia are signs of the weakness of imperialism.... The U.S. government is using its military might because it lost the cold war. It could not defeat the Soviet Union the cold way and has not been able to reestablish capitalism there yet."

The SWP absurdly denies reality because they *supported* counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, calling the breakup of the



WV Photo

**New York City, September 1991: Spartacist protest against cutoff of Soviet aid, which devastated already weakened Cuban economy.**



a petty-bourgeois guerrilla movement seeking only democratic reforms, the Russian Revolution was consciously made by the Russian working class under Communist leadership. The Bolshevik leadership of Lenin and Trotsky fought to extend socialist revolution across the planet. Yet because of the great backwardness of Russia and the failure of revolutionary opportunities elsewhere, a bureaucracy developed in the new Soviet republic in the early 1920s. Represented by Joseph Stalin, it wrested political power from the working class through a political counterrevolution, turning the Soviet Union into a degenerated workers state. The essence of Stalinism is summed up in its theory of "socialism in one country": that it is possible to create socialism, the abolition of class inequality, in an isolated and backward country.

Trying to maintain its privileged position, the Stalinist bureaucracy instead sought "peace" with imperialism, later dubbed "peaceful coexistence." It became extremely hostile to extending the Russian Revolution abroad, and in fact sabotaged such attempts and murdered those Bolsheviks, like Trotsky, who remained internationalists. The Stalinist bureaucracy built up a whole system of lies and repression against the Soviet working class. The working class was atomized and demoralized. After decades of slowly strangling the revolution, the Stalinists, more hostile to the workers than to capitalist restoration, stood by during—or actually led—capitalist counterrevolution.

## Cuban Stalinists Open Gates of Counterrevolution

At the festival, I got a snapshot of how the Stalinist politics of the Castro leader-

ship has led Cuba into a dead end. The themes of many meetings—such as "Young Entrepreneurs" and "Young Religious Believers"—were far from what I expected at a leftist conference. The main slogan, "For Anti-Imperialist Solidarity, Peace and Friendship," explicitly left out any mention of socialism or the working class in its attempts to cuddle up to pro-capitalist forces. I personally attended a meeting at Havana's Capitolio Nacional

e.g., the *perestroika* introduced by the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. Castro proclaims that he hopes to avoid the "horrible experiences" that destroyed the deformed workers states in East Europe by slowly introducing these reforms, but this is undermining the fibre of the revolution.

Contrary to what Castro and his bureaucrats maintain, it is impossible to build socialism on a tiny island alone. As we wrote in "Cuba, Castro and Che: The

Bosio/Gamma-Liaison

Castro advised Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega (far right) against expropriating Nicaraguan bourgeoisie and creating "another Cuba."



where an official of the Cuban government, looking just like a Western yuppie, declaimed the necessity and irreversibility of the "mixed economy"—a bit of socialism and a bit of capitalism. Yet it is this counterrevolution on the installment plan which threatens the revolution.

Following the destruction of the Soviet Union, the Cuban leadership introduced mass layoffs and legalized private entrepreneurship, foreign capital investment and the use of the U.S. dollar. These policies are eerily reminiscent of those introduced by many East European and Soviet Stalinists during their terminal crises—

Mystique of the Guerrilla Road" (WV No. 630, 6 October 1995): "The future of the Cuban Revolution hangs in the balance of class struggle outside the Caribbean island, and this fact underlines the urgent necessity for revolutionary struggle here in the U.S., in Latin America, and elsewhere." But like Stalin and his successors who sought only to maintain their own nationally limited planned economies, Castro is viscerally hostile to the struggle for socialist revolution abroad. In the 1980s, Castro warned leftist guerrillas in Nicaragua against "the Cuban road," advising them not to expropriate the

Nicaraguan capitalists and landlords.

This in turn feeds cynicism within the Cuban working class. While I expected to encounter some illusions in capitalism, I was nonetheless appalled by the degree to which Cubans believe in the "wonders" of the capitalist world, especially in "friendly" countries like Canada. Cubans were shocked when I told them about the homelessness, racism and the general material misery of the capitalist world. The bureaucracy's censorship of international news and, more fundamentally, its appeals to world imperialism reinforce these illusions.

But while the U.S. pursues its gunboat version of imperialism toward Cuba, other imperialist countries, such as Canada, simply have a different plan for fomenting counterrevolution. They think it more productive to work *through* the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy, which is only too happy to oblige. Through tourism, mining and other industries, Western companies are making large profits on the backs of the Cuban working class. The chairman of the Canadian company Sherritt International, Corp., which now runs Cuba's biggest nickel smelter, declared that Cuba "is the best investment opportunity in the world."

Under the rubric of "solidarity," organizations such as the CP and SWP are in fact egging on the final demise of the Cuban Revolution. All youth who are genuinely interested in defending the gains of the revolution should understand this. Only the ICL's internationalist Trotskyist perspective can defend the Cuban deformed workers state. U.S./Canada: Hands off Cuba! Defend Cuba! For proletarian political revolution and international socialism! ■

## Campus Support...

(continued from page 5)

of minorities. That's the power of labor."

