

## Imperialist Chief Clinton Witchhunted for Sex

# Impeachment Drive Threatens Right to Privacy for All

SEPTEMBER 20—The drive to remove Bill Clinton from the presidency for his consensual sexual affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky poses a threat to every one of us. At issue is one of the most fundamental democratic rights, the right to privacy—which in practice comes down to the right to a private sex life without meddling or snooping by state and church authorities. The politicians and media are going after Clinton for about the only thing he's done that *isn't* a crime from the standpoint of the working class. As we noted in an earlier article (WV No. 695, 28 August):

"Bill Clinton is commander in chief of U.S. imperialism, and as such a deadly

enemy of working people and minorities in the U.S. and around the world. But we are not indifferent to the anti-sex witchhunt which has now targeted Clinton. The seemingly limitless powers of the Starr chamber to pry into Clinton's and Lewinsky's private lives through harassment and intimidation are a threat to the most elementary right to privacy for the population as a whole."

Among the world's industrialized countries, the U.S. is the most deeply permeated by religious and superstitious influences. Yet there is also a strong sentiment among the populace that the government has no business dictating how people conduct their private lives. If the long arm of the sex cops can reach into the White House,

many understand, then what about their own bedrooms? It is notable that despite the torrent of hypocritical anti-sex moralizing spewed out by politicians and the media, Clinton's approval rating has remained solid since his affair with Lewinsky first came out in January (though this could change, as opinion polls are notoriously susceptible to the bourgeoisie's propaganda machine).

At this weekend's conference of the Christian Coalition in Washington, D.C., the right-wing religious bigots gathered there were "despondent" over the lack of outrage among America's "God-fearing people." Moreover, as the

*continued on page 9*



AP  
Anti-sex moralism and anti-abortion bigotry on display at Cincinnati protest against Clinton.

## London, Dublin Impose New "Anti-Terror" Laws

# Northern Ireland: Down With Police-State Crackdown!



Reuters

The following article is adapted from Workers Hammer (No. 164, September/October 1998), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

LONDON, September 17—The first session of the Northern Ireland Assembly on Monday, coming after an announced end to British Army patrols of Belfast

## British Troops Out Now!

and a "historic" meeting between Protestant Loyalist first minister David Trimble and Sinn Féin/Irish Republican Army (IRA) leader Gerry Adams, occasioned outpourings of praise for the imperialist "peace process." But the real face of the "peace" deal signed in Belfast's Stormont Castle last April, imposed by British Labour Party prime minister Tony Blair and Irish Republic taoiseach (prime

minister) Bertie Ahern and brokered by U.S. president Bill Clinton, was seen in the massive mobilisations of British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) repression and in the Orange mobs besieging the Catholic community of Drumcree over the summer.

In a joint declaration by the Spartacist League/Britain and the Dublin Spartacist Group opposing the Stormont agree-

ment, we warned that this imperialist "peace" would necessarily be imposed at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority in the North and would not do working-class Protestants any good either. We noted that it "will be taken by the governments in London, Dublin and Belfast as a mandate for intensified repression" (see "Northern Ireland: Imperialist 'Peace' Fraud," WV No. 689, 24 April). This is exactly what is now taking place. The imperialist butchers in Westminster and their junior partners in Dublin seized on the August 15 bombing

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# The Left and the "Million Youth March"

The army of cops that laid siege to black Harlem and rampaged against participants at the "Million Youth March" (MYM) on September 5 was an ominous new installment in racist New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani's campaign to brand the ghetto poor as criminal outlaws. In his efforts to promote race war in the city, Giuliani found a fitting analogue in MYM organizer Khalid Muhammad. As we wrote in our article protesting the attempt to ban the MYM: "Diverting the justified outrage of black youth against conditions of horrendous oppression into racist bigotry against Jews, Asians and others, Muhammad stokes the flames of right-wing reaction whose first targets will be black people" (WV No. 695, 28 August).

Yet a whole number of self-proclaimed "socialist" organizations fell in behind Muhammad's reactionary mobilization. *Workers World* (10 September) praised Muhammad as "strong and unapologetically anti-white." The Revolutionary Communist Party hailed the MYM as "proud, defiant and determined to make a difference" (*Revolutionary Worker*, 6 September). *Socialist Action* (September 1998) pledged its "uncompromising sup-

port to the progressive political goals of the Million Youth March," as though there is anything whatsoever progressive about Khalid Muhammad's anti-Semitic, anti-Asian, woman-hating black nationalism.

Seemingly standing apart from these leftists was the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which distributed a leaflet at the Harlem rally titled "Why Anti-Semitism Destroys Our Struggle." Leaving aside that the ISO is obviously incapable of staying away from any "mass action," even one dominated by Muhammad's anti-Semitic ravings, this leaflet was nonetheless a pretty bold move for these inveterate opportunists. Doubtless, "the courage of their convictions" was bolstered by "respectable" opposition to Muhammad coming from Harlem Democrats like Congressman Charles Rangel and State Senator David Paterson.

The black elected officials tried to organize a "community peacekeeping force" to serve as an auxiliary to Giuliani's racist cops. Yet the ISO's leaflet said not a word in opposition to the Democratic Party. And, in the aftermath of the MYM, the ISO's *Socialist Worker* (11 September)

applauded Democrat Al Sharpton—a former FBI fink who ran in last year's Democratic Party mayoral primary—as "the only speaker to say that he opposes anti-Semitism and homophobia." The ISO did *not* note that only a few years ago Sharpton joined black demagogue Sonny Carson in whipping up an anti-immigrant frenzy against Korean shopkeepers.

The ISO has postured as an opponent of reactionary black nationalism in the past. In 1995, it decried Louis Farrakhan's Million Man March as "a step backward from the political goals and ideals of the 1960s civil rights movement." But the goals of the liberal leadership of the civil rights movement were premised on the illusion that black equality could be achieved within the framework of racist American capitalism, largely through the vehicle of the Democratic Party. Although sometimes cloaked with "socialist" rhetoric, the ISO's politics are fundamentally predicated on the same liberal pressure politics. Their own illusions in the Democratic Party come through in an ISO pamphlet titled "Bill Clinton: A Record of Broken Promises." But the Clinton White House is delivering exactly what it "promised" in its relentless war against blacks, immigrants, working people and the poor.

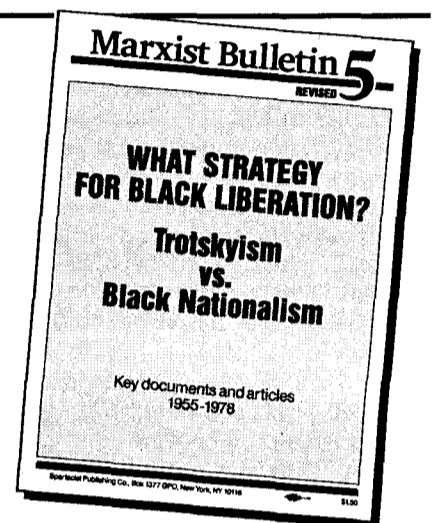
## The ISO: Color-Blind "Socialists"

In its leaflet to the Million Youth March, the ISO calls for "a movement that unites black and white workers to fight for real change." Indeed, the fight to break down the racial divisions which are imposed by America's capitalist rulers is crucial to mobilizing the multiracial proletariat in its own class interests and in defense of all the oppressed. But the ISO's "unite and fight" rhetoric is based on obscuring the centrality of the fight for black liberation to the struggle for socialist revolution in the U.S. Indeed, the ISO studiously avoids even mentioning black people in its articles on the attacks on welfare, on the burgeoning prison population and the increase in state executions. Yet blacks are the first target of the attacks of the American ruling class, which plays the race card in order to drive down the living standards of all workers.

While denouncing Farrakhan and Muhammad for assisting the bosses in dividing the working class along racial lines, the ISO social democrats say not a word about the far greater responsibility of the pro-capitalist trade union tops they tail in maintaining a system based on brutal racist oppression. In its cheerleading for the Carey leadership of the Teamsters during last year's UPS strike, the ISO completely ignored the refusal of the Teamster bureaucrats to take up any fight against racist and sexist discrimination at UPS.

The ISO has denounced Farrakhan's

Nation of Islam for "work[ing] with the police rather than organizing against them" (*Socialist Worker*, 27 October 1995). But the ISO itself sees cops—the armed guardians of the rule of capital—as potential "allies" of the labor movement. In 1997, John Molyneux, a leader of the ISO's British parent group, the Socialist Workers Party, proclaimed that the cops would cease being "agents of the state" if they were to "rebel collectively." But as any black youth or militant worker knows, the cops "rebel collectively" by demanding more money, more power and more leeway to gun down the ghetto poor and beat up strikers. In our polemic against the ISO's pro-cop line, we wrote: "The ISO's benevolent view of the capitalist state precludes its being a revolutionary organization. Instead, the most it can be is a tepid 'left' face of capitalist



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TROTSKY

## Socialist Revolution: The Only Road to Black Emancipation

*Because racial oppression is embedded in the very foundations of American capitalism, the aim of black emancipation can only be realized through a proletarian revolution which replaces the rule of the bourgeoisie with an egalitarian socialist society. In a 1945 pamphlet, published when Jim Crow segregation reigned in the South and only two years after lynch mobs had rampaged through the streets of Detroit, the then-*



LENIN

*Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party advanced a class-struggle program to combat black oppression and the racist bigotry which has historically been used to divide the working class. The Spartacist League fights to build the multiracial revolutionary workers party needed to lead the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression to victory.*

Without a doubt, it is only those who hire and exploit wage labor who stand to gain by pitting white against black and black against white: the wealthy planters, the big industrialists, the monopoly capitalists, and the Wall Street financiers; those who produce nothing themselves but who, like leeches, live by extracting a hidden toll from their employees.

The people who own and control the factories, the railroads and all the other means of production and distribution, stand to gain because interracial prejudice diverts the attention of both the black and the white workers away from their true foe....

Capitalist exploitation hangs like a tapeworm from the entrails of human society. It lives off the nourishment which is created by the labor power of both white and colored workers. In its parasitic existence it gives off increasing doses of poisonous prejudice. In America the poison of racial prejudice, which capitalism produces, circulates throughout society and is the direct cause of the external festering sores of segregation, discrimination, lynching and race riots.

Since these exploiters are the only ones who really gain in dollars and cents by driving this wedge between white and Negro workers, it is easy to understand that the capitalist system itself is the real cause of Jim-Crowism. Here, then, is the basic enemy against which we must battle.

*The Negro will never achieve complete equality as long as the capitalist system, which makes race prejudice profitable, is allowed to exist.*

—Charles Jackson, *A Practical Program to Kill Jim Crow* (1945)

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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On September 21, the Spartacist League/U.S. and other sections of the International Communist League joined in united-front protests against the Islamic fundamentalist regime in Iran initiated by exile groups of the Worker-communist Party of Iran (WPI). The protests in New York City, Vancouver, London, Berlin, Hamburg and Sydney, Australia were timed to coincide with Iranian president Mohammad Khatami's visit to the United Nations and were called to "defend rights, secularism, Socialism, freedom and equality" against the murderous Iranian regime (the word "socialism" was omitted from the WPI's appeal in the U.S.). A day earlier, our Los Angeles comrades joined a protest there.

Among the signs carried by our contingents were ones reading: "Down With the Woman-Hating Mullah Regime! For Workers Revolution in Iran!" "U.S./UN/NATO Out of the Persian Gulf! Down With UN Embargo of Iraq!" and "Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!" In a letter endorsing the WPI's united-front call, we stressed "the necessity of the absolute independence of the working class from its 'own' capitalist rulers and from the agencies of imperialism, notably including the United Nations, that den of thieves and their victims, to paraphrase Lenin's earlier formulation about the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations."

