

Referendum Result Deepens National Divide

Fight National Chauvinism! Independence for Quebec!



CP photos

Maple Leaf vs. fleurdelisé in Quebec referendum campaign. National schism cripples anti-capitalist struggle.

The No side's razor-thin 50.6 to 49.4 percent victory in the Quebec sovereignty referendum has only deepened the poisonous national division in Canadian society. There will be a further chauvinist backlash from English Canada, especially in the West where politicians and talk-show rednecks alike are already vowing "no more appeasement" of Quebec.

Meanwhile Quebec itself is bitterly polarized. About 60 percent of francophone Québécois cast Yes ballots for sovereignty, while the English-speaking and immigrant minorities, both concentrated in Montreal, overwhelmingly voted No. Shortly after the results were made official, crowds of No and Yes supporters in Montreal threw stones and traded punches as they chanted "Canada, Canada" or "Quebec, Quebec." And Parti Québécois premier Jacques Parizeau launched a vicious racist attack on immigrants, blaming "money and the ethnic vote" for the referendum defeat

When polls showed support for the separatist forces surging in the final week of the campaign, the capitalist money markets spoke out loudly in favor of "Canadian unity." The dollar went into freefall, and the Toronto Stock Exchange had its biggest one-day drop in six years. Airline companies and the government-owned Via Rail slashed fares by up to 90 percent to bring thousands of people from English Canada to a flag-waving "unity" rally in Montreal on October 27. Phone companies offered free long-distance calls to Quebec on the eve of the vote so "the people" could "speak out for Canada."

This brazen manipulation was accompanied by crude threats. Capitalist magnates like Laurent Beaudoin of Bombardier warned they would shift operations out of Quebec in the event of independence. Federal finance minister Paul Martin raved that a million jobs would be lost if the Yes side won.

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PDC Partisan Defense Committee

Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

This year marks the PDC's tenth annual "Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners." The Holiday Appeal fund drive maintains monthly stipend payments to class-war prisoners throughout the year, in addition to providing the money for individual holiday gifts for the prisoners and their families. During the decade since the first Holiday Appeal, the children of some of our foremost class-war prisoners—like **Mumia Abu-Jamal** and former Black Panther leader **Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)**—have grown to be young adults, while the struggle for their fathers' freedom continues.

The PDC in the U.S. initiated these annual Holiday Appeals to revive a tradition of the International Labor Defense and its founder and early leader, James P. Cannon. In 1927, in the article "A Christmas Fund of Our Own," Cannon scornfully derided the *New York Times*' "neediest cases" fund (still in existence today!) as an attempt by the exploiting class to make themselves feel better when faced each holiday season with the misery their greed imposes on the poorest in this society. Cannon counterposed to this the custom of the international labor movement "of raising a special fund for those in prison for the labor cause and their wives and children, of transforming the hypocritical spirit of Christmas into the spirit of solidarity with the class-war fighters behind bars."

Class-war prisoners who receive stipends from the PDC today are fighters against racist capitalist oppression from many different political backgrounds. Among them are former members of the Black Panther Party, which was spied upon and hounded by the government. Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), a survivor of the FBI's murderous COINTELPRO operation against the Panthers, has spent a quarter century behind bars, framed for a murder the FBI knows he did not commit.

Many of our stipend recipients have been soldiers from the front lines of the class war—striking workers—whose only "crimes" were to defend their union and their picket lines. Among the first were five British miners arrested in the bitter, year-long 1984-85 coal strike. Others, each outstanding in their

loyalty to their unions and their class, have included **Amador Betancourt** of the hard-fought 1986 Teamster Local 912 cannery workers strike; **Bob Buck** of Steelworkers Local 5668 at Ravenswood, West Virginia, who was thrown in prison for refusing to fink on his fellow strikers; and current stipend recipient **Jerry Dale Lowe**, a United Mine Workers member framed in the shooting death of a scab contractor in Logan County, West Virginia.

Over the years, we have counted among our class-war prisoners numerous members and supporters of the controversial MOVE organization—an organization which has suffered years of relentless persecution and frame-ups. Most of their loved ones outside prison walls, including babies, were murdered in the savage 13 May 1985 Philadelphia police bombing of MOVE's Osage Avenue home. We send stipends to nine **MOVE members** in prisons throughout Pennsylvania.

Our other current class-war prisoners include:

Ed Poindexter and **David (Wopashitwe Mondo Eye we Langa) Rice**, former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism.

Jaun Laaman and **Ray Luc Levasseur**, of the Ohio 7. Radical activists, they share a history of opposition to racism and imperialism.

Hugo Pinell, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. A militant anti-racist, he was a prison rights organizer along with George Jackson and has spent over 30 years in prison.

All of these class-war prisoners have fought, in their own way, in the interests of all of the working class—against racism, union-busting, and capitalist oppression. Our duty to them now is solidarity. Our duty is to take up their cases and causes, to fight for their freedom.

Support the Holiday Appeal! Make your donations payable/mail to: PDC, Box 314, Station B, Toronto ON M5T 2W1. Checks should be earmarked "Holiday Appeal."

* * *

Robert Gentles: We Will Not Forget!

Two hundred people demonstrated outside Kingston Penitentiary October 21 to mark two years since the death of black inmate Robert Gentles at the hands of prison guards. During a prison lockdown in October 1993, Gentles demanded to know why he and other inmates hadn't been fed in 23 hours. In response, six prison guards sprayed him with mace and suffocated him by holding him face down on his bed for almost ten minutes. According to eyewitnesses, the guards then dragged him unconscious from his cell and threw him down a staircase.

Obscenely, the Attorney General's office (of the then NDP provincial government) refused to press charges against any of the killers. Outraged, Carmeta Gentles, Robert's mother, initiated a private prosecution. But when the authorities took over the case they quickly stayed the charges against four of the guards, then finally dropped the prosecution last summer.

The case of Robert Gentles is far from unusual in racist, capitalist Canada. Too many young black men—like Wade Lawson, Ian Coley, Wayne Johnson—have died at the hands of cops or prison guards. These killers are then exonerated by the courts, if they're ever charged at all. The cops and prison guards are at the heart of the armed apparatus of the capitalist state, whose job is to maintain "law and order" for the rich,

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U.S./Canada/UN/NATO Out Now!

Down With NATO's Balkans Terror!

For two weeks in early September, wave after wave of NATO warplanes rained down tons of bombs on the Bosnian Serb people. Tomahawk cruise missiles blasted off from a U.S. warship in the Adriatic to aid the campaign of destruction. "Operation Deliberate Force" was the biggest operation in NATO's history and the most massive use of imperialist firepower since the Pentagon's devastation of Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War. By the time a temporary halt in the bombing was announced on September 14 after the Bosnian Serbs gave in to an imperialist *diktat*, NATO commanders were complaining that they had run out of "military" targets and openly talked of bombing factories and other civilian population concentrations.

The stated purpose of the NATO bombing, which received fulsome support from Ottawa, was to force the Serbs to lift their siege of Sarajevo, the capital of the Bosnian Muslim regime. But like the one-sided slaughter in the Persian Gulf four years ago, the terror-bombing of the Bosnian Serbs was designed to reassert the U.S. rulers' role as the "cops of the world" and to send a bloody message to those who dare defy Washington's dictates. In the midst of the bombing, sections of the International Communist League held emergency protests in New York, London, Paris and other cities, stating: *The international working class and oppressed peoples throughout the world must defend the Bosnian Serbs against U.S./NATO imperialism and its clients of the Muslim-Croat alliance!*

Washington has been itching to teach the Serbs a bloody lesson in imperialist bully-boy etiquette. Western leaders are now claiming that the bombing succeeded in forcing Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic and the Bosnian Serb leadership to accept a "peace" plan which amounts to partition of Bosnia, giving 49 percent to the Serbs and 51 percent to a fictitious Bosnian Muslim/Croat federation which would be subordinated to a Greater Croatia. But the gratuitous character of the murderous bombing campaign was underscored by the fact that Milosevic—desperate to end the imperialist starvation embargo of Serbia—and the Bosnian Serbs acquiesced to Clinton's "peace" proposal *before* NATO launched its latest assault. And Washington has assiduously covered up the real terms of the latest agreement on withdrawal of Serb guns from around Sarajevo.

While the NATO air offensive produced a momentary convergence of interests among the Western powers, one immediate effect was to provoke a flare-up with Russia. Seeking to assert itself as a regional power—although short on the military wherewithal—Moscow has simultaneously postured as the big-power champion of Serbia in the international diplomatic arena and the "soft cop" for the Western imperialists



NATO warplanes bomb Bosnian Serb areas near Sarajevo. Marxists call for military defense of Bosnian Serbs against imperialism.

vis-à-vis the Serbs. Thus the Russians made a big show of indignation over the NATO air strikes while simultaneously pressuring the Bosnian Serbs to acquiesce. Washington then offered Russia a role in policing the NATO-imposed ceasefire around Sarajevo. In exchange for Russia policing the Serbs, the U.S. and NATO have agreed to ease treaty restrictions on the number of tanks Moscow can deploy in the Caucasus.

