

Peasant Unrest, Strikes, Protests Against Salinas Regime

Mexico Rocked by Chiapas Revolt

On January 1, a dramatic piece of news burst upon the world like a bombshell: an insurrection of Mayan Indian peasants had broken out in the southernmost Mexican state of Chiapas. The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) declared war on the U.S.-backed government of Carlos Salinas de Gortari and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which went into effect that day. The Mexican army, caught off guard, responded with an indiscriminate bloodbath that slaughtered several hundred, mainly peasant non-combatants. Then, just as suddenly, the fighting stopped after only 12 days as Salinas confined the army to barracks in Chiapas and offered peace talks with the rebels.

But while the "dialogue" went on in the colonial city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, a wave of rebellion spread through the peasantry of Chiapas and southern Mexico, extending to urban workers as well. After 100,000 marched in the capital in early January demanding "Stop the massacre," groups of strikers began to raise slogans linking their struggles to that of the "Zapatista" rebels.

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Mendoza/Imagenlatina

Zapatista peasant rebels rise up on New Year's Day. Their cry of rebellion has echoed around the world.

Massacre Fuels Palestinian Outrage Against Arafat Sellout

Israeli Army Terror Escalates

MARCH 14—As the Zionist regime conducts a whitewashing "commission of inquiry" into the February 25 massacre of scores of Muslim worshippers in the West Bank town of Hebron (Al-Khalil in Arabic), Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin has brought down on the Palestinian Arab people the "iron fist" of murderous repression for which he is notorious. As outraged protests continue to sweep the Occupied Territories, the army has killed dozens of Palestinians and wounded hundreds more in the past two weeks. Round-the-clock starvation curfews have been imposed on Arab towns and villages, while heavily armed ultra-Zionist set-

tlers continue to roam the streets of Hebron and other Arab areas unchecked. Clearly singling out secular leftist militants, on International Women's Day troops brutally charged into a demonstration of Palestinian women in East Jerusalem.

The Pax Americana "peace" deal between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) of Yasir Arafat lies in tatters. The famous Arafat-Rabin handshake on the White House lawn has become a symbol of murderous perfidy to Palestinians everywhere. Rabin rebuffed his own cabinet when half the ministers called for removing the several hundred settlers from Hebron as a cosmetic concession. Instead, he has invited Rafael Eitan, a virulently anti-Arab racist who denounces Palestinians as "cockroaches," to join his government as police minister. Eitan demonstratively met with a

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Israeli police attack Palestinian women demonstrating on International Women's Day, March 8. AP



Secretly Held in Zionist Prison for 11 Years

Free Israeli Scientist Marcus Klingberg!

For more than seven years, courageous nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu has been locked up in solitary confinement in a six-by-nine-foot cell in Israel's high-security Ashkelon prison, kidnapped and tortured by the Zionist state for exposing to the world the scope of its vast nuclear arsenal. Now articles in the French weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* (6 January) and the daily *Le Monde* (8 January) reveal that another cell in this dungeon has been occupied for the last eleven years by high-ranking scientist Marcus Klingberg. Klingberg was secretly tried and sentenced to 20 years on charges of spying for the Soviet Union. He had intimate knowledge of Israel's other secret arsenal of mega-death, its stockpile of chemical and bac-

teriological weapons.

An internationally prominent researcher who had published scores of works on epidemiology and other medical sciences, Marcus Klingberg seemingly disappeared from the face of the earth in January 1983. Until recently, his fate remained unknown to coworkers, friends and all but his immediate family. The only record in the Tel Aviv court where he was tried is a reference to the case of "State of Israel vs. X." When British journalist Peter Pringle tried to investigate Klingberg's fate in 1985, Israeli police broke into his car and stole his files. Even Klingberg's prison guards knew him only as "Greenberg," the name given him by the Shin Beth secret police.

What brought the wrath of the Zionist

state down on Marcus Klingberg? He sought to assist, as best he could, the Soviet Union which had saved his life—and the lives of countless other Jews—and defeated the Nazi scourge. For years, Klingberg moved comfortably in elite Zionist intellectual and political circles, despite his leftist views and openly pro-Soviet sympathies. When his daughter Sylvia, who was a far-left activist and anti-Zionist, castigated him for his complacent attitude toward the Israeli regime, he replied: "One day, you will see..."