The striking BART workers faced a torrent of anti-union abuse from the capitalist media like the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which railed to its yuppie readers about "greedy" strikers and the commuting problems of the suburban wealthy. Comrade Don concluded the speakout, "This is not a question of public opinion, this is a question of raw class power. The capitalist class and the BART management have the power of the capitalist state and the police on their side. The BART police union signed their contract with an agreement that they would not only get their raise, but on top of that they would get the raise that the BART unions would get through struggle. The *Chronicle* is not crying about overpaying the cops. The cops are on their side. The *Chronicle* is on the side of the bosses. *Workers Vanguard*, the newspaper of the Spartacist League, is on the side of the workers. You should get it and read it. Unchain labor's power! Victory to the BART strike!"

One self-professed "socialist" group, the International Socialist Organization

(ISO), capitulated to this anti-strike hysteria and tried to make the strike more acceptable to "inconvenienced" students. The ISO's "support" for striking BART workers on the campus was limited to pushing a mealy-mouthed petition begging President Corrigan to "openly support the strike and to excuse students who are absent or late to classes." According to the *Golden Gater*, some of the students who signed this petition opposed the strike! This is the same Corrigan who ordered a cop riot squad to brutally disperse a multiracial group of students who were trying to defend a mural of Malcolm X against administration attempts to remove it in 1994.

Thus it was no surprise that the ISO refused to participate in our openly communist demonstration; instead they held a tiny five-minute "rally" at which the *only* speaker was a union bureaucrat whose speech apologized for the effect the strike was having on the public!

In contrast to our call for the independence of the working class from the bosses and their political parties, the ISO seeks simply to pressure the current pro-Democratic Party misleaders who are wedded to upholding the racist capitalist system. At the same time, the ISO believes that security guards, prison guards and even cops can "collectively rebel" against capitalism! (See "ISO: Looking for a Few Good Cops," WV No. 664, 21 March.) The cops' scab-herding attacks against strikers and the ever-present threat of federal intervention showed clearly which class the government and its thugs in blue "protect and serve."

The SYC attacked the anti-union smear job of the capitalist press aped by the administration's lackeys on the campus newspaper, the *Golden Gater*, which whined that the "strike strands students." The ISO essentially echoed this line of reasoning: "If there was a hurricane and all the bridges were washed out, you wouldn't be dropped out of your classes because you missed three classes because the bridge washed away" (*Golden Gater*, 9 September). For real socialists, a strike isn't a disaster but an *opportunity* to fight oppression!

Our class-struggle program is not predicated on public opinion polls, or begging representatives of the class enemy like Corrigan, Brown or Clinton. We seek to win students and youth to the side of the working class in the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. The Spartacus Youth Club seeks to win students to an understanding of the necessity of allying with the working class in the struggle for communist revolution. Join us! ■

## Enlightenment...

(continued from page 7)

hands of his fellow men? For Rousseau, the basis of society and the root of all evil in the modern world was the institution of property:

"The first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, thought of saying 'This is mine' and found people simple enough to believe him, was the true founder of civil society. How many crimes, wars, murders; how much misery and horror the human race would have been spared if someone had pulled up the stakes and filled in the ditch and cried out to his fellow men: 'Beware of listening to this impostor. You are lost if you forget that the fruits of the earth belong to everyone and that the earth itself belongs to no one!'"

Man, of course, can never return to a pre-social "state of nature." Thus Rousseau's ideal—and it was an *ideal*, not a program—was a democratic and egalitarian society in which there would be "no citizen so rich as to be able to buy another, none so poor as to be forced to sell himself." He envisioned small, self-governing communities of independent farmers and artisans.

From a Marxist standpoint, two fundamental criticisms can be leveled against Rousseau, leaving aside his myth of a pre-social state of nature. The first of these criticisms was also made by other Enlightenment thinkers, especially Voltaire. This was Rousseau's economic primitivism, his aversion to technological progress and to what would now be called a rising standard of living.

Rousseau and Adam Smith shared the

same basic premise but drew opposite conclusions from it. Both maintained that a technologically dynamic economy necessarily generated widespread inequalities. The men who invented and financed new machines or improved agricultural techniques would exploit these advantages to acquire riches for themselves. New items of consumption could not be made available to everyone but would be enjoyed only by the wealthy. Hence Rousseau's democratic republic had to be based on Spartan austerity and a static technology. The actual society which came closest to his ideal was that of the mountaineer peasant villages of his native Switzerland, an economically backward region even by the standards of mid-18th century Europe.

At the beginning of this talk, I quoted a contemporary of Marx to the effect that he had united, among other thinkers, Rousseau and Voltaire. The main way in which Marx did this was to combine Rousseau's commitment to a democratic and egalitarian society with Voltaire's understanding that advances in science and technology are key to social progress.