Under the umbrella of NATO's air war, Croatian and Bosnian Muslim ground forces launched an offensive in western and central Bosnia which succeeded in driving 100,000 Serbs from their ancestral homeland. Following on the heels of the Croatian onslaught against Krajina in August, in a matter of weeks upwards of 300,000 Serbs were forced from their homes. This is the single most extensive instance of "ethnic cleansing" in the four-year-long Balkan blood wars—which have already produced well over 3 million refugees—and the largest forced population transfer in the region in over a century. And it was perpetrated under the direct auspices of the U.S. and its NATO allies, with the complicity of the Serb leadership, aimed at "creating facts" on the ground for the imperialist-engineered carve-up.

Noting that "Serbian efforts to repel the [Croat/Muslim] attacks have still been surprisingly light," an article in the *New York Times* (14 September) cited the comment by a UN official in western Bosnia: "It's a lot easier to scare these people into moving out of an area that's going to be given up than it is to

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Join the Campaign to Free Mumia!

As expected, the "prosecutor in robes," Judge Albert Sabo, ruled on September 15 against U.S. death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal's petition challenging his 1982 conviction and death sentence. Sabo's decision flagrantly disregarded the massive evidence presented of a police and prosecution frame-up. Mumia, a former Black Panther, courageous journalist and supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE group, is now closer to a legal lynching. A notice of appeal to the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court was filed on October 10.

As the legal battle goes forward, we must redouble our efforts to fight for Jamal's freedom. As Mumia himself said after winning a stay of execution on August 7, the stay was an attempt by the state "to blunt the edge off of a growing and militant anti-death penalty movement.... Let us utilize this precious time to build a stronger and broader movement, to not 'stay' one execution, but to halt them all!"

1 Organize protest! Pass motions demanding Jamal's freedom in your unions, campus, community and church organizations. Get your union or organization to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Jamal. Publicize Jamal's case in your union or organization's newsletter. Get on the Partisan Defense Committee phone tree to organize in your area.

2 Spread the word! The current issue of the PDC's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* is devoted to the struggle to save Mumia Abu-Jamal. And the PDC pamphlet, *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, exposes in detail the prosecution's case of lies, the coercion of witnesses and the FBI's COINTEL-PRO terror campaign against Mumia and the Black Panther Party. Order bundles of the special campaign issue of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* and *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 25 copies of either publication for \$10. For only \$2, buy the PDC's button: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" Get your local bookstore to stock Jamal's powerful *Live from Death Row*. Contact the PDC for speakers, to arrange showings of the PDC's video, *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*. The video can be purchased for \$30 from the PDC at the Toronto address

Award-winning journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, under sentence of death in Pennsylvania.



below. Contributions of \$5 or more to the PDC include a year's subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*.

3 Send protests to: Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Ridge changes his phone and fax number daily to try and stay ahead of the growing movement for Jamal! As we go to press, the numbers are: phone (717) 789-2500; fax (717) 783-3369.

4 Funds are urgently needed! To get a new trial and overturn the death sentence could cost over a million dollars. **Make a contribution to the legal defense today.** Make payable to the Partisan Defense Committee, earmarked "Jamal Legal Defense," and mail to the Toronto address below. These funds will be forwarded in full to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal in New York.

5 Write to Jamal to express your solidarity: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8835, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA 15370-8090.

For more information contact the Partisan Defense Committee at Box 314, Station B, Toronto, ON M5T 2W1, (416) 593-4138 or, Box 4932, Main P.O., Vancouver, BC V6B 4A6, (604) 687-0353.

Robert Gentles...

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white ruling class. This is just as true in "caring," "multicultural" Canada as it is south of the border. Only when the racially integrated working class gets rid of the entire system of oppression through socialist revolution will we have a society truly based on justice, freedom and equality. To achieve that requires forging a multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights for all the oppressed.

The Partisan Defense Committee sent a message of solidarity which was read out at the October 21 Kingston protest. Last August 14, Gentles' mother Carmeta was one of the speakers at a Toronto demonstration in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal which was organized by the PDC among others. We print below excerpts from her speech.

* * *

It's great to know that there are so many people that are interested in helping those who are less fortunate, those who

are locked up in these prisons, those who are on death row.

My son Robert, 23 years old, was locked up in Kingston Penitentiary, and he died at the hands of six guards in 1993. I've been trying ever since to get some justice for the death of my son. It seems as though the officials are patting the guards on the back, and saying that they're right. When the time came around, and I listened to see if some justice would be done, they claimed that the guards were cleared of all wrongdoing. I'm in this fight for justice for my son, and for justice for all people. I'm glad to be here today to help to try to get Mumia free, and I'm hoping and praying that he *will* be free.

My son was a very vocal person, and when you're vocal, when you speak out, you are in great danger. They want us to shut up and go away, we're just to accept whatever they hand down.

We've got to come out to support these activities because it's not finished yet. There's a stay of execution, but it doesn't mean that Mumia will not be executed. But by the power of the people, we hope that he will be free. ■

Ipperwash, Gustafsen Lake

Murderous State Terror Targets Native Peoples

Anger at the horrible living conditions on the reserves, combined with frustration over unresolved land claims and Ottawa's hollow rhetoric about "self-government," spilled over in a countrywide wave of Native protests late this summer. At every turn, Native protesters from Ontario to British Columbia were met with the full force of the racist state.

At Ipperwash on the shores of Lake Huron, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) committed cold-blooded murder of a Chippewa protester. And at Gustafsen Lake, B.C., the ruling provincial NDP sustained the largest RCMP operation in Canadian history to drive a tiny group of Natives off a patch of ranch land.

This state terror came on the fifth anniversary of the assault at Oka, where heavily armed Sûreté du Québec police and the Canadian army besieged Mohawks defending ancestral territory which the authorities wanted to turn into a private golf club. Hounded and scapegoated on all sides, the Mohawks were caught in the nationalist crossfire between English Canada and Quebec in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Meech Lake constitutional deal.

Five years on, the same capitalist rulers in Ottawa who unleashed the army against the Mohawks pretended to "rediscover" Native rights—but only in Quebec, where the feds tried to manipulate the aboriginal population to look to the Canadian state as an "ally" against the prospect of Québec independence. But this cynical con game was exposed in Native blood at Ipperwash and Gustafsen Lake.

Ipperwash: Racist Expulsions, OPP Murder

The events at Ipperwash are the legacy of one of the many racist atrocities committed by the Liberal government of Mackenzie King over half a century ago. In 1942, invoking the War Measures Act, the King government seized the Chippewa reserve at Stony Point near Ipperwash to build a military base. Native houses were destroyed in a few hours, their occupants forcibly displaced without warning. Other houses in the area went untouched.

It was only in July of this year, *more than fifty years later*, that the army finally withdrew from the base. This followed a two-year occupation by determined Native militants. The OPP's Emergency Response Team then moved to attack an occupation at the nearby Ipperwash Provincial Park, itself built on part of the old Stony Point reserve. Native militants there demanded the return and protection of an ancestral burial ground which had been seized by the government.

The massive cop operation against these unarmed Native occupiers came to

a head on September 6, when the paramilitary police commandos opened fire, killing 38-year-old Chippewa Anthony (Dudley) George and wounding two others. A week after this racist state execution, federal Indian Affairs minister Ron Irwin admitted that the Natives had been right all along. Irwin claimed that Ottawa had just "discovered" documentation from the 1930s which proved the park was indeed on an ancestral burial ground! The most minimal justice demands that the Chippewa have this ancestral land fully restored to them, without conditions.

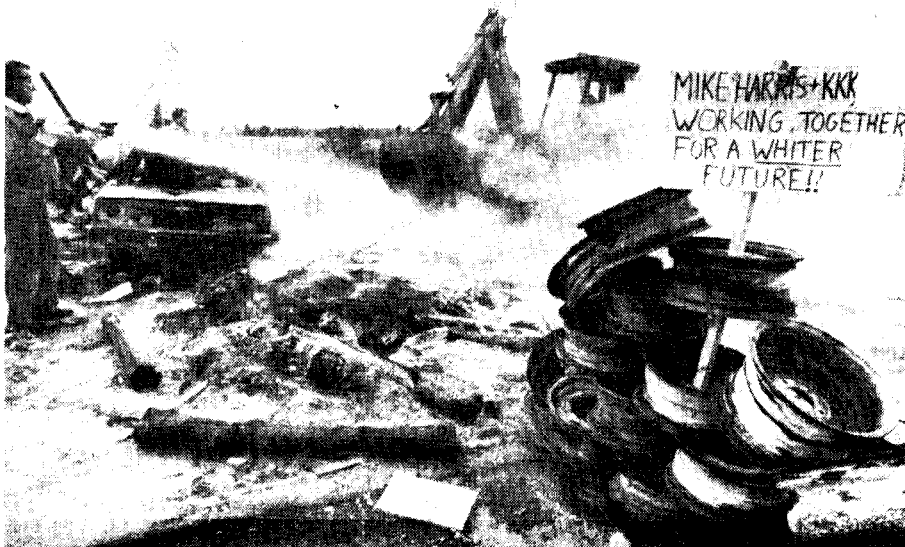
B.C. NDP's Racist "Law and Order"

Meanwhile in the B.C. Cariboo region, a small group of Native people became the target of an enormous combined RCMP/army military operation. The Natives had been using a small area on Gustafsen Lake, part of the vast 182,000 hectare James Cattle Company Ranch, since 1990 for their annual sundance, a ceremony practiced by the Plains Indians in the U.S. and now increasingly popular among Native people in Western Canada.

