

As Clinton Militarizes Border with Mexico



Der Spiegel



Palmer/U.S. News & World Report

Immigrants face terror, exploitation from U.S. capitalist rulers: troops erect steel wall at Mexican border near San Diego, children toil for starvation wages in Manhattan garment sweatshop.

Government Starves Immigrants

As the capitalist rulers rub their hands in glee over the sharp decline in welfare rolls across the country, millions more people grow gaunt from hunger. Since Democratic president Clinton signed the bipartisan measure ending "welfare as we know it" in August 1996, already overburdened soup kitchens and food pantries have been besieged by people desperately trying to feed themselves and their children. In denouncing this vindictive law, we wrote: "The vast increase in human misery resulting from the new anti-welfare act is still uncharted, but there is no doubt that many thousands will starve and die—from hunger, from untreated contagious diseases, from exposure, from homelessness—as a direct result" (WV No. 650, 30 August 1996).

While Democratic and Republican politicians alike cynically have prated about moving people "from welfare to work," the deadly effects of this assault on the poor are so evident this winter that even the capitalist press has had to concede that millions are being pushed to the brink of starvation. The attack on welfare was promoted by a racist campaign vilifying "illegal" immigrants and especially the black ghetto poor, particularly women and children for whom Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) provided a slim lifeline. In fact, nearly one million "legal" immigrants were cut off from food stamps and other benefits. "Denied Food Stamps, Many Immigrants Scrape for Meals," headlined an article in the *New York Times* (8 December 1997), while a similar piece in the *Los Angeles Times* (27 December 1997) was titled, "New Face in Line at Soup Kitchen: Working Poor."

In New York City alone, over 70,000 people are being turned away from food pantries each month as supplies run out. The *New York Times* article noted: "As the months pass and kitchen cupboards

Labor Must Champion Immigrant Rights!

grow barer, immigrants who earn on average about \$10,000 a year find themselves giving up fresh meat, spending rent money on groceries, lining up at food pantries and hunting for work in a city where the unemployment rate stands at 9.1 percent, nearly double the national average." The situation has grown so dire that even Republican NYC mayor Rudolph Giuliani has launched a lawsuit to force the federal government to restore food stamps for immigrant families, arguing that the cuts imposed "extreme hardship, hunger and malnutrition." But this racist pig has hardly become a champion of the poor: Giuliani just appointed as the city's new "welfare czar" the author of the Wisconsin plan which served as the model for the federal anti-welfare law.

Virtually every major city has experienced increased demand for emergency food aid, with two out of five applicants currently employed. The savagery of this onslaught, even as the capitalists are wallowing in record profits, is boundless: "illegal" immigrants suffering from AIDS—who had been granted temporary residency in cities like New York—are now having their Medicaid benefits (and life-prolonging drugs) taken away, giving them the "choice" of dying a cruel death here or back in their impoverished homelands.

In pushing the war on welfare, "the capitalist rulers seek to pit the white working class against both blacks and immigrants by portraying them as a drain on the tax dollars of 'hard-working white folks,'" we wrote in the introduction to our January 1997 *Black History and the Class Struggle* pamphlet ("Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Blacks, Immigrants"). We continued:

"In racist America, where the words 'welfare queen' have long served as code words for the black ghetto poor, the ruling class thinks it can get away with shredding welfare by playing the race card. Leaving aside the fact that the majority of those on welfare are white, the 'welfare reform' bill is aimed at driving down the wages and further immiserating the entire working class. This fact is being brought home with a vengeance in the implementation of 'workfare' programs aimed at busting the unions by forcing welfare recipients to work these jobs at starvation wages."

What is happening in the U.S. is far from unique. With the heating up of inter-imperialist rivalries in the wake of the destruction of the Soviet Union, the bourgeoisies have escalated their attacks on wages, working conditions and social programs across the board in order to increase their competitive edge against rival capitalists. Particularly in West Europe, immigrants and ethnic minorities have been the principal targets of this drive, which is aimed against the whole of the proletariat. This is evident in the U.S., as real wages have fallen by one-fifth over

the past two decades. And the elimination of relatively inexpensive programs like AFDC is only the prelude to a full-scale assault on Social Security and Medicare.

Racist Repression on the Border

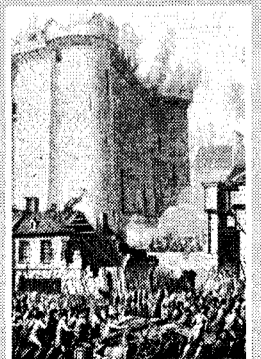
Along with driving immigrant families to starvation, the Clinton government has drastically beefed up its arsenal of repression along the borders. Under codenames like "Operation Gatekeeper" in California and "Operation Rio Grande" in Texas, border guards have been equipped with advanced weaponry and increasingly reinforced with military units. Numerous border cities have been closed off with mammoth steel walls, including one in Nogales, Arizona which the racist yuppie Clinton administration grotesquely touts as being designed to appear "friendly" to Mexico by allowing "light and a feeling of openness"! Deportations are at a record high—over 110,000 last year—a 62 percent increase from the year before.

According to conservative estimates by the University of Houston's Center for Immigration, nearly 1,200 people died trying to cross from Mexico between 1993 and 1996, the vast majority of them drowning victims, while others were shot down by U.S. troops or cops. A 1997 law gave Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents sweeping

continued on page 10

Enlightenment Rationalism and the Origins of Marxism

See Page Four



Arafat Museum Visit Canceled by Vile Zionist Outcry

When the State Department organized a tour of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. for visiting Palestinian Authority president Yasir Arafat, it provoked a vile chauvinist frenzy by American Zionists and Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling right-wing Likud party. The Zionists pronounced the Palestinian leader *verboten* at the federally funded museum, screaming that he was "Hitler incarnate." Only after this reactionary outcry had succeeded in canceling Arafat's visit did the Zionists back off and say he was welcome after all.

The furor over Arafat's proposed visit was not only thoroughly racist but immensely hypocritical. In pursuit of Zionist *Realpolitik*, some truly sinister anti-

Semitic types have been *welcomed* at the Holocaust Museum. One of the foreign dignitaries who was feted at the museum's dedication in April 1993 was none other than fascist Croatian strongman Franjo Tudjman, an open apologist for the Nazi-allied Ustasha which slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Jews and Serbs during World War II. Two years before that, the museum site was visited by Lech Walesa, then president of Poland, whose fascist-infested Solidarność upholds the anti-Semitic Pilsudskiite dictatorship of the 1920s and '30s. To this day, Walesa's chief "spiritual advisor" is a notoriously anti-Semitic priest named Henryk Jankowski.

It takes phenomenal chutzpah for the Zionists, whose Israeli stormtroopers have

carried out one genocidal massacre after another against the Palestinian people, to denounce Arafat as a Hitler. In fact, the Palestinian nationalist leader is a toady of the Israeli Zionist state and U.S. imperialism. The Holocaust Museum visit was intended to help revive the U.S.-sponsored "peace process"—which has effectively been scuttled by the Netanyahu regime—through which Arafat became an Israeli lieutenant in the national subjugation of the Palestinian masses. As proletarian internationalists, we fight for a socialist federation of the Near East, in which all the toilers of the region will achieve social and national emancipation. ■



Gamma/Studio X

An earlier visitor to Holocaust Museum: Croatia's Franjo Tudjman, apologist for Ustashi fascists.

The Mendacity of Anarchy

A reader recently brought to our attention an article by one "Max Anger" in the Spring-Summer 1997 issue of *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* (!) headlined "The Spartacist School of Falsification." The article purports to expose our supposed lies about anarchist idol Nestor Makhno, a Ukrainian peasant leader at the time of the 1917 Russian Revolution and the ensuing Civil War. What this typically mendacious (i.e., deceitful, prevaricating, false) anarchist anti-Marxist drivel "omits" to mention is that, months earlier, our *Young Spartacus* pages had run both the relevant portions of Anger's "contribution" and a lengthy reply demolishing his numerous lies and distortions ("An Exchange on Nestor Makhno: Peasant 'Anarchism,' Pogroms and the Russian Revolution," WV No. 656, 22 November 1996).

Anger's ire was aroused by the seven-part *Young Spartacus* series, "Marxism vs. Anarchism: From 1848 to the Bolshevik Revolution," which noted:

"The most significant counterrevolutionary force under the banner of anarchism was the Ukrainian peasant-based army of Nestor Makhno, which carried out pogroms against Jewish communities and collaborated with White armies against the Bolsheviks."

—WV No. 650 (30 August 1996)

When Anger leapt in to defend Makhno's honor, we published our exchange with him in order to educate those leftist youth mistakenly attracted to anarchism. We

cited, among other things, eyewitness documentation in Yiddish and Russian—held by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City—attesting to anti-Semitic pogroms by Makhno's bands. Evidently unable to challenge our facts, Anger peddled his lying wares in more sympathetic quarters.

Anarchist diatribes against Bolshevism/Trotskyism are nothing new. As we noted in our series, the anarchists also raised a hue and cry about Makhno—and the Bolsheviks' suppression of the counterrevolutionary 1921 Kronstadt uprising—in the 1930s, when Trotsky was exposing and denouncing the treachery of the Spanish anarchists, who joined the Stalinists and social democrats in a capitalist government which suppressed a workers revolution. Today, the anarchists rush to embrace the imperialists' "death of communism" lie. The current issue of *Anarchy* (Fall-Winter 1997-98) promotes a treatise titled *Anarchism After Leftism*, which argues: "Cleansed of its leftist residues, anarchy—anarchism minus Marxism—will be free to get better at being what it is." Indeed, petty-bourgeois hostility to Marxism and the proletariat is "what it is," pure and simple. As we commented in our reply on Makhno: "Max Anger's raving defense of Makhno's peasant bandits provides a measure of the dementia that can be induced by bourgeois anti-Communism in the U.S." ■

Tailing Mexican Nationalism, IG "Disappears" the PRD

For some months now, the Internationalist Group (IG)—a small coterie of defectors from the International Communist League (ICL) in the U.S. and Mexico—has been fulminating against our supposed revisionism on the nature of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas' Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in Mexico. Where we say clearly that the PRD is a bourgeois-nationalist party and counterpose the need to break the Mexican proletariat from nationalism and forge a revolutionary workers party, the IG insists that there is some vaguely defined "Cardenista popular front," echoing various Mexican reformists and centrists in the PRD's shadow.

The whole purpose of a popular front—a class-collaborationist coalition of reformist workers parties and bourgeois parties—is to subordinate the workers organizations to their class enemy. Writing on the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, Trotsky noted that this purpose could be served even by including only "the shadow of the bourgeoisie." But now the IG has conjured up a "popular front" with no workers party! Instead, the IG is reduced to pointing to the tiny reformist and centrist groups which tail Cárdenas, a handful of "dissident" union officials who speak at his rallies, or other amor-

phous "rebellious sectors" in the PRD's tow, like the peasant-based Zapatistas. As we noted in correcting our own earlier designation of this formation as a popular front: "In the process of seeking to defend its characterization of the Cardenistas as a popular front, the IG in effect liquidates any distinction between the proletariat—which Marxists understand is the only class with the social power and consistent class interest to *lead* the fight against capitalist class rule—and petty-bourgeois forces" ("Mexico: For Workers Revolution!" WV No. 672, 8 August 1997).

After Cárdenas was elected mayor of Mexico City last July, the IG's *Internationalist* (September-October 1997) pontificated: "This is precisely the moment when Trotskyists should be dispelling illusions among Mexican workers and youth.... Yet at this very moment, the ICL leaders abandon the struggle against the popular front just where it is the hottest." Behind the IG's cynical diatribes is its refusal to challenge illusions in PRD "left" bourgeois nationalism. This was evident at a January 12 protest in New York City against the massacre of 45 Chiapas peasants by death squads linked to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party. One of the signs carried by the Spartacist League contingent read, "No



TROTSKY

Honor Lenin, Liebknecht, Luxemburg!