The second fundamental criticism of Rousseau from a Marxist standpoint is one which is applicable to Enlightenment social thought in general. Rousseau maintained that it was the institution of property which caused men to become selfish, envious, ambitious. At the same time, the desire for wealth and power drives men to acquire and maintain property. How then is it possible to break out of this vicious circle?

As Plekhanov explained in *The Development of the Monist View of History*, Enlightenment social thought was in a sense circular. Prevailing opinions or attitudes are said to be determined by existing institutions. And existing institutions were sustained by prevailing opinions. How then did Enlightenment thinkers expect social and political progress to come about, how did they expect to bridge the gulf between what existed in the present and what they wanted in the future?

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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# Australia...

(continued from page 3)

and utterly dispossessed Aboriginal peoples. In August this year, the High Court denied financial awards to Aboriginal families subjected to decades of state-enforced kidnapping of their children under the rubric of "assimilation." The ruling came just over two months after the government's own Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission described the monstrous kidnapping of up to 100,000 Aboriginal children between 1910 and 1970 as "genocide" and called for monetary redress for Aborigines. Howard responded by announcing he would refuse to abide by the finding, intoning against "extremist views" portraying Australia's history as "little more than a disgraceful record of imperialism, exploitation and racism" (*Australian*, 27 May). And in the face of a racist backlash by farming and mining interests, Howard has moved to cut off even the minimal social programs and land rights decisions for Aborigines from previous governments.

Along with the exclusion of Asian labour codified in the "White Australia" policy adopted at the turn of this century, the murderous dispossession of Aboriginal peoples was part of the bedrock of Australian capitalism. Today, the very survival of these marginalised people, who are condemned to lives of unemployment and abject poverty and subject to unmitigated racist cop terror, demands nothing less than sweeping away capitalist rule through workers revolution.

Especially now, with the Howard government employing its arsenal of anti-strike laws to break the unions, it is in the immediate interests of the organised working class to mobilise in defence of the rights of Aborigines and all the oppressed. The Common Youth Allowance, which cuts off tens of thousands of youth from unemployment benefits, was prepared by the Keating Labor government's denial of social security benefits to newly arrived immigrants. The "work for the dole" scheme, which conscripts thousands of unemployed youth for forced labour, undercutting union wages and conditions, was first piloted on Aboriginal people. The virulently racist underpinnings of such measures are meant to poison the consciousness of the multi-ethnic proletariat, so that the capitalists can continue to divide and rule.

As communists, we aim to forge a Leninist vanguard party that would be a tribune of the people, fighting all manifestations of national, racial and sexual oppression. The storming of Parliament during a trade-union demonstration in August last year, which was sparked when workers came to the defence of an Aboriginal contingent attacked by the cops, gave a small taste of the sort of integrated class struggle that is desperately needed. But such a struggle requires politically combatting the hold



**Spartacist contingent at protest last March against fascist National Action "bookshop" in Fawkner, heavily immigrant suburb of Melbourne.**

over the working class of the Labor Party and pro-capitalist ACTU union tops, who responded to the August demonstration by collaborating with a vicious state witchhunt, fingering militants and purging trade unionists who acted in defence of their Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

## "Leftists" in Labor Party's Shadow

At the moment, Hanson's virulent racism has galvanised previously quiescent layers of the society into political motion. Significantly, protest demonstrations have included large numbers from the increasing immigrant component of the Australian working class. Opposition to Hanson is also growing in ruling circles, who understand she is very bad for business. The previously booming tourist trade from Japan has been dropping precipitously, while university officials bemoan the fact that Hanson's anti-Asian xenophobic tirades have caused a severe drop in the enrollment of fee-paying students from South Korea to Malaysia.

With even the most despotic right-wing Asian regimes chastising their Australian counterparts over Hanson, Canberra's foreign trade office recently established a special division dedicated to promoting Australia's "image" in Asia! The federal government has gerrymandered Hanson's electoral district to push her out in the next elections.

Now that it is out of office, the Labor Party occasionally likes to posture as opponents of Hanson's xenophobia and blunt racism. This is even as Labor parliamentarians give their assent to virtually all of the Howard government's vicious racist initiatives, while New South Wales Labor premier Bob Carr is in the forefront of whipping up hysteria against "Asian drug gangs" and pushing for tighter immigration restrictions. But closer to the ground, Labor spokesmen have been prominent in many anti-Hanson protests.

The reaction in the bourgeoisie and Labor officialdom against Hanson has opened the door for the reformist left to

push the line of class collaboration. Thus, while the ISO is portrayed in the bourgeois press as some sort of wild-eyed radicals for their demand to "shut down" Hanson, in reality the ISO is making this call on *the bourgeoisie and its state*. The ISO is circulating a petition calling on Parliament to oust Hanson, appealing to the same racist capitalist government that produced this fascistic menace to clean up its act. *Socialist Worker* (4 July) also hails the measure taken by the Ashfield City Council in Sydney, put forward by a Labor councillor, to ban meetings of Hanson's followers.