In the 1988 book by his friend, the French writer Alain Brossat, on *Agents of Moscow: Stalinism and Its Shadow*, the first chapter is a biographical account of Klingberg titled "The Anonymous Debtor." Brossat described him as one "who refused to forget his debt, to turn his back as one disillusioned with real socialism, unlike so many others with similar backgrounds.... He was never a doctrinaire Stalinist desperately trying to justify the gulag as the price of 'building socialism'; he was simply a man with a memory—who did not want to forget."

Born into a Polish-Jewish family, Klingberg was a student at Warsaw University and an anti-fascist activist on the eve of World War II. As Hitler's Wehrmacht swept through Poland in 1939, he heeded his father's urging to ensure "that at least one of us will survive" and fled to Minsk. When Nazi Germany launched its invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Marcus Klingberg immediately volunteered for the Red Army, serving as a field doctor at the front and reaching the rank of captain by the end of the war.

Klingberg returned to his native Poland in December 1944 as the Red Army advanced toward Berlin, only to find that his entire family had perished in the ghettos and gas chambers. In 1948, he began organizing volunteers for the Israeli Haganah "defense" force and soon left for Israel himself. As *Le Monde* noted, Klingberg's Zionist and pro-Soviet sympathies did not seem in contradiction at the time, when Stalin was a key promoter of the creation of Israel.

Rapidly climbing the ladder of the Israeli military medical establishment, by the early 1950s Klingberg had been appointed assistant director of an "institute of biological research" at Nes Tsiona, a position he held until 1972. But Nes Tsiona is "no ordinary laboratory." As *Le Nouvel Observateur* points out, this top-secret research center,



Marcus Klingberg

operated under the direct control of the Israeli prime minister, is "the heart of a military-medical complex designated for the development of bacteriological and chemical weaponry as well as their antidotes," including "43 types of non-conventional weaponry, from viruses to poison derived from mushrooms."

As we noted in defending Mordechai Vanunu, the Zionist madmen who lust for a "Greater Israel" not only have enough A-bombs to obliterate every Arab capital in the region several times over, but were capable of launching nuclear attacks on the Soviet Union. And here was evidence that they were and are capable of deploying toxic poisons against the Arab populations on a scale rivaling the Nazis!

It was not until many years later that the CIA passed on a tip to Shin Beth from a Soviet defector, leading to Klingberg's arrest. To cover their tracks, the Israeli secret police circulated "rumors" that Klingberg had fled to the USSR or entered an insane asylum in Switzerland, while warning his wife and daughter to remain silent or lose all visitation rights. In 1985, Sylvia Klingberg hired a French lawyer, who approached the Soviet embassy in Paris and East German "spy trader" Wolfgang Vogel to arrange a swap for Klingberg. When Vogel's plans collapsed, he advised her to appeal directly to Gorbachev. In one of four letters to the

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TROTSKY

Workers Revolution and the Peasantry in Mexico

Following the outbreak of the "Zapatista" Indian peasant revolt in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas, a spirit of rebellion has swept through the impoverished rural and urban masses. But to break the stranglehold of the authoritarian regime of the "Institutional Revolutionary Party" (PRI), in power for the last seven decades, requires more than widespread plebeian unrest. The following excerpt from the "Draft Theses

on Mexico," published under the political direction of Leon Trotsky while he was in political exile in Mexico, emphasizes the fundamental Marxist tenet that the peasantry, lacking the clear class interest and social cohesion of the fundamental classes in society, can follow either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. While the bourgeois nationalist regime that grew out of the frustrated Mexican Revolution of 1910-17 confirmed the communal landholdings (ejidos) of the Indian villages—now canceled by the "reforms" of the Salinas regime—it did not provide the "land to the tiller" for which Emiliano Zapata and other agrarian revolutionary leaders fought. This could only be accomplished by the working class taking power, at the head of the peasantry and led by a communist vanguard, as it proceeds to undertake socialist revolution.

The native bourgeoisie has been and continues to be incapable of solving the agrarian problem. Millions of agricultural laborers and an impressive mass of poor peasants, small landholders and *ejido* members await the revolution in hopes that it will resolve their problems. The nonexistence of a revolutionary party capable of leading these peasants to struggle has made it possible for the PRM [Party of the Mexican Revolution, former name of the PRI under Lázaro Cárdenas] and Cardenism to capitalize on the discontent and thirst for land of the peasant masses, at the same time as they use this as political food for the people.