In upholding the revolutionary traditions of the early Communist movement, this month the International Communist League commemorates the "Three Ls"—Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Karl Liebknecht was imprisoned during World War I for his opposition to the imperialist war, expressed in his call, "The main enemy is at home!" Along with Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, a Polish Communist of Jewish origin, was a leader of



LENIN

the revolutionary wing of the German Social Democracy and a founder of the Spartakusbund and its successor, the German Communist Party. They were murdered on 19 January 1919 by military reactionaries as the Social Democratic government of Ebert and Scheidemann crushed the Spartakist workers uprising in blood. V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian October Revolution of 1917, died on 21 January 1924. We publish below Lenin's remarks on hearing of the murders of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, written as a postscript to his "Letter to the Workers of Europe and America."

The foregoing lines were written before the brutal and dastardly murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg by the Ebert and Scheidemann government. Those butchers, in their servility to the bourgeoisie, allowed the German whiteguards, the watchdogs of sacred capitalist property, to lynch Rosa Luxemburg, to murder Karl Liebknecht by shooting him in the back on the patently false plea that he "attempted to escape"... Evidently, history has chosen a path on which the role of "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class" must be played to the "last degree" of brutality, baseness and meanness. Let those simpletons, the Kautskyites, talk in their newspaper *Freiheit* about a "court" of representatives of "all" "socialist" parties (those servile souls insist that the Scheidemann executioners are socialists)! Those heroes of philistine stupidity and petty-bourgeois cowardice even fail to understand that the courts are organs of state power, and that the issue in the struggle and civil war now being waged in Germany is precisely one of who is to hold this power—the bourgeoisie, "served" by the Scheidemanns as executioners and instigators of pogroms, and by the Kautskys as glorifiers of "pure democracy," or the proletariat, which will overthrow the capitalist exploiters and crush their resistance.

The blood of the best representatives of the world proletarian International, of the unforgettable leaders of the world socialist revolution, will steel ever new masses of workers for the life-and-death struggle. And this struggle will lead to victory. We in Russia, in the summer of 1917, lived through the "July days," when the Russian Scheidemanns, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revisionaries, also provided "state" protection for the "victory" of the whiteguards over the Bolsheviks, and when Cossacks shot the worker Voinov in the streets of Petrograd for distributing Bolshevik leaflets. We know from experience how quickly such "victories" of the bourgeoisie and their henchmen cure the people of their illusions about bourgeois democracy, "universal suffrage," and so forth.

—V.I. Lenin, "Letter to the Workers of Europe and America" (January 1919)

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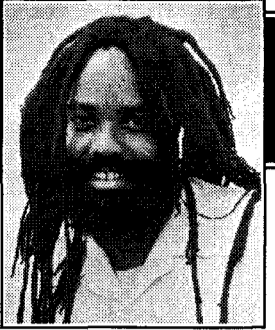
The closing date for news in this issue is January 26.

No. 683

30 January 1998

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mexican Massacre in Acteal: How Many More?



In a vicious attack that lasted up to four hours at least 45 of Mexico's indigenous people (men, women and children) were massacred in the county of San Pedro de Chenalhó, in Chiapas State, several days before Christmas, 1997. New accounts were generally sketchy, and rarely tried to make sense of the evil, savage event.

The names of over two score dead were not worthy of reporting, and the fleeting references to the Zapatista Rebel Army (EZLN) only left many in a ball of confusion.

One hears of this long, drawn-out, premeditated massacre, and wonders: Why? If the reader is at all like the writer, s/he saw or heard nothing at all like an explanation for this planned explosion of death. The writer had to turn to the informative alternative to the establishment press, which, in this instance, meant the Nuevo Amanecer Press, which offered what the establishment media could not—context.

N.A.P. noted, in a communique issued weeks before the massacre by the Zapatista Central Command, that the indigenous people have been suffering for months at the hands of paramilitary bands and state police, under the auspices and protection of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Indeed, the area of the massacre, San Pedro de Chenalhó, was a place where

thousands of Indians were congregated, poor, ragged, hungry and ill, refugees from villages in the Chiapan highlands, under PRI guns. In a December 12th, 1997 communique, Zapatista Subcommander Marcos wrote of the repression waged against the indigenous people, especially local (Chenalhó) Zapatista activists:

"The state and federal governments and the Institutional Revolutionary Party, far from stopping their wave of aggressions, are trying to avoid solving the main problem of Chenalhó, which is the eradication of their paramilitary groups and the return of the displaced people to their communities. While it pretends to establish a dialogue, Chiapanecan PRI followers are undertaking the plunder and destruction of the evicted's property. Coffee, cattle, clothes, and domestic utensils are being distributed among the paramilitary as the bounty of a war which, up until now, has only seen shooting coming from one of the sides, that is the government and its political party."

(NAP: amanecer@aa.net 12/16/97)

These paramilitary groups, whose war-cry was "an end to the Zapatista seed," have waged an insidious campaign against Indian communities in the southeast, of theft, robbery, brutality, rape, arson, murders and then, mass murders.

Subcommander Marcos' warning (of Dec. 12th, '97) was all but ignored, and ten days later (on Dec. 22nd, 1997) Chiapas was marked by an unholy massacre.

According to Subcom. Marcos, "The direct responsibility for these bloody events falls upon Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon and the Justice Ministry, who, two days ago, gave a green light to the counterinsurgency project presented by the Federal Army." (NC for DM: moonlight@igc.apc.org 12/25/97)

Nine men, 21 women and 15 children—these people, nameless, invisible, and dead, could very well be alive if the warnings had been heeded. But they were Indians. Indigenous people. Indigenes.

What if 45 whites were killed in a four hour-long paramilitary massacre? Their faces, their names, their lives, and their loves would be the daily fare of newspapers, magazines and television.

But they weren't white. They were red. And just as the Zapatista warnings were ignored the brutal lives and deaths at the hands of the PRIistas are fast on the way of being forgotten.

Until next time.

31 December 1997

© 1997 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

To join the fight to free Mumia and for the latest updates on his case, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099; phone (212) 406-4252. E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com. Urgently needed contributions for Mumia's defense, which are tax-deductible, should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense," and sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Avenue, No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Memphis

Defend Anti-Klan Protesters!

The following protest letter was sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to William L. Gibbons, attorney general in Memphis, Tennessee, on January 23.

The Partisan Defense Committee condemns the vicious police attack on the men, women and children who came out to protest a march by the hooded-and-robed lynchers of the Ku Klux Klan in Memphis on January 17. Now your office is persecuting 26 anti-Klan protesters who were arrested by the cops, cynically branding them as "gang members." We demand that all charges against these protesters be dropped immediately!

The Klan's racist provocation against Martin Luther King Day—in the city where King was assassinated 30 years ago—was a threat challenging not only the right of black people to a place in American society but to their very right to live. The multiracial crowd of hundreds who poured out in protest were

there to defend blacks, Jews, Hispanics, gays, leftists, trade unionists and others the Klan has lined up in its cross hairs.

Throughout the day, the police protected the Klan while lobbing potentially deadly tear gas and pepper spray canisters against the protesters, who included children and elderly people. The cops themselves admitted to planting at least 50 undercover agents in the protest. These agents began assaulting the anti-Klan demonstrators when they protested against provocateurs distributing racist white-supremacist literature among them.

While the Klan was allowed to spew its racist filth and program for genocide, the anti-Klan protesters were attacked and arrested by the cops for the "crime" of exercising their right to protest against Klan terror. Drop all the charges against the Memphis anti-Klan protesters!

Richard Genova for the
Partisan Defense Committee



Riggs/NY Times
Memphis, January 17: Demonstrators protest racist Klan provocation against MLK Day.

Support to the Capitalist PRD—Build a Revolutionary Workers Party of the Bolshevik Type!" Yet after spilling pages of ink on the "crucial," "urgent," "vital" necessity of fighting a supposed PRD "popular front"—at this very moment when illusions in the PRD as an agency for "justice" were heightened—the IG turned up with placards that *made no mention of the PRD!*

When confronted on this by our comrades, the IG finally hauled out a placard reading, "Romper con El Frente Popular! Forjar un Partido Obrero Revolucionario!" (Break with the Popular Front! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!). Why no specific reference to the PRD? "The people" would understand that's what they meant, huffed IG número dos Negrete. In fact, "the people" the IG is pandering to have deepgoing illusions in the PRD—in its core, petty (and not so petty) bourgeois nationalists—which is falsely seen as an advocate for the poor

and an opponent of the escalating imperialist subjugation of Mexico. Writing the PRD out of its placards, the IG demonstrates that its insistence on a "Cardenista popular front" is simply the vehicle for adapting to bourgeois nationalism.

Nationalism has historically been the *main instrument* for tying the proletariat and dispossessed masses of Mexico to their exploiters. Caught in the grip of imperialism, Mexico is a volatile society seething with social grievances. The reformist-nationalist perspective of an "anti-imperialist united front" with the thoroughly corrupt and slavishly dependent semicolonial bourgeoisie is a recipe for bloody defeat. The road to social emancipation for the Mexican toilers lies in the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution—the seizure of power by the proletariat at the head of all the oppressed, linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. imperialist heartland. ■

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La "izquierda" siembra confusiones en el PRD nacionalista burgués

Artículo publicado originalmente en el número 9 de Espartaco, el periódico del Grupo Espartaquista de México. El contenido de este artículo es el resultado de un debate que tuvo lugar en el seno del Comité Editorial de Espartaco, el periódico del Grupo Espartaquista de México. Este artículo es el resultado de un debate que tuvo lugar en el seno del Comité Editorial de Espartaco, el periódico del Grupo Espartaquista de México. Este artículo es el resultado de un debate que tuvo lugar en el seno del Comité Editorial de Espartaco, el periódico del Grupo Espartaquista de México.

Young Spartacus

Enlightenment Rationalism and the Origins of Marxism

In resuming publication of this series, we begin the second of two presentations given by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour last summer as part of a series of internal SL classes on the origins of Marxism. The first three parts, which covered comrade Seymour's first presentation, were published in WV Nos. 673, 674 and 675 (5 September, 19 September and 3 October 1997).