Even the ISO's tepid reformist approach can seem positively militant, however, when compared to the civil-libertarian Democratic Socialist Party (DSP). Feeling heat from the media's witchhunting, the DSP wrote in *Green Left Weekly* (6 August) that "only a small minority of the left (the International Socialist Organisation and the Spartacist League) advocate closing down One Nation meetings." The DSP not only wilfully confuses the SL's perspective for a class-struggle fight against racist oppression with the ISO's liberal reliance on the state, but spits on the thousands of Asians, Aborigines, students and other activists who have mobilised to stop Hanson and her racist rabble.

While the DSP's attempts to pose as "reasonable" leftists as opposed to the ISO would repel anyone seeking to fight racist oppression and the profit system that breeds it, the ISO's appeals to the bourgeois state and its Labor councillors to ban bad people and bad ideas are no less a danger. The ISO sows the illusion that the bourgeois state—at its core composed of the police, army, prisons and courts, providing the armed fist of capitalist rule—can be pressured to act in the interests of the oppressed. The cops' attacks on anti-Hanson protesters and other assaults on democratic rights are a warning that whatever measures the state may take against Hanson and her followers will only be triply enforced against anti-racists, the left and the unions.

For their part, the centrists of Workers Power (WP) have emblazoned their articles on Hanson with the call "no free speech for racists." This demand is inherently absurd. Racism is endemic to capitalist society, so who exactly would WP deny a platform to? Certainly not the chauvinist swine who run the Labor Party, which WP assiduously tails. In practice, this slogan boils down to another liberal appeal to clean up the system of racist oppression. WP also claims that this demand is not a "call upon the capitalist state to censor racists" (*Workers Power*, July/September 1997). But this is precisely what is happening, as Labor-run city councils from the Sydney and Melbourne suburbs to Ipswich and Brisbane ban Hanson's meetings from premises they control.

As the fascists increasingly active around Hanson, the question is not one of speech but of *deeds*. The fascists are not based on a program of ideas, but of racist violence and murder, ultimately aimed at destroying the organised workers movement. They must be stopped through mass united-front mobilisations centred on the trade unions and uniting behind them all of

the fascists' intended victims. In regard to the fight against the opening of National Action's "bookshop" in Fawkner, Melbourne, the ISO, WP and other fake socialists in the Coalition Against the Nazis *opposed* this proletarian perspective.

## The Fight for Revolutionary Leadership

What unites reformists like the ISO with the centrist WP is their common fealty to the Labor Party and the trade-union bureaucracy—the "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class." This is captured in the call trumpeted on ISO leaflets to "fight the right" and mimicked in *Workers Power's* lead headline on Hanson, "Fight the Racist Right." Historically, "fight the right" has been the watchword for class-collaborationist coalitions tying the working class to a supposed "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie. In Australia, this is accomplished through the instrumentality of the Labor Party and trade-union tops. The Laborite left forms a syphilitic chain between these pro-capitalist misleaders and militant workers, minorities and youth, religiously calling for support to Labor in *every* election.

It is remarkable but predictable that in its two articles on Hanson, *Workers Power* studiously avoids taking up the issue of protectionism—one of Hanson's chief calling cards—because it is the Labor/trade-union tops who are today among the most rabid proponents of high tariffs to "protect" Australian industry. National-chauvinist protectionism is poison to the class struggle, sowing the lie that workers and their exploiters have joint class interests.

The submersion of the "left" in Laborite social democracy has given the misnamed "Socialist Equality Party" (SEP) a chance to posture as somewhat orthodox Marxists, condemning the ISO for acting "to keep any movement of workers and youth chained to the Labor and union bureaucracies" (*Workers News*, 13 June). But potential buyers of the SEP's Marxist pretences should beware. In their articles on Hanson, the SEP offers no concrete demands in defence of the oppressed while denouncing in *Workers News* (30 May) the "anti-Hanson" campaigns being waged by the various radical groups" as "hysterical"—a charge which rather neatly dovetails with the current media/police witchhunt against the left.

Furthermore, *Workers News* (13 June) dismisses Aboriginal land rights altogether on the grounds that "the very conception of ownership of land was completely alien" to Aboriginal society. Unfortunately for the colour-blind SEP, the colonial conquerors *did* have a precise concept of property, which they proceeded to steal outright. On top of this, the SEP has written off the trade unions as no longer workers organisations of any kind. In equating the mass economic organisations of the working class with their traitorous, pro-capitalist misleaders, the SEP renounces the necessary political struggle against the union bureaucrats every bit as much as the Laborite left.