The entire development of the Mexican Revolution, including the period of Zapata and the other agrarian leaders, confirms the fact that the peasants constitute an enormous revolutionary force which, however, is incapable of crystallizing its own policy. For 27 years they have marched in the train of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie and the professional politicians emanating from the agrarian petty bourgeoisie. The future of proletarian revolution in Mexico depends in large measure on this situation changing.

Only the power of the proletarian dictatorship will give all the land to those who have longed for it in vain. The semi-feudal backwardness of the millions of peasants, their thirst for land, the hunger and poverty, in a word, the mammoth proportions of the agrarian problem, made acute in the extreme by imperialism, the backwardness of the country and its semicolonial character, rather than being factors which make impossible the dictatorship of the proletariat, are the motor for the inevitable worker-peasant alliance which will carry the proletariat to power.

—translated from "National Problems," in *Clave* (No. 5, February 1939)



LENIN

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From Mexico to Europe: A Cry of Rebellion
Rumblings in the "New World Disorder"

January 1984 Chiapas peasant rebellion explodes in Mexico; October 1993 Air France strike faced down government; striking workers strike Europe

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Pliant Judge Reinstates Gun Convictions

Waco Frame-Up Continues

Fuming that a San Antonio jury threw out murder and conspiracy charges against eleven Branch Davidians, Clinton's attorney general Janet Reno pulled out the stops to pile on more jail time for those who escaped death in the government's Waco inferno last April. "General" Reno is determined that they must pay for the fact that four federal agents died in the earlier February 1993 assault on the integrated religious commune by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF).

So after being heavily leaned on by Washington, the federal judge who tried the case suddenly reversed himself and reinstated weapons charges against seven of the defendants. Under federal sentencing guidelines, these draconian charges carry a maximum sentence of 30 years, and cannot be served concurrently with other sentences. One of those who had been acquitted of all other charges, Ruth Riddle, was within hours of being released. The sheer vindictive-

ness of the federal government's judicial persecution of the Waco survivors knows no bounds!

In last month's trial, though cleared of "murder-conspiracy" charges, seven Davidians were nevertheless convicted of voluntary manslaughter and weapons possession, and face long prison terms. Originally Judge Walter Smith Jr. had thrown out seven additional firearms convictions for "using a firearm in furtherance of a conspiracy"...since the jury ruled there was no conspiracy. But now the "Justice" Department has dug up an obscure precedent allowing it to mete out maximum retribution to those who dared defend themselves against the armed might of the state.

The Spartacist League has from the first denounced this government mass murder by the BATF and FBI stormtroopers, in which 86 people (including two dozen children) were killed, and demanded freedom for the survivors of the Waco holocaust. The embattled White

House seeks to strike a tough "law-and-order" posture to buttress its anti-"crime" credentials. For those who might have held illusions in a "kinder, gentler" Democratic regime, the horror of 19 April 1993 must be a chilling reminder that the gun control crusade is a program not to "stop the violence," but rather for police-state repression and state murder.

In an article headlined "Waco Verdicts Seen as Time of Renewal for ATF," the *Los Angeles Times* (28 February) reports that with the Branch Davidian convictions and passage of the Brady gun control law, the Treasury Department's private army has a new lease on life. Not only will they be responsible for investigating handgun purchasers, but with Clinton pushing for higher tobacco taxes, the trigger-happy T-men are gearing up for more Gestapo-style raids and greater police powers to rerun Prohibition with a war against cigarette smugglers.

The racist capitalist rulers are determined to impose a monopoly on armed



Tasnadi/AP
Clinton's top cop Janet Reno pursues vendetta against survivors of feds' Waco massacre.

violence as they seek to enforce conformity and submission on minorities, the poor and working people. That is the lesson of Waco. And we vow to sear that lesson into the memory of the working class in building a multiracial vanguard party fighting for a socialist revolution to sweep away this oppressive system. ■

Massacre...

(continued from page 1)

delegation of settlers, many of whom openly rejoice over the bloodbath perpetrated by Brooklyn-born fascist Kach member Baruch Goldstein. Kach party leaders paraded on Israeli television to sneer at orders confining them to "administrative detention." To get the heat off itself, the Israeli regime has now banned Kach and its Kahane Chai split-off. But involvement in this and other anti-Arab massacres extends far beyond these fascist fringe groups.