PART FOUR

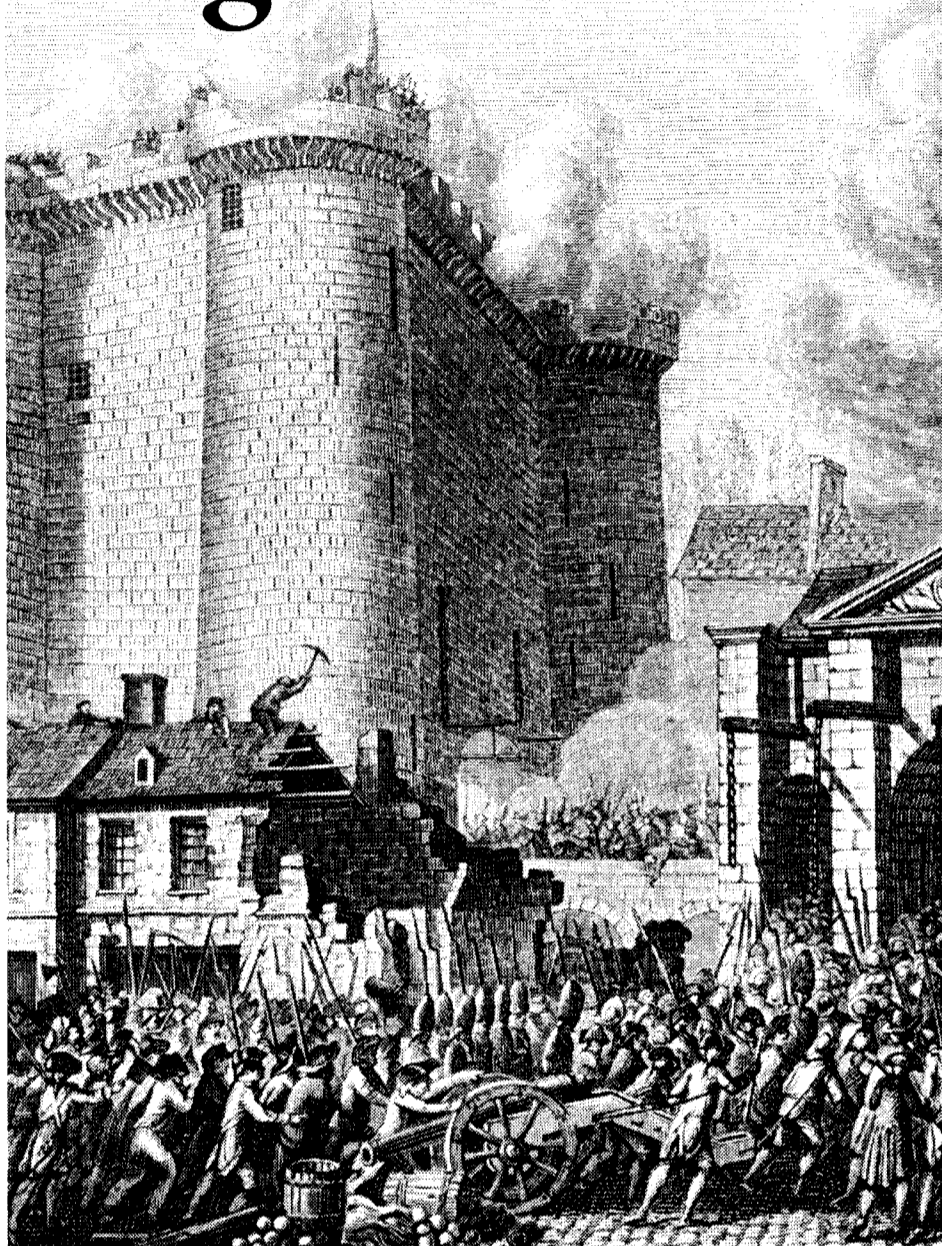
In early 1841, shortly before his 23rd birthday, Karl Marx completed and submitted his doctoral dissertation in philosophy, entitled "Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature." His ambition and intent was to become a professor of philosophy at a German university, that is, a respectable bourgeois intellectual. His close friends and colleagues were teachers or students of philosophy of the Hegelian school. His writings were directed toward—and only intelligible to—intellectuals thoroughly familiar with German philosophy, its various tendencies and disputes.

Six years later, Marx joined and became a principal leader of an underground communist organization, largely composed of workingmen, dedicated to the overthrow of every government in Europe, first and foremost the Kingdom of Prussia. The nature of his *new* comrades can be gauged by the political biography of Karl Schapper, the organization's leading figure before Marx joined it.

In the early 19th century, the storming of the Bastille in Paris in 1789 was for leftist youth what the storming of the Winter Palace in Petrograd in 1917 was for leftist youth during much of the 20th century. They all dreamed of storming their own Bastille and igniting a great, world-shaking revolution. In the mid-1830s, about 50 revolutionary "hotheads" in central Germany—among them Karl Schapper, a 21-year-old student of forestry—decided the time for dreaming was over and they should just do it. So they took over a police station in Frankfurt. Needless to say, this adventure was easily and quickly suppressed by the authorities.

Schapper managed to escape arrest and made his way to southern France, where he joined a ragtag army led by Italian radical democrat and nationalist Giuseppe Mazzini. Mazzini's army of national liberation, numbering about 300 men, promptly invaded the Kingdom of Savoy—the strongest absolutist state in Italy—whose forces easily repelled the revolutionary invaders.

But once more Schapper was unscathed and this time he made his way to Paris, the political and spiritual center of the European revolutionary movement. There he joined the newly formed League of the Just, a secret communist society largely composed of émigré German workers. The League had close ties to similar French secret societies led by the redoubtable Auguste Blanqui. One fine spring day in 1839, Blanqui assembled about a thousand of his armed follow-



Mansell Collection



British Museum

Storming of Bastille in July 1789 inspired fighters against tyranny around the world. Overthrow and arrest of Robespierre (left) five years later signified triumph of Thermidorian reaction.

ers—mainly Frenchmen, with a contingent of Germans—in central Paris, where they set up barricades and declared their intent to overthrow the government of Louis Philippe, the so-called bankers' king. This time Schapper and his German comrades were arrested, along with Blanqui and the other leaders.

However, there was considerable popular sympathy for the insurgents, so Louis Philippe decided simply to expel Schapper and the other German communists, who then went to London. I would like to recount that two months after arriving in England, Schapper and 2,000 other

guys tried to storm Windsor Palace aiming to overthrow Queen Victoria. But this time he decided to change his strategy and tactics. I'll discuss this a little later.

What I want to emphasize here is how radical a change Marx underwent between 1841 and 1847. It was not simply his ideas about the world that changed, but every significant aspect of his public life and to a large extent his private life as well. How and why did this young academic philosopher become a leader of a working-class-based, communist movement aiming at the revolutionary overthrow of the existing European social and

political order? What was the relationship—positive or negative—between the philosophical ideas of Hegel and what was later called scientific socialism?

Two Paths from the French Revolution

To answer these questions one has to go back to the French Revolution. For *both* the political movements with which the young Marx was successively involved—the Young Hegelians and the Communist League—had their origins in the French Revolution and its extension to Germany through the Napoleonic empire. The youthful Hegel enthusiastically welcomed the French Revolution, and as a mature and respected bourgeois intellectual he became an ardent supporter of Napoleon, whom he dubbed "the world-soul on horseback." Here it's important to point out that Napoleon was an ex-Jacobin and onetime protégé of Robespierre, whose memory he always held in high regard. For its part, the German League of the Just was rooted in the theoretical, political and organizational tradition begun by Gracchus Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals of 1796, Babeuf himself having earlier been a Jacobin militant.

In a sense, there were two paths leading from the French Revolution to Marxism: a rightward path from Napoleon through Hegel to the Young Hegelians; and a leftward path leading from Babeuf and Philippe Buonarroti through Blanqui to the German League of the Just. These two paths converged in 1847 when the former Young Hegelian intellectuals Marx and Engels effected a revolutionary regroupment with erstwhile German Babouvist militants to form the Communist League, whose doctrine and program was codified in the *Communist Manifesto*.

Both Hegel and Babeuf were members of that generation of young intellectuals who believed that with the French Revolution the principles of the Enlightenment were being transformed into reality. Decades later, when in his fifties, Hegel recounted in a lecture to his students (published in *The Philosophy of History* [1956]) the apocalyptic atmosphere ushered in by the storming of the Bastille and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen:

"The conception, the idea of Right asserted its authority *all at once*, and the old framework of injustice could offer no resistance to its onslaught. A constitution, therefore, was established in harmony with the conception of Right, and on this foundation all future legislation was to be based.... This was accordingly a glorious mental dawn. All thinking beings shared in the jubilation of this epoch. Emotions of a lofty character stirred men's minds at that time; a spiritual enthusiasm thrilled through the world, as if the reconciliation between the Divine and the Secular was now first accomplished."

The belief that heaven was about to descend to earth necessarily led to a disillusionment among the youthful idealists who had held this vision. Both Babeuf and Hegel expressed this disillusionment, albeit for very different reasons, in very different ways and with very different conclusions. Babeuf maintained that the

French Revolution did not go far enough. He therefore inaugurated a movement and tradition defined by communist idealism and revolutionary voluntarism. Hegel decided that the French Revolution had gone too far, too fast; that the French people were not spiritually mature enough to achieve heaven on earth. He thus became an advocate of gradual—very gradual—reform from above. In his last years, he wrote in his 1821 work, *The Philosophy of Right*, that political change should be such that “the advance from one state of affairs to another is tranquil in appearance and unnoticed. In this way a constitution changes over a period of time into something quite different from what it was originally.”

Marx came to believe in communism and proletarian revolution and, in that sense, embraced the Babouvist tradition. But he also adhered to Hegel’s anti-utopian realism. Like Hegel, he maintained that revolutionaries could not simply reconstruct the world at will according to their own moral ideals. In Marx’s first work as a self-considered communist, in 1844, he states: “It is not enough for thought to strive for realisation, reality must itself strive towards thought” (“Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law: Introduction,” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, Volume 3 [1975]). In other words, men can change society only insofar as society itself has changed so as to make possible their goals and program.

Communism is possible not because it is a moral ideal but because its economic preconditions have been created by industrial capitalism along with a social class—the proletariat—with a vital interest in economic collectivism. Thus he and Engels wrote in their 1846 work, *The German Ideology*:

“Communism is for us not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the now existing premise.”

Jacobin Idealism

To understand both the Hegelian component of Marxism as well as its Babouvist heritage, we have to take a closer

Gracchus Babeuf publicized early communist ideas in his journal, was later executed for leading 1796 insurrection by Conspiracy of Equals.



Radio Times Hulton

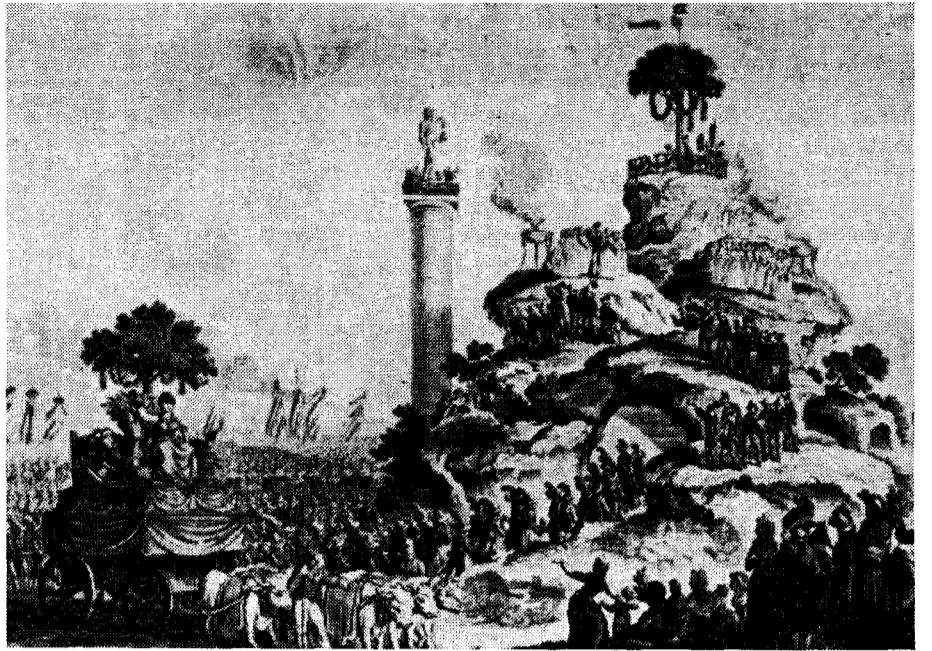
look at the French Revolution, especially its ideological dimensions during its most radical phase, the Jacobin regime of 1793-94. If the young Hegel, viewing the upheaval in France from across the Rhine, believed that heaven was about to descend on earth, imagine the apocalyptic fervor of the men actually leading the revolution.

The Jacobin leader Saint-Just declared that happiness was a new idea in Europe. Obviously, he was not talking about the momentary happiness of individuals: long before the French Revolution, men and women were happy when they fell in love, when they had a healthy infant whom they wanted, when they got drunk and partied all night (though perhaps they were not so happy the next morning). Saint-Just was talking about collective happiness as a permanent social condition. He meant that the French democratic republic was the first state in Europe committed to the well-being of all its cit-



Bibliothèque Nationale

Jacobins attempted to replace Christianity with new state religion based on deism, expressed in artworks of the time: “Regenerated Man” triumphant over superstition (left), “Feast of the Supreme Being.”