In June the ranch owner, Lyle James, organized an armed posse and tried to evict Percy Rosette, who had been the lone occupant of a cabin near the lake. After several encroachments near their camp, in mid-July the sundancers said they were preparing "to resist an invasion by the RCMP" and had some AK-47s for self-defense. They were joined by a handful of others, including some non-aboriginal supporters of Native land rights.

In response to this tiny and isolated challenge to what the capitalists hold sacred, private property, the NDP and the

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Tibor Kolley/Globe and Mail

Native protesters dismantle barricade near Ipperwash, Ontario.

Young Spartacus

Brutal Police Assault in Hidalgo

Mexican Students Fight "Elitization" of Education

The following leaflet was distributed by our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM) and Juventud Espartaquista in response to the repression of student protesters in the Mexican state of Hidalgo. On October 17, a student march from the teachers' training college in El Mexe, Hidalgo, was attacked by the Judicial Police (*judiciales*) and *granadero* riot police, as well as other police forces.

The bus belonging to the school was fired on by the cops, while students were in it, "until its windshield, tires and side windows were destroyed," *La Jornada* (28 October) reported.

"Then, more than 120 students, most of them wounded, were detained and held incommunicado, causing desperation for their families, who did not know if they were alive, dead or wounded. Others were tortured physically by burning their eyelids and stripping them in the cells of the Judicial Police so as to beat them and threaten them with rape. Others were beaten on the muscles, kidneys and soft tissue. After a period of 18 to 30 hours most of them were set free after they were made to sign a document stating that they were in good physical condition and promising that they would not continue the struggle for the right to education."

The Hidalgo governor's threats to "annihilate" protesters recall the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre of hundreds of student demonstrators in Mexico City. While "union" leaders from the ruling party (key to the system of regimenting mass organizations known as "corporatism") sealed off the 1968 student movement from most of the working class, it nonetheless managed to win significant gains in public education. As a result, access to the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) was opened up considerably; it now has about 300,000 students. The use of new rules and procedures to exclude about 150,000 applicants from UNAM this summer has led to protest demonstrations over the past several months, which the regime has answered with threats and repression.

Emergency protests called by the Partisan Defense Committee in New York City at the Consulate General of Mexico on October 23 demanded "Down with Police State Torture and Terror Against Mexican Students in Hidalgo." The Los Angeles Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club also organized a speakout at the University of California at Los Angeles on October 24. The protests were covered in New York's *El Daily News* and *La Opinion* in L.A. As we go to press, reports from Mexico indicate that arrested students have been released, although the status of charges against them remains unclear, as does the fate of those reported "disappeared."



Thousands of students excluded from public university classes protest in Mexico City at National Autonomous University.

Stop Repression in Hidalgo!
Mobilize the Power of the Working Class!

Mass United Actions Urgently Needed to Defend El Mexe Students

The grave situation of state repression in Hidalgo demands urgent action by the labor and student movements. Today (October 21), newspapers report that 300 riot police are blocking access to the Luis Villarreal Normal School in El Mexe, where 300 students have taken refuge, while the police "detain any youth who 'looks like a student,' and stop local residents 'in order to search them.'" This is the sequel to an attack by the cops on an October 17 student march, which was broken up with tear gas, gunshots and clubbings, leading to the arrest of more than 110 students, many of whom were wounded. There are reports of the "disappearance" of 16 students and the use of torture against those detained; 12 are being held on serious charges.

The head of the Hidalgo education system announced the expulsion of participants in the protest. Meanwhile, it was reported that Hidalgo's governor Murillo Karam "threatened that if they did not desist from their struggle, they would be 'annihilated'" (*El Dia*, 21 October). Thus this governor, who rules Hidalgo like his personal fiefdom, threatens to imitate the massacre carried out by [then president] Díaz Ordaz at Tlatelolco in 1968. This takes place in the context of threats and repression against applicants denied admission to the

Education Cuts Provoke UBC Protest

Students: Ally With Labor!

VANCOUVER—On October 13, hundreds of university and high school students marched to the University of British Columbia in a “Trek for Education,” protesting the federal government’s cuts to post-secondary education. The Spartacus Youth Club on campus encouraged students to participate and joined the protest. The cuts would mean increases of up to 300 percent on tuition fees! They are part of the ruling class’ all-out assault on working people and the poor.

This system is gouging students because, under decaying capitalism, the rulers want to spend on education only what they can get back in profits. They have no jobs for poor and minority youth, so they want to make the universities even more elitist than they already are. But education should be a right, not a privilege. The SYC fights for no tuition, open admissions and free education *for all!*

The wretched student bureaucrats of UBC’s Alma Mater Society (AMS) put out a call for the demonstration which proclaimed that “Students are willing to accept their fair share of the cutbacks.” And at the Trek itself, the AMS wanted to provide a platform for NDP politicians and the UBC Board of Governors, which had declared in advance that they plan to pass the full impact of the cuts onto students. The AMS simply sought to lobby the NDP provincial government (whose supporters showed up at the rally wrapped in Canadian flags).

The pro-capitalist NDP is *implementing* the ruling class’ austerity measures against workers, immigrants and the poor, and they’re not about to make an exception for students. Begging the government for a more “reasonable,” “responsible” capitalism is a dead end for the struggles of workers, students and all the oppressed. When you accept the framework of the capitalist system, begging for a bigger piece of the shrinking pie, you end up buying the rest of the oppressive logic of that system. And the AMS buys wholesale.

Earlier this year, the AMS entered into secret negotiations with the administration to take over the university cafeteria and central kitchen, staffed by members of CUPE Local 116, saying “it would be kind of silly to extrapolate who is going to be hired.” Clearly, they were planning to use non-union student cheap labor as a club against the campus unions. And, in the name of “budget-balancing,” AMS president Janice Boyle is leading the charge against tenure for academics at UBC. At the same time, the AMS is hypocritically denouncing “Mr. Tube Steak” fast-food vendors on campus as a threat to union jobs! Defend the unions! Organize the unorganized! For

student/teacher/worker control of the universities!

Then comes pandering to racist bigotry. Last year, the then AMS president disgustingly opposed plans to increase the number of foreign students at UBC, sneering: “I don’t think we should bring more students on to the campus unless there is a significant improvement for the students who are already here.” This comes straight from the divide-and-rule program



SC photo

SYC banner at January 25 anti-cuts demo in Toronto.

of the racist rulers!

For increasing numbers of youth today, capitalist society offers no future. The SYC stands for anti-capitalist class struggle against the education cuts and the entire ruling-class offensive against workers and the poor. That means looking to the social power of the labor movement to take on and defeat the bosses. As we said last spring during country wide protests against the federal Liberal cuts to education funding (see SC No. 102, March/April 1995):

“It’s good that students from coast to coast are rallying in protest today. But it’s going to take a lot more than student protest to defeat Axworthy’s cuts. We need the power of the organized *working class*. That’s the one force in society that can bring the capitalist system to a halt, and the bosses’ profits with it. The workers built this country, they can *run* this country—and students should be their allies, around a revolutionary socialist perspective.” ■

National University here in Mexico City.

Hidalgo Normal School students—many of them from Indian and peasant families—are fighting against cutbacks restricting education to the elite few. They are demanding a 100 percent increase in student enrollment, more scholarships, better lodging and food. The vital interests of the working class and of students from poor families throughout Mexico are at stake in this fight against repression and against the “elitization” of education. (This drive to restrict education is directly related to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as we noted in our October 2 leaflet on the struggle

of students barred from enrolling at UNAM.) The bloody repression in Hidalgo is an attack on all those who dare to oppose the government’s offensive against the working people, the right to education and democratic rights. Active, mass solidarity with the besieged students of El Mexe is clearly necessary, in particular the mobilization of support from the working class.

There must be united mass mobilizations now to demand immediate and unconditional freedom for those arrested at El Mexe, the dropping of all charges against them and fulfillment

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Quebec...

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Prime Minister Jean Chrétien sternly warned the elderly that they would lose their pensions in a sovereign Quebec.