This points to a key difference between our revolutionary Marxist program and the politics of the WPI. Many WPI cadre have been murdered, imprisoned or exiled for their heroic opposition to the ayatollahs' regime in Teheran. Yet despite its stated commitment to socialism, the WPI has repeatedly issued impotent appeals to the UN and other imperialist agencies to oppose repression in Iran and Iraq. This is implicitly reflected in its protest call, which states, "Rather than speak at the UN, the regime's representatives must be tried for their crimes against humanity."

A statement issued by the WPI's affiliate, the Worker-communist Party of Iraq, for a September 14 demonstration in London made this appeal explicit, calling for a "team of international inspectors to visit Iraqi prisons" to make "full inquiries" about prison conditions there. And a 25 May Internet posting by the Iraqi group—which is heavily centered in the Kurdish region of the country—demanded a plebiscite on Kurdish independence in Iraq with representatives of the "UN to observe the process and to give legitimacy to the result of the referendum."

Such appeals dovetail with the designs of the imperialists themselves, who already have an army of UN "arms inspectors" in Iraq and have killed more than one million Iraqis in the last eight years through the UN-sponsored starvation blockade. Also under a UN fig leaf, the imperialists have carved out an "autonomous region" in Iraqi Kurdistan which has been opened to repeated, murderous invasions by the Turkish army as it pursues its own war of annihilation

# Protests Denounce Reactionary Iranian Regime



September 21: Spartacist contingent at NYC united-front protest outside United Nations against bloodsoaked Iranian regime. WV Photo

against Kurdish nationalists. Only days before the WPI-initiated protests, Washington brought together the feudal and petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan to broker a truce between these perennially feuding groups in order to further imperialist control of the region and bolster the CIA-sponsored "opposition" to the regime of Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein.

As the SL speaker at the New York City protest emphasized:

"Repeated appeals for UN intervention in Iraq and Kurdistan can only result in the further oppression and misery of the masses of the Near East. It was under the aegis of the UN that the U.S. slaughtered over 100,000 Iraqis in the 1991 Gulf War. And it is today the UN which is strangling and starving the masses of Iraq, including its Kurdish inhabitants. The liberation of the Kurdish people can only be achieved through the overthrow of capitalism in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria. For the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people! For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!"

During the 1991 Gulf War, we raised the slogan "Defeat U.S. imperialism—Defend Iraq!" while calling on the Iraqi working people to sweep away their capitalist oppressors. But the WPI's predecessor organization refused even to side militarily with Iraq against the U.S./UN onslaught.

Behind the WPI's appeals to the agen-

cies of "democratic" imperialism lies its failure to transcend the Menshevik/Stalinist schema of "two-stage revolution," which puts off the fight for social-

ist revolution to a distant future while seeking to pressure a (nonexistent) "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie to carry out a democratic revolution. This perspective has led to countless defeats and betrayals for the workers of the colonial and semicolonial countries, notably in Iran itself. At the time of the 1978-79 upheavals which overthrew the Iranian monarchy and installed the Khomeinists in power, we called for a revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat in opposition to both the shah and the mullahs. In contrast, much of the left in Iran and internationally tailed behind the Islamic clergy. And while the WPI did not exist at the time, it retrospectively tries to draw a nonexistent distinction between the Khomeini-led "revolution" and the ayatollahs' accession to power, talking of the "suppression of the 1979 revolution by the Islamic regime" (*Bolshevik Message*, February 1989).

As the SL speaker at the NYC protest concluded:

"What is essential is the application of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, powerfully vindicated by the 1917 Russian Revolution. In backward countries, the bourgeoisie is tied by a thousand strings to the imperialists and incapable of resolving the tasks associated with the European bourgeois revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries, such as political democracy, agrarian revolution, national emancipation or elementary rights for women. Trotsky stressed that in the epoch of imperialism these tasks can only be resolved through the proletarian seizure of power. To thwart imperialist intervention and overcome the economic backwardness of 'Third World' countries, this must be integrally linked to a struggle for international socialist revolution, particularly in the advanced industrial countries. What is necessary for this is the forging of proletarian, internationalist Trotskyist parties in the Near East committed to the fight against all forms of oppression through the struggle for proletarian revolution." ■

## Women and Revolution

### Bound Volume

We are proud to make available the first bound volume of *Women and Revolution*, journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League/U.S. Now incorporated into *Spartacist*, the theoretical and documentary repository of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), *Women and Revolution* reflects our commitment to the fight for women's liberation through socialist revolution.

The fully indexed clothbound volume contains issues No. 1 (May/June 1971) through No. 20 (Spring 1980).

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Saturday, October 10, 4 p.m.  
Hollywood United Methodist Church  
6817 Franklin Avenue  
(Highland Ave. exit off 101 Freeway)  
For more information: (213) 380-8239

#### SAN FRANCISCO

Saturday, October 24, 7:30 p.m.  
Women's Building  
3543 18th Street (near Valencia)  
For more information: (415) 777-9367 or  
(510) 839-0851

#### BOSTON

### The Fight for Revolutionary Marxism Today

Saturday, September 26, 7 p.m.  
102 Sever Hall  
Harvard University, Cambridge  
(take the Red Line to Harvard)  
For more information: (617) 666-9453

#### CHICAGO

*Defeat of Reconstruction and the Great Rail Strike of 1877*

### The Shaping of Racist American Capitalism

Saturday, October 10, 7 p.m.  
Ida Noyes Hall, Library Room  
University of Chicago  
(1212 E. 59th St.)  
For more information: (312) 454-4930

#### MADISON

### The Revolutionary Road to Black Liberation

Saturday, October 3, 3 p.m.  
Memorial Union  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
(See "Today in the Union" for room)  
For more information: (312) 454-4930

### Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forums

#### TORONTO

### The Fight for a Trotskyist Party

Introducing "Who We Are, and What We Fight For," Programmatic Theses of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste

Saturday, October 3, 7:30 p.m.  
St. Paul's Centre  
427 Bloor Street West  
(one block west of Spadina Station)  
For more information: (416) 593-4138

#### VANCOUVER

### For World Socialist Revolution! Imperialism and Class Struggle in Asia

Saturday, October 3, 2:30 p.m.  
Britannia Community Centre  
1661 Napier Street  
(off Commercial Drive)  
For more information: (604) 687-0353

### Spartacus Youth Club Classes

#### NEW YORK CITY

### Anti-Labor Attacks, Cop Terror and the Capitalist State

Tuesday, September 29, 7 p.m.  
Loeb Student Center, Room 413  
New York University  
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For more information, readings: (212) 267-1025

#### TORONTO

### The Bolshevik Revolution

Thursday, October 1, 7 p.m.  
International Student Centre  
33 St. George Street  
(north of College St.)  
For more information, readings: (416) 593-4138

## The Holocaust, "Collective Guilt" and German Imperialism

We reprint below the first part of an article originally published in the German-language edition of Spartacist (No. 20, Summer 1998).

### SPARTACIST

The recent publication of *A Nation on Trial: The Goldhagen Thesis and Historical Truth* (Henry Holt & Co., 1998) by Norman G. Finkelstein and Ruth Bettina Birn has revived the controversy touched off two years ago by Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (Vintage Books, 1997). Goldhagen's warmed-over version of the half-century-old "collective guilt" argument—that the German people as a whole were responsible for the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust—met with a frenzy of adulation among bourgeois commentators in the U.S., and initially with an ugly chauvinist uproar in Germany. Finkelstein and Birn's polemics against Goldhagen have, in turn, provoked a vile outcry among American Zionist spokesmen, including attempts to have their book banned.

The Holocaust—in which six million Jews were murdered, along with millions

#### PART ONE

more Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), Slavs, homosexuals, leftists and Soviet citizens—was a singular event in human history: a systematic attempt by a technologically advanced capitalist power to wipe out an entire people. But none of the countless other Holocaust books published in recent years were featured on the covers of major American and German magazines and few made it onto the best-seller lists in either country. Nor is the prominence achieved by Goldhagen's arid, pseudo-academic treatise explained by any breakthrough in research or analysis. His "evidence" that the mass of "ordinary Germans" were responsible for the Holocaust is largely derived from a case study of a Nazi police unit! Moreover, this same unit was previously examined (with different conclusions) in Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1992).

The Goldhagen controversy has been fueled less by a historical dispute over the degree to which the German people were driven by a supposedly unique form of "eliminationist anti-Semitism" to



Top: Nazis round up Jewish survivors of heroic 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising for deportation to Treblinka death camp. Goldhagen book glorifies U.S. imperialist "democracy," but it was Soviet Red Army (below) which smashed Nazi regime.

Eastfoto

Yevgeni Khaldei



embrace the Nazi extermination machine and more by the current international political situation. The U.S.-dominated anti-Soviet Cold War consensus which shaped world capitalist politics for 45 years after World War II has given way to a resurgence of interimperialist rivalries.

Already in the 1970s and '80s, as it regained its former economic might following the defeat and devastation of World War II, the German bourgeoisie was chafing at its subordination to U.S. imperialism. This was expressed on an ideological level in a revival of reactionary chauvinism, both in "left" and right colors, as German imperialism sought to reclaim its role as a world power in its own right. This chauvinist resurgence has

sharply accelerated since the capitalist annexation of the East German (DDR) deformed workers state in 1990 led to a reunified Fourth Reich of German imperialism. As it extends its reach throughout East Europe, the Balkans and the Caucasus, seeking to fill the void left by the collapse of the USSR, the German bourgeoisie is hindered in its ambitions by the memories still vivid among its intended neocolonial subject peoples of the horrors of Nazi occupation.

Throughout the Cold War, U.S. imperialism amply assisted its now "democratic" German ally in deep-sixing the crimes of Hitler's Third Reich. Immediately after World War II, U.S. intelligence agencies and the Vatican set up the "rat



Deutsche Fotothek Dresden

"Democratic" imperialists' war crime: February 1945 firebombing of Dresden by U.S. and Britain slaughtered over 100,000 German civilians.

line" to spirit out Nazi mass murderers to safety in order to serve in the anti-Soviet war drive. Seeking to resurrect its former imperialist enemy as a front-line bastion in the Cold War, Washington financed the reconstruction of the shattered German economy under the postwar Christian Democratic (CDU) regime, while cultivating the Social Democracy (SPD) as an instrument for its anti-Communist designs against the West European workers movement. To a man, the industrialists who had bankrolled Hitler's rise to power and presided over the Third Reich were "rehabilitated." Under the Third Reich, the Deutschebank (which was initially Bismarck's instrument for foreign trade) was Hitler's partner in the genocidal business of slave labor; today it is the country's largest bank. In 1985, U.S. president Ronald Reagan joined with German chancellor Helmut Kohl in "honoring" the memory of SS killers buried at Bitburg.

But since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the American media have been filled with accounts of German and Japanese World War II atrocities and—a half century after the fact—cynical memorials to the victims of the Holocaust have suddenly sprung up in one American city after another. (At the same time, the U.S. rulers could not even countenance a tame exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution on the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki!)

It is in this context that Harvard professor Goldhagen's book elicited such an enthusiastic response among bourgeois commentators in the U.S. By the time Goldhagen toured Germany in late 1996 to promote the German edition of *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, he was effusively greeted there as well. The following January, he became the first recipient in six years of the German bourgeoisie's prestigious Democracy Prize. The reason is simple: Goldhagen *amnesties the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz* for both its past and current crimes, blaming the horrors of the Third Reich not on the imperialist rulers but on the German people as a whole and joining in the chorus of hosannas to the "democratic" Fourth Reich.