Musée Carnavalet

izens, to ensuring them liberty, equality and fraternity.

More than a century after the French Revolution, Leon Trotsky called the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union in the 1920s a “Thermidorian reaction.” When you think about it, this is an odd term used in no other context. It does not derive from a person (there was no Joe Thermidor), place or movement. It derives from the month that Robespierre was overthrown by a right-wing Jacobin faction. But you might say, there is no month called Thermidor in French. Not today there isn’t. However, in 1792 the leaders of the French Revolution decided to signify their total break with the past by scrapping the Gregorian calendar and beginning world history anew with the year I, written in Roman numerals. They also gave new names to the months, such as Thermidor, Fructidor and the like.

Along similar lines, the Jacobins attempted to establish a new state religion, based on deism, which would replace Christianity. Robespierre’s speech proposing this new civic religion is a good expression of the Jacobin worldview. As a true son of the Enlightenment, he begins

kings and nobles; and we cannot conceive of it with them.”

—reproduced in George Rudé, ed., *Robespierre* (1967)

Robespierre concludes by proposing the following legislation:

“Article I. The French people recognizes the existence of the Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul.

“Article II. It recognizes that the best way of worshipping the Supreme Being is to do one’s duties as a man.

“Article III. It considers that the most important of these duties are: to detest bad faith and despotism, to punish tyrants and traitors, to assist the unfortunate, to respect the weak, to defend the oppressed, to do all the good one can to one’s neighbor, and to behave with justice towards all men.”

In other words, the Jacobins believed it was possible by law to instill in the French people unselfish concern for their fellow man; to use the language of the day, to instill “patriotism” and “virtue” as the dominant principles of social and political life.

The Jacobins represented a revolutionary *minority* of the French bourgeoisie. They did *not* come to power through gaining a majority of the votes in elections to the revolutionary parliament, the Convention, which would have required support from a majority of the peasantry. Rather, they came to power by organizing an insurrection of the Parisian lower classes—the so-called *sans-culottes*—which overthrew the more moderate bourgeois faction, the Girondins, then governing the country. Consequently, the Robespierre regime had to conciliate the Paris artisan proletariat which constituted its main base of support against its many enemies, both within and without France.

The Jacobin regime was waging war against most of the rest of Europe as well as civil wars against royalist forces in key regions of France. These wars inevitably caused enormous economic dislocations and shortages. The combined pressure of the *sans-culottes* from below and the dislocations of war forced the revolutionary government to institute a primitive version of a controlled economy, for example, setting a maximum price for basic foodstuffs such as bread.

Given its idealistic ideology, the Jacobins did not justify these policies on pragmatic grounds—as temporary emergency measures—but as a manifestation of the fundamental rights of man. Thus Robespierre declared:

“Which is the first object of our polity? To guarantee the imprescriptible rights of man. And which is the first of these rights? That of existence. The first social law is, therefore, that which assures every member of society of the means of existence; all others are subordinated to it; property has only been founded and protected to give it greater strength.”

—Robespierre

If, as Robespierre maintained, the right to exist permits and even justifies restrictions on private property, it is but a logical extension to maintain that the right of

existence demands the abolition of private property altogether. That extension was soon made by ex-Jacobin militants such as Babeuf, Buonarroti, Sylvan Marichal and others.

But before discussing this I want to say something about the Jacobin “Terror,” since it played a central role in the development of Hegel’s political attitudes and theories. Over 90 percent of the people executed under the “Terror” were in the two regions of France beset by full-scale civil war. They were people who were captured arms in hand fighting against the revolutionary army. People were *not* executed for merely expressing opposition to the Jacobin government and its doctrines. Catholic priests were not killed or imprisoned for giving sacraments to the faithful, or whatever Catholic priests do with the faithful. (Not part of my personal experience, thank god!) Some Catholic priests were killed for inciting peasants to insurrect against the revolutionary government.

However, counterrevolutionary propaganda—liberal as well as reactionary—portrayed the Jacobin “Terror” as what would later be called “totalitarian thought control.” The Englishman Edmund Burke denounced Robespierre and his colleagues for seeking to establish a reign of virtue through a reign of terror. This was a lie, but a lie that was widely accepted, especially outside France, and one which has been perpetuated and has remained widely accepted ever since.

The Babouvist Tradition

During the Jacobin regime, Gracchus Babeuf served as a local official administering the food supply in a working-class district in Paris. Thus on the basis of his own firsthand experience he recognized that attempts by the revolutionary government to regulate the capitalist market in the interests of the workers and poor were

continued on page 6

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Enlightenment...

(continued from page 5)

at best inadequate and at worst totally ineffectual. Merchants evaded the price maximum by hoarding and selling at higher prices on what we would now call the black market. After Robespierre was overthrown, all economic controls were abolished, and the conditions of the workers in Paris and other French cities deteriorated into ever greater wretchedness.

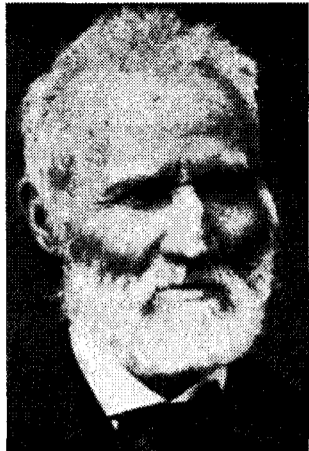
Considering these developments during the Thermidorian reaction, Babeuf concluded that the right to existence was fundamentally incompatible with the right of private property. He therefore developed a crude system of communism. This was a communism of distribution, not production—though Babeuf did advocate agricultural collectivism rather than peasant smallholding. In Babeuf's view, peasants and workers would produce as before but would deliver their products to government warehouses rather than sell them on the market. The government would then distribute these goods equally and in proportion to need. Those families with more children would receive more food, clothing, etc.

The Conspiracy of Equals in 1796 was an attempt to realize this communist program through an armed insurrection—centrally based on the artisan proletariat of Paris—against the Thermidorian regime. The movement was suppressed by the authorities before it reached the stage of insurrection and the principal leaders were arrested and tried. While Babeuf was sentenced to death, another leading figure, Buonarroti, was only imprisoned for a time, possibly because his mistress had seduced one of the judges.

For the next 40 years of his life, Buonarroti sought to keep alive the principles and program of Jacobin communism, first in the hostile climate of the Napoleonic empire and then under the even more reactionary conditions of the post-Napoleonic restoration. In 1828, he published in Belgium a history of the Conspiracy of Equals, including many of its original documents, a book which became known as "the bible of revolutionaries." At one point the young Marx considered translating this book into German.

In 1830, the ultra-reactionary Bourbon regime in France was overthrown by a popular revolution and replaced by the less repressive monarchical regime of Louis Philippe. For a time the political situation in France was relatively open. Buonarroti thus returned to the country of the Revolution and was able to intersect and influence a new generation of leftist militants, the outstanding figure among them being Auguste Blanqui.

At that time there was a sizable population of émigré German workers in Paris, and a number of these were won to Jacobin communism and came under the sway of Blanqui's secret societies. Central to the Blanquist strategy was what might be called military vanguardism, the belief



Institute for Social History, Amsterdam

Jacobin communist Auguste Blanqui participated in July 1830 revolution which brought down ultra-reactionary French Bourbon regime.



H. Roger-Viollet

that the bold action of a small group of revolutionary militants could inspire the masses to rise up in revolt against the oppressive monarchical regimes.

However, after experiencing defeat in the streets of Paris in 1839 and being expelled from France to England, leading German communists such as Karl Schapper and Joseph Moll reconsidered the Blanquist strategy. They concluded that the mass of workers had not heeded the revolutionaries' call to arms because they did not understand and therefore did not support the communist program. Consequently, adherents of the League of the Just—which was centered in London but also existed in Paris and other European cities—now devoted themselves to propaganda and education, postponing the revolution to an indefinite future. Ironically, it was the former left-Hegelian intellectuals Marx and Engels who had to convince the former revolutionary adventurers Schapper and Moll that popular insurrections in Germany and France were possible in the historical short term.

During the 1970s, I gave a lecture series under the heading "Marxism and the Jacobin Communist Tradition," which was published and is available in the bound volumes of *Young Spartacus*. So what I know and think about this subject is accessible in far greater detail and analytical elaboration than I can convey to you today. Therefore I'm going to devote the rest of this talk to Hegel and his school, the intellectual and political development of the young Marx and certain controversies about this. I'm weighting this educational in this way *not* because I consider the left-Hegelian component more important in understanding Marxism than the Jacobin component—I don't think that—but rather because the

left-Hegelian component is far harder to understand and has been subject to much confusionism and mystification.

Hegel's Political Biography

I think the easiest way to approach Hegel—and I said easiest, not easy—is to first consider his political biography. Before we descend to the mind-bending depths of Hegelian philosophy, we should look at the major historical events which affected him and how he responded to them.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was born in 1770 in the principality of Swabia

trampled in the dust, but will themselves take and appropriate them."

—quoted in Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (1972)

However, over the next several years this naive democratic idealism and optimism dissipated and were replaced by a moderate liberalism which for Hegel represented a reconciliation with social and political reality as he viewed it. A key factor in Hegel's rightward evolution was his extremely negative reaction to the Jacobin regime in France. In part this represented a reaction to what actually happened in France at this time, and in part it was based on a common misunderstanding of this crucial historical episode.

Even when he was a democratic idealist, Hegel opposed social leveling and regarded the right to property as an important guarantor of individual liberty. Thus he denounced what he termed "sans-culottism" in France. At the same time, he believed that Robespierre and his colleagues had resorted to mass terror in order to impose on the French people their own philosophical principles, such as deism, and their concept of revolutionary morality. He later wrote that the French Revolution represented

"for the first time in human history the prodigious spectacle of the overthrow of the constitution of a great actual state and its complete reconstruction *ab initio* [from the beginning] on the basis of pure thought alone, after the destruction of all existing and given material. The will of the refounders was to give it what they alleged was a purely rational basis, but it was only abstractions that were being used; the Idea was lacking; and the experiment ended in the maximum of frightfulness and terror."

—Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*

As a criticism or even understanding of what actually happened during the French Revolution, Hegel's view was profoundly wrong. But as a criticism of Jacobin *ideology*, Hegel was in this



Raccolta Stampe Bertarelli, Milan

Radical democrat Giuseppe Mazzini strove to unite Italy. A short-lived Roman Republic was proclaimed in February 1849.

in southwestern Germany, a relatively economically advanced region in that then-divided country. His father was a senior government bureaucrat involved in finance and trade. Hegel's background was thus typical of the German bourgeoisie of the Lutheran persuasion. He was educated in the spirit of the German Enlightenment, which was more idealistic, more concerned with individual morality and spiritual values, so to speak, than the English and French versions of the Enlightenment.

As previously noted, he enthusiastically welcomed the French Revolution and believed that the rights of man were about to triumph on the German side of the Rhine as well. In 1795, he wrote to his friend and fellow philosopher-in-training, Friedrich Schelling:

"I believe that there is no better sign of the times than the fact that mankind as such is being represented with so much reverence, it is a proof that the halo which has surrounded the heads of the oppressors and gods of the earth has disappeared. The philosophers demonstrate this dignity [of man]; the people will learn to feel it and will not merely demand their rights, which have been

respect on the mark. The Jacobins did believe they could sweep away the old society and rebuild the world anew according to their ideals—not only in terms of social, economic and political institutions but in all fundamental aspects of popular consciousness. Robespierre, Saint-Just and their comrades believed that through an act of will or even an act of law they could eradicate almost 2,000 years of Christianity, respect for traditional authority and even individual egoism. Hegel was right that no government—even a revolutionary government—possesses absolute freedom to reconstruct society according to its own principles and ideals. As Marx later wrote in a very Hegelian passage in his 1852 work, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

"Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living."

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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New York Post Squeals as Reaganite Pig D'Souza's Views Blasted at NYU

The following was issued as a leaflet on January 21 by the New York Spartacus Youth Club.