Earlier, Chrétien threatened that the federal government would not recognize the legitimacy of a narrow Yes majority. Mooting a possible snap federal election or countrywide referendum, he vowed not to let the separatists "destroy Canada." Now, however, with the No side having won by the slimmest of margins, Ottawa insists that the result is definitive and that Quebec's place in Canada is effectively resolved.

In fact, the referendum has resolved nothing. Sovereignist leaders who said "Canada now exists only on paper" were only stating the obvious. Following the vote, Chrétien talked about reopening the endless constitutional debates in order to address what he termed a "will for change" in Quebec. He was immediately slapped down by Reform Party leader Preston Manning and Western premiers Klein and Harcourt, who reiterated their opposition to even a hint of "special status" for Quebec. And Bloc Québécois leader Lucien Bouchard dismissed Chrétien's schemes with a contemptuous shrug, saying they were "too little, too late," and that the only negotiations he would undertake would be on behalf of a sovereign Quebec.

Bouchard and other sovereignist spokesmen quickly dissociated themselves from Parizeau's racist ravings about the "ethnic vote," and the premier announced his resignation a day later. But Quebec's bourgeois-nationalist leaders are determined to win "next time"—and sooner rather than later. Nice-

ties aside, they will seize on their narrow loss to scapegoat minorities and increase pressures aimed at pushing out anyone who is not white and francophone. Already the Quebec government has announced a sharp cut in immigration quotas for next year.

Bouchard told reporters he is considering his future in the light of personal and family considerations. But the PQ leadership is his for the asking, and he and other nationalist leaders have already pledged to work toward a new referendum. Speaking to an audience of business moguls in Toronto, Chrétien shot back: "We cannot play that game that there will be a referendum every six months or year or two years.... It is very frustrating for a lot of Canadians to be in a position where 2 million people in voting one way could destroy the country of 30 million people." This is a clear threat to deny the people of Quebec the right to determine their own future.

The intractable national divide in the Canadian state—in which the oppressed Québécois nation is necessarily subordinated to the economically and politically dominant English Canadian majority—will keep on growing. It will continue to twist and distort all aspects of political life in this country, above all the prospects for anti-capitalist working-class struggle. This underlines the necessity for Marxists to advocate the independence of Quebec as the means to cut through the barrier which sets worker against worker along national lines, and lay a basis for united working-class struggle against capitalism.

We print below a leaflet issued by the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste during the referendum campaign.

Quebec's Referendum: Acid Test for the Left

On October 30, the population of Quebec will vote for or against sovereignty. In the present circumstances, this is a clear referendum on independence. The oppression of the Québécois, who form a separate nation with their own distinct language and culture, is a cornerstone of capitalist rule in Canada. From the British Conquest of 1759, to the crushing of the Patriote rebellion in 1837, to the War Measures Act of 1970 and repeated threats to "use the sword" against any move to independence, the Anglo-chauvinist rulers have kept Quebec forcibly confined in a "united," and necessarily oppressive, federal state.

The government in Ottawa has made clear it is not about to agree to any amicable new "partnership" with Quebec. Chrétien, who sat in the Trudeau cabinet when Ottawa sent the army to occupy Montreal in 1970, threatens to refuse to recognize a majority Yes vote as a mandate for independence. And the NDP provincial premiers Romanow and Harcourt (and ex-premier Rae in Ontario) have joined the Liberals, Tories and Preston Manning's viciously anti-Quebec Reform Party in a grotesque chauvinist front against Quebec's national rights.

The prospects for anti-capitalist class struggle in Canada today are deeply poisoned by nationalist bigotry. Spawned by the oppression of the Québécois under the heel of the unitary Canadian state, and fueled by the bourgeois nationalists of the

Parti and Bloc Québécois who seek to be exploiters of their "own" working class, these animosities have bitterly divided the working class of English Canada and Quebec. As revolutionary internationalists who seek to clear the road for common struggle by the workers of both nations against their common capitalist enemy, the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste calls for an independent Quebec. Thus we believe that class-conscious workers in Quebec should vote Yes in the coming referendum.

Since the triumph of the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s and '70s, the development of Quebec society has been sharply away from assimilation into English-dominated Canada and toward separation. The late 1980s/early '90s saw a vicious chauvinist uproar in English Canada against the Meech Lake accord's simple affirmation that Quebec is a "distinct society." This was followed by another surge in separatist sentiment in Quebec, leading to a massive vote for Bouchard's *indépendantiste* Bloc in the 1993 federal election. In the same election, workers in whole regions of English Canada backed the anti-Quebec bigots of Manning's Reform Party.

National chauvinism has divided the workers, undermining class struggle in the face of ever more sweeping attacks on wages, jobs and social programs from both Ottawa and the provincial governments. The union movement is increasingly riven: today not only all three Quebec labor federations but even the Quebec wings of countrywide unions like the Auto and Postal Workers support independence. We advocate independence for Quebec as the means to *break down* national and chauvinist antagonisms. Only through separation into two independent states can it be made clear to the workers of both

nations that their real enemy is not “the French” or “les Anglais,” but their “own” capitalist rulers.

Defend Quebec’s Rights, Defend Native Rights!

While Chrétien and his lieutenants brandish the sword of “Canadian unity,” nationalist leaders Bouchard and Parizeau want independence in order to more fully exploit the workers of Quebec, and lord it over Native peoples and other minorities. Bouchard’s grotesque comment about the need for more children “of the white races” in Quebec speaks volumes about the racist mindset of these bourgeois nationalists, mirroring the anti-immigrant and anti-Native hysteria fanned by the rulers in English Canada.

Aboriginal people in particular are in the racist rulers’ crosshairs. The PQ’s draft sovereignty bill pledges to uphold Quebec’s “territorial integrity.” These are code words for denial of the rights of the Cree, Inuit and other Native peoples who make up the overwhelming population of northern Quebec and have made clear that they do not want to be part of an independent Quebec. The capitalists in both Quebec and English Canada are determined to hold onto this resource-rich region, whose rivers feed the hydroelectric power stations that are the mainstay of the modern Quebec economy.

The labor movement must defend Native rights against today’s all-sided racist offensive. In particular, that means upholding the right of the aboriginal populations of the north to regional autonomy and to decide their own fate, whether that be in Quebec or a rump Canada. But we emphasize that, in either case, the capitalist ruling class will continue to oppress and brutalize the Native peoples. We fight for an egalitarian socialist society which can alone redress the centuries-long oppression of the aboriginal populations.

Quebec and the Left

A correct stance toward the national question in the Canadian state today is decisive for those who would fight for working-class unity and a socialist future. But in both English Canada and Quebec, most of the left is in thrall to either Quebec nationalism or—far worse—to Anglo chauvinism.

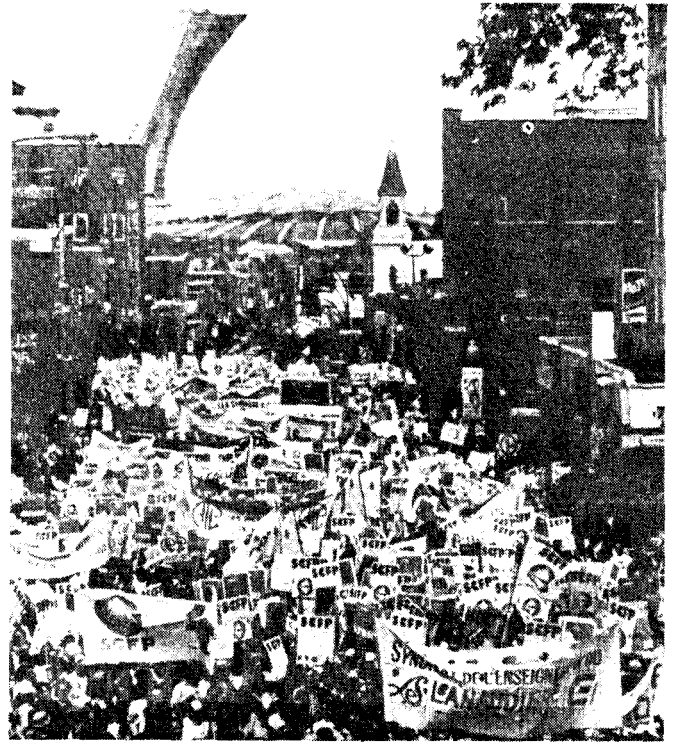
The NDP, right-wing social democrats who seek to manage capitalism on behalf of Bay Street, are by no means alone in appealing to prop up the oppressive federal state. The Communist Party, for example, has stayed true to form in calling for a No vote, issuing yet another “urgent appeal for a united Canada” which calls for a “new, equal and democratic union.”