Even the government's own commission has been unable to bolster Rabin's claim that the Hebron massacre was an aberrant outrage by a lone "lunatic." West Bank military commander General Danny Yatom lamely claimed that most of the guards who were supposed to be posted outside the mosque entrance had "overslept." The closed-circuit TV cameras in the mosque were coincidentally broken that day, and the videotapes have since somehow "disappeared." A known "troublemaker" even by the army's own admission, Goldstein was nevertheless allowed into the mosque wearing protective earmuffs for indoor shooting and carrying his army-issue Galil machine gun and five clips of ammo. The gate between Jewish and Muslim prayer areas through which Goldstein passed, normally locked, had been left open. And after the shooting started, electrical power at the mosque was cut off, preventing a call for assistance over the mosque's loudspeaker.

The army high command ludicrously claimed they had no reason to anticipate a massacre by settlers because until then "none had ever occurred"! In December, rampaging settlers had gunned down three Palestinians in Hebron in broad daylight—in full view of Israeli soldiers. Goldstein regularly spent hours visiting convicted mass murderer Ami Popper, who had gunned down seven Palestinian laborers. In fact, Muslim clerical authorities at the mosque had specifically warned both the army and Rabin about Goldstein four months earlier, after he had poured acid on prayer rugs. And the night before the massacre, settler thugs had set upon Muslims at the Hebron mosque, while a few hours later two of them opened fire on worshippers at a mosque near Goldstein's Qiryat Arba settlement.

The evidence of army complicity in the massacre mounts daily. As worship-



Rosen/Saba

Ultra-Zionist settler thugs strut through Arab market in Hebron.

pers arrived at the Hebron mosque that morning, Israeli soldiers unprecedentedly ordered women to a completely separate room, leaving only men and boys in the area where, minutes later, Goldstein opened fire. Moreover, as we reported last issue, numerous survivors have testified that Goldstein was not the only Israeli involved in the shooting. *Time* (7 March) wrote that Israeli TV reported, "quoting army sources," that two soldiers rushed into the mosque, saw worshippers starting to overpower Goldstein and opened fire.

Now the Israeli magazine *Shishi* reveals that a half-hour before the massacre, Goldstein's wife herself had notified the local army command post that "Baruch is on his way to the Tomb. You have to stop him. I know he did not go to the Tomb to pray" (*New York Times*, 13 March). But no amount of warnings would have made any difference. Testifying before the commission of inquiry, the Israeli border police commander in Hebron said that his standing orders were that "under no circumstances" were they to fire at settlers, specifically including when settlers were shooting Arabs. One high-ranking officer brazenly admitted the army's policy was, "We don't shoot at Jews; they are not the enemy."

In a searing indictment of the government and the army, a commentator in the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharonot* (4 March) wrote, "this massacre reminds me of the massacres of Sabra and Shatila." In that 1982 bloodbath, Israel ordered its Lebanese puppet forces to

carry out a methodical slaughter of residents of two Palestinian refugee camps.

Palestinian Masses Spit on PLO Perfidy

In the wake of the Al-Khalil massacre, the demonstrations of outrage which have erupted in Arab communities on both sides of the Green Line (demarcating Israel from the Occupied Territories) have been directed as much against the PLO deal as against the Israeli occupiers. Effigies of Arafat have been burned, his posters defaced and in Hebron even PLO banners have been removed, with the cry, "This is Arafat's flag." Rebellion is rife even within Arafat's Fatah, as armed Fatah Hawks march alongside the Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas in street demonstrations, declaring: "We are all ready to renew attacks against Israeli soldiers and settlers. We have given up on the peace process and we can't stand by while Israelis massacre our people."

No less a mainstream Palestinian intellectual than Edward Said, formerly the most prominent Arafat spokesman in the U.S., has bitterly denounced the accord as an "instrument of Palestinian surrender" and the PLO chairman as "Israel's enforcer" (*New York Times*, 4 March). Disillusionment with Arafat had mushroomed in the Occupied Territories even before the Hebron massacre, as Fatah supporters began acting as cops for the occupation forces, working in the "closest possible coordination with the Israeli authorities" in arresting Palestin-

ian "criminals" (*Ma'ariv*, 28 January [translated by Israel Shahak]).

As Arafat's ignominious capitulation is repudiated on the Arab street, the question facing Palestinian militants is: What now? While taking a clear stand even with Hamas in military confrontations with Israeli troops and settlers, revolutionary Marxists must issue a sharp warning to the beleaguered Palestinian masses that any political support to these Islamic fundamentalists is suicidal. Hamas is a sinister outfit whose development in the first years of the *Intifada* uprising was initially sponsored by the Zionist state itself, as a weapon to weaken support for the PLO.