Dinesh D'Souza, a racist ideologue and former "policy analyst" for Ronald Reagan, was sponsored to speak at New York University (NYU) last December by the ultraright Young American Foundation and the *Intercollegiate Review*. But while his sponsors had hoped to provide a forum for D'Souza to promote his new book, *Ronald Reagan: How an Ordinary Man Became an Extraordinary Leader*, this mouthpiece for vicious racist reaction got a suitably hostile reception from a multiracial crowd of some 100 students.

D'Souza is most notorious for his earlier book, *The End of Racism*. Oozing with a self-righteous appreciation of his own intellectual prowess, D'Souza derides blacks as "destructive and pathological" and deserving of what he so politely terms "rational discrimination." Dedicated to his wife Dixie, D'Souza's book rails against a supposed "resistance to academic achievement" by American blacks. This is really rich coming from a

Actually Zulu Nation, a multiracial student group, was barred by campus security from entering the event because they had arrived late. But, in the lingo of tabloid trash, "Zulu" is a high-impact word designed to connote images of "lawless" blacks, or in D'Souza's words, "ignoble savages." We don't know where the *Post* gets its information. But as we pointed out in a letter of protest to the *Post* (which they have refused to print) published below, their incorrect spelling of our organization's name is characteristic of the FBI (see "And 'i' = FBI," WV No. 340, 21 October 1983).

As a member of the Spartacus Youth Club argued during the discussion period, D'Souza's "intellectual" apologies for racist reaction go hand in hand with his adulation of Reagan's Cold War drive aimed at destroying the former workers states in the Soviet Union and East Europe. Although bureaucratically deformed, economically mismanaged and ultimately strangled by Stalinist bureaucracies who looked for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, these states em-



Kennerly/Gamma-Liaison

man whose hero, Ronald Reagan, is a poster child for dimness. Now D'Souza's racist programs are largely being carried out by the Clinton White House.

At the NYU event, D'Souza's revolting alibis for all-sided capitalist reaction—from the smashing of the air traffic controllers union by Reagan in 1981, to the starvation of single black welfare mothers and their children, to celebrating the ravages of capitalist counterrevolution now sweeping East Europe and the former Soviet Union—provoked a raucous debate. A week later, the editorialists of the *New York Post* weighed in, demanding "punitive measures" against the students who protested D'Souza. These hired pens who otherwise spend their time uncovering closet pinkos everywhere from the *New York Times* obituary page to John Sweeney's AFL-CIO bureaucracy to even the Clinton White House argued, "If any such thing as school discipline exists any longer, they should face expulsion." The *Post* editorial especially targeted a "substantial group of student radicals—including the local Spartacist [sic] League, the Zulu Nation and assorted socialists."

bodied enormous gains for the working class internationally. That is why we as Marxist revolutionaries fought tooth and nail for the defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the East European deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counter-revolution. At the same time, we understood that such a defense mandated a proletarian political revolution to replace the Stalinist bureaucracies with a revolutionary internationalist leadership, like that of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party which had led the Russian working class to victory in the great October Revolution of 1917.

A large contingent of members of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) also came out to protest D'Souza. It was notable that while they heckled his overtly racist remarks, the ISO fell silent when D'Souza touted Reagan's anti-Communist war drive. But, then, how could they protest when they had stood on the same side of the barricades as the U.S. imperialists—from supporting Polish Solidarność, the only "union" Ronald Reagan ever loved, to cheering for the CIA-armed

Socialist Worker

May 1988

Just as socialists welcomed the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, we welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in Eastern Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin's heirs. But this does not mean giving

Reagan supported counterrevolutionary Afghan mujahedin, so did "socialist" ISO.

The Public Policy Series of New York University presents
Dinesh D'Souza
John M. Olin Fellow
at the American Enterprise Institute
Former White House Domestic Policy Analyst
RONALD REAGAN
How an Ordinary Man Became an Extraordinary Leader

The College Hill Independent

Scurrilous editorial in Rupert Murdoch rag screams for expulsion of anti-racist students who exposed Dinesh D'Souza, apologist for racism and Reagan reaction.

Distorting D'Souza

New York University Professor (and **NEW YORK POST** 16 December 97)

London was hosting an appearance by Dinesh D'Souza and introduced him by noting that...

and whatever Reagan's other sins, he had never been accused of impregnating large numbers of women. But he was still incessantly heckled and interrupted. The protesters' major obsession was D'Souza's book, "The End of Racism," in which he attacked the prevailing liberal orthodoxy on racial issues. These self-important race warriors didn't hesitate to brand D'Souza — who is of Indian ancestry — a "sand..."

Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan who skinned schoolteachers alive for teaching young girls how to read and write.

The anti-Communist consensus, shared by the ISO, was a reflection of just how deeply these self-proclaimed socialists buy into the fraud of "democracy" preached by the imperialist rulers. Thus it is no surprise that in the days preceding D'Souza's appearance at NYU, the ISO was pleading with the NYU administration to not allow D'Souza at "our school." But the administrators are nothing other than the representatives of the bourgeoisie on campus. Their purpose is to maintain the university as an institution to train the next generation of capitalist ideologues and technicians. These are the same administrators whom the *Post* is now instructing to expel those students who protested D'Souza.

We reprint below our reply to the slanderous *New York Post* editorial.

* * *

19 December 1997

To the editor of the *New York Post*:

Your December 16 editorial, "Distorting D'Souza," is a masterpiece of distortion. Representing the Spartacus Youth Club, I attended the NYU meeting where D'Souza spoke for an hour while "discussion" was restricted to "questions only." What free and "raucous" exchange of ideas there was came only from an audience which was mainly hostile to D'Souza's repugnant views.

You scream about "freedom of expression." Yet you demand the expulsion of those who sought to challenge the views of a man who upholds chattel slavery with the grotesque argument that "the

American slave was treated like property, which is to say, pretty well." One student read a poem aimed at showing D'Souza that, as a dark-skinned Indian, his role as an ideologue for racism is precarious. The poem told the truth: "In your denial that racism exists/you deny that the very people that promote your theory/ laugh behind your back/saying 'We have another sandn----r'." You retail D'Souza's lie that this was racist.

You smear opposition to D'Souza's views as "fascism" in order to alibi a man who was editor of the *Dartmouth Review*, which had a motto of "Genocide is never having to say you're sorry." We're not saying D'Souza's a fascist. Fascists are paramilitary action gangs whose aim is racial genocide and the destruction of the labor movement. This is not a question of free speech. As an elementary act of self-defense the fascists must be stopped through organized working-class action. D'Souza just traffics in right-wing ideas. He was not stopped from speaking, but was met by protest and argument aimed at refuting the racist views that he tries to pass off as "scholarship."

Perhaps a clue to the sources of your false information can be found in your misspelling of our organization's name. The substitution of an "i" for the "a" in "Spartacist" is a trademark of the FBI. Or maybe you got the spelling from Herb London, D'Souza's host at NYU and president of the Hudson Institute, a right-wing think tank whose board of trustees includes Dan Quayle, a man who can't spell the word "potato."

Joe Sol
New York Spartacus Youth Club

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Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacists

Workers Power's "United Front" with Counterrevolution

The following polemic centered on the Australian Workers Power group—affiliated to the British group of the same name—is reprinted from *Australasian Spartacist* No. 162 (Summer 1997/98), published by our comrades of the Spartacist League of Australia.

Australasian SPARTACIST

The centrist Workers Power (WP) group is clearly in turmoil. By their own report (*Workers Power*, October/December 1997), the phoney "League for a Revolutionary Communist International" (LRCI) emerged from their August conference deeply divided over the class nature of the state, the overturn of capitalism in East Europe and elsewhere after World War II and the counterrevolutionary restoration of capitalism in the USSR.

For Marxists, these are fundamental and defining questions, at the core of a revolutionary program. But for the LRCI they are merely academic debates. Thus "changes in analysis" can be safely relegated to a future issue of their international journal, not due for publication until January 1998. Yet, as a companion article marking the 80th anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution ("The Left and Capitalist Restoration") makes clear, WP still seeks to justify their sordid history of support to various forces of capitalist counterrevolution, especially Boris Yeltsin's pro-imperialist counter-coup of August 1991.

Seizing on the pathetic "coup" attempt by the "gang of eight" Kremlin bureaucrats, Yeltsin's ascendancy, backed by the U.S. and every other imperialist power, subsequently proved to be the key event in the destruction of the Soviet Union. In the absence of mass working-class resistance, the period of open counterrevolution ushered in by Yeltsin culminated in the creation of a bourgeois state. Capitalist restoration was and is an unparalleled catastrophe for the working class, not only in the former Soviet Union but internationally, freeing up the imperialists to unleash attacks on the working masses of the advanced industrial countries and the already savagely oppressed peoples of the semicolonial world.

In 1991 Workers Power called for a "united front with the Yeltsin forces," declaiming: "It was necessary to form a common front of resistance, a military and class struggle bloc with those forces and with their leaders.... A part of this united front call would have been to fight alongside the 'democrats' and the Yel-

tsinites to defend all the centres of resistance to the coup including the RSFSR parliament (the 'White House')" (*Workers Power* [Britain], November 1991). One of their members literally stood on Yeltsin's White House barricades. They did so "no matter what the socially counterrevolutionary nature of Yeltsin's pro-

"for blocking with all those forces opposing the coup makers (CSE)?" "It was because the CSE represented the most serious immediate threat to the meagre democratic gains that the workers had wrung from the bureaucracy over the previous years." Thus in the name of defending "democratic gains" WP blocks

ment that "the nationalisation of the land, the means of industrial production, transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade constitute the basis of the Soviet social structure." State-owned collectivised property, central planning and state monopoly of foreign trade are indeed the defining features of proletarian property forms—the necessary economic foundations for the development of a classless, socialist society on an international scale. But widespread nationalisations alone do not equal the destruction of capitalism. And in general, in periods of revolution or counterrevolution, the economic forms can be, and often are, at variance with the political character of the state. Trotsky specifically addressed this question in "Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?" (November 1937):

"Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon the nationalised economy. But what does such a type of temporary conflict between the economy and the state mean? It means a *revolution* or a *counterrevolution*. The victory of one class over another signifies that it will reconstruct the economy in the interests of the victors."

Even by WP's own false criteria, they have a problem, and are obliged to admit that "The monopoly on foreign finance and trade, the planning ministries and many state-owned industries have all been dismantled." So now they are forced to fall back on an absurdity: "Difficulties in constructing and enforcing capitalist credit mechanisms mean that thousands of firms continue to operate when the domination of the law of value would dictate that they should be closed down. In no capitalist country would loss-making production be tolerated on such a scale." Have they never heard of corporate bailouts?

The Russian Question Point Blank

WP sneeringly mocks as "one of the most memorable pearls of Spartacist wisdom" our statement that the August 1991 events "appear to have been decisive in the direction of development of the SU, but only those who are under the sway of capitalist ideology would have been hasty to draw this conclusion at the time" (*Spartacist* No. 47-48, Winter 1992-93). For WP, this means we say "Yeltsin's August coup was decisive but it would have been wrong to have recognised it at the time!" Only those who forsake the proletariat as incapable of becoming a class mobilised for itself through the instrument of a Leninist party would have instantly written off the Soviet degenerated workers state.