Then there are the International Socialists, who in 1992 called to vote in favor of Mulroney’s Charlottetown referendum, which aimed to reinforce the chauvinist status quo of a “united” capitalist Canada. On 20 September *Socialist Worker* came out for a Yes vote in Quebec’s sovereignty referendum, albeit with spurious arguments which attempted to dodge the question of independence. Then the I.S. did a 180 degree about-face. In the next issue (4 October) they wrote:

“We have to let them [Quebec workers] know that they are welcome in Canada. We need them in our struggles....

“We must demand that our government negotiate with Quebec in good faith. We must demand that Martin and Chrétien abandon all threats and agree to a new economic and political association.”

The fact that self-proclaimed socialists could portray the Anglo-chauvinist capitalist rulers in Ottawa as “our” government says just about all there is to say about where the I.S. is



Normand Blouin/Agence Stock

June 1993 union demo against pay cuts in Montreal.

coming from. Their plea for Chrétien to “negotiate” a new “economic and political association” is simply a call to refurbish the existing, necessarily oppressive capitalist state.

A small Maoist group in Montreal, Action Socialiste, raises the call to “Don’t Vote Yes!”—which, they explain, means you should vote No, abstain, boycott, or whatever else you want. AS claims that this is the way to “rebel against the capitalists” of Quebec. But beyond the fact that most Québécois capitalists currently oppose independence, AS willfully *ignores* the reality of national oppression in Quebec—and that this oppression has produced deep-going national divisions which sharply undercut prospects for proletarian struggle in both nations. Behind their left rhetoric stands *de facto* support to the oppressive federal status quo.

Even worse, a leaflet issued by the tiny Bolshevik Tendency in Toronto calls for a No vote while nowhere mentioning—much less opposing—the national oppression of Quebec. Three years ago, the BT refused to vote No to Mulroney’s Charlottetown gambit. Their statement calling for abstention failed even to defend Quebec’s *right* to independence. Now they are quick to say No to Quebec separation, claiming, in the face of all reality, that English Canadian and Québécois workers show a “considerable desire for unity.”

The BT flatly denies that there has been an upsurge of chauvinism in English Canada over recent years, or that the national divide has served to stifle working-class struggle throughout the Canadian state. Instead they conjure up a fantasy world where Québécois workers retain the militancy of the 1960s and early ’70s—militancy which was in fact spawned in large part by opposition to national oppression—and continue to spark joint class struggle across Canada. The BT’s position isn’t so much self-delusional as an expression of their *disdain* for any kind of struggle against special oppression. In the real world, their call for a No vote puts them in a united

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Quebec...

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front with the chauvinist Canadian ruling class.

Despite ritual genuflection to the right of self-determination and appeals to the Quebec working class to "unite and fight," from the CP on down these organizations end up capitulating to the Anglo-chauvinist status quo. As we wrote in the latest issue of *Spartacist Canada* (No. 105, September/October 1995), "Only by standing forthrightly against the nationalism of an oppressor nation can the proletarian vanguard claim the moral authority to call on workers of the oppressed nation to fight their 'own' nationalist leaders, who seek to solidify their place among the exploiters and oppressors."

Toward Socialist Revolution

Our advocacy of Quebec independence has nothing in common with that of the various "left" apologists for nationalism. While calling for a Yes vote, organizations like the Communist League and the Gauche Socialiste group (Quebec supporters of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat) provide a left cover for the bourgeois nationalists of the PQ and Bloc.

Rejecting the elementary proposition that there should be

equal language rights for all, including francophones in English Canada and anglophones in Quebec, these groups support restrictive and undemocratic legislation like the PQ's French-unilingualist Bill 101. Far from fighting for a revolutionary working-class alternative to the nationalists, three years ago Gauche Socialiste even tried to form a joint youth group with the Péquistes. Meanwhile their co-thinkers in English Canada, Socialist Challenge, support the NDP, who are ferocious *enemies* of Quebec's national rights!

The task of Marxist revolutionaries is not to ignore or minimize the realities of national and racial oppression—the stock-in-trade of the social democrats and most fake-leftists—but to put forward a revolutionary program and perspective which can overcome them. Through advocating independence for Quebec, we seek to get the national question "off the agenda": to lay a basis for redirecting the workers' consciousness and struggle against their "own" capitalists, whether in Ottawa and Bay Street or Quebec City and Rue St-Jacques. Our fight is for a *revolutionary workers party* which can rally the multiracial, binational working class against all forms of capitalist exploitation and oppression, in the struggle for international socialist revolution.

—25 October 1995

Mexico Students...

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of their just demands. *Education for all! From Mexico City to Hidalgo, Guerrero and Chiapas: Down with bourgeois repression!* These demonstrations should be called by mass student and workers organizations (in particular the University Students Council, the movement of rejected UNAM applicants, and independent trade-union organizations like the Mexico City bus drivers, the dissident teachers movement, the UNAM and Metropolitan University workers unions and others). This fight goes hand in hand with the struggle of the students excluded from UNAM and with the university workers' battle against starvation wages—especially since the UNAM workers union has planned an October 26 work stoppage and a strike at the end of the month. What's needed is a militant, class-struggle perspective and leadership, which could make such a mobilization an important step toward uniting all the struggles in one big fist.

In the state of Hidalgo, where auto workers and miners have a long history of struggle, workers at Dina and Sidena (large bus and steel plants) must mobilize their power, together with other sectors, in defense of the besieged students. This would strengthen and broaden their own fight against layoffs and attacks on their union contracts, and would point the way toward a proletarian counteroffensive throughout the country.

For a number of years now, the government has sought to reverse the so-called "massification" of UNAM, which resulted from the 1968 mobilizations, and to exclude the majority of poor students from higher education throughout Mexico. The repression in Hidalgo is part of the same bourgeois onslaught that has been sinking the working-class population into ever-deeper poverty; that launched its machinery of death against the courageous Zapatista insurgents; that seeks to smash the peasant land seizures occurring all over the southern part of the country; that threw the Mexico City Ruta 100 municipal bus drivers out into the street, imprisoned their

union leaders and now persecutes the strikers at Tres Estrellas de Oro bus line. Now they seek to formalize this wave of repression through a draconian "anti-crime law."

Under the aegis of NAFTA, the Mexican bourgeoisie and its senior partners on Wall Street are slashing real wages at the same time as they attack the most basic social services; they want workers to foot the bill for the devaluation and brutal inflation brought on by *their* capitalist system. This offensive means increasingly harsh attacks on all the oppressed, the poor peasantry, Indians, working women and youth, and everyone's democratic rights.

The working class is the only force with the social power and interest to unite the oppressed and exploited in a counteroffensive capable of defeating the bourgeois assault. In 1968 the government succeeded in isolating the students from the bulk of the working class, and repressed them in a hail of bullets. But today, when the regime is shaken by one crisis after another, it is possible and necessary to destroy the corporatist chains that bind the Mexican proletariat. This means *breaking with the bourgeoisie*, both the ruling PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and the PAN (the rightist National Action Party) as well as Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas' bourgeois nationalist PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution), that neo-PRI that helps isolate struggles and seeks to subordinate every sign of discontent to the politicians and institutions of the capitalist state. What's lacking is the *revolutionary leadership*; the urgent task is to forge a revolutionary, internationalist workers party to unchain the power of the working class, uniting it with its class brothers and sisters north of the Rio Grande and throughout the world, to eradicate poverty, inequality and bourgeois repression through socialist revolution. As part of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), the Grupo Espartaquista de México and the Juventud Espartaquista are dedicated to this task.

For united mass mobilizations to defend the students of El Mexe! Freedom now for the arrested students—Drop all charges against them! ■

Native Peoples...

(continued from page 5)

RCMP launched the biggest operation in RCMP history. Police spokesmen branded the Native occupiers as "terrorists." Seizing on the fact that some protesters—driven to the wall by the racist society around them—were influenced by the conspiracy theories of right-wing demagogue Glen Kealey, NDP premier Mike Harcourt railed that they were "fanatics" with a "cult mentality." The kept media joined in, denouncing these Natives as "thugs," "hooligans," "criminals"—crazed non-people, to whom anything might be done.

Hundreds of police sealed off a no-go zone of 7,770 square kilometers (larger than Prince Edward Island) with "explosive devices." Heavily armed and camouflaged SWAT teams, equipped with sophisticated night-vision goggles and other hardware used in the 1990 Gulf War slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqis, fanned out through the area. The army sent in eight Bison armored personnel carriers with 7.62-mm machine guns—the same kind used in Bosnia and Somalia. Seven planes and four helicopters carried out sorties.

The area was literally turned into a war zone, complete with field hospital, as the cops demanded unconditional surrender. The people at the camp tried to defend themselves as best they could. Around the province, Natives and others were subjected to racist martial law treatment, detained without cause, harassed and searched.

With their backs against the wall, the Natives at Gustafsen Lake tried to petition the British Crown to intercede. But from the outset NDP attorney general Ujjal Dosanjh flatly refused to negotiate anything. Declaring "there will be no deals," he even refused to forward their petition to England. As the RCMP prepared for a massive assault, Dosanjh threatened the Native occupiers: "We shall not participate in what in fact is an extortion of the administration of justice.... We do not run messages for people with AK-47s."