The all-sided ruling-class assault on immigrants, Aborigines, youth and the unions highlights the struggles of workers and minorities must advance together or they will surely all fall back. To address the near-record levels of unemployment, we call for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay to provide jobs for all. Against the racist, chauvinist protectionism pushed by the Labor/trade-union misleaders, which helped prepare the ground for Hanson, we fight for internationalist proletarian struggle against all the capitalist rulers of the region. Asian immigrant workers will play a key role in the class struggle in Australia, and form a bridge to workers in the rest of Asia. For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!

The fight for socialist revolution requires above all the forging of a revolutionary leadership for the working class and the oppressed—a communist vanguard party. Such a party can only be built through irreconcilable political struggle against the Laborite misleaders and their reformist and centrist tails. ■

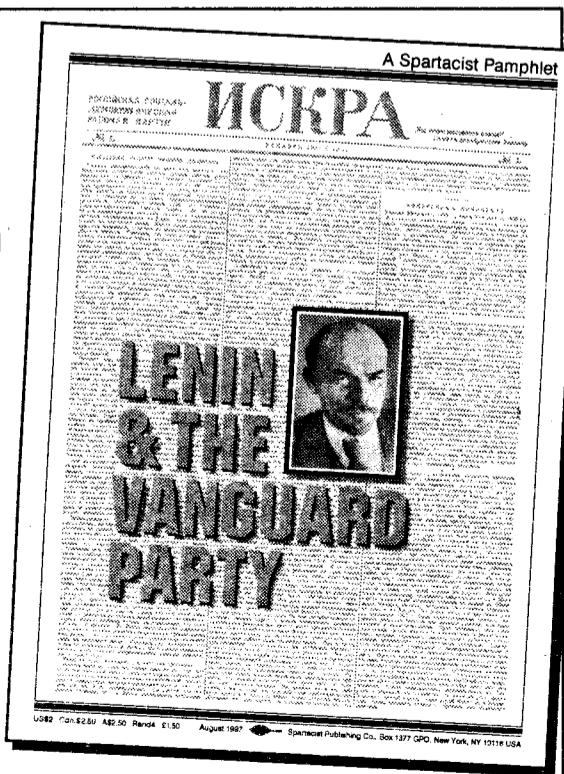
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# BART Strike...

(continued from page 12)

That is what is behind the howls against "overpaid" city workers, whose relatively higher wages expose just how far the wages of industrial workers have fallen. To bring these unions down is largely why Brown was brought in from his former powerful job as speaker of the state assembly. His predecessor, the ex-cop Frank Jordan, could never have gotten away with what Brown is doing. Brown's strikebreaking role underscores that the capitalist Democratic Party is the enemy of workers and the oppressed. *Break with the Democrats—We need a multiracial, class-struggle workers party!*

In this class-divided society, with the capitalists on top amassing wealth from the labor of the working class, the police are there to defend the ill-gotten riches of their ruling-class masters against those they exploit. There were widespread illusions on the picket lines, however, that



AP  
Strikebreaking San Francisco Democratic Party mayor Willie Brown.

BART cops, who have been organized into another local of the SEIU, are different. These illusions were systematically spread by the union officials, including ATU Local 1555 president Bob Smith, who went so far as to thank the cops publicly and welcome their support at a September 12 union rally.

Make no mistake: BART cops work for the racist, anti-union BART bosses—they are the ones who escort workers out when fired. Their job in any militant workers action is to smash it. During the 1979 conflict, BART police were assembled in a nearby building and readied for an assault on a militant union occupation of the Concord maintenance yard.

It was a racist BART cop who blew away black teenager Jerrold Hall with a shotgun blast to the back of the head in November 1992—just like the San Francisco cops who brutally beat to death black San Francisco resident Aaron Williams in 1995 and one year later did the same to Teamster trucker Mark Garcia; or the Rohnert Park cops who carried out the racist execution of Chinese American scientist Kuanchung Kao last April. Cops are not workers but racist, strikebreaking thugs for the capitalist class. BART cops have no place in the SEIU, any more than the cops and prison guards organized by AFSCME and the Teamsters belong in the ranks of labor. *Cops out of the unions!*

## For a Class-Struggle Leadership!

The program of the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy is *class collaboration*, sacrificing the economic and social interests of the workers to ensure the profitability of American corporations. Thus the union tops have overseen the drastic decline in workers' wages over the last two decades. This class collaboration is codified in their strategic alliance with the Democratic Party, which dates back to the "New Deal" of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s. Many top AFL-CIO officials sit on the central committees of

internationally, including by tens of thousands of anti-racist youth and workers, after the signing of his death warrant a year later. It was this mass public outcry that won a stay of execution in August 1995.