For WP, Yeltsin's triumph was a foregone conclusion. We, however, stand with American Trotskyist James P. Cannon who wrote:

"We do not examine the Russian revolution and what remains of its great conquests as though it were a bug under a glass. *We have an interest! We take part in the fight!*"

—"Speech on the Russian Question," *Struggle for a Proletarian Party* (1943)

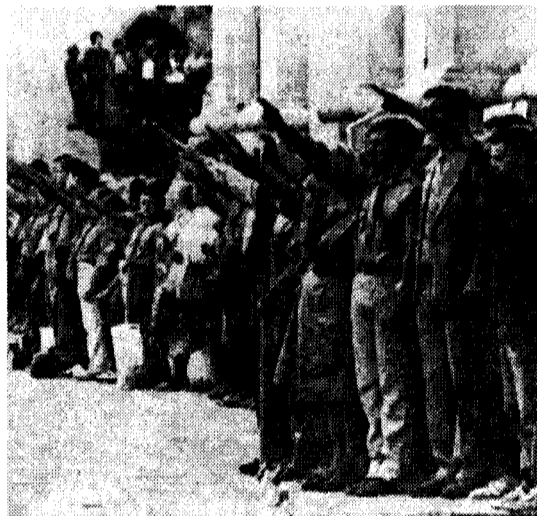
The ICL distributed tens of thousands of leaflets proclaiming: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" Ours was the first statement widely distributed in the Soviet Union in opposition to Yeltsin's restorationist drive. We said that what was necessary in August 1991 was a call on Moscow workers to clean



Workers Hammer



British Workers Power at 1990 London picket (top) in support of Baltic counterrevolutionaries. Centrist WP joined with anti-Soviet SWP, echoing imperialist chorus for fascist-infested Lithuanian nationalists (above).



Skurihinaya/Pravda

gramme, no matter how many spivs and racketeers joined the barricades."

We Spartacists of the International Communist League denounced WP and its ilk as "Traitors, not Trotskyists" for this criminal betrayal. It is no surprise, therefore, that in seeking to "justify" their actions WP aims its polemical fire largely at the Spartacists.

WP adamantly denies that they "supported Yeltsin" or had "illusions in bourgeois democracy" as the Spartacists are so fond of claiming." But why was WP

with...U.S. imperialist chieftain George Bush, who certainly was among "all those forces opposing the coup makers"! "Democracy" versus "Stalinist totalitarianism" was precisely the counterrevolutionary rallying cry of the capitalists and their social-democratic front men.

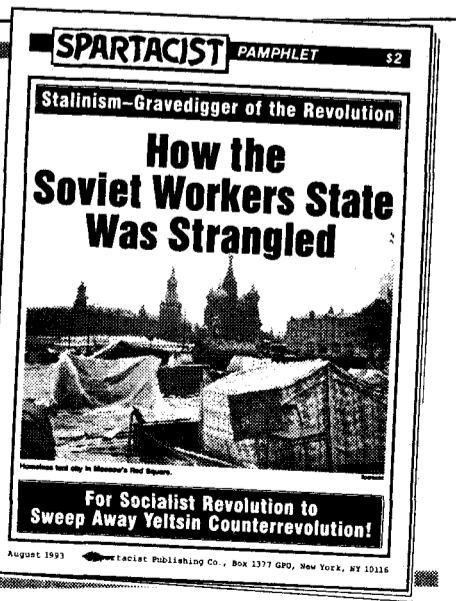
Indeed, WP views Yeltsin's counterrevolution purely through the eyes of a Laborite parliamentarist. Against "the politically bankrupt Spartacists [who] argue that Yeltsin coming to power...was the decisive turning point in the restoration of a capitalist state," WP paints Yeltsin's counter-coup as "a simple change of government." To this day they deny that capitalism has been restored in the lands of the former Soviet Union. Russia, they say, is a "moribund workers state," a peculiar, classless formulation invented by Workers Power to deny that capitalist counterrevolution has taken place, as a cover for their support to the restorationist forces. This position has made WP look foolish as it obviously flies in the face of reality—so they have begun to modify it, declaring that most of East Europe, which they also labelled "moribund workers states," are now capitalist.

For Workers Power, the essential feature of a workers state is the degree of nationalisation. Claiming that the class nature of the state is merely a reflection of the economy, WP tries to make an ally of Trotsky, quoting (more or less) his state-

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out the counterrevolutionary rabble on Yeltsin's barricades. Such an independent mobilisation of the workers could have opened the road to political revolution through a showdown with the imperialist-backed forces of capitalist restoration. While recognising that the state power had been effectively fractured, we looked to spark working-class action in defence of collectivised property.

Unable to conceive of an independent proletarian policy, Workers Power claims that if "Yeltsin taking power was decisive in the restoration of capitalism, then surely the Spartacists made a mistake. They should have blocked with the Stalinists who opposed him." Spicing up their polemic with a falsehood, WP claims we have never explained why we didn't.

This was an all-sided squalid affair in which neither side opposed capitalist "market reforms," i.e., counterrevolution. The "coup plotters" only wanted a more gradual, controlled introduction of capitalism, without the democratic trappings of *glasnost* (openness). As we said in a polemic against the pseudo-Trotskyist apologists for Yeltsin:

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

— "Cheerleaders for Yeltsin's Counterrevolution," *ASP* No. 143, Summer 1991/1992

WP recalls that "after only three days we immediately called for a breaking of the united front with the Yeltsin forces and advocated mobilising opposition to their 'seizure' of power." They sniff that this "falsifies the Spartacist claim that we politically supported Yeltsin." Actually, it proves exactly what we said of them: during the most critical moments of August 1991, they knowingly supported Yeltsin's forces of imperialist-backed capitalist counterrevolution. Now, with boundless cynicism, they try to claim they politically opposed it.

WP's "Solidarity with Solidarność Counterrevolution"

WP's road to Yeltsin's barricades was well prepared. As we have said:

"While formally adopting a position of Soviet defencism in 1980 over Afghanistan, WP condemned the Soviet intervention against imperialist-backed feudal reaction as 'counterrevolutionary' (later also denouncing the Soviet withdrawal as 'counterrevolutionary'). In 1981, they 'critically' championed Solidarność even while admitting that Solidarność in power would mean capitalist restoration. In 1989, while claiming to be against the capitalist annexation of the former DDR by the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, Workers Power sided with counterrevolution at every crucial stage. The following year, they supported the anti-Soviet, fascist-infested nationalist movement in Lithuania and were caught

He Who Pays the Piper Calls the Tune

The following article is translated from Spartakist No. 130 (December 1997-January 1998), publication of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League.

SPARTAKIST

For Marxists, who understand that the bourgeois state must be smashed through socialist revolution, the fight for the independence of the workers movement is a question of principle. For that very reason we accept *no* financial support from the capitalist state. Not so the "League for a Revolutionary Communist International" (LRCI) and its Austrian section ArbeiterInnenstandpunkt

(AST—Workers Viewpoint; in Germany, Gruppe Arbeitermacht [GAM—Workers Power Group]). The Viennese Alliance of Alternative Publications released documentation on the Internet which shows that the bimonthly *ArbeiterInnenstandpunkt* as well as the LRCI's German-language theoretical journal, *Revolutionärer Marxismus*, are funded by the Austrian state. When we confronted a member of AST at Vienna University during our subscription drive there this year, he proudly confirmed the receipt of state money.

In November 1996, the Austrian social-democratic SPÖ successfully prevented an attempt by its Christian Democratic ÖVP coalition partner to overturn the subsidy of the AST/GAM publications and other "left alternative" papers as not

"worthy of support." The SPÖ has been in the government in Austria for decades: he who pays the piper calls the tune. The AST was scheduled to receive not less than 135,000 Austrian Schilling (\$11,100) for the 1996 fiscal year. With the corrupt Austrian state as its paymaster, who could wonder about the current AST front page on the 1998 presidential elections: "Don't back down: SPÖ must run candidate!"

Two years ago the SPÖ introduced the harshest racist immigration laws in Europe, thereby providing Haidar's Nazi FPÖ with a mass following. Echoing the SPÖ, the AST and GAM white-wash this dangerous fascist führer as "right-populist," just as they did in the 1980s when they alibied Nazi war criminal and former Austrian president Kurt Waldheim.

The dividing line between revolutionaries and reformists is their attitude toward the bourgeois state. In accepting money from the government, the Austrian LRCI section apes the reformist Social Democracy, whose program and practice is to administer the capitalist state in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

out collaborating with Russian fascists in sponsoring a 'trade union' speaking tour by one Yuri Butchenko."

— "Chickens Come Home to Roost Over Balkan Betrayal," *ASP* No. 157, Summer 1995-96

Today WP is particularly sensitive on the question of Polish Solidarność. In an anti-Communist lie that could just as easily have emanated from the "free trade unions" gang at ASIS [Australian Security Intelligence Service] or one of the CIA's labour fronts, WP says that we were in "support of the murder of Polish workers by Stalinists in 1981." By WP's lights, opposition to this capitalist-restorationist "union" (favoured by the CIA, the pope, Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and then Labor prime minister Bob Hawke) could only be Stalinist. Acknowledging that all the "dominant tendencies" in Solidarność sought the restoration of capitalism, WP concluded that this did "not mean that we do not solidarise with Solidarność."

At its 1981 congress it was clear that Solidarność had consolidated around a program of clerical reaction and capitalist restoration. It took up the CIA-inspired calls for "free elections" and "free trade unions." We Spartacists said that this company union for the Vatican, CIA and Western bankers was now making an open bid for power based on a program for capitalist restoration. We said, forthrightly, "If the Kremlin Stalinists, in their necessarily brutal, stupid way, intervene militarily... we will support this. And we take responsibility in advance for this; whatever the idiocies and atrocities they will commit, we do not flinch from defending the crushing of Solidarity's counterrevolution" (WV No. 289, 25 September 1981).

While we stood militarily with the Po-

lish government in spiking Solidarność bid for power, we said that the Stalinist crackdown would only delay the day of reckoning, for Solidarność would have to be defeated politically within the working class. Thus our call to stop Solidarność counterrevolution was integrally linked to the need to forge a Trotskyist party that could lead a proletarian political revolution to oust the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy. WP is so warped by the pressures of bourgeois society that they scream bloody murder over our defence of Soviet tanks that were never sent to Poland, but they cheered the Yeltsin counterrevolution which has brought a real living hell to workers and especially women in the former Soviet Union and East Europe—the dramatic plunge in life expectancy, the rise of pogroms and communal fratricide, the rollback of abortion rights.

Centrist Confusionism and Cliffite Recidivism

WP originated in Britain in a 1975 split from Tony Cliff's virulently anti-Soviet International Socialists (now the Socialist Workers Party). Born of capitulation to the imperialists' genocidal war against North Korea, the Cliffites labelled the Soviet Union "state capitalist" to deny any basis for its defence. In 1980, a month after the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan, WP rejected "state capitalism" and characterised the USSR as a degenerated workers state, a step to the left. A classic example of what Trotsky called the "crystallised confusion" of centrism, WP wrote that "We oppose the invasion of Afghanistan" while opining that it would be "tactically wrong for revolutionaries... to demand the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops."

After a decade of Cold War anti-

Communism, and especially now in this period of "death of communism" bourgeois triumphalism, WP has moved increasingly to the right. Hailing "an end to decades of Stalinist dictatorship," their statement that "All genuine revolutionaries rejoiced at the downfall of these bureaucratic, totalitarian monstrosities" is of a piece with the SWP's obscene gloating that "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991).

In the spirit of its Cliffite heritage, the LRCI's August congress took up the question of "the nature of the state form in the degenerate workers' states" involving "the question of whether the state machine was smashed, in the Marxist sense of the term, during the post-war overthrow of capitalism in Eastern Europe, China, Indochina and Cuba, and the related question of whether the state machine had to be smashed to allow capitalism to be restored in the post-1989 period." In a word, their answer is, "No."