Dosanjh railed: "These individuals, through their conduct, have shown they have no regard for human life or for law." But it was the RCMP, with full approval of the NDP, which planned an all-out massacre. As the planes and helicopters circled above and the cops and soldiers poured into the RCMP's "Zulu" base camp, many feared a repeat of the 1993 Waco, Texas holocaust carried out by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, in which 86 members of the Branch Davidian sect were annihilated in fire. While Ramsey Clark, a lawyer for some Branch Davidians, wrote to Dosanjh urging him to avoid a massacre at Gustafsen Lake, a sign at a protest by Native Americans outside the Canadian embassy in Washington, D.C. read, "Honor Native Treaty Rights—No Waco at Gustafsen Lake."

In the end, Waco did not come to Gustafsen Lake only because the last twelve Native occupiers emerged from their camp on September 10, fearful they would otherwise be killed by the RCMP terrorists. When the dust finally settled, the cops and courts laid two charges of attempted murder against leaders of the occupation, as well as several counts of trespass and mischief. Underlining their racist contempt, the authorities shackled the Natives' maverick attorney Bruce Clark and hauled him off to a mental hospital for "psychiatric examination." We demand that all the charges be dropped and that the persecution of these Natives and their supporters cease immediately!

Canada was built on terror and genocide against the Native peoples. In B.C., the Northwest Mounted Police carried out a bloody "pacification" of the aboriginal populations, a tradition upheld today by their RCMP successors. The labor movement must actively take up the cause of Native rights against the racist capitalist state, which stole their land and which oppresses and degrades them to this day.

Acting as a transmission belt for all that is reactionary in capitalist society, the NDP and their friends in the union bureaucracy fuel anti-Native racism among the working class. A case in point is the longstanding conflict between the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU) and Native fishermen over the dwindling salmon stocks in the Fraser River. Rather than leading their members in struggle against the avaricious bosses and governments whose drive for profits depleted the fish stocks in the first place, the labor tops have incited violence against Native peoples for exercising their right to fish out of season.

On August 16, seventy boatloads of UFAWU fishermen harassed Native gillnet boats on the lower Fraser. While one fisherman called for "open season on Indians with no bag limit," UFAWU spokesman John Sutcliffe stated: "Most fishermen haven't fished yet and it's beyond endurance to watch others fish" (*Toronto Star*, 17 August). This racist poison is deadly to integrated class struggle and must be rooted out of the workers movement. The UFAWU bureaucrats' disgraceful racist scapegoating of Native people is eerily evocative of 1942 when the union, egged on by the Stalinist Communist Party, urged the government to round up Japanese Canadian fish boats in the name of "national defense."

Labor Must Defend Native Rights!

Most of the Native protests this year have been in rural areas, isolated from the working class and far removed from the integrated urban centers. Yet the cops who are reliving the "Indian wars" are the same cops who bust up picket lines and wage unremitting racist war on black people in Montreal and Toronto, and Asians and others in Vancouver.

On September 23, a hundreds-strong Toronto demonstration against racist police terror brought together blacks, Natives, socialists and others in united-front protest. Marchers protested cop brutality from Ipperwash and Gustafsen Lake to Toronto's east-end Regent Park housing project, the site of yet another racist police assault in late summer. Among the speakers was Partisan Defense Committee spokesman Peter Stevens, who denounced the NDP's unleashing of racist state terror in B.C. and emphasized the need for a new, anti-capitalist leadership of labor and the oppressed.

Under capitalism, Native people face the "choice" of poverty and isolation in the cities or squalor and deprivation on the reserves. The way forward lies through building a racially integrated revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed. That requires a sharp political fight and break with the NDP social democrats, who would sanction the massacre of a small and defiant group of Native people in order to demonstrate their loyalty to "law and order" and capitalist private property. Only the destruction of capitalism through workers revolution and the inauguration of the era of socialist development can redress centuries of crimes against the aboriginal peoples of this country, and permit their all-sided voluntary integration into society on the basis of the fullest equality. *Stop racist state terror—Defend Native rights!* ■

Down With NATO Terror...

(continued from page 3)

wait until the new borders are announced and then ask them to please leave their homes." In other words, tens of thousands of Serb families are being bombed out of their homes in order that the various nationalist leaders and their imperialist sponsors can "peacefully" redraw the map amid the serenity of Lake Geneva. Such imperialist-inspired forced population transfers are not without precedent in the Balkans. In the 1920s, more than two million people were brutally "exchanged" among Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey under the auspices of the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations.

For years, the Western press has steadily churned out denunciations of "ethnic cleansing" by the Bosnian Serbs. Exposing the imperialist hypocrisy, we have pointed out that these nationalist wars for redivision of territory have been marked by chauvinist atrocities *on all sides*. They are part and parcel of the counterrevolutionary destruction—which the imperialist powers helped to engineer—of the Yugoslav deformed workers state. Milosevic rose to power as the IMF's man in Belgrade in the 1980s, imposing brutal austerity policies. Milosevic's drive for a Greater Serbia trampled on the federated structure of Tito's Yugoslavia, and was mirrored in Croatia by the ascendance of fascistic Holocaust apologist Franjo Tudjman. In 1991, Germany instigated Croatia's declaration of independence, which triggered the fratricidal slaughter that destroyed Yugoslavia. A year later, the U.S. encouraged Bosnian Muslim president Alija Izetbegovic to form a separate state, provoking the three-sided communalist bloodbath among Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats.

As proletarian internationalists, we have opposed the nationalist slaughter on all sides while denouncing all imperialist intervention, including the punishing economic embargo of Serbia and the presence of UN "peacekeepers" from Canada and elsewhere. However, in recent months the character of the war *changed* as the weight of Western imperialism increasingly pressed against the Bosnian Serbs, first with the deployment of

NATO's "rapid reaction forces" in the spring and then with the U.S./German-sponsored Croatian blitzkrieg in Krajina. With this, it became a Western imperialist war against the Bosnian Serb people. For Leninists, this mandates a position of *revolutionary defensism* toward the Bosnian Serbs.

In defending the Bosnian Serbs on the battlefield, we have not changed in the least our revolutionary opposition to their reactionary nationalist leaders like General Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic and their rapacious policies. On the contrary, working-class struggle to overthrow the nationalist butchers in Belgrade and Pale—and their counterparts in Zagreb and Sarajevo—is the only way to halt the cycle of fratricidal slaughter and revenge. Key to this is the formation of Leninist-internationalist parties, cohered in the struggle to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International and committed to a program of workers revolution against all the nationalist regimes as part of the fight for world socialist revolution.

While Tito's World War II Partisans rid the country of the fascist Croatian Ustasha and Serbian Chetnik royalist gangs, his Stalinist policy of building "socialism in one country" inevitably fostered growing national antagonisms, ultimately preparing the ground for counterrevolution. Today, amid the growing war-weariness and impoverishment, there is widespread nostalgia for the relative ethnic harmony which existed before capitalist counterrevolution. A Trotskyist nucleus would fight to galvanize the working people among all the nationalities in revolutionary struggle against the imperialist bloodsuckers who created this horror and the nationalist demagogues who perpetuate and profit from it.

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the International Communist League likewise called for defeat of the U.S.-led imperialist onslaught and defense of Iraq while appealing to the Iraqi working masses and oppressed Kurds to overthrow the despot Saddam Hussein. General Colin Powell's memoirs now reveal that the Pentagon even considered using *nuclear weapons* against Iraq. Yet, going with the flow of Washington's "New World Order," many liberals and even leftists joined the imperialist hue and cry over "poor little Kuwait," donned yellow ribbons in solidarity with the imperialist troops and backed the starvation blockade of Iraq as a "peaceful alternative" to bombing. By the time it came to "poor little Bosnia" a couple of years later, many of these types had graduated from being simply cheerleaders into becoming *the most bellicose advocates* of NATO imperialist intervention.