Mumia's case throws a glaring spotlight on the barbaric death penalty, which stands at the apex of the capitalist system of repression. While driving down wages and axing social welfare programs, this country's rulers are drastically beefing up their apparatus of state terror. Central to that is the speedup on death row, where executions are taking place at a rate greater than at any time since the 1930s. Last week, death row inmates in Mansfield, Ohio rebelled in desperation as the state prepares for its first execution in almost 35 years. Meanwhile, on the streets of the impoverished ghettos and barrios, racist cops feel emboldened to carry out the most heinous atrocities. This was recently seen in the sadistic torture

Oakland protest, March 1993, denounces BART cop killing of black teenager Jerrold Hall.



state Democratic parties.

The fact that this collaboration with the class enemy is directly *counterposed* to the independent mobilization of labor's potential economic and political power was starkly revealed in the way the BART strike was ended behind the backs of union members. BART spokesman Larry Kamer credits the intervention of top state and regional AFL-CIO bureaucrats with ending the strike, remarking that the union negotiators "needed to have someone at a high level who had the kind of authority to pull people together and perhaps even knock a few heads" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 14 September).

The "high level" delegation included Art Pulaski, head of the California Labor Federation, and Walter Johnson, Owen Marron and John Dalrymple, who respectively head the San Francisco, Alameda and Contra Costa County Central Labor Councils. It was this crew of more "experienced" labor traitors which came up with the four-year wage deal that was calculated to deceive the workers. Meanwhile, top Democratic Party politicians like Brown, Oakland mayor Elihu Harris and state legislator (and anti-gun nut)

Don Perata piled in behind the scenes to ratchet up the pressure for a settlement. With Democratic "friends" like these, who needs enemies like Republican governor Pete Wilson?!

The "new" leaderships elected in both ATU Local 1555 and SEIU Local 790 to replace the hated leaderships that sold them out in past contract fights proved to be no better. They, too, caved in to BART management and to political pressure from the ruling class. This had little to do with their supposed lack of experience. The real problem is that they *share* the same pro-Democratic Party policies and outlook as the people they replaced. As we wrote in "Government Hands Off the Teamsters!" (WV No. 673, 5 September):

"While starting on the picket lines, the struggle to reverse the last 20 years of defeats is going to take more than just union militancy. It's going to take a new kind of *political* leadership that knows that the interests of labor and capital are absolutely counterposed. It means breaking from the Democratic Party and forging in struggle a fighting workers party that not only knows how to win strikes, but also knows that 'labor peace' will only come when the workers take state power. Those who labor must rule!" ■

# Mumia...

(continued from page 2)

the UPS strike:

"If the labor movement is to be revitalized, it must actively take up the fight against racist terror and champion all those victimized by the capitalist rulers. As Mumia continues to struggle and speak out from death row on behalf of the oppressed, it is urgent that labor and all fighters against racist injustice take up his cause."

In 1994, the PDC responded to NPR's cancellation of Mumia's broadcasts by organizing a united-front speakout in New York City hosted by actor Ossie Davis. Participants heard Mumia's own voice through messages taped from behind prison walls, as well as dramatic readings by Davis and others of his commentaries. This effort helped propel wide notice of Jamal's cause, which swelled into a tidal wave of publicity and protest

by New York City cops of Haitian immigrant Abner Louima in Brooklyn.

It is in the direct interest of the labor movement to champion Mumia's cause as part of the fight against the entire system of racist capitalist repression. The kind of frame-up methods, spying and violence employed against Mumia and other fighters for the oppressed have time and again been used against strike militants and the trade unions. In August 1995, as Mumia's execution loomed, the PDC initiated labor-centered united-front protests in New York City and Oakland, California. These protests were based on the understanding of the social power residing in an aroused labor movement standing at the head of oppressed minorities. That power must be brought to bear now in the fight to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty. It is in the course of such struggles that the multiracial working class, under the leadership of a revolutionary party, can and must be armed with

the consciousness of its historic task: to sweep away the murderous capitalist state through socialist revolution.

\* \* \*

**Join the fight to free Mumia! Pass resolutions and raise much-needed contributions for Jamal's defense in your unions and campus and community organizations. Contact the PDC—New York: P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099, phone (212) 406-4252; Chicago: P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867, phone (312) 454-4931; Bay Area: P.O. Box 77462, San Francisco, CA 94107-0462, phone (510) 839-0852.**

**Contributions for Mumia's legal defense should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation (earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense") and mailed to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, New York 10023-5001. ■**