Far from expressing opposition to resurgent German chauvinism, the embrace of "collective guilt" by German liberals serves as a cover for aggressively promoting imperialist military intervention to "stop genocide" in the Balkans and elsewhere. For their part, Zionists like Goldhagen seek to paint genocide as a uniquely German undertaking, not least in order to deflect criticism of the Nazi-like persecution of the Palestinian Arabs by Israel's rulers. It was for making this elementary observation that Finkelstein incurred the wrath of a sizable chunk of the American Zionist establishment.

A genuine reckoning with the causes and horrors of the Holocaust cannot come from ideologues for one or another imperialist ruling class—which have all perpetrated untold atrocities against working people, minorities and semicolonial peoples around the world—nor from the Zionist apologists for Israeli state terror against the Palestinian people. Nor can it be expected from the various pseudo-socialists who seek to prettify the Social Democratic face of resurgent German imperialism. Only Leninist internationalists, fighting to reforge Leon Trotsky's Fourth International as the world party

of socialist revolution, can draw the lessons of Hitler's rise to power and advance a strategy to defeat the growing fascist danger today. This is the task of the International Communist League and its German section, the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD).

### Historical Roots of the Jewish Question

The history of the 20th century painfully underscores the Marxist understanding that the fate of the Jewish people hinges on the victory of the world socialist revolution. This understanding is rooted in the very history of Europe's Jews, as Abram Leon made clear in his incisive book, *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*. A Belgian Trotskyist of Polish origin who was murdered in Auschwitz after his capture by the Nazis, Leon completed the book in 1941, even as he was organizing clandestine anti-Nazi resistance.

Leon built on the writings of Karl Marx and Karl Kautsky to rip away the metaphysical mythology shrouding the history of the Jewish people. Leon situated the continued existence of a distinctive Jewish people in Europe through the Middle Ages, and their brutal oppression under capitalism, in their social role as a commercial "people-class" in feudal and prefeudal society. With the rise of mercantile capitalism, the Jews were driven out of one West European country after another, only to face similar persecution in the lands of the tsarist empire as capitalism took root there several centuries later. As Leon wrote:

"The Jews lived within the pores of feudal society. When the feudal structure started to crumble, it began expelling

who owned the land and held the power, but at the Jews who purchased the peasants' crops, bought and sold livestock and made loans.

In any case, as Heinrich Heine observed, Germany joined with the rest of Europe in reaction, but not in revolution. The democratic revolution of 1848 was betrayed by the German bourgeoisie out of fear of the nascent proletariat. The national unification of Germany took place not under the banner of "liberty, equality, fraternity" raised by the French Revolution, but under the reactionary Prussian Junkerdom. In direct counterposition to the internationalist ideals of the early socialist workers movement, German chauvinism gloried in "race," "blood and soil" and the "Christian German state."

Fascism is simply the most extreme, the most consistent expression of such chauvinism, despising anything which is transnational. In "What Is National Socialism?" (November 1933), Trotsky wrote of the Nazis' crazed anti-Semitism:

"In order to raise it above history, the nation is given the support of the race. History is viewed as the emanation of the race. The qualities of the race are construed without relation to changing social conditions. Rejecting 'economic thought' as base, National Socialism descends a stage lower: from economic materialism it appeals to zoologic materialism....

"Nationalism in economy comes down in practice to impotent though savage outbursts of anti-Semitism. The Nazis abstract the usurious or banking capital from the modern economic system because it is of the spirit of evil; and, as is well known, it is precisely in this sphere that the Jewish bourgeoisie occupies an important position. Bowing down before capitalism as a whole, the petty bourgeois declares war against the evil spirit of gain



Bildarchiv Prussischer Kulturbesitz

**Napoleon enters Berlin in 1806. His military victory over Prussian aristocracy led to 1812 Emancipation Edict freeing German Jews from ghettos.**



emancipation. In like measure, the forces of bloody counterrevolution raised as their battle cry the struggle against "Jew Bolshevism."

### Interwar Germany: Revolution vs. Counterrevolution

In December 1938, shortly after the Nazi *Kristallnacht* pogrom which was a harbinger of the Holocaust, Trotsky wrote:

"It is possible to imagine without difficulty what awaits the Jews at the mere outbreak of the future world war. But even without war the next development of world reaction signifies with certainty the *physical extermination of the Jews*."

Trotsky was armed with a materialist analysis and a Marxist program. He understood that the Nazis were not merely an expression of anti-Semitic reactionary frenzy but an instrument of last resort of the German bourgeoisie to defend its *class rule* against the powerful workers movement. It was this which led to fascist dictatorships also in Mussolini's Italy and Franco's Spain. We observed in the introduction to *Documents on the "Proletarian Military Policy"* (Prometheus Research Series No. 2, February 1989):

"After the military defeat in WWI of the most powerful European state, Germany, and especially after the failure of two successive proletarian revolutions in that country, the stage was set for Nazism, Germany's virulent nationalism, to place itself at the head of European reaction.... Since fear of Communism had not been accompanied by its spread, the growing Nazi party, with wide echoes of agreement, offered up the Jews as surrogate Bolsheviks."

The rise of Nazism can only be understood in the context of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and Germany's military defeat in World War I. The German bourgeoisie was determined to recoup its losses in World War I through a second installment of interimperialist war. Yet they feared the powerful, highly organized German workers, who they thought might follow the example of their Russian class brothers. The war's end found Germany in the throes of insurrection, as a mutiny by revolutionary sail-

ors led to a broader proletarian upheaval and the January 1919 Spartakist uprising in Berlin. However, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht's Spartakists had only just formed themselves into the Communist Party (KPD) in the midst of the revolutionary situation, and proved unprepared to lead the workers to victory.

The SPD, which had definitively made its peace with the capitalist order in August 1914 when it signed on as recruiting sergeants for the imperialist war, confirmed its loyalty to the bourgeoisie by crushing the 1918-19 German Revolution. Despite its mass working-class base, the SPD became the chief bulwark of the bourgeois Weimar Republic which was installed following the abdication of the Kaiser. Vowing to be "bloodhounds of the revolution," the SPD leaders unleashed the murderous *Freikorps* paramilitary units to suppress the proletariat and assassinate Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Railing against Weimar as the "Jewish republic" and vowing to "dam the flood of Bolshevism," the *Freikorps* went on to become the core of Hitler's SA stormtroopers.

The onerous terms of the Versailles Treaty imposed on Germany by the imperialist victors continued to fuel political and economic turmoil. In March 1920, workers mobilizations defeated the Kapp Putsch, when right-wing army officers tried to overthrow the SPD government. A year later, the KPD attempted the abortive "March Action" rising. The burgeoning crisis came to a head in 1923, as the occupation of the Ruhr by French troops provoked uncontrollable inflation and mass strikes. The KPD's influence grew enormously. (The far smaller fascist movement also experienced rapid growth.) The situation was ripe for proletarian revolution. Trotsky urged the KPD and the Communist International to prepare for an insurrection. But Stalin preached passivity and his ally Zinoviev, then head of the Comintern, vacillated. And the KPD, saddled with a weak, indecisive and faction-ridden leadership, let pass the revolutionary opportunity which peaked in October 1923.

It was always the understanding of the Russian Bolsheviks that for the October Revolution to survive, workers revolution had to extend into industrialized West Europe, especially Germany. The defeat of the German October sealed the isolation of the young Soviet republic and produced widespread demoralization. This led directly to the consolidation of political power by a conservative bureaucracy headed by Stalin, whose nationalist, anti-revolutionary program was soon made clear with the proclamation of "socialism in one country." In Germany, the 1923 defeat paved the way to a temporary restabilization of capitalist rule. But the German bourgeoisie remained determined to crush the proletarian movement and to prepare for a new imperialist war; even as the Weimar regime publicly repudiated rearmament, the giant Krupp works secretly "forged the new German sword" (*schmiedete das neue deutsche Schwert*; William Manchester, *The Arms of Krupp 1587-1968*).

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Editions La Brèche



**Jewish Trotskyist Abram Leon, author of Marxist analysis of the Jewish question, was murdered in Auschwitz after capture by Nazis. Trotskyist paper *Worker and Soldier* appealed to German troops in occupied France on basis of proletarian internationalism.**

elements which were, at one and the same time, foreign to it and indispensable to it. Even before the peasant had left the village for the industrial center, the Jew had abandoned the small medieval town in order to emigrate to the great cities of the world. The destruction of the secular function of Judaism within feudal society is accompanied by its passive penetration into capitalist society.... "The highly tragic situation of Judaism in our epoch is explained by the extreme precariousness of its social and economic position. The first to be eliminated by decaying feudalism, the Jews were also the first to be rejected by the convulsions of dying capitalism. The Jewish masses find themselves wedged between the anvil of decaying feudalism and the hammer of rotting capitalism."

The Jews of Germany had been freed from the ghettos by a foreign conqueror, Napoleon, but continued to suffer decades of oppression following his defeat and were first granted legal equality, by the North German League, only in 1869. By the latter half of the 19th century, they were on the road to assimilation. Some had distinguished themselves in the revolutionary movement; others, like the Rothschilds, had become pillars of the financial establishment. Beginning in the 1890s, the influx of large numbers of impoverished, religiously backward *Ostjuden*—East European Jews fleeing tsarist pogroms—saw a renewed upsurge of anti-Semitic bigotry, often cloaked in "populist" rhetoric against "Jewish capital." It was such sentiment which led leaders of the Social Democratic workers movement like August Bebel to warn that anti-Semitism is "the socialism of fools." Bebel pointed out that in the countryside, the peasants' bitterness was directed not at the aristocratic Junkers

in the guise of the Polish Jew in a long-skirted caftan and usually without a cent in his pocket. The pogrom becomes the supreme evidence of racial superiority."

It was precisely the precarious position of the Jewish people which impelled its best thinkers and fighters to place themselves in the front ranks of the radical-democratic bourgeois Enlightenment and, subsequently, of the internationalist, proletarian struggle for socialism. The October Revolution of 1917, in turn, confirmed in flesh and blood that only through the proletarian seizure of power could the Jewish people find



**Spartakist uprising in Berlin, December 1918: Mass workers demonstration demands "All Power to the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils." SPD regime drowned proletarian revolution in blood.**

# Young Spartacus

## Reformists' Agenda at Black Radical Congress

# New "Radical" Veneer for Old Betrayals

### Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Just as the increasingly brutal workings of American capitalism have started to engender a new fighting mood among the working class, seen in strikes from UPS to Flint GM, there is a new generation of black youth looking for an alternative to both the Democratic Party "lesser evilism" promoted by Jesse Jackson and Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan's reactionary black nationalism. This was seen in the more than 2,000 people, over half of them youth, who turned out for the Black Radical Congress (BRC) held in Chicago in June.

The BRC claimed to offer a perspective of struggle against the racist capitalist system, declaring in its manifesto, "A Black Freedom Agenda for the Twenty First Century": "What we want is an end to the exploitation of capitalism, white racism and every manifestation of human oppression, a revolutionary transformation of the state and society, and the realization of humanistic values." The road to black freedom *does* lie through the destruction of racist American capitalism, which from its origins has been characterized by the forcible segregation of blacks at the bottom of this society. But this was hardly the perspective of the BRC organizers. Behind their left-sounding rhetoric lies the same treacherous politics long used to channel black militancy into the confines of the Democratic Party.