The Zionists lie that all opposition to Israel is anti-Semitic, but the Islamic fundamentalists they spawned really are anti-Semitic, in contrast to the bulk of the secular Palestinian left. Hamas' political program is reactionary through and through, particularly in seeking to enslave Palestinian women in the veil. What Hamas offers the Palestinian population can be seen by looking at the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria or, worse yet, at the *mujahedin* cutthroats in power in Afghanistan.

What is desperately needed is a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard committed to a perspective of revolutionary internationalism, which alone is capable of uniting all the disparate peoples of the region in a struggle for workers revolution, the only road to achieving national and social emancipation. Today Hebrew-speaking workers remain deeply mired in Zionist reaction, while the Arab rulers' and would-be rulers' acquiescence to the imperialist "New World Order" has fueled a sharp rise in "militant" Islamic fundamentalism among the Arab masses. But the potential for socialist revolution in the Near East has been demonstrated on numerous occasions.

This was particularly the case in Iraq in 1958, as the masses rose up against the puppet regime imposed by the U.S. imperialists and the former British overlords. The Iraqi Communist Party had a massive proletarian base and a sizable component of Jewish cadre, as well as significant support among the Kurds. But its Stalinist politics led it to behead the struggle as it capitulated to Arab nationalism. Only within the framework of a socialist federation of the Near East can the national rights of the Palestinian Arabs as well as the Hebrew-speaking peoples be equitably achieved. *Down with the Israel-PLO anti-Palestinian accord! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!* ■

Mortality Rate Soars in Post-Soviet Russia

Counterrevolution and Death

Barely a couple of years ago the Western media was proclaiming triumphantly that the collapse of "communism" would bring a cornucopia of benefits for the people of the now-defunct USSR. Former Stalinist bureaucrats and yuppie intellectuals echoed Ronald Reagan in singing the praises of the "magic of the marketplace." Soon glitzy boutiques did start appearing in Moscow's Arbat district, street stands offered Western imports from pantyhose to perfume, and Snickers candy bars are ubiquitous. But meanwhile the mass of the population was thrown into abject misery.

Counterrevolution has brought unimaginable devastation to the land of the October Revolution. In recent months statistics have begun to trickle out giving a measure of the impoverishment and havoc that the breakdown of the socialized planned economy has wreaked, as it is replaced by "wild capitalism" without capital. Basic indicators of well-being show a decline in every sphere (real income, food intake, medical care), while indices of social pathology (violent crime, alcoholism, prostitution) are skyrocketing. And on the most fundamental question—life and death—the figures record a catastrophe.

The *New York Times* (6 March) reported on the dramatic rise in deaths (up by 20 percent in a single year) and an accompanying decline in births. The number of people who died exceeded the number born by nearly 800,000 in 1993, "making Russia the first industrial country to experience such a sharp decrease in its population for reasons other than war, famine or disease." David Coleman, a university lecturer in demographics at Oxford University said, "A decline in life expectancy this dramatic has never happened in the postwar world."

Much of the decline is due to the drop in the birthrate. Last year in Russia it was only 9.2 per 1,000 people, a drop of 15 percent from the previous year (in the U.S. the figure was 16.0 per 1,000). The *Washington Post* (7 March) called the plummeting rate "the lowest in the world in modern history." The reasons are simple—absolute poverty such that families can't afford to feed another mouth, combined with total economic and social uncertainty. The average industrial wage in Moscow is now \$72 a month, while many professionals earn much less.

The falling birthrate is not unique to Russia. In east Germany (the former DDR), following capitalist reunification in 1990, the wholesale closure of factories in what was once the tenth-largest industrial economy in the world has led to mass firing of women. While 94 percent of women in the DDR used to work outside the home, now over two-thirds of the official unemployed in east Germany are women—and that doesn't include a couple of million more who are not counted as unemployed because they are stuck at home caring for children now that day-care centers have been closed! A recent German television documentary noted that "today there are less than half the babies born as in DDR times. Demographers are calling this phenom-

enon a kind of 'Gebärstreik' [birth strike] of eastern women, in protest against the total destruction of their former society, the uncertainty and discrimination against women."