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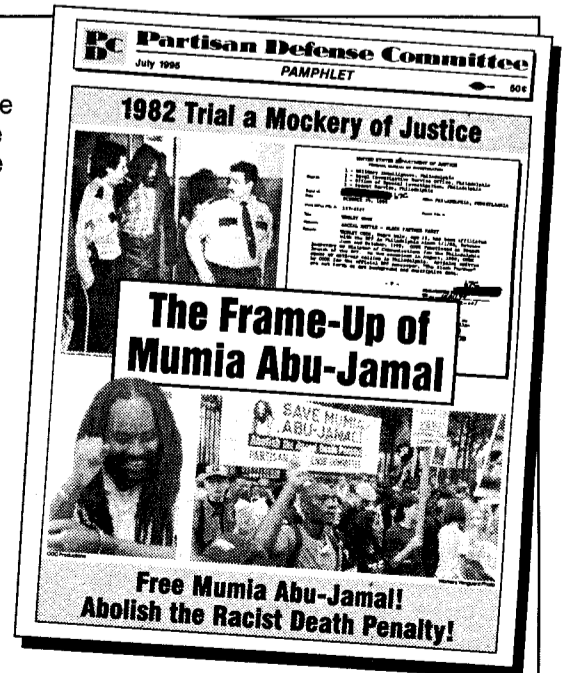
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## Bay Area Transit Strike

# Union Tops Scuttle Fight for Equal Pay for Equal Work

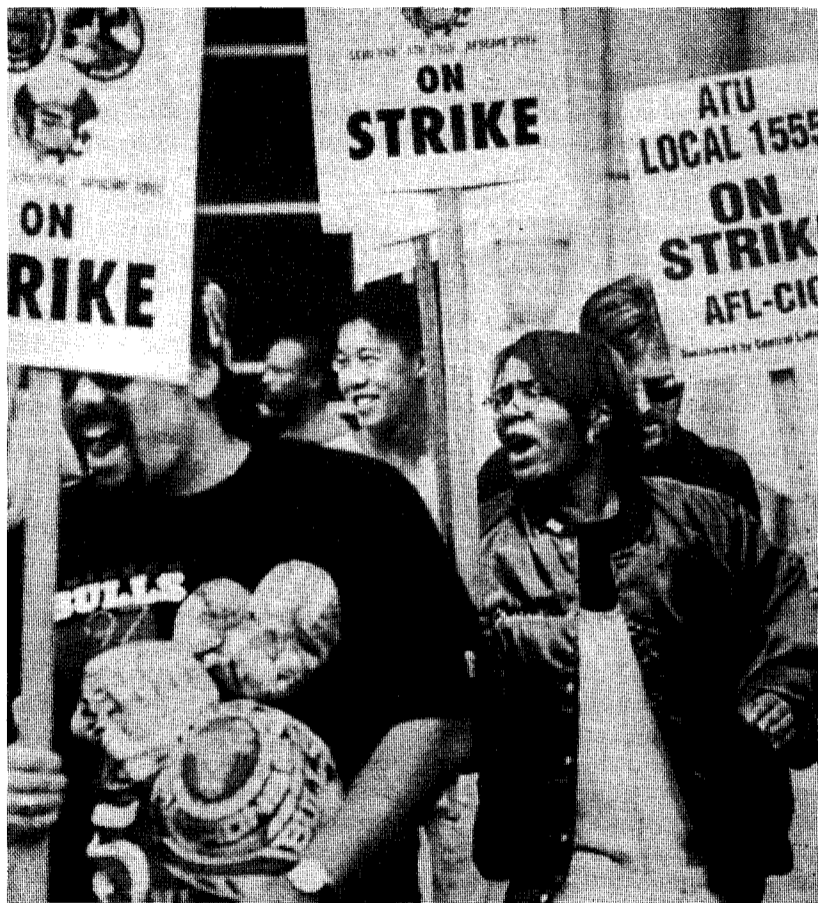
SAN FRANCISCO, September 14—In a treacherous move by the labor bureaucracy working hand in hand with assorted Democratic politicians, a six-day strike against the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system was ended abruptly early Saturday morning when union leaders came out of all-night negotiations and declared that a settlement had been reached with BART management. By 5 a.m., all picket lines had been dismantled and workers were instructed to report for work beginning at 9 p.m. that night. According to news reports, no membership vote is to be permitted until the end of the following week, long after the system is up and running.

From the limited information available, it is clear that this deal struck behind closed doors has ended the strike without winning on the two central issues. The first was an end to the hated two-tier wage system, introduced in 1994 with the connivance of the BART union bureaucrats. According to the tentative agreement, it will take three to four years for new-hires to reach full wages, and starting pay will remain about the same fraction of full pay as previously—as much as 25 percent less.

The second key demand was for a substantial wage increase. A wage package spread over the new four-year contract is deliberately intended to convey the illusion that workers are getting more money than the 3 percent per year over three years that represented BART's "best and final offer." That offer was overwhelmingly rejected by the membership before the strike began. The settlement provides for a four-year contract with *no* pay raise in the first year and 4 percent in each of the three remaining years, which averages out to the same amount that BART originally offered. A \$3,000 bonus, which does not affect base pay, was thrown in as a sweetener. BART director Dan Richard claims the \$43 million price tag on the contract is simply the number you get when you extend the original \$28 million offer over four years instead of three (*San Francisco Examiner*, 14 September). This sleight of hand is now being pushed as a "victory" by the labor tops.