Among the main movers and shakers behind the BRC were the Communist Party (CP), the Committees of Correspondence (CoC) and the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). The CP and CoC are virtually defined by their "fight the right" program of abject capitulation to the capitalist Democrats, while the DSA is an integral part of the Democratic Party. With the Democrats currently at the fore in dismantling welfare and other social programs for the working class, minorities and the poor, the CP, CoC and DSA feel the need for some "radical" verbiage in order to try to convince black youth to enter "progressive" coalitions—which are meant only to "progress" toward increasing the vote total for the Democrats in the year 2000.

The Spartacist League intervened at the congress to champion the perspective of revolutionary integration: the understanding that black freedom can only be achieved through a socialist revolution which places the multiracial proletariat in power, laying the basis for the full integration of black people in an egalitarian socialist society. The social power of the working class must be brought to bear in the fight against every manifestation of capitalist oppression and exploitation. But this can only happen if the proletariat is mobilized *independently* of and in opposition to *all* the parties and institutions of capitalist rule.

If many black youth do not today see

the working class as a motor force in the fight for black rights, this is above all the responsibility of the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy, which has not lifted a finger against the escalating attacks on the black masses. And it is precisely the likes of the CP, CoC and DSA (which includes among its members AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney) which have done their share to prop up the pro-capitalist trade-union tops. Exposing the "socialist" pretensions of the BRC organizers as a subterfuge, we stressed that support to the Democratic Party has long served to retard any consciousness by the American proletariat that its class interests—and the inter-

as against their black liberal front men and the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats.

#### Bankrupt Liberals Looking for a Home

In an article in *Black Scholar* (Spring 1998) building for the BRC, Manning Marable, co-chairman of the social-democratic CoC, noted the "crisis of confidence in the official representatives of the black establishment, and its traditional liberal integrationist, let's-work-within-the-system credo." Marable decried the fact that former leaders of the 1960s civil rights movement supplanted civil disobedience and community-based

the black population, the "talented tenth," were the main beneficiaries of the civil rights movement. Following the brutal suppression of the ghetto upheavals of the 1960s, the ruling class sought to quell the anger of the inner cities by co-opting civil rights activists and installing "black faces in high places."

Marion Barry, the first chairman of the militant Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), went on to become mayor of Washington, D.C. Coleman Young, who came from an earlier generation of black and labor activists, was installed as mayor of Detroit. In Chicago and Atlanta, more mainstream black Democrats—Harold Washington and Maynard Jackson—were elected. The purpose of these black elected officials was to serve as front men for racist capitalist rule. But by the 1992 elections, their powerful and wealthy Democratic Party patrons made it clear that they had no need for the black politicians who had served to discipline the inner-city masses.

The Democrats' election strategy in 1992 was centered on winning back the "Reagan Democrats"—Southern whites and white ethnic constituencies in the North who had defected to the Republicans as part of a racist backlash against the minimal gains achieved by blacks in the 1960s. To this end, the Democrats ran a slate of two Southerners, Clinton and Gore. Clinton's election campaign promoted his "New Democrats" as the party of racist "law and order," as he returned to Arkansas to personally oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black man. In the course of the campaign, Clinton also ostentatiously "dissed" Jesse Jackson, who for years had desperately sought influence in the Democratic Party by appealing to a broad range of "constituencies"—blacks, women, trade unionists, youth—with his "Rainbow Coalition."

In casting aside the loyal backing of Democratic black elected officials, Clinton expressed the contempt of the ruling class for the majority of the black population locked in the inner cities. With the slashing of industrial jobs, particularly in the Midwest, the ghetto masses who had long served as a reserve army of labor for the capitalist exploiters were largely deemed "expendable." Now the capitalist rulers present the unvarnished face of raw racist reaction, from the elimination of welfare to intensified police terror, an overflowing prison population and the speedup on death row.

In 1995, Jesse Jackson, the Black Congressional Caucus and black liberals like Cornel West embraced Louis Farrakhan's Million Man March. A reactionary mobilization calling on black men to



Martin Luther King Jr. with Robert Kennedy, NAACP head Roy Wilkins and Lyndon Johnson in 1963. Liberal civil rights leaders looked to racist Democrats. In 1992 election campaign, Clinton dumped on Jesse Jackson to win "white backlash" vote.

ests of all the oppressed—are directly counterposed to those of the capitalist exploiters.

Our purpose is to win the working class to that understanding, to build a revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed. The fight to forge such a party is expressed, for example, in our efforts to mobilize labor to win freedom for black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty. This means a political struggle against the racist Democrats who push the speedup on death row and preside over intense repression of the ghetto masses, as well

organization with "a blind adherence to electoral politics."

But the mass marches led by Martin Luther King Jr. and the other liberals who headed this movement were always premised on electoral pressure and lobbying Democratic Party administrations for legislative redress. Indeed, the program of liberal integrationism is *based* on the chimera that black equality can be achieved within the framework of capitalism. At bottom, this means accepting the racist status quo, while seeking simply to alleviate some "excesses" through pressuring a "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie, particularly the Democrats.

"atone," the Million Man March blamed the oppressed for their own oppression and amnestied the racist rulers for their enormous crimes against blacks, working people and the poor. Having no alternative to Farrakhanite black nationalism, Jackson & Co. hoped that the sight of a million black men in front of the Capitol would give them some bargaining power with the Clinton White House.

As Spartacist League supporter Don Cane wrote in an article in the Winter/Spring 1996 issue of *Black Scholar* (reprinted in WV No. 647, 7 June 1996):

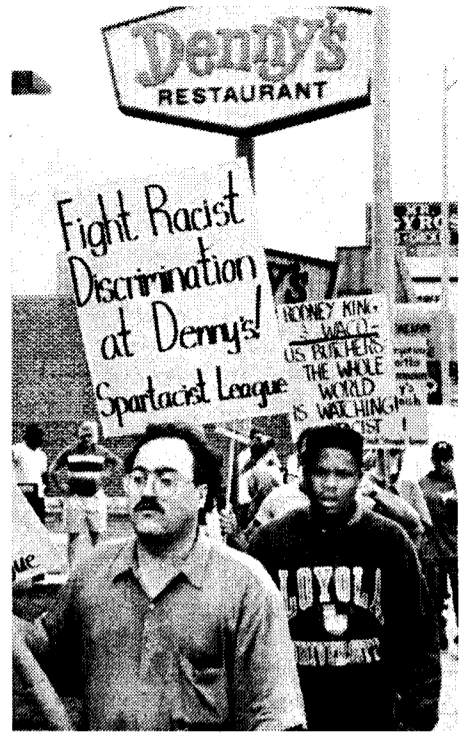
"Much is made of the march as a demonstration of 'black operational unity'—a million black men standing together. In the 1960s, 'I'm Black and I'm Proud' race consciousness, influenced by masses in struggle, was defiant of the racist capitalist rulers. Today we witness 'I'm black and I'm not a criminal' race consciousness influenced by a desperate black middle class begging for 'understanding' from the racist rulers. The black misleaders, branded by race themselves, can barely conceal their contempt for the black masses on whom they call to 'atone.' I say *black people have nothing to atone for!* But the false prophets of the 'American Dream' blame the victim for not 'succeeding' and degrade the proud history of black working people who have struggled long and hard for freedom from the chains of racist oppression."

Now, two years later, Marable claims in his *Black Scholar* article that "it was only after the Million Man March's success that the serious limitations and demagoguery of Farrakhan became readily apparent to many African Americans who had supported and even attended the mass event." In the context of growing disenchantment with Farrakhan, black liberals and social democrats see the opportunity to advance their own political fortunes in calling, in Marable's words, for "a radical democratic third alternative."

The BRC's "Principles of Unity" pro-



Spartacist League initiated November 1982 labor/black mobilization which stopped Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. (above) and July 1993 protests against racist discrimination at Denny's.



WV Photos

displace existing organizations, parties or campaigns." Though never stated in so many words by the congress organizers, it was obvious that the party they don't "intend to displace" is the Democrats!

Since the time of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" government of the 1930s, the CP has sacrificed labor struggles and the fight for black rights on the altar of the Democratic Party. And the CoC was set up in 1991 as a *right-wing* split from the CP. Pushing for even more open support to Democratic politicians like Jesse Jackson, those who formed the CoC saw the troublesome "Communist" label as an impediment. Joining these ex-Stalinists in building the BRC was the virulently anti-Communist DSA, which has been firmly ensconced in the Democratic Party throughout its history as the

he stressed the importance of the fall elections—in order to garner votes for the Democratic Party. The CP made this crystal-clear on the eve of the 1996 presidential elections, when it enthused in a front-page headline, "Democrats Unite to Fight the Right" (*People's Weekly World*, 31 August 1996). For its part, the CoC provided a handy list of Democratic legislative updates in its leaflet at the BRC.

Many of the BRC organizers wanted to forgo the "radical" label altogether. Salim Muwakkil, a columnist for the DSA house organ *In These Times*, wrote of concern that "the 'radical' label would scare people away" (*In These Times*, 12 July). But what really had them worried was that some of the youth might actually be serious about being radical. As Muwakkil put it, "Understanding that black youth, especially those influenced by hip-hop culture, are often attracted to images of cultural audacity and 'no sell-out' authenticity, the framers of the Freedom Agenda used some rhetoric so soaring that many movement veterans winced."

But even this "soaring language" was not enough to corral many of the youth at the BRC into the organizers' warmed-over version of Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition." Many even boycotted a party featuring a rap singer—"presumably booked for their benefit," as an offended BRC participant reported in the *Nation* (27 July), sneering that the younger activists instead went off to "hammer out their own, 'more radical' principles of unity." For their part, the BRC organizers flatly warned that anyone who didn't stand by *their* "principles of unity" were "invited to withdraw."

## Lessons of the Civil Rights Movement

In articles building for the BRC, the organizers made a point of recalling various black movements and struggles of the past. At the congress itself, dozens of former 1960s black activists—who long ago sold their political souls to the very system against which they had once rebelled—were called upon to instill the "lessons" of these struggles to

the youth who turned out. But the aim of these exercises was precisely to *obfuscate* those lessons.

Typical was an 18 June article by Marable posted on the "Black World" Web site, which purported to outline the "long and rich tradition of African-American radicalism in the United States." Marable cynically amalgamated the militant Black Panther Party of the 1960s with the tame liberals of the NAACP and 1980s Chicago mayor Harold Washington. This is of a piece with efforts in recent years by apologists for pro-Democratic Party pressure politics to identify militant black nationalist Malcolm X with Democratic Party liberal Martin Luther King Jr. by endlessly rerunning the one photo ever taken of the two together.

Malcolm X was the voice of black militancy, intransigently opposed to the "white man's puppet Negro 'leaders,'" as he called King, Bayard Rustin and other liberal civil rights leaders. He reviled their calls for "turn the other cheek" pacifism in the face of murderous racist attacks by the KKK and other agents of Southern Dixiecrat rule. He denounced their appeals to Democratic president John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert, the attorney general, who "came to the aid" of civil rights activists by sending in the FBI and federal marshals to *suppress militant black protest*. Malcolm X inspired a generation of young black radicals in the 1960s who came to repudiate the "moral suasion" and reliance on the federal government promoted by King et al.

While the mass of black and white activists who were the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement wrote a heroic chapter in the fight for black equality in racist America, the politics of the Kings and Rustins were those of liberalism. Their goal was formal, legal equality in the South, whose beneficiaries were to be primarily the black middle class. But no new civil rights bill could address the systematic racist discrimination and dehumanizing conditions suffered by the masses in the South—or in the Northern inner cities, where blacks already had "equality" under the law. As the bankruptcy and impotence of the liberals' strategy became increasingly clear, many young activists began to champion the call for "black power" prominently raised by Stokely Carmichael (now Kwame Ture) of SNCC.