Thus one Tim Wohlforth, the squeezed-out former honcho of the U.S. Workers League, who previously pleaded for the imperialists to "give war a chance" (*In These Times*, 26 July 1993) and now peddles his demented pro-imperialist enthusiasms on the Internet, congratulated NATO on September 6 for its terror-bombing of the Serbs with a fervent "Good Going!" Not far behind this outright warmonger are many self-styled "socialists" who have enlisted in the imperialist crusade over Bosnia. The British Workers Power group, one of the boosters of the "Workers Aid for Bosnia" campaign, could barely restrain

himself from celebrating the NATO bombing of the Serbs with a fervent "Good Going!" Not far behind this outright warmonger are many self-styled "socialists" who have enlisted in the imperialist crusade over Bosnia. The British Workers Power group, one of the boosters of the "Workers Aid for Bosnia" campaign, could barely restrain

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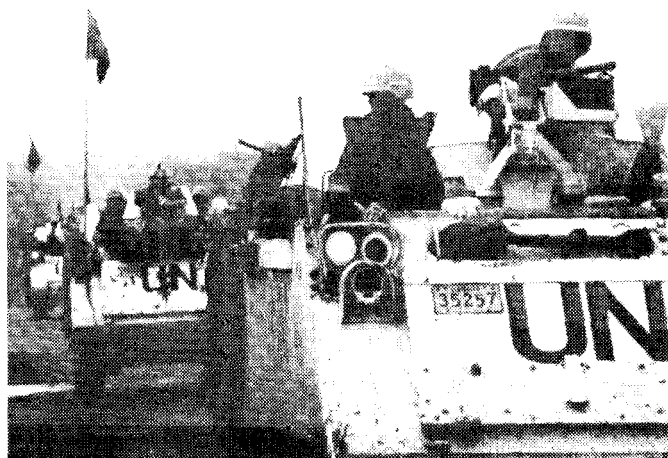
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itself from enthusing over NATO's air war, arguing that its "objectives would be progressive" if only the war planes did not have NATO insignia. Workers Power's 5 September statement scandalously declares that "in the war between NATO and the [Bosnian Serb] Republika Srpska, revolutionaries continue to take a revolutionary defeatist position on both sides." Workers Power openly admits that NATO is waging war against the Bosnian Serbs, yet remains "neutral" with a hefty pro-imperialist bias. What's behind this is simple: these "socialists" screamed for more aggressive imperialist intervention in Bosnia, and they got what they wanted.

Justifying its flagrant repudiation of the Leninist principle of *unconditional* military defense of a small nation or semicolonial people against imperialist aggression, Workers Power moans, "Each side's strategic goals are reactionary." By their logic, Trotskyists should not have defended Saddam Hussein's Iraq against the U.S.-led onslaught. This directly contradicts Trotsky's defense of Haile Selassie's Ethiopia against Italy in the 1930s and of Chiang Kai-shek's China against Japanese colonialism. Marxists understand that imperialism is not a question of one or another particular "strategic goal" but a system of domination and exploitation of the vast masses of the world's peoples by a handful of powerful capitalist ruling classes. A blow against the U.S./NATO imperialists in Bosnia would be a victory for working people the world over.

Whatever comes of this latest attempt to impose imperialist "law and order" on the contending Balkan nationalists, it will not bring peace but only lay the basis for future wars. Indeed, Pentagon planners have been projecting the need for 50,000 NATO troops—half of them American—to enforce Washington's "peace" plan in Bosnia, which could turn into a bloody quagmire for the imperialists. A lasting peace and national justice for all the peoples of the region can be achieved only through proletarian revolutions leading to a Socialist Federation of the Balkans as part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

The new Balkan wars are both the product of the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet bloc and an arena for the intensified interimperialist rivalries of the post-Soviet



Reuter

Canadian UN "peacekeepers" in Bosnia. All UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans now!

world. Germany seeks to turn Croatia (and Slovenia) into neocolonies of the Fourth Reich. American imperialism wants to show that it still calls the shots in the NATO alliance and has the military might and will to bully the world's peoples into submission. In addition to arming the Zagreb and Sarajevo regimes, Washington has quietly established a military and intelligence presence in Albania and Macedonia, while brokering an end to the dispute between the latter and NATO ally Greece. For the moment, there is a convergence of interests between German and U.S. imperialism; in the long run they will necessarily clash.

As on the eve of World War I, the Balkans have once again become the powder keg of Europe. This bloody conflict points to the need for Trotskyist parties, built in the struggle of the International Communist League to reforge the Fourth International, to fight against the imperialist war criminals who have the power to destroy civilization if not humanity itself.

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard No. 629*,
22 September

Smash Bosses' War...

(continued from page 16)

because of the elimination of provincial road safety crews, Transport Minister Al Palladini says, no problem, "Most people have a cellular phone in their car."

Then there's David Tsubouchi, Harris' "social services" minister, who has slashed the welfare lifeline of half a million Ontarians by 22 percent. Asked how people would feed themselves, Tsubouchi suggested they haggle with shopkeepers over the price of dented cans of tuna. He later expanded on this modest proposal, producing an itemized "welfare budget" based on pasta and potatoes. Tsubouchi's menu also includes one can of orange juice, one head of lettuce, three loaves of bread and twelve cans of beans *per month*. It does not include margarine, oil or salt. As *Toronto Star* columnist Thomas Walkom caustically noted (24 October):

"Some nutritional experts say no one would die from the Tsubouchi diet. True enough.... Prisoners have subsisted on bread and water....

"The Tsubouchi welfare shopping list makes no provision for soap, toothpaste or laundry detergent (the government is willing to let the poor live but it doesn't see why

they should be clean, too)."

Way back in 1789, French queen Marie Antoinette opined that if the people had no bread, they should eat cake. Tsubouchi, Harris and the rest might do well to bear in mind her fate at the hands of "the great unwashed."

Buzz Hargrove's Line in the Sand

A centerpiece of the Tories' "Common Sense Revolution" was the repeal of Bill 40, the "anti-scab law" promulgated by the Rae NDP government. This banned the use of "replacement workers" and supervisors to maintain production during "legal" strikes. At the same time, it increased the powers of the government's Labour Relations Board to break strikes through state intervention.

The Tories' Bill 7, passed on October 31, goes far beyond repeal of the NDP law, crippling the right to organize unions and making decertification far easier. Farm workers are forbidden to unionize at all. In the public sector, Bill 7 abolishes "successor rights" (where purchasing companies are required to recognize unions and collective agreements already in place) as a prelude to large-scale privatizations. This vicious law must be torn up through mass working-class action.

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Smash Bosses' War...

(continued from page 13)

Defense of the NDP's Bill 40 has become the rallying cry of the Ontario Federation of Labour brass. The CAW's Buzz Hargrove has vowed to draw a "line in the sand" against the Tories over it. But worker militants beware: "anti-scab laws" are designed to *head off* class struggle and reinforce illusions in the "neutrality" of the capitalist state. The union tops consciously counterpose such legislation to using the weapons that built the unions in the first place: mass pickets, flying squads, secondary boycotts. Thus OFL president Gord Wilson moaned that Harris "invites a return of the kind of picket line violence we all thought was behind us."

Instead of leading a working-class counteroffensive against the capitalist rulers, Hargrove and Wilson have tried to win the hearts and minds of corporate Ontario by pointing out that profits and investment have soared under the NDP law. Hargrove's contribution to the "struggle" to save Bill 40 was to mobilize the Chrysler and McDonnell Douglas *bosses*, with whom he signed joint letters opposing its repeal! The law's abolition, Hargrove wrote in the big-business *Globe and Mail*, "would poison rather than improve the labor-relations climate," and put an end to the kind of "cooperation" between labor and management which the CAW chief has sold to auto workers like a used Ford Pinto.

Hargrove's bragging about raising corporate profits shows whose side the labor bureaucracy is on in the irreconcilable conflict between capital and labor. The CAW leader's vaunted "cooperation" in increasing "productivity" (read: exploitation) has eased the way for the corporations' ongoing massacre of hundreds of thousands of industrial union jobs.

As profits have soared, so have unemployment, hunger and homelessness. There can be no "partnership" between capital and labor: the interests of workers and bosses are counterposed. The only way the bosses can maximize profits is by increasing the exploitation of labor, and by driving down social "overhead expenses"—which is what the attacks on the unions and on UI, welfare and medicare are all about. This is the basic reality of capitalism which social democrats like Hargrove want to bury with all their blather about "improving the labor relations climate." Working people can't fight back effectively under a leadership that wants to sleep with the enemy. Beating back Mike Harris and the capitalists he represents requires a political fight *against the social-democratic labor traitors*, forging a new class-struggle leadership of labor.

NDP Revival?

The scope and ferocity of the capitalist offensive has given hope to the labor bureaucrats that they can begin to salvage their "political arm," the NDP. Down to a mere five percent in federal polls, reduced to a parliamentary rump that doesn't even qualify for official party status in Ottawa, the New Democrats have been badly wounded.

The decisive blow was delivered by Bob Rae's Ontario NDP government. Five years ago, the labor sellouts trumpeted Rae's election as a giant victory for working people. But having pledged to run the Canadian industrial heartland on behalf of the Bay Street bankers, the New Democrats quickly turned against their hopeful supporters among workers and oppressed minorities. They imposed the union-busting Social Contract on public sector workers. They inflamed anti-immigrant racism

by canceling medicare coverage for foreign students and refugees. Along with Mike Harcourt in B.C. and Roy Romanow in Saskatchewan, Rae took a leading role in the chauvinist crusade against Quebec's national rights.