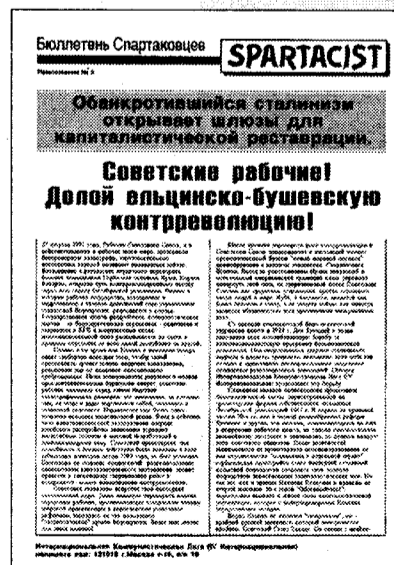
WP recognises that Cuba, China and Yugoslavia became workers states. Nevertheless, WP's long-standing position is that "Castro and co, like Mao and Tito before them, carried out a counterrevolutionary overthrow of capitalism" (*Trotskyist International*, Summer 1988). So imbued is WP with social-democratic horror of their own bourgeoisie's hue and cry about communist "totalitarianism" that they ludicrously claim that every overthrow of capitalism since the Russian Revolution has been "counterrevolutionary." And what could a counterrevolutionary overthrow of capitalism mean—except, perhaps, a return to feudalism?

Two years ago, WP's refusal to take a

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Yeltsin on barricades of counterrevolution, August 1991 (left). ICL leaflet proclaimed: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" ICL supporters raised banner of Trotskyist Fourth International at November 1991 Revolution Day rally in Moscow.



Immigrants...

(continued from page 1)

new powers, allowing them to summarily exclude visitors and bar them from re-entry for up to five years. So tight have the border restrictions become that even many Canadian citizens have been denied entry. Now airports have begun implementing new computerized procedures to screen for "potential terrorists," clearly targeting travellers from the Arab world, Africa and other regions who fit the government's racist "profile" for "terrorism."

Clinton's 1996 "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act" greatly expanded not only the range of federal offenses punishable by the racist death penalty but also those offenses—some as minor as shoplifting—which can get legal residents deported. The draconian sweep of this law was recently spotlighted by the case of 43-year-old New York restaurant manager Jesus Collado, who moved here from the Dominican Republic when he was a youth. Collado

was seized by the INS last spring and threatened with deportation on the grounds that 23 years earlier he had been sentenced to one year's probation, for having had sex with a 15-year-old girlfriend! A victim of both state racism and the reactionary anti-sex witchhunt, Collado was locked up in an INS dungeon for six months before an outcry of protest won his release.

While the wretchedly chauvinist American labor bureaucracy joins with capitalist politicians in ranting against "foreign" workers stealing "American" jobs, the assault on immigrants has nothing to do with "saving" jobs. American capitalism has long relied on undocumented immigrants to provide the labor for physically demanding, dangerous jobs that others won't touch—an estimated 40 percent of the country's two million farm laborers are "illegal aliens." Indeed, one effect of militarizing the border with Mexico is to allow through only young, physically fit males who are capable of working in grinding farm labor, by keeping out women and children who can't cross through treacherous, hilly terrain. Moreover, under a 1990 law, rich people can literally

buy legal residency by investing \$1 million in a business here.

Labor Must Champion Immigrants' Rights!

Campaigns against immigrants serve as an ideological weapon to further divide the American proletariat along race and national lines. To defend the jobs, wages and union rights for all workers, labor must champion the rights of immigrants and other minorities. Brutally exploited immigrants from Asia and Central America are forced to toil in garment sweatshops across the country for sub-minimum wages. And even many who are in unions and have legal residency work at wage and piece-work rates barely above the legal minimum.

We call for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants* and for *organizing the unorganized*, on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. But this perspective is anathema to the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO bureaucracy headed by John Sweeney, despite their occasional words about "organizing" immigrant workers and "solidarity" with Mexican workers. Far from defending undocumented workers against the savage repression meted out by *la migra*, in 1996 Sweeney's AFL-CIO called for "effective control of illegal immigration," including an additional 700 border patrol cops. Likewise, United Farm Workers (UFW) president Dolores Huerta and other AFL-CIO officials made a show of launching an organizing drive for California's brutally exploited, overwhelmingly immigrant strawberry pickers. But far from mobilizing union power to ensure victory in this struggle, the labor tops devote their efforts to opposing a Republican bill to bring in 25,000 more farm "guest workers."

The labor bureaucracy sees the world through the same lens as the capitalists and their government and embraces the goals of U.S. imperialism, chaining the workers to the capitalist class enemy through support to Clinton's Democrats. Indeed, about the only significant difference Sweeney & Co. have with Clinton is over "fast track" trade legislation—and earlier, NAFTA—which these labor lie-



Hathcox/USA Today
1986 clothing workers' rally: bureaucrats' chauvinist protectionism chains unions to U.S. capitalists' interests.

tenants of the bourgeoisie oppose from the standpoint of a protectionist crusade to bolster U.S. industry. In contradistinction to the chauvinist, job-trusting labor tops, we opposed NAFTA as a "free trade" rape of Mexico by U.S. imperialism and called for international labor solidarity *in struggle* by workers in the U.S. and Canada with Mexican workers—for example, those battling U.S. corporations for basic union rights in the *maquiladora* border factories.

A real fight to organize immigrant workers would help reinvigorate the American labor movement, bringing into the unions workers from Central America and elsewhere with a history of bitter class struggle against U.S. imperialism and its local death squad regimes. Black and Hispanic workers, including a sizable number of immigrants, played a prominent role in last summer's Teamsters strike against the UPS bosses, the first significant victory for American labor in decades. To unchain labor's power requires above all a political struggle to oust the racist, pro-capitalist bureaucracy and to forge a revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed as part of the fight for socialist revolution. ■



Watsonville, California march in support of strawberry workers' organizing drive, April 1997. AFL-CIO tops refuse to unleash union power to defend and organize immigrant workers.

Workers Power...

(continued from page 9)

stand for military defence of the Bosnian Serbs under massive NATO bombing blew apart the LRCI as most of their New Zealand group and all of their Latin American supporters split away. Revealing a continuing political schism, Workers Power reports that "At the Fourth Congress, the former minority position secured a narrow majority. The Congress adopted the view that the bureaucratic Stalinist overturns took place without the

smashing of the bourgeois form of state apparatus." Does this mean that capitalism was not really destroyed in East Europe, Cuba, etc. (à la Cliff)? Or does it mean that capitalism can be overthrown without smashing "the bourgeois form of state," an open repudiation of Leninism (à la Karl Kautsky)?

Specifically against the German Social Democrat Kautsky, who opposed proletarian revolution, Lenin said that "the proletariat cannot simply win state power in the sense that the old state apparatus passes into new hands, but must smash this apparatus, must break it and replace it by a new one" (*The State and Revolution*). By asserting that workers states

could come into existence without smashing "the bourgeois form of state apparatus," the latter-day Kautskyites of Workers Power reveal their true program—pushing social-democratic parties like the Australian Labor Party (ALP) or the British Labour Party into getting rid of capitalism.

Indeed, WP's Stalinophobic support to every sort of counterrevolutionary scum in the former Soviet Union and East Europe is a reflection of, and capitulation to, the pro-imperialist social democracy, which since 1917 sought the destruction of the October Revolution. From Australia to Europe, wherever the social-democratic parties are fronting for the capitalist offensive, Workers Power can be found behind them. In Britain, they backed Tony Blair's Labour Party, while in the French elections last May they openly called for a vote to the class-collaborationist alliance of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and various bourgeois formations—a popular front. In Australia, WP shores up the hold of the racist Labor Party on the struggles of the exploited and oppressed, claiming that workers' illusions in the ALP can only "be broken by putting Labor to the test of office," i.e., vote ALP, no matter what.

At root, the anti-Sovietism of WP expresses their acceptance of the "democratic credentials" of their "own" bourgeoisie as good coin. Indeed, they have deeply imbibed the values of the Australian ruling class, not least its profound anti-woman bigotry. At a large workers demonstration on 12 November in Melbourne, a Workers Power leader, Lloyd, responded with vile misogynist epithets to political debate about their position on the former Soviet Union and their Laborism, twice hurling the word "c--t" at our comrades. This illustrates that the leadership of Workers Power will try to use the

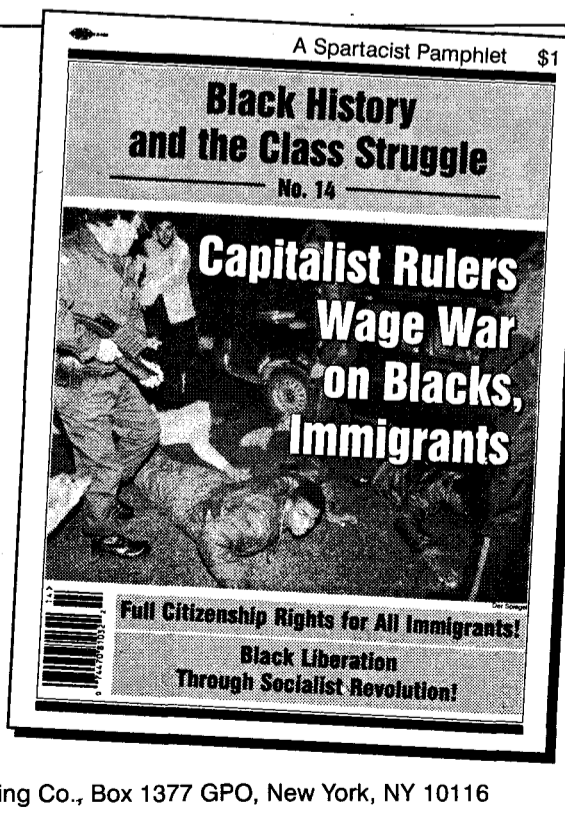
most grotesque means to draw a blood line to seal off political discussion. We won't fall for it—we will continue to pursue open political debate because it is through the clash of opinion and test of competing programs in action that Leninist parties are forged.

Workers Power are counterfeit Trotskyists who deny in practice the necessity of building a revolutionary vanguard party to bring to the working class genuine class consciousness—the understanding that it is their historic mission to take state power in their own name. WP fatuously denies the devastating effects of the destruction of the Soviet workers state, saying "the worst of the counterrevolutionary effects of those defeats have already been experienced in the previous period, and do not lie ahead." That's easy for them to say from where they sit in comfort in the West!

On the contrary, we of the ICL recognise that this is a new period in world history, one conditioned by colossal defeats for the proletariat. As Leon Trotsky wrote in his 1937 article, "Stalinism and Bolshevism":

"In these conditions, the task of the vanguard is above all not to let itself be carried along by the backward flow: it must swim against the current. If an unfavorable relation of forces prevents it from holding the positions that it has won, it must at least retain its ideological positions, because in them is expressed the dearly purchased experience of the past. Fools will consider this policy 'sectarian.' Actually it is the only means of preparing for a new tremendous surge forward with the coming historical tide."

Workers Power members who seek Marxist clarity and a forward, revolutionary perspective, the fight for new October Revolutions, would do well to undertake a serious investigation of the Trotskyist politics of the International Communist League. ■



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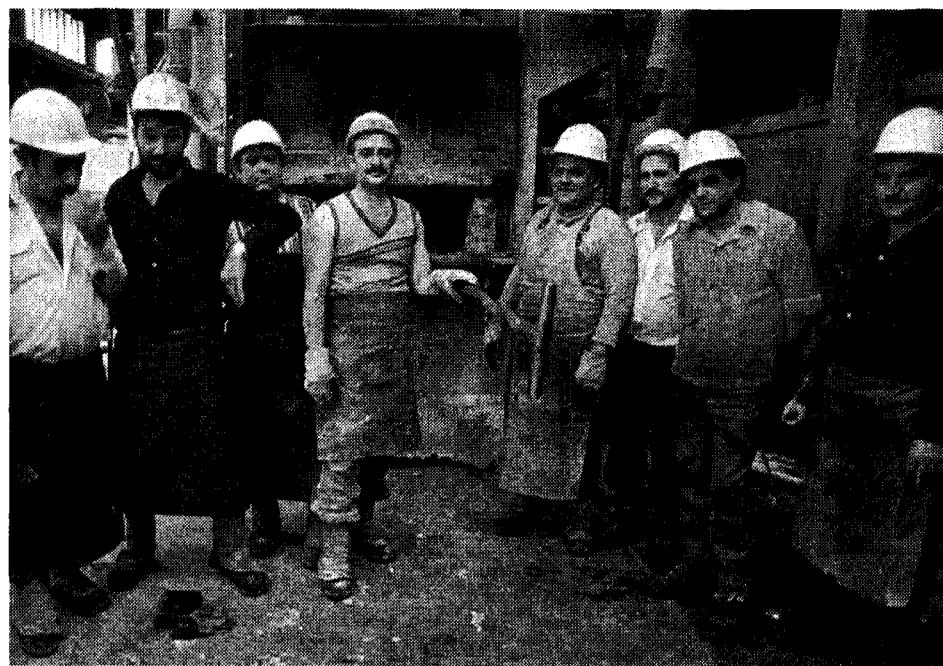
ICL Statement...