Initially, the "black power" movement was contradictory. As we wrote:

"SNCC's empirical rejection of the more obvious brands of reformism advocated by white liberals and petty-bourgeois Black 'leaders' has taken the form of a call for 'Black Power,' a militant-sounding phrase which frightens the white liberals and Uncle Toms. The concepts implied in the SNCC slogan of 'Black Power' are radical enough to have caused the bourgeois press and politicians to shower vicious abuse on it, precisely because the slogan is a groping for

*continued on page 8*



Herb Robinson



Manning Marable (left), CP leader Jarvis Tyner. BRC reformists promote "unity" with capitalist Democrats, as seen in CP headline on 1996 elections.



People's Weekly World

fessed rejection of "Black patriarchy and Black capitalism as solutions to problems facing Black people." At the same time, these "principles" coyly added, "We cannot limit ourselves to electoral politics." What the liberals, reformists and radical has-beens who organized the BRC have in mind is an "alternative" modeled on Jesse Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition." In an article in *Color Lines* (Summer 1998), Marable harked back to Jackson's 1988 bid for the Democratic presidential nomination, which he lauded as "on the verge of becoming the most significant left-of-center force in national politics." He went on to complain that "the decline of the Rainbow left a gaping political vacuum" which opened the door to Farrakhan.

Left unsaid is that most of the same outfits that were behind the BRC supported Farrakhan's Million Man March. Despite all their various rationales, this reflected their own desperation and impotence in the face of a rising tide of racist reaction. Now, with Jackson serving as "spiritual adviser" to Bill Clinton and Farrakhan widely recognized as a black Reaganite, Marable & Co. see their chance to come in from the cold.

## Old Hands at Betrayal

The preamble to the BRC "Principles of Unity" stated: "The Black Radical Congress does not intend to replace or

"left wing of the possible." As U.S. imperialism was hip-deep in its dirty, losing war against the Vietnamese during successive Democratic administrations in the 1960s, DSA founder Michael Harrington was braintrusting the Democrats' "war on poverty" to defuse black militancy on the home front.

An article on the BRC by black CP leader Jarvis Tyner opined, "We must reach out to the mass of radicalized Black working class folks...the most consistent progressive voting bloc" (*People's Weekly World*, 20 June). Addressing a plenary session of the BRC, Tyner identified the desired goal of this "voting bloc" when



Doug Harris

Lowndes County, Alabama Black Panther Party, 1966. Radical wing of civil rights movement rejected liberal pacifism and advocated armed self-defense.

## Reformists...

(continued from page 7)

solutions *outside* the framework of the capitalist society."

—"SNCC and Revolution,"  
Spartacist No. 8  
(November/December 1966)

But we warned that "the slogan 'black power' must be clearly defined in *class*, not racial terms, for otherwise the 'black power' movement may become the black wing of the Democratic Party in the South" ("Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," *Spartacist* No. 10, May/June 1967). Today John Lewis, a militant SNCC leader in the 1960s, is a Georgia Democratic Congressman.

The most militant expression of the "black power" movement was the Black Panther Party. The best of a generation of young black radicals, the Panthers in their own contradictory way sought to challenge the entire system of racist American capitalism. Largely thanks to the treachery of the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy, which openly joined with the capitalist rulers in opposing any expression of black militancy, the Panthers rejected the multiracial proletariat as the agency for social liberation. Subjected to murderous repression by the FBI's "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO), the Panthers were also destroyed by factional feuding born of the contradictions inherent in their "revolutionary nationalist" program.

The Spartacist League was born in good part in a fight for a revolutionary intervention into the civil rights movement, aimed at winning the thousands of left-wing militants who rebelled against King's liberal pacifism. The precursor of the SL was the Revolutionary Tendency of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which fought against the latter's criminal abstention from the struggle to win these activists to a revolutionary proletarian program. After our expulsion from the SWP, we sought to carry out this perspective. As we wrote in "Black and Red," one of the SL's founding documents:

"The struggle of the Black people of this country for freedom, while part of the struggle of the working class as a whole, is more than that struggle. The Negro people are an oppressed race-color caste, in the main comprising the most exploited layer of the American working class.... Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution....

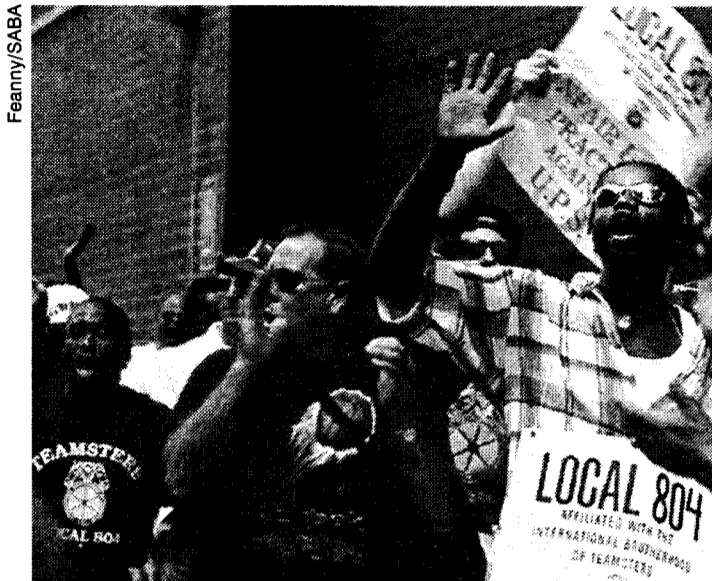
"The victory of the socialist revolution in this country will be achieved through the united struggle of black and white workers under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard party. In the course of this struggle unbreakable bonds will be forged between the two sections of the working class. The success of this struggle will place the Negro people in a position to insure at last the end of slavery, racism and super-exploitation."

It is precisely such a perspective of revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system that the reformist and liberal organizers of the BRC oppose. In his *Black Scholar* article, Marable declared

that a new "radical black political project" must by all means not be "a party based on a vanguard, cadre-type organizational mode." This is a direct echo of the imperialist rulers' triumphal proclamations following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union that "communism is dead." The lie that Marxism has "failed" serves the bourgeoisie in promoting its system of brutal exploitation and oppression as the best and only possible world. At bottom, this outlook is shared by the social democrats,

Byrd had been sadistically lynched only days before. Typical of PL's mindless bombast, the leaflet went on about "violent workers revolution" and the need for "armed revolutionary violence." But it was because of PL's posture as revolutionary communists that the reformist BRC organizers condemned them as a threat to the "unity" of the conference.

In response, PL complained in *Challenge* (1 July) that the BRC organizers had broken "their 7th principle of unity—'we must be democratic and inclusive in



Feanny/SABA

**Teamsters picket in New York City during 1997 UPS strike. Marxists fight to mobilize power of multiracial working class in struggle against black oppression.**

ex-Stalinists and radical has-beens behind the BRC. Thus, they necessarily reject a proletarian, internationalist party modeled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky which led the 1917 Russian Revolution and opened the portals of emancipation to the oppressed peoples of the tsarist empire.

The BRC organizers don't seek to destroy the system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression, but merely to give it a "human" face. While Mumia Abu-Jamal sent greetings to the BRC, the congress couldn't even bring itself to take up the fight for his freedom. About the only concrete proposal the organizers put forward was to appeal to the United Nations for "reparations" for American blacks. This appeal to the sponsor of numerous imperialist military occupations of black African and other semi-colonial countries epitomizes the liberals' impotent faith in the agencies of imperialism to serve the cause of the oppressed.

### Liberals Unite with Nationalists in Redbaiting

Seeking to silence any revolutionary perspective at the BRC, the reformist organizers found a ready purpose for the black nationalists—whose politics they claim to oppose as "conservative"—as a battering ram against communists. Spewing the divisive venom of the capitalist rulers, the nationalists race-baited our comrades for championing integrated class struggle and the forging of a revolutionary workers party. This accompanied an anti-Communist diatribe against the Progressive Labor Party (PL), which distributed a leaflet calling to "smash the KKK" in Jasper, Texas, where James

our dealings with one another." This touching appeal to the democratic credentials of anti-communist reformists and nationalists reveals PL's own liberal underbelly. While idiotically proclaiming that the "essence" of the BRC is "to lure angry black workers farther down the road to fascism" (!), in the same article PL declares its objective was "to win the center people to our ideas." For decades, PL has alternated between "fight for communism" rhetoric and pushing the notion of a "center-left coalition," which is cut of the same class-collaborationist cloth as the CP's call for "progressive coalitions."

While in its leaflet on the Jasper lynching PL declared that "the struggle against racism is the key to the struggle for workers' power," this is an organization which has *condemned* the fight to mobilize against the assault on affirmative action as "divisive" and even echoes the "reverse discrimination" rhetoric of the racists. And when Mumia Abu-Jamal was under immediate threat of execution in the summer of 1995, PL refused to take up the defense of this eloquent spokesman for the oppressed. Moreover, as we noted in "How PL Caves In to Racist Bosses" (WV No. 645, 10 May 1996):

"Acceptance of the most backward social consciousness bred by capitalism, however, has long characterized PL. You'll never find an article in *Challenge* defending gays—in fact PL claims homosexuals are 'sick.' Nor will you find much about the fight against women's oppression, defense of abortion clinics, etc. To this day, PL retains the reactionary Stalinist position that the family—the main institution responsible for the oppression of women—can somehow help in the fight for communism."

Another self-proclaimed socialist group at the Black Radical Congress was the International Socialist Organization (ISO). Not surprisingly, these social democrats were conspicuously passed over in the frenzy of redbaiting at the congress. Indeed, the ISO's own liberal politics, dished up with a patina of "unite and fight" rhetoric, fit in well with the prevailing theme at the congress. From its inception, the ISO's hallmark has been rabid anti-Communism. In the name of fighting "Stalinist totalitarianism," this outfit embraced "democratic" imperialism, supporting virtually every counterrevolutionary movement sponsored by the American bourgeoisie in its drive to destroy the Soviet Union. Yet at the BRC, ISO spokesman Ahmed Shawki shared the platform at the "Socialism and Black Liberation" workshop with CPer Joe Sims.

Neither Shawki nor Sims breathed a word against the Democratic Party in

their presentations. This is not surprising, as the "anti-Stalinist" ISO seeks to follow in the footsteps of the Stalinist CP in its heyday, i.e., when it wielded mass influence in support of Roosevelt's "New Deal." Consonant with this, the CP, DSA and the more left-posturing ISO slavishly tail the labor bureaucracy, whose allegiance to the Democratic Party is the chief obstacle to successful class struggle in the U.S.

In opposition to the reformists, the Spartacist League intervened at the BRC to stress that breaking with the Democratic Party is central to any genuine fight for black freedom, which can only come through the seizure of power by the integrated working class. Through its numbers, organization and above all its role in producing the wealth in this society, the working class has the social power to sweep away the capitalist oppressors. This power was seen at the time of the Black Radical Congress in the United Auto Workers strike at Flint GM, which crippled the largest corporation in the world. But this power will only be fully realized through the forging of a class-struggle leadership of the labor movement which actively champions the cause of black liberation and mobilizes in defense of the rights of immigrants and all the oppressed. The key to unlocking the chains that shackle labor to its exploiters is a political struggle against the pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders.