The population decline in post-Soviet Russia is also due to the soaring death rate, which has risen to 14.6 for every 1,000 people, an increase of *one-fifth* over the 1992 figure (in the U.S. it is 9.0 per 1,000). Possibly the most startling figure is the plummeting life expectancy for men in Russia: in 1993 it was 59 years, compared to 64 in 1985. A significant number of the deaths are suicides (up by 50 percent in the last four years), particularly among retirees who, unable to survive on their pitiful pensions, decide the only way out is to take their lives.

The reasons for the overall increase of the death rate are myriad, not the least from a terrible scarcity of medicines in hospitals—everything from aspirins to antibiotics is unavailable. The *Washington Post* reported that children and newborns are dying at twice and three times the rate of their counterparts in the West. Russian women are now dying in childbirth *five to ten times* more often than they do in the West. (In contrast, in Cuba the infant mortality rate has continued to fall to 9.4 per thousand births, despite the imperialist starvation blockade.)

"Recent and dramatic increases in the rates of tuberculosis, hepatitis, dysentery, typhus, venereal diseases and cancer have been recorded. Measles cases quadrupled in 1993 compared with the previous year. Cases of diphtheria, all but eradicated in most developed countries, also quadrupled last year, topping 15,000," the *Post* reported.

As with the explosion of nationalist/fascist violence across East Europe, the bourgeois press shamelessly tries to blame the skyrocketing death rate on the heritage of the workers state. The *New York Times* quotes a sociologist saying that "The Soviets demanded that men in Russia sacrifice their lives for Communism," and "nobody put the cost of life before the cost of building that society." Even more grotesquely, they blame the Soviet *people*: "there is still simply no feeling among a majority of people that it is worth worrying about one's future health!"

Just one horrifying indicator of the situation: last week, first-aid station workers and ambulance drivers in Moscow went on strike to protest the drastic shortage of drugs, outdated and poorly maintained ambulances and undermanned emergency rooms in local hospitals. For the most part these workers are working to rule. Their one real strike measure is refusing the task of "transporting corpses found in the street"! According to an ITAR-TASS (5 March) dispatch, this "threatens to turn the city into a morgue as corpses are not removed from the streets." The restoration of capitalism is like a scene out of the Middle Ages!

The formation of the Soviet Union following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 was the first time in



Der Spiegel
Elderly Russian begging near Kremlin in Moscow.

history that the working class took power and offered the prospect of development toward a socialist society of genuine equality and abundance for all. But with the country devastated by civil war and imperialist invasion, and as a result of the failure of revolution to extend to the advanced countries of Europe, in 1923-24 a conservative bureaucratic caste usurped political power from the soviets and the Communist Party of Lenin and Trotsky. Yet even under bureaucratic rule, the power of the planned economy was such that it achieved spectacular results, catapulting the Soviet Union from a backward peasant country to a modern European industrial country, a military superpower capable of putting men into space.

But the Soviet Union was always economically weaker than the imperialists, and given the Stalinist bureaucracy's refusal to fight for workers revolution internationally—summed up in its nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country"—it eventually succumbed under the pounding military and economic pressures of imperialism. With the Yeltsin countercoup in August 1991, the Stalinist regime collapsed and subsequently the rudiments of a capitalist state were consolidated.

Now the destruction of millions of lives is dramatic proof that the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union is a giant step backward. Capitalism in the epoch of imperialist decline is unable to produce the wonders its Madison Avenue pitchmen promised. The simple statistic of a 20 percent increase in the death rate in one year tells the stark truth about a country where concealed unemployment exceeds 13 million workers, where the standard diet for millions consists of *bread* and nothing else—if they can get it.

A fight for workers revolution to bring about a regenerated Soviet Union urgently requires the leadership of a Bolshevik-Leninist party, a Trotskyist party that drives home the lessons of the fiasco of Stalinism and fights relentlessly against imperialism which is, quite literally, killing the people. ■

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Klingberg...

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Soviet leader, Sylvia Klingberg wrote:

"Fifty or so years ago, my father arrived in the Soviet Union, this country which is yours but which is also his. He does not have another, he does not want another. In his cell, which the sun does not penetrate, he has only one ray of hope, returning to the USSR."

But this was the period of "new thinking," as Gorbachev bent over backward to accommodate the imperialists and their Zionist henchmen. Sylvia Klingberg's letters were never answered. Instead her father was left to languish in an Israeli prison, where he remains now, ill and dying, at the age of 75. Klingberg repaid his debt of solidarity to the Soviet

Union, but the disintegrating Stalinist bureaucracy refused to honor its debt to him. Since the collapse of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the dissolution of the USSR, Klingberg has really been left out in the cold—a man without a country in every sense.