The six-day walkout was the longest shutdown of BART since 1979, when a combination lockout and strike lasted three months. Since then, however, BART ridership has more than doubled to 275,000 passengers a day, including 40 percent of those who commute from the expanding high-income bedroom communities of the East Bay to San Francisco's financial district. It was this white yuppie and upper-middle-class commuter crowd that was the core of a really savage outburst of anti-working-class hatred which was directed against the strike from the beginning and was orchestrated by the union-hating media. Newspapers and airwaves were filled with hysterical denunciations of the "highly paid" BART

**Break with the Democrats!  
Fight for a Workers Party!**



**Integrated BART unions fought against hated two-tier wage system. Strike was called off in backroom deal by labor tops and Democratic Party politicians.**

workers. And since the BART unions are heavily integrated, like other municipal workers unions, there was also an underlying racist component to this vicious union-baiting campaign.

Train operators and station agents, organized in Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1555, and maintenance and office workers of the BART chapter of Service Employees (SEIU) Local 790 were ready to walk out when their contracts expired last June 30. On July 2, Republican governor Pete Wilson imposed a 60-day "cooling off" period, hoping to dissipate the workers' determination as in the past. But this ploy backfired, as BART workers were clearly energized by the example of the successful Teamsters strike against UPS that took place in the interim. At union meetings called to vote on BART's "last and final offer," workers gave the arrogant employers a resounding repudiation. Nearly two-thirds of the membership of both unions turned out. SEIU Local 790 members voted it down by an overwhelming 83 percent; in ATU Local 1555, only 13 votes could be found in favor.

Since the "tiers" took effect on New Year's Day 1995, recently hired BART workers have grown increasingly angry

as their wages are held below those hired earlier. One placard at picket lines in Oakland declared simply: "Tiers of Rage." The strikers' demand for *equal pay for equal work* resonated with workers and minorities who have faced attack after attack: the racist ban on affirmative action; the witchhunting of immigrants; rampant police terror against blacks, Latinos and striking workers; "downsizing" and wage cuts, all to further bloat the enormous wealth of the rich capitalists at the top. This was a fight that all working people, minorities and poor in the Bay Area had a stake in winning.

### **Democratic Party: Enemy of Labor**

The BART strike was not defeated on the picket lines, which remained solid throughout. Instead it was called off in the back rooms by the labor bureaucracy and their Democratic Party "friends of labor," without workers getting what they thought they were fighting for. As we said in our *Workers Vanguard* supplement (27 August)—"Teamsters Face Down UPS Bosses—Unchain Labor's Power!"—which was well received by many on the BART picket lines: "The union bureaucracy sees 'allies' in the

agencies of the class enemy—the government, the cops, the courts.... In the U.S., the main obstacle to successful class struggle against the capitalists is the allegiance to the Democratic Party of the labor bureaucracy as well as of a majority of the working class itself."

BART workers deeply resented Wilson's intervention to postpone their strike. Right-wing State Senator Quentin Kopp has also tried to pass a law banning all strikes by transit workers. But when Willie Brown, San Francisco's Democratic Party mayor, complained last week that the strike was hurting the city and called both sides to his office to end it, the union tops cheered. Many workers on the picket lines also expressed illusions in Brown. Yet this was government intervention in another form, intended like Wilson's "cooling off" order and Kopp's move to restrain and curtail working-class struggle on behalf of the capitalist rulers all these politicians represent. The only difference is that in Brown's case, the class enemy was *welcomed* by the treacherous bureaucrats, who promote illusions in the Democratic Party, which is no less a capitalist party than the Republicans.

The SEIU was a major organizer for Brown's mayoral campaign in 1995, so it's no surprise that the Local 790 tops would welcome him with open arms. Likewise, the entire AFL-CIO bureaucracy mobilized to support Brown, one of the few remaining black mayors, who is seen as particularly pro-labor. But since he took office, Brown has made a special target of the heavily black transit workers in San Francisco's MUNI bus and streetcar system. Appointing his personal hatchet man, Emilio Cruz, as transit czar, Brown has carried out a vicious ongoing campaign against the MUNI drivers union and their "exorbitant" wages, the same theme used against the BART strikers. Cruz nearly provoked a wildcat sick-out in the spring by drivers furious over the firing of a veteran black woman driver.

When San Francisco's garbage workers, represented by the Teamsters, struck for the first time in 50 years last April, Brown threatened to use other city workers to scab, then engineered a sellout which ended the strike after three days. Furthermore, Brown is running a vicious slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" program, forcing largely minority unemployed people to work alongside union workers at half or one-third the wages with no benefits. Brown arrogantly sneers that "workfare" union organizing attempts are "silly."

As reflected in these attacks, the ruling class is targeting public employee unions, whose wages have remained relatively higher than in the more decimated private sector. And because of greater job security due to civil service laws, city workers are less easily pressured into concessions.

*continued on page 11*