In the course of the class battles and social struggles to come, the Spartacist League seeks to build a revolutionary workers party which will serve as a tribune of the people. A sense of what such a workers party will look like can be seen in the exemplary actions we have initiated over the years to combat Klan terror and racist discrimination. From Washington, D.C. in 1982 to Atlanta in 1989, the SL and the Partisan Defense Committee have initiated united-front labor/black mobilizations drawing in sections of the trade unions against KKK race-hate provocations. As we wrote in "Unchain Labor's Power" (WV No. 673, 5 September 1997) after last year's Teamsters strike against UPS:

"In these mobilizations could be seen the powerful combination of black and red: labor united in its own defense and in defense of all the oppressed under a communist leadership. At the time of the Civil War, Karl Marx captured a fundamental truth of American society in his statement that 'Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded'."

The Civil War was a social revolution which smashed the system of chattel slavery. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed by the Northern capitalists. It will take a third American revolution to smash the system of wage slavery. The road forward lies in an aroused and struggling labor movement, imbued with the class consciousness and understanding that it must champion the cause of black liberation and the rights of all the oppressed in the fight to shatter this racist capitalist system through proletarian socialist revolution. ■

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# Clinton...

(continued from page 1)

London *Independent* (17 September) noted, the polls increasingly show a "class divide," with opposition to Clinton strongest "at cocktail parties, dinners and gatherings of the smart in Washington and across America" and support for the president strongest among the black population and those with incomes under \$15,000 a year.

This in part reflects the illusions in the Democrats as a "lesser evil" to the Republicans promoted by the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois black "community leaders." At the same time, working people and minorities are far more likely to come up against the increasingly augmented repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state. Black people in particular are keenly aware of how black spokesmen from Martin Luther King Jr. to Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry were hounded and vilified as a result of FBI sting operations and snooping. In an op-ed piece titled "What Is Freedom Without Privacy?" (*New York Times*, 15 September), black Harvard academic Orlando Patterson observed:

"One reason African-Americans have so steadfastly stood by the President, in spite of his having done so little for them, is that their history has been one long violation of their privacy. Long after slavery was abolished, blacks were keenly and humiliatingly aware that whites could invade their lives in countless ways and with total impunity."

At the same time, it is a real reflection of the racial divide in this country that a president who has done more to devastate the lives of blacks than any of his Republican predecessors has won their admiration in part because he numbers Vernon Jordan among his closest friends.

## Puritanical Hypocrisy Run Amok

The "national discourse," such as it is, has taken on the character of an evangelical tent meeting or Catholic confessional, replete with talk of shame, sin, contrition and sexual "perversity." When Grand Inquisitor Kenneth Starr, himself the son of a Christian fundamentalist family, released his report of 400-plus pages filled with a raft of details about every single encounter between Clinton and Lewinsky, porn video star Nina Hartley commented to the *San Francisco Chronicle* (12 September): "Ken Starr's investigation is the biggest publicly funded porn production I've ever seen." Or, as drag queen "Sister Boom-Boom" aptly put it in the same article, "I don't care if Clinton is doing a three-way with Janet Reno and a monkey. It's his private business."

What is taking place is a monumental exercise in public hypocrisy, in which the guiding "moral" is: don't get caught! As the snoopers are themselves snooped upon, right-wing Republican Congressmen Dan Burton, Helen Chenoweth and Henry Hyde are among the most recent to be "outed" for sexual "indiscretions." Hyde, who now presides over the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment inquiry, dismisses his four-year extramarital affair (when he was in his mid-40s) as "youthful indiscretions." And the hypocrisy cuts many ways. Gay Massachusetts Democrat Barney Frank exclaimed, "They're trying to impeach this guy for lying about his sex life. But you're talking to a guy who's been criticized for *not* lying about my sex life" (*New Yorker*, 14 September).

Starr and his backers hypocritically assert that the only thing at issue is that Clinton committed perjury and an "abuse of power" in trying to cover up the affair. No doubt, Clinton used the considerable powers at the disposal of the imperial presidency to try to hide his affair with Lewinsky, though clearly without much success. And he is a truly unappetizing character. But the bottom line here is that it's nobody's business who people screw, and so it's nobody's business that they lie about it. For Marxists, opposition to gov-



WV Photos  
SL contingents at abortion rights protests denounce Democrat Clinton for his crimes against working people and minorities, oppose government sex snoops.

ernment interference in people's personal lives is a matter of principle, regardless of who is on the receiving end. That is why we also defended Air Force Lieutenant Kelly Flinn when she was thrown out of the military on nominal grounds of lying about a sexual affair.

When Republican president George Bush nominated black anti-abortion bigot Clarence Thomas for the Supreme Court in 1991, the feminists and liberal Democrats went after Thomas for his predilection for pornography and his alleged sexual harassment of law intern Anita Hill. While opposing Thomas for his anti-abortion stance and his support to the racist death penalty, we condemned the ensuing "orgy of prudery and prurience in the service of racism and sexism" as a "Moral Majority morality play" ("Sex, Race and Reaction," WV No. 537, 25 October 1991).

Now bourgeois feminists like the National Organization for Women have rallied behind Clinton because of his supposedly "progressive" stance on women's rights. Clinton won the presidency in 1992 largely because millions of women were repulsed by the Republicans' anti-abortion platform. But the reactionary "family values" crusade has been amply promoted by Clinton and his party—from the "don't ask, don't tell" sham which has led to even wider persecution of gays in the military to the ever more ominous censorship laws justified in the name of "protecting" children from pornography. And access to abortion for poor and rural women in particular has actually decreased during Clinton's reign.

The capitalist rulers foster "family values" religious moralism as a conservatizing ideology to regiment the population and bolster the family, the key institution for the oppression of women in class society. The feminists have played no small role in helping to fuel a climate of anti-sex hysteria. In portraying sexual harassment as everything from the real victimization of women in the workplace to any sexual innuendo or consensual sex between an employee and a superior, they reinforce the sexist view that the woman is always the victim in any relationship with a man—especially an older, more powerful one. Here they again find common ground with the Christian right, which argues that women are in need of "protection" because they are incompetent in controlling their sex lives. Maybe next they'll propose forcing women to apply for licenses with different classes and restrictions, like driver's licenses, delimiting who can screw whom, when and at what age!

Demolishing this reactionary outlook, Katie Roiphe, author of *The Morning After: Sex, Fear and Feminism on Campus*, noted in a commentary in the *New York Times* (15 September), "If there are any lingering doubts about Monica Lewinsky's ability to take care of herself, any lingering perceptions of her as a victim, an innocent used for sexual purposes, a careful reading of the Starr report should put them to rest." Lewinsky showed the staying power and drive of a hawk going for a bunny in her steely pursuit of Clinton, including angry, hour-long, late-night phone calls demanding the president secure her a high-paying

prestige job she "didn't have to work for" in exchange for keeping quiet about their affair.

Now former Reagan legal adviser Peter Wallison tries to make the case for impeachment by comparing Clinton's affair with Lewinsky to a president who "engaged in child abuse while in office" (*New York Times*, 14 September). Leaving aside that Lewinsky was hardly a child, "child abuse" can mean a host of things in this brutal, anti-sex society: from a 19-year-old man screwing a 17-year-old "underage" woman to spanking a child as punishment to actual rape and physical attack. We oppose reactionary "age of consent" laws and the view that children are asexual beings. The key criterion for determining whether a sexual relationship is abusive must be *effective consent*—as long as it is genuinely consensual, it's nobody's business and certainly not a matter for the courts.

## Impeachment and the Imperial Presidency

A number of commentators have compared the Clinton cover-up with the Watergate affair that brought down Republican president Richard Nixon in 1974. However, what Nixon covered up was a break-in he had ordered at the offices of the Democratic National Committee. While Nixon was a certified war criminal who presided over the slaughter of millions of Vietnamese workers and peasants, Marxists did not *call* for his impeachment, as this would have sown illusions that another imperialist chief could be any less an enemy of workers and the oppressed. But when Congress moved to impeach Nixon, we supported this while insisting: "Impeachment is not enough!" We raised a series of demands aimed at mobilizing the proletariat in struggle against both the Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism: "A class-struggle answer to Watergate must shift the axis of struggle. *The fight to remove Nixon must become a fight not to replace Nixon with Gerald Ford, but a fight to replace the rule of capital with a workers government!*" ("What Labor Should Do About Watergate," WV No. 34, 7 December 1973).

Historically, the possibility of impeachment was written into the Constitution precisely in order that Congress be able to rein in the powers of an overly strong president who might tend toward dictatorship. But America's emergence as a world power created the need for a strong, imperial presidency, particularly in times when it is deemed necessary to launch a war or invasion without the bother of Congressional approval as mandated in the Constitution. Thus, the bourgeoisie has been loath to wield the impeachment mandate. In the end, Nixon was not impeached but forced to resign.

Now liberal columnist Anthony Lewis warns in the *New York Times* (15 September) that forcing Clinton out of office "would do terrible damage to the role of the Presidency in our constitutional structure. It would move us toward a parliamentary system." In fact, a parliamentary system would be more democratic, but it would still be an instrument for enforcing what Marxists call the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the rule of capital over the

vast majority of the dispossessed and exploited.

## For Workers Revolution!

In the period immediately following the Civil War which smashed the Southern slave system, when the American bourgeoisie was still in its progressive phase, there was an impeachment attempt which posed questions of real social significance for the population. When Tennessee's Andrew Johnson became president after Lincoln's assassination in 1865, he sought to conciliate the former slavocracy and curtail the Reconstruction effort aimed at ensuring full equality for the newly freed slaves. Johnson handed out mass pardons to representatives of the defeated Confederacy, allowing them to set up state assemblies known as the "Johnson governments" to defy the Union Army and drive the black freedmen protected by the military occupation of the South out of local and state administration. In 1866, Johnson unsuccessfully tried to veto the Civil Rights Act which conferred citizenship on the black freedmen. He also attempted to undercut the Freedmen's Bureau which had been set up by Congress to help the emancipated slaves in securing access to food, medical care, work, property and basic education.

Finally, when Johnson tried to remove radical Reconstructionist Secretary of War Edwin Stanton from the Cabinet, Congress moved to bring him down. The House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly for Johnson's impeachment, which lost by only one vote of the needed two-thirds majority in the Senate. Afterward, Congress operated around Johnson, casting him aside as an obstacle to the pursuit of Radical Reconstruction. But the Northern bourgeoisie increasingly undermined this great democratic effort, culminating in the Compromise of 1877 which formalized the end of Reconstruction and sealed the betrayal of the aspirations of the black masses.

The American capitalist class long ago ceased to be a force for social progress. Today, the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie is the foremost enemy of workers and the oppressed around the world. In the U.S., this is expressed not only in the burgeoning attacks on the black and working masses but in the growing influence of Dark Ages attitudes toward sex and women. As we noted in "Race, Sex and Reaction":

"As far as we're concerned it's not the peccadillos of the bourgeoisie that we care about, but their crimes against the working people, against women and blacks, against Vietnam and Iraq.

"It says something about the end-of-the-20th-century American social climate that we Marxists are fighting to defend many tenets of the *bourgeois* revolution—the separation of church and state, rights of privacy, etc."

To justify its increasingly brutal class rule, the bourgeoisie repudiates the most progressive aspects of its own origins. The stench of hypocrisy and moralism emanating from the bourgeoisie is a measure of the decrepitude of this outmoded capitalist system. For our part, we seek to do away with the imperial presidency, and all the institutions of the bourgeois state, as part of a thoroughgoing socialist revolution which will place the only progressive class, the proletariat, at the helm of society. ■

# Ireland...

(continued from page 1)

atrocities carried out in Omagh by a group called the "Real IRA"—which followed the Loyalist arson murder of three young children in a Catholic home in Ballymoney—as a pretext to impose new police-state measures which even Blair and Ahern described as "draconian."