We have fought to defend Mordechai Vanunu from his Zionist jailers from the moment he was seized by the Israeli Mossad. Yet the fate meted out to Vanunu and Marcus Klingberg is a small portion of the vicious brutality which the Israeli rulers regularly visit upon the oppressed Palestinian Arabs. Hundreds of Palestinians have been "disappeared," while thousands more have been gunned down and tens of thousands imprisoned. *Free Mordechai Vanunu and Marcus Klingberg! Free all the Palestinian victims of Israeli terror!* ■

Young Spartacus

RWL Splits... Again

By Keith Hill

Times are tough for the misnamed Revolutionary Workers League. The RWL is hemorrhaging internally, having suffered three splits in as many years. In 1991, the RWL underwent mitosis when its two gurus, Peter Sollenberger and Leland Sanderson, discovered that there wasn't enough room in one organization to contain both their egos. Last year, two other comrades and I waged a fight in the RWL and broke from it in programmatic solidarity with the Spartacist League (see our bulletin, *Whither the RWL?*).

The newest split, first humbly calling itself the "Communist International Organizing Committee," only to become a month later the "Communist League" (CL), has produced no observable polarization along programmatic lines which might offer an opportunity for Trotskyist regroupment. While nominally seeking a more "proletarian" orientation, the CL ultimately shares with the RWL its hostility to working-class struggle, its warmed-over New Leftism, its pressure politics and its petty-bourgeois lifestyle. The CL wants nothing more than an RWL with a better self-image: a more "proletarian" veneer and a more stable organizational structure. Not surprisingly, the CL seems to be heading back to Sollenberger, looking forward to an early fusion with his tiny "Trotskyist League." Our view is necessarily one-sided and incomplete, as the RWL has declined to comment on the January split and has yet to publish any pertinent documents.

The CL's split documents, published in journal form as the first issue of *The Communist Internationalist*, provide a morbidly titillating glimpse into the sordid, miserable details of life in a convulsing centrist cult. For those of us who experienced it firsthand, the CL's account strikes a reminiscent chord. Reports abound of the most grotesque anti-Marxist practices, from political contacts being appraised "on the basis of their personality and sex appeal," to one young member openly shouting "Fuck the workers!" in a local meeting without so much as a criticism by the leadership. The RWL "Political Committee" is charged with intercepting the mail of comrades with political differences.

I can accept these accounts with little suspension of disbelief, even considering the source. The author is one Lisa W., whose chief complaint with the RWL leadership clique seems to be that it wouldn't have her for a member. I remember Lisa well. When I was in the RWL, she was my primary source of juicy stories about the Spartacist League. Yet in the introduction to "For a Democratic Centralist RWL!" the CL's founding document, in her own subjectivist way Lisa contrasted the political fights she had with the SL to the personalist mudslinging of the RWL:

"It has been the RWL, through its clique structures and methods, which has succeeded in demoralizing me and shaking my confidence, where these other organizations could not. The reason for this is that the SL and BT cloak their attacks under a political shield. Under the guise of political disagreements, members be-



Sabau/Columbus Dispatch

RWL repeatedly leads anti-fascist protesters into police pens, as in Columbus, Ohio last October (above). At PDC-initiated labor/black mobilization against the KKK in Springfield, Illinois in January (below), union marshals defended demonstrators from provocations by fascists and cops.



WV Photo

come convinced that they have betrayed the international proletariat, the revolution, and everything that they wanted to fight for. In the RWL there is no such political shield. Comrades are isolated, minimized, and demoralized on the basis of pure personalism, with no political disagreements even implied."

Lisa chose the personalism of the RWL over principled politics, and I take her current protestations of affinity for a working-class orientation with more than one grain of salt. She ostensibly left the SL because we refused to support the bureaucrats' ass-covering consumer boycott during the PATCO strike (we counterposed the urgent need for labor to shut down the airports) only to join an organization of proud and self-conscious scabs.

What struck me most was the absence of any real politics from the split documents. Escaping mention entirely is the RWL's fatuous insistence on the existence of a Soviet workers state headed by imperialist-backed Boris Yeltsin. *Fighting Worker's* cringing hope that Bill Clinton will "preserve the gains women—and blacks, lesbians and gays and workers—have won by their own

struggle" also slips by unnoticed! There is nary a word on the RWL's grotesque grooving on the Waco massacre, their despicable call for vigilante squads to hunt down a black "rapist" at UC Berkeley, nor their corraling of anti-fascist protesters into cop-lined pens from Indianapolis to Columbus.