(continued from page 12)

In Germany, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU) are also waging war against that country's two million immigrants and refugees of Turkish and Kurdish descent. Their children—including those born in Germany—were forced last year to apply for visas in order to remain in the country. Turkish leftist and Kurdish nationalist groups, including the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party), are banned. Even showing the Kurdish national colors is illegal, as it is in Turkey. Having used its economic muscle to dictate the terms for the dismemberment of the former Yugoslav deformed workers state, which resulted in millions of refugees, Bonn moved last year to expel some 300,000 Bosnian immigrants—the biggest mass deportation since Hitler's Third Reich. Now, German interior minister Manfred Kanther enjoins Italy to "secure its borders," declaring that Germany will not accept a "criminally organized migra-

by which the main European countries agreed to do away with passport checks at their respective frontiers. This points up the real purpose of Schengen: to consolidate racist "Fortress Europe" against refugees and immigrants fleeing the exploitation and inhuman conditions in backward countries under the boot of imperialism. Like the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which envisioned a common European currency by the end of the century, Schengen was billed as a step toward melding the existing capitalist societies into a single supranational European state. But this is reactionary utopianism. The bourgeoisie, by its nature, is a nationally limited class, whose rise to power was closely associated with the consolidation of powerful nation-states, serving to protect the bourgeoisie's national market while competing internationally with rival capitalist states. As Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky wrote during World War II and on the eve of the Nazi Holocaust:

"The world of decaying capitalism is overcrowded. The question of admitting a hundred extra refugees causes a major problem for such a world power as the United States.... Amid the vast expanses



H. Cristoph

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

imperialism, while forging a bloody alliance with the anti-Palestinian Zionist rulers of Israel. And when PKK leader Kani Yilmaz visited London three years ago to push for a "political solution," he was arrested and imprisoned for two years before being extradited to Germany, where he is now on trial for leading a "terrorist association." Freedom for Kani Yilmaz!

While the Near Eastern bourgeoisies are the immediate oppressors of the Kurdish people, there can be no self-determination for the Kurds without opposing imperialism and its repeated interventions in the area. Following the 1991 Gulf War, Iraqi Kurdistan was declared to be a "safe haven" for Kurds, to be policed by the U.S. and other imperialists under a UN fig leaf. Yet the Turkish regime, armed to the hilt by the U.S. and Germany, has repeatedly invaded this "safe haven" to round up and kill supporters of the PKK.

The national emancipation of Kurdistan requires the revolutionary overthrow of four capitalist regimes—Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria—among which the 25 million Kurds in the Near East are partitioned, and the throwing off of the yoke of imperialist domination. The allies and motor force for Kurdish emancipation are to be found in the proletariats of those countries, who have their own scores to settle with their exploiters. It is vital in

those countries to forge revolutionary multinational workers parties committed to the national liberation of Kurdistan through socialist revolution. The Kurdish proletariat in diaspora—in the major industrial centers not only of the Near East but (together with Turks) of West Europe—represents the living bridge between the struggle for the emancipation of the Kurdish nation and proletarian revolution in imperialist West Europe.

This is the perspective of Trotsky's permanent revolution for countries whose capitalist development has been retarded by imperialism: the tasks of political democracy and national emancipation can only be achieved through the seizure of power by the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. This perspective requires the construction of Leninist vanguard parties that combat every form of social and national oppression as an integral part of the struggle for working-class political power. For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan in a Socialist Federation of the Near East! Down with imperialist "Fortress Europe"! For a Socialist United States of Europe! For the reforging of Trotsky's Fourth International to fight for new October Revolutions worldwide! This is the task to which the International Communist League is dedicated. ■



Spartaco

Italian Trotskyists initiated August 1993 protest in Milano to denounce racist cop terror, call for labor to champion full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

tion movement because of world conflicts like Bosnia" (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 7 January).

Meanwhile, the Social Democrats (SPD) are attacking Kohl from the *right*, denouncing the CDU government for not pressuring Rome earlier to stop Kurdish immigration and calling for restoring strict border control between EU countries. SPD-ruled Hamburg has been turned into an anti-immigrant police state. The SPD election campaign there last fall was so obscenely racist that even the bourgeois press was forced to note that it was "one of the most xenophobic election campaigns conducted by the left in post-war Germany" (London *Independent*, 22 September 1997). In whipping up anti-immigrant racism, the SPD has also given a green light to Nazi thugs throughout Germany.

In Bremen, where the SPD governs together with the CDU, imprisoned Kurds facing deportation are waging a hunger strike against torture, overcrowding and other abusive conditions. Six of the protesters are said to be in imminent danger of dying. An SPD state justice ministry official was forced to resign, but his replacement contemptuously dismissed the hunger strike as taking place during the month of Ramadan "fasting time" (*Neues Deutschland*, 8 January). Meanwhile some 370 Kurdish prisoners are undertaking a hunger strike in a Turkish jail in the city of Erzurum. We say: Down with the ban on the PKK and the Turkish leftist Devrimci Sol! Free all leftist and Kurdish nationalist political prisoners! Down with the racist "laws on foreigners"! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

The frantic rush by Italy's European neighbors to impose border controls against Kurdish immigration fly in the face of the 1995 Schengen agreement

of land and marvels of technology, which has also conquered the skies for man as well as earth, the bourgeoisie has managed to convert our planet into a foul prison."

—"Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution" (June 1940)

The racist policies being pushed by the capitalists and their social-democratic henchmen have greatly reinforced fascist bands throughout Europe, who feel they have a green light to carry out murderous attacks against immigrants and leftists. However, the ultimate aim of these racist shock troops of capitalist reaction is the eradication of the whole of the organized workers movement. Immigrant workers are a key component of the industrial proletariat, whether they be Kurds in Germany, North Africans in France or black Africans in Italy. French workers, in a series of mass demonstrations protesting the expulsion of *sans-papiers* over the past two years, have shown the potential for mobilizing the multiethnic proletariat against racist terror. In Germany, a number of protests and strikes have united ethnic German and foreign-born workers, as in last spring's powerful week-long miners strike. The crucial need is to break the workers from the reformist betrayers and the forging of revolutionary workers parties as part of a Leninist-Trotskyist international party.

The petty-bourgeois nationalist PKK calls on the UN and imperialist powers to broker a "political solution" to the Kurdish question in Turkey. The EU is as much an enemy of the Kurds as the Turkish government. A major reason for the recent rejection of Turkey's bid for EU membership was the fear by the German and other bourgeoisies of massive immigration by Kurds and Turks. Meanwhile, the Turkish bourgeoisie jockeys for support between U.S. and German

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

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WORKERS VANGUARD



DPA

Piscitelli/Archer

Desperate Kurdish refugees from Turkey and Iraq have been thrown into concentration camps by popular-front government in Italy.

“Fortress Europe” Bars Kurdish Refugees

We publish below a January 12 protest statement by the International Communist League denouncing a chauvinist campaign against Kurdish refugees by the West European bourgeoisies. European sections of the ICL have distributed this statement in English, French, German and Italian under the headline: “Down With Racist ‘Fortress Europe’! For a Workers Europe! Asylum for Kurds and All Refugees from Right-Wing Terror! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!”

The Turkish regime’s 13-year war against the Kurdish population has devastated Eastern Anatolia, totally destroying some 3,500 villages and forcing more than three million Kurds to flee their homes. Kurds in northern Iraq have also been repeatedly hit by military offensives—most recently last month—carried out by Turkey with the backing of its NATO allies, the U.S., Germany, Italy and France. This comes on top of the seven-year starvation blockade of Iraq following the massacres carried out by NATO/UN troops in the 1991 Gulf War. Yet, when 900 Kurds from Turkey and Iraq, along with other refugees fleeing right-wing terror, arrived last month off the Italian coast in two packed freighters, the European imperialist powers, with Germany in the lead, launched a hysterical, racist campaign against the “refugee flood.” The racist masters of capitalist Europe are determined to keep out the victims of right-wing terror, racist persecution and desperate poverty generated by their drive for profit in the neo-colonial Third World. The International Communist League demands: Down with the NATO/UN starvation blockade—Hands off Iraq! Turkish army out of Kurdistan! No deportations! Asylum for Kurds and all refugees from right-wing terror!

Capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe has sharpened interimperialist conflicts over the redivision of world markets. This has led to the creation or consolidation of rival

trade blocs, such as the European Union (EU), which are reactionary attempts by the imperialists to compete for markets abroad while savagely attacking the working masses at home. The cutting edge of the capitalist offensive is racist

terror against immigrants and refugees, who are scapegoated for the growing misery and unemployment created by the capitalist system itself. The ruling classes of Europe have deliberately fomented racist hysteria as the ideological preparation for new imperialist wars and to divide the workers and poison their class consciousness.

ICL Protest Statement

Throughout Europe, it is the social democrats and ex-Stalinists who, using their positions of leadership of the organ-

ized working class, are doing the racist dirty work for the imperialists. While reformists and centrists support them as a supposed “lesser evil,” these parties are, in the words of Lenin, “bourgeois workers parties” based on the organized working

class but sworn to protect the capitalist order. The parliamentary governments they form, whether in coalition with the bourgeois parties or alone, are *capitalist* governments, carrying out the anti-immigrant and anti-working-class policies demanded by their bourgeois masters.

In Italy, the coalition government of the ex-Stalinist Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) and various bourgeois politicians enforces one of the most vicious

anti-refugee policies in Europe. With the support of Rifondazione Comunista (RC), the other by-product of the breakup of the reformist Italian Communist Party, this racist regime has passed laws that threaten up to 300,000 people with deportation. Last spring, the Italian navy sank a ship in the Adriatic packed with desperate refugees fleeing chaos and poverty in Albania, killing 89. With the blood of this massacre on its hands, Italian imperialism then sent troops to establish “order” in Albania. Meanwhile, thousands of Albanian refugees who made it to Italy were herded into concentration camps and quickly deported. Today, those same camps are used to imprison Kurdish refugees. Responding to German dictates that his government crack down on Kurdish refugees, a PDS minister—speaking on the eve of a meeting of police chiefs from Turkey and the EU—vowed to “fight with the most absolute firmness against illegal immigration.”

The policies of the French coalition government of Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin have been as anti-immigrant as its Italian counterparts and as racist as its conservative predecessors. Jospin’s popular front—a class-collaborationist coalition of the Socialists and the French Communist Party with bourgeois politicians—was elected on a wave of mass strikes and demonstrations against neo-Gaullist Alain Juppé’s racist, anti-working-class policies. Yet the popular front has continued the racist “Vigipirate” campaign in which the army is used to terrorize immigrant ghettos. The government’s “new” laws on immigration are in some ways even more restrictive than the reactionary laws of the previous regime! Meanwhile, the *sans-papiers* (undocumented workers) are to get the boot: Jospin toured Morocco, Senegal and Mali last month to prepare the mass deportation of over 100,000 people. And as hysteria was whipped up over Kurdish refugees, massive contingents of French police were sent to seal off the Italian border against Kurds.



Action Press

Turkish government’s war of terror in Kurdistan has forced more than three million Kurds from their homes.

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