In all but name, the new "anti-terror" laws amount to internment—imprisonment without trial or even criminal

## WORKERS HAMMER

charges. The word of a "senior police officer" will now constitute *evidence* that someone is a member of an "unlawful organisation," bringing with it the possibility of a life sentence. Remaining silent under interrogation will be treated as "corroborating" evidence. Any opponent of British imperialism, the Orange statelet in the North and the clericalist state in the South is liable to be labelled an "enemy of peace" and potential terrorist, set up to be dragged off in the small hours or blown away by the state—as happened to Diarmuid O'Neill in London two years ago, or to Ronan McLoughlin, a supporter of the Real IRA shot dead by Irish cops in May.

It is in the direct and absolute interest of the working class in Britain to mobilise against Labour's repression, against the imperialist "peace" fraud and for British troops out of Northern Ireland now. The Blair government is whipping up chauvinism over Northern Ireland to launch a sweeping attack on the multiracial working class and all of the oppressed. In particular, sweeping international "conspiracy" clauses in the new legislation will serve to incite racist attacks against Muslims under the guise of countering "Islamic terror" and will provide the legal basis to ban Turkish leftists, Tamil and Kurdish nationalists and other exile political organisations.

We refused to give one iota of support to Labour in the last election. We seek to split Labour, which is what Lenin called a "bourgeois workers party," winning its working-class base to a revolutionary party and programme. The Labour government is a capitalist government: anti-working-class, racist to the core and totally committed to the monarchy and British imperialism. It was an earlier Labour government which introduced the 1974 Prevention of Terrorism Act, leading to the notorious frame-ups of the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six. The working class must defend itself and all of the oppressed against attacks by the capitalist state. Black, Asian, Turkish and Irish workers are an integral part of the proletariat in Britain. We fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, as a necessary part of the struggle to forge a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party.

### Not Orange Against Green But Class Against Class!

The Real IRA's Omagh bombing, which killed and maimed both Protestant and Catholic civilians in an integrated shopping area, was a hideous crime from the standpoint of the working class and in no conceivable way a blow against imperialism. Marxists oppose the tactic of individual terror because it is antithetical to the necessary task of mobilising the working class—Protestant and Catholic—against their imperialist/capitalist oppressors. Nonetheless, when Irish nationalist groups strike a blow against the forces of British imperialism, the RUC or Loyalist fascist killers, we defend the perpetrators of such acts against state retribution.

We have always taken a fundamentally different attitude toward indiscriminate terror directed against civilians. From a proletarian standpoint, the bombing in Omagh and similar attacks on British shopping centres and pubs are criminal

acts which serve only to deepen hatred between Protestant and Catholic, English and Irish workers. This was evident in the 1993 IRA Shankill Road bombing which killed nine Protestant shoppers in Belfast. Only weeks earlier, Protestant workers at Shorts aerospace factory had walked off the job and marched in protest against the murder of a Catholic worker by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). This proletarian unity was wilfully destroyed by the bombing, and led to the same workers demonstrating against the IRA and all Catholics.

The SL/B and DSG are dedicated to building Leninist-Trotskyist parties to fight for the revolutionary overthrow of all the capitalist powers on these islands—British imperialism, the Orange statelet in Northern Ireland and the Catholic clericalist state in the South. We demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. This would not automatically ensure advance in a revolutionary direction but is a necessary starting point which must be linked to a revolutionary



**Birmingham Six leave prison in 1991 after 16 years behind bars, framed up under Prevention of Terrorism Act introduced by a Labour government.**

proletarian and internationalist perspective for both islands.

Northern Ireland is a situation of interpenetrated peoples sharing a common territory. The Catholics are an oppressed minority in the North and part of the Irish Catholic nation which dominates in the South. At the same time, the privileges historically enjoyed by Protestants in the North over Catholics in jobs and housing have always been pretty marginal. With the decline of British capitalism, Northern Ireland has some of the worst wages and unemployment in the British Isles. While championing equality for the oppressed Catholic minority and opposing all forms of discrimination, we fight for jobs for all, as part of a programme for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. We fight for programmatically based workers militias including both Protestants and Catholics—which would have to be organised on an internationalist basis under communist leadership—to combat sectarian terror, both Orange and Green. This is necessarily linked to the forging of a Leninist vanguard party.

We oppose the call for an "independent Ulster," which means supporting Orange supremacy. We also oppose the demand for "self-determination for the Irish people as a whole" (including when it is dressed up as a "socialist united Ireland"), which is a call for Irish Catholics to "self-determine" at the expense of the Protestants. This would reverse the terms of oppression against the Protestants, who form a distinct community and would forcibly resist incorporation into an Ireland dominated by the Catholic church. The Irish capitalist state is notorious for brutality toward Travellers and immigrants and for repression of women. Abortion is illegal, and vigilante mobs attack women's health clinics and Travellers halting sites.

Any attempt at a bourgeois "solution" is a recipe for increased communalist ter-

ror and forced population transfers. We fight for an Irish workers republic as part of a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles. Under workers rule, the Protestants may yet be incorporated into a common Irish nation, they may develop a more distinct identity, or they may find other democratic forms of accommodation with the Catholics.

### British Fake Left Tails Blair's Labour

From 1993, when it was first mooted, the imperialist "peace" deal was always premised on the British Army presence to reinforce repression by the RUC. British imperialism regards Northern Ireland as an economic liability, but is totally committed to Orange rule. Contrary to Sinn Féin's preaching about "demilitarisation" and "reforming" the RUC, the only force to be "de-commissioned" in Northern Ireland is the IRA and other Republicans. We say the RUC must be smashed in the fight for working-class rule.

Karl Marx insisted the working class in Britain must oppose imperialism in Ire-

land. In 1870, he wrote that the "ordinary English worker," influenced by anti-Irish chauvinism, "feels himself a member of the *ruling nation* and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists of his country *against Ireland*, thus strengthening their domination *over himself*." The policy of the fake-socialist groups in Britain today, who welcomed the election of Labour and are shameless supporters of the imperialist "peace" fraud, is in flat contradiction to what Marx fought for.

Tony Cliff's reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), affiliated to the International Socialist Organization in the U.S., supports the imperialist "peace process." Since the "peace process" began, segregation has increased under threat of murderous terror—"ethnic cleansing." The killing of the three Quinn children in Ballymoney was only the most horrific of Loyalist outrages in a campaign of driving Catholics out of mixed areas in Ballymoney. Around 35 Catholic or mixed-marriage families have been forced out of the town. In Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, 22 families were forced out, mostly with firebombs. Several formerly integrated housing estates were completely cleared of Catholics. In 1968, there were 40,000 Catholics in East Antrim, but today there are only about 2,000.

A few weeks after the Orange siege at Drumcree which led to the Loyalist arson attack in Ballymoney, the SWP complained that "the British government could have stood up to them long before this" (*Socialist Worker*, 25 July). The SWP's lie that the British government "stands up to" Orange pogromists is of a piece with the Cliffites' line in 1969, when they supported the introduction of troops into Northern Ireland by a previous Labour government with the argument that it would provide a "breathing space." Despite illusions among the Catholic community that the British Army would be the lesser evil to Loyalist mobs, the outcome was

Bloody Sunday in 1972, when British troops shot and killed 14 marchers in Derry.

Today the SWP whines that the new "anti-terror" legislation is excessive because "the security forces admit there are no more than 100 members of the real IRA. It is a small, isolated group. So why are such draconian measures needed?" (*Socialist Worker*, 5 September). This is a straight echo of bourgeois criticism of the new laws, that repression by the "security forces" should be more "surgical," using the existing mechanisms of repression.

The Socialist Party (SP) of Peter Taaffe is notorious for its chauvinist opposition to the call for British troops out, and as publicity agents for *fascistic Loyalist killer* Billy Hutchinson of the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP), "political wing" of the UVF scum. Like an echo of David Trimble, the Socialist Party defends the pogromist Orangemen's "right" to march in Catholic areas, such as Bogside and Garvaghy Road. In Omagh, the SP actually took part in a prayer vigil along with Trimble and Ahern, sympathetically noting that "many in the crowd went across to shake hands with the RUC men, just one indication of the deep sea change in attitudes brought about by this bomb" (*Socialist*, 28 August). Such expressions of solidarity with the RUC are typical of the reformist SP's longstanding embrace of the bourgeois state's armed thugs as "workers in uniform" (see *Militant Labour's Touching Faith in the Capitalist State*, Spartacist Pamphlet [August 1994]).

The centrist Workers Power (WP) group has for years supported the social-imperialist British Labour Party and capitulated to Green nationalism. Now they complain that Sinn Féin/IRA has "abandoned the revolutionary armed struggle for a united Ireland" (*Workers Power*, September 1998). Far from being "revolutionary," the Sinn Féin/IRA nationalists have always looked to the Irish Catholic bourgeoisie, of whom they wish to be part, and ape their social values. Following the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counter-revolution in 1991-92, petty-bourgeois nationalists like the IRA quickly came to terms with the "New World Order" by placing their hopes in U.S. imperialism. But the "armed struggle" and the "ballot box" have always been twin parts of the same nationalist strategy to pressure British imperialism to grant a 32-county capitalist Irish republic incorporating the North. Notwithstanding lip service to the need to reach out to Protestant workers, WP *supports* the IRA's nationalist perspective, which serves to compact the Protestants behind the Loyalist bigots and is directly counterposed to the Leninist fight for working-class power.

Workers Power now says: "The indiscriminate and reactionary bombing of Catholic and Protestant workers in Omagh...must be condemned" and describes it as "a crime against the Irish working class." This is true, but so were IRA bombings such as Enniskillen in 1987, which WP in Britain justified, saying "We defend the right of the Provisionals to struggle by any means to end Britain's rule" (*Workers Power*, December 1987). Now that the IRA has itself become a prop for continued British rule, WP pontificates that "the attempt by the Real IRA to carry on the guerrilla struggle...in 1998 is utterly stupid and counter-productive" and admonishes "all those Republicans who reject the pro-imperialist peace deal" to "find a better way." Workers Power's "way" was campaigning for Tony "I believe in the United Kingdom" Blair in the 1997 general election.

The bloody spiral of imperialist repression and communalist terror can only be broken by uniting the proletariat—Protestant and Catholic, English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish—across national and religious lines against British imperialism and the Irish bourgeoisie. For workers revolution on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea! ■

# Teamsters...

(continued from page 12)

control the vast union. Better to put the Teamsters in the hands of those *within* the union who were loyal and trusted agents of the state. The following year, the Justice Department adopted the TDU proposal.

## Forge a Class-Struggle Leadership!

The reformist left has a long history of championing "reform" bureaucrats, going back to Arnold Miller's campaign which captured the presidency of the United Mine Workers (UMWA) through Labor Department-run elections in 1972. Miller, a Democratic Party politico, subsequently joined hands with the courts and Democrat Jimmy Carter's White House to smash wildcat strikes and then flatly sold out the militant 1977-78 national coal strike. These class-collaborationist policies gutted the ranks of the UMWA and brought the once mighty union to its knees. Miller was one of a slew of union "reform" candidates in the 1970s, such as Ed Sadlowski in the United Steelworkers of America, who prated about "union democracy" while appealing to the Justice Department and the bourgeois courts. In his 1991 book, *Which Side Are You On? Trying to Be for Labor When It's Flat on Its Back*, Thomas Geoghegan, a yuppie labor lawyer who built a career advising Miller, Sadlowski and the TDU, wrote that now "the entire labor movement is like a giant bar association of nonlicensed attorneys."