Now, free of the Rae albatross, the same labor traitors who sold Premier Bob as the Messiah are trying to refurbish their party's image. In October the federal NDP held a "Renewal Conference" to choose a new leader. Ex-MP Lorne Nystrom, fronting for the Saskatchewan NDP, was the candidate of the "deficit cutting" right wing. Alexa McDonough, the "silver-spoon socialist" from Nova Scotia, was the anointed of the NDP's central establishment. Among her prominent supporters were Bob Rae and leading members of his cabinet.

But it was B.C. MP Svend Robinson who captured the campaign spotlight. Robinson was variously described as a radical, a leftist maverick and an activist. Yet, despite occasional rhetorical outbursts, Robinson is not even a left-wing social democrat. His thoroughly pro-capitalist program (e.g., "We must reform the Bank of Canada") would not be unacceptable to a large section of the Liberal Party.

Robinson entered the convention with substantial support from the Canadian Labour Congress apparatus and unions like the CAW. They saw his candidacy as a way to channel rising social discontent back into support for NDP parliamentarism. The labor brass didn't much care if he actually won, so long as he succeeded in "renewing" interest in the crippled party. There were no complaints from CLC headquarters when Robinson, leading after the first convention ballot, threw his support to McDonough in the name of "party unity."

For Revolutionary Leadership

The NDP cannot and will not lead any kind of struggle against the capitalist onslaught. As a *bourgeois workers party*, its function (if it survives) is to contain social struggle within limits acceptable to the ruling class. The ruling class understands this, and approves: as social tensions mount throughout Canadian society, the haughty *Globe and Mail* itself (12 October) has declared that it is "sad" to see the NDP, which "was once a great party," reduced to being "virtually invisible."

As long as militants seeking to fight the bosses' onslaught are kept chained to the NDP's program of propping up capitalism, there will inevitably be defeat after defeat. The Rae government was no aberration. In office and out, social-democratic parties from Sweden and Australia to France and Britain have signed on as open advocates of anti-worker austerity in the name of imperialist "international competitiveness." Trotskyists fight to forge a party of *class struggle*, that can break the political grip of the union bureaucrats and their social-democratic cohorts. As we wrote in "NDP Paves Way for Right-Wing Reaction" (SC No. 104, July/August 1995):

"We need a revolutionary workers party. Such a party would fight for the kind of independent, class-struggle program which is the stuff of nightmares for the pro-capitalist labor tops and NDP parliamentarians. It would mobilize the power of labor to smash the austerity attacks from Parliament Hill to Queen's Park and beyond. It would champion the rights of immigrants, Native people, gays, women, and stand foursquare in defense of the right to self-determination for the Québécois nation. It would reject flag-waving protectionism in favor of international solidarity with workers in the U.S., Mexico and around the world. The only solution to capitalist poverty and oppression is the struggle for workers revolution and a socialist North America!" ■

Svend Robinson and the Left

The only thing that was “renewed” at the federal New Democrats’ October “Renewal Convention” was their commitment to maintaining the bankers and bosses in power. The star of the show was B.C. MP Svend Robinson, who came into the leadership contest with the support of key sections of the CLC bureaucracy, the bulk of the New Democratic Youth and even the editorialists of the big-business *Globe and Mail*.

Robinson’s attraction for the labor tops and Bay Street financial pundits was not his West Coast environmentalism and legendary “social activism.” They hoped Robinson (who at least knows how to attract a TV camera) might pull *some* of



Andrew Wallace/Canapress

Robinson hails new NDP leader McDonough.

the social discontent in this country back toward the moribund social democracy. While its broader impact remains to be seen, the Svend campaign did rally a slew of self-styled “revolutionary socialist” organizations. Socialist Challenge, Socialist Action, the Freedom Socialist Party and the International Socialists (I.S.) all clambered on board.

The I.S. in particular went head over heels. Declaring Robinson to be “at the centre of a new radicalization,” *Socialist Worker* (20 September) waxed ecstatic about how a victory for this “radical socialist” would “give a boost of confidence and enthusiasm to radicalizing activists.”

What world do these people live in? Svend Robinson is the *antithesis* of a “radical socialist.” Even the 1933 Regina Manifesto (adopted by the NDP’s forerunner, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation) proclaimed that “no CCF government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism.” Of course, by this the CCF meant merely the reform of its worst excesses, not the overthrow of the capitalist class. But compare it to a September 1995 Robinson policy platform, modestly entitled “Economics for a People and a Planet”:

- “We must reform the Bank of Canada.”
- “We will consider [!] restoring corporate taxes to the same level they were prior to 1984.”

- “We support the idea of a National Renewal Fund...to provide a pool of ‘loyal’ investment capital.”

There was plenty more of this Canadian-nationalist, pro-capitalist twaddle. But worst of all was Robinson’s pointed *silence* on the question of Quebec. The NDP convention was held in the middle of the referendum campaign, which dominated political life and polarized the whole country. Throughout, the NDP’s main spokesmen—B.C. premier Harcourt, Saskatchewan’s Romanow and former Ontario leader Bob Rae—were leading the charge against Quebec, often outdoing even the Reform Party in pure Anglo vitriol. Yet Robinson (who is rumored to “personally support” Quebec’s right to self-determination) said not a word on this decisive issue, and thus aligned himself with the rabid chauvinism of his colleagues.

Yet, despite everything, Svend Robinson was the repository of the International Socialists’ hopes and dreams. When Robinson, leading after the first ballot, conceded victory to Alexa McDonough in the name of “party unity,” the I.S. was shattered. “Disappointment and betrayal” they wept. “The defeat of Svend Robinson at the NDP Renewal convention is a setback to the struggle for socialism in Canada. We grieve this defeat...”

Pretty pathetic. But then, what can you expect from an organization that proclaimed Bob Rae’s 1990 election to be a cause for celebration, and sent its members out door-to-door to campaign for his re-election, even after tens of thousands had quit the party in disgust?

Not even Robinson’s refusal to oppose the NDP’s “national unity” chauvinism against Quebec cooled their ardor. But then again, this is the “revolutionary” organization that, almost uniquely on the left, joined the NDP in *support* of Brian Mulroney’s Charlottetown Accord to uphold the capitalist status quo of a “united” Anglo-chauvinist Canada.

The I.S.’ reaction to Robinson’s “defeat” chiefly expresses their own unswerving loyalty to the NDP, and through it to capitalist society. The I.S. never met an NDP candidate they wouldn’t vote for. And why not. When push comes to shove, their own “left” social-democratic politics aren’t much different from the NDP’s.

Despite its “grief,” the October 18 *Socialist Worker* ran a huge banner headline assuring its readers: “There is a future for socialism.” Yes, there is. But it does not lie with the I.S., and certainly not with the NDP. It lies in the struggle to forge an anti-capitalist, revolutionary workers party. This is the struggle to which the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste is committed. ■

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Labor Tops, NDP: Roadblocks to Struggle

Smash Bosses' War on Workers and Poor!

"Cutbacks" hardly describes the current ruling-class offensive against working people and the poor. The UI, welfare and WCB benefits, the health care and education on which millions depend, are being shredded along with the gains of 50 years of hard trade union struggle. The Bay Street bosses and all their governments, from Jean Chrétien's federal Liberals to Roy Romanow's Saskatchewan NDP, are waging open *class war* against almost everybody.

At the forefront has been the right-wing Tory government of Mike Harris in Ontario, whose sweeping attacks have sparked angry protests in every corner of the province. In Toronto on September 27, an anti-Harris demonstration of 7,000 outside the Tories' inaugural Throne Speech was attacked by riot police with nightsticks and mace.

The breadth of popular anger even impelled the Ontario Federation of Labour bureaucracy to hint at calling a one-day general strike on November 1. What's needed right now is mass workers action to smash the Tory onslaught. The question is: who will lead it? November 1 came and went as the OFL tops backed down from a province-wide confrontation, pledging to hold rotating local walkouts over the coming months. Instead of organizing effective labor action, the union bureaucrats have busied themselves trying to breathe life back into the NDP. Yet it was the New Democrats who *paved the way* for Harris' one-sided war in the first place, by carrying out their own version of Bay Street's dictates under the Rae government.

Anti-Tory protests have been called under the slogan "Embarrass Harris." But it's not a matter of a single reactionary individual or party: the problem is a capitalist *system* deter-



Fred Thornhill/Toronto Sun

Thousands protest right-wing provincial Tory regime, Toronto, September 27.

mined to further bloat its profits by immiserating more and more of the population. What's needed is a new class-struggle leadership of labor and the oppressed which can galvanize social discontent in powerful class struggle—a revolutionary workers party committed to the overthrow of the wealthy few and their inhuman system of production for profit.

"Let Them Eat Tuna"

The public pronouncements of Harris and his country-club courtiers veer from the nightmarish to the surreal. To working women facing the elimination of daycare funding, London MPP Dianne Cunningham says, don't worry, simple country folk like her "are perfectly happy leaving their kids with a neighbor." To people afraid of being stranded on the highway

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For a Revolutionary Workers Party!