The Spartacist League stood out on the left in refusing to support Miller, Sadlowski and their like. Our opposition to any intervention by the capitalist state into the affairs of labor is a fundamental part of our principled fight for the political independence of the working class from the exploiters, their political parties and their state. It is only on such a basis that labor can be mobilized in *class struggle*. As Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky noted in his 1940 article, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," the fight for trade-union democracy "presupposes for its realization the complete freedom of the trade unions from the imperialist or colonial state." Trotsky observed that the imperialist ruling class demands that the reformist labor bureaucrats "become transformed into its political police before the eyes of the working class."

This was clearly borne out in the case of the Teamsters. Carey's embrace of the bosses' government as a vehicle for his own installment as union president is simply reflective of the labor bureaucracy's worldview which is premised on the maintenance of capitalist exploitation. Thus the role of these "labor lieutenants" of capitalism is to police the workers on behalf of the American rulers. Once in



Ronald NY Newsday

One year after TDU "reformers" urged feds to use anti-labor RICO law to "clean up" Teamsters, then U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani announced 1988 RICO suit against the union. TDU paper now appeals to FBI and Justice Department to investigate James Hoffa Jr.

office, Carey proceeded to organize racist rallies against Mexican truckers in the Southwest and to abjectly capitulate to UPS bosses *after only ten hours* in the 1994 strike. The Carey team went on to knife the 1994 national freight strike while abandoning strike militants like Jesse Acuna, who was imprisoned for five years for the "crime" of defending a Teamsters picket line.

In trumpeting Carey, both the ISO and Socialist Action have covered up this history of betrayals. Similarly, neither group

terposed to the fight to mobilize union power against racist discrimination, which requires breaking from the class-collaborationist politics of all wings of the union bureaucracy.

Occasional "militant" rhetoric notwithstanding, the ISO and SA act only to lawyer for the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy. Both ignore the bureaucracy's ties to the Democratic Party, the main war party of U.S. imperialism and the historic party of Jim Crow racism. Both continue to forgo criticism of the "America First"

arbitration in this summer's Flint GM strike, both covered up the fact that the Solidarity House bureaucrats *voluntarily* agreed to arbitration—that is, essentially requested government intervention—in fear of waging a hard class battle to defeat GM.

What binds these groups to the labor bureaucracy is that they, too, share a fundamental belief in the "democratic" credentials of the U.S. capitalist rulers. The ISO's support to government intervention in the trade unions goes hand in hand with their championing of imperialist-sponsored forces of counterrevolution which were instrumental in the destruction of the former Soviet Union—a degenerated workers state. SA, too, was in the forefront of the anti-Soviet chorus, hailing Polish Solidarność—company union for Wall Street and the Vatican—and every other reactionary movement backed by the imperialists. Trotsky drew an analogy between the bureaucratically controlled unions in the West and the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state, calling for defense of both against the capitalists while fighting to oust the bureaucratic misleaders. Those like the ISO and SA who cannot defend past gains of the working class are incapable of conquering future ones.

With their support to Carey and other "reform" bureaucrats, the ISO, Socialist Action and others assist in forging the chains which bind the working class to the rule of capital and block the road to proletarian class struggle. The fight for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist exploiters and their state is the most elementary starting point to unlocking the social power of the multiracial working class. Bringing that power to bear in a struggle to eradicate a system based on exploitation and oppression requires a political fight against all wings of the labor bureaucracy. Out of the coming class battles, a new class-struggle leadership of the unions must be forged as part of the fight for a revolutionary workers party necessary for the final victory of the proletariat as the rulers of a socialist America. ■

Reformists hailed 1996 re-election of feds' man Ron Carey. Spartacist League opposes capitalist government intervention into the unions on principle.

### Teamsters Boo Bush—G-Men Run Convention, Elections

## Feds Hands Off Teamsters!

### WORKERS VANGUARD

5 July 1991

raised a word of criticism of Carey's refusal during the UPS strike to tackle the issue of rampant racism at the company. In this the ISO and SA starkly revealed how their economist cheerleading for "militant" bureaucrats like Carey is coun-

protectionism which is the primary expression of the labor tops' ideological alignment with U.S. imperialism. Although the ISO and SA have deplored the United Auto Workers tops' meekness in the face of the threat of binding

## CONVOY DISPATCH

### Teamster Reform Wins in Local Union Elections

## Teamsters Demand

### Thorough Investigation of James Hoffa Junior

The undersigned Teamster members call upon the Department of Justice, the FBI and the Teamster Election Officer to conduct a thorough investigation of James Hoffa Jr., using every bit as many resources as have been used to investigate and attack Ron Carey and his reform leadership.

Item: Mafia associate John A. Matassa, Jr., has already admitted that he was a fundraiser for Junior's state. Item: The FBI and a grand jury are investigating pension fund transfers that may have funded Junior's state. Item: The Feds ordered UPS management to stop making illegal contributions that helped Junior's campaign. Item: Junior and his law firm may have received \$1 million in contributions from National Metal Processing. Item: Junior's law firm may have received \$1 million from National Metal Processing.

January 1998

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## Carey Expulsion—Bitter Fruit of Government Intervention

# Fight Feds' Vendetta Against Teamsters Union!

Ending nearly two decades of defeated strikes, last summer's UPS Teamsters strike has sparked a series of strikes indicating that American workers are fed up with years of eroding living standards, second-class and second-tier jobs and a future that promises even less. Predictably, the capitalist rulers, bloated with years of record profits and concerned that these may soon go pop in a worldwide depression, have counterattacked against the labor movement. Only weeks after the UPS strike, the government moved to order new elections in the 1.4-million-strong International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). Then they barred Teamsters president Ron Carey from running for re-election while seizing the union treasury. Now they have thrown Carey out of the union entirely.

Dictating who can be a union member, the feds' purge of Carey is the latest chapter in a decades-long campaign by both capitalist parties, and especially the liberal wing of the Democrats, to gut the power of the Teamsters, one of the strongest unions in the country. The favored weapon in this anti-labor offensive has been government intervention in the name of fighting union "corruption." Carey himself owed his ascendancy to the Teamsters presidency in 1991, and his re-election in 1996, to union elections that were totally controlled by the Justice Department. Carey then threw out scores of local Teamsters leaders fingered by the feds as "corrupt." Now the government has struck back against its own accomplice.

This is an attack against the entire labor movement, fundamentally against the ability of unions to wage class struggle—i.e., against the right to strike. Virtually alone on the left, the Spartacist League has unconditionally opposed on principle any intervention by the bosses' government into the labor movement. As we wrote in "Government Hands Off the Teamsters!" (WV No. 673, 5 September 1997) following the UPS strike:

"The capitalist state, which represents the interests of the corporations, fears the potential power of the Teamsters to shut down the country, from in-city and national trucking to the major ports and airports. The government's only interest in intervening into the affairs of the Teamsters or any other union is to cripple their ability to fight for the interests

of their members by directly subordinating the unions to the government and dictating how they are run."

We say: Labor must clean its own house, through a political fight against the venal, pro-capitalist union bureaucracy. **Feds out of the Teamsters! Government hands off the labor movement!**

### ISO, Socialist Action: "Justice Department Socialists"

No greater demonstration of the abject loyalty of all wings of the trade-union bureaucracy to the capitalist exploiters

cratic Union (TDU), self-styled "reformers" and Carey loyalists who have spent over two decades bringing anti-union lawsuits against the Teamsters; and John Metz, head of a spoiler slate of long-time bureaucrats who previously supported Carey.

All wings of the Teamsters bureaucracy, like their AFL-CIO counterparts, openly act to tie the workers to their class enemy, expressed politically through support to the Democratic Party (and sometimes the Republicans) and manifested in their cringing servility to the bourgeois

are utterly belied by the ISO and SA's calls for votes to Carey loyalist Tom Leedham in the next Teamsters election while omitting any reference to his own call for government intervention in the Teamsters.

Whatever their current empty declamations against government intervention, these organizations have always sought to be waterboys for "progressive" bureaucrats who act as agents of the bourgeoisie and its state inside the unions. Socialist Action—which made its debut by mobilizing a goon squad for the San Francisco labor tops during the 1983 Greyhound strike to keep militant workers from stopping scab buses—called Carey's re-election "an important victory for rank-and-file Teamsters and for the entire American working class" (*Socialist Action*, January 1997).

The ISO has a particularly lengthy record of support to Carey and the TDU, whose central strategy has *always* been to drag the union into the bosses' courts. In January 1991, *Socialist Worker* proclaimed: "In concert with the government—forced to curb the openly corrupt aspects of the union—the reform movement under TDU's leadership has gone a long way toward leveling the playing field for those seeking union offices." More recently, in a June/July 1997 special edition of its paper addressed to UPS workers, the ISO hailed the 1989 "consent decree," in which the IBT leadership turned over the union to the government, as a "breakthrough" and described the government-controlled 1991 election as "the Teamsters first-ever democratic vote for the union presidency."

The ISO's forebears in the International Socialists were directly involved in setting up the TDU. As one TDU founder boasted: "Over the years, TDU has repeatedly gone to the National Labor Relations Board, to the courts and to the Department of Labor (and to many government agencies) to seek justice for union members" (Dan La Botz, *Rank and File Rebellion* [1990]). In 1987, the TDU literally wrote the blueprint for the feds to take over the Teamsters, helping to make the draconian RICO Act the weapon of choice for government intervention in the unions. La Botz's pro-TDU history shows that the TDU was in bed with the feds all along:

"In April 1987, even before the official announcement of the RICO suit against the Teamsters, TDU National Organizer Ken Paff sent a nine-page letter to Stephen Trott, assistant US attorney general, laying out in detail TDU's views at the time: '[W]e strongly urge the government to seek reorganization of the IBT under Section 1964(a) of the RICO Act.'"

The TDU even served as witnesses for the prosecution in the 1989 "probe" by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—the same outfit that Robert Kennedy used as a weapon in his vendetta against Jimmy Hoffa in the 1950s aimed at crippling the Teamsters.

In its submissions in the RICO case in 1989, the TDU offered the capitalist union-busters a more efficient way to control the union than putting it in trusteeship, in which a handful of outsiders would face intractable problems trying to

*continued on page 11*



Kuntz/Reuters

**Teamsters rally in Georgia during UPS strike, August 1997. In wake of solid, popular strike, capitalist government launched vindictive attack on Teamsters union.**

can be made than that all current candidates for Teamsters president *support* the government's raid on the union. The contenders are: James Hoffa Jr., seemingly preferred, at this time, by the Justice Department which drove his father out of the union; Tom Leedham, inheritor of Carey's "rank and file" movement who was endorsed by Teamsters for a Demo-

state. This openly class-collaborationist program is given a "left" cover by avowed "socialists" like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Socialist Action (SA). Lacking any confidence in the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat, and therefore accepting the current pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, these reformists instead have been prominent in hailing the TDU and its strategy of inviting the capitalist state to "clean up" the unions and in acting for years as slavish press agents for Carey.

But with Carey's ouster, the ISO and SA have now suddenly "discovered" the evils of government intervention into the labor movement. So the ISO has taken to inveighing against "relying upon elections and the government to transform the union from above" while calling for "shop-floor organization independent of the union bureaucracy" (*Socialist Worker*, 19 June 1998). And SA hypocritically proclaims that Carey's removal from office highlights the Marxist understanding of "the role of the government and state as a repressive instrument of the ruling class" (*Socialist Action*, April 1998). These bald-faced attempts at covering up their own support to the feds' intervention



International Teamster

**Ron Carey announces victory in government-run election for Teamsters president in 1991. Now feds have expelled him from union.**