Scabs for a Proletarian Party?

The CL's reports of the abysmal status of the RWL's organization indicate that things have changed little since I left last year. If anything, they've gotten worse. Apparently, the RWL still has no central office, no treasury or dues scale, no newspaper sales apparatus, and few employed members. They publish no bulletins, issue no motions, record no minutes of meetings, hold no votes, and have no leadership outside the "Political Committee" clique.

The three of us shared many of the CL's complaints when we split from the RWL a year ago. The RWL's complete lack of any organizational norms provided us with a negative example of how political program determines organizational forms. Yet in the CL's

documents, these glaring symptoms of impending collapse are curiously referred to as a "danger" which the RWL must "overcome" in order to "remain" a "programmatically healthy Trotskyist vanguard"!

Repeating over and over again that organizational norms follow from political program, the CL themselves don't get it. They try to separate the questions of organization from those of program, spitting sideways at James P. Cannon in the process. The CL refuses to understand that democratic centralism and a proletarian orientation are inseparable from a Bolshevik program. If ever there was an outfit that proved Cannon's insistence that organizational forms are subordinate to political program, it is the RWL. Its lack of democratic centralism and a proletarian orientation stem directly from its anti-communist petty-bourgeois politics—if what you're about is tailing after liberals like NOW or NARAL or the NAACP, who needs organizational structure?

The CL complains that mentioning the working class only once between two RWL speeches just isn't enough. They'd like a little more lip service to the proletariat and a little less enthusing about "militant youth." To them, the working class is just one more "area" of work, one in which the RWL needs to do "more."

Actually, the less they do, the better. The RWL is perhaps unique among those groups calling themselves "socialist," in that it was founded on the principle of crossing picket lines! The first, and to date the most substantial, document published by the RWL was 80 pages of bragging about their own members' scabbing on a 1977 Ann Arbor campus strike! The very first issue of the *Fighting Worker* devotes itself to the question in an article entitled "Picket Lines and Spartacists," in which the RWL outrageously claims that the SL "invented" the historic labor principle of not crossing union pickets! To argue amongst an organization of scabs for a turn toward the working class is just gross.

The CL split occurred in the wake of the labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK in Springfield, Illinois. One would think that an organization with a real proletarian orientation would have given that action its full support, yet the documents do not mention the SL's united-front appeal to the RWL once.

The Springfield mobilization, initiated by the Spartacist League, constitutes a victory that belongs overwhelmingly to the hard core of Chicago's black working class. Union marshals successfully defended the demonstration against repeated provocations by both the fascists and the cops. That mobilization required hard political fights that polarized the labor movement, and tough legal battles in the bosses' courts. In Springfield, the RWL abstained from the struggle of the working class. The RWL joined the International Socialist Organization and Workers World Party in a fake-left diversion, which screamed impotently at the fascists while leaving themselves vulnerable to provocations by the cops.

Just how few the differences are
continued on page 11

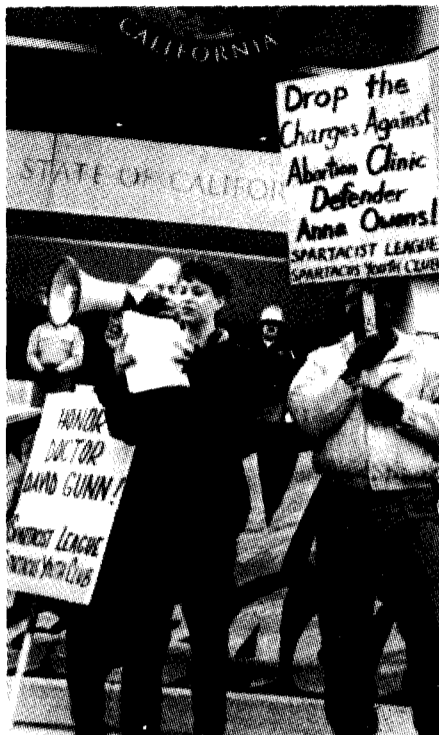
Spartacist Arrested in San Jose Clinic Defense— Drop the Charges!

Defend Abortion—Stop O.R.!

SAN FRANCISCO—On March 5, the “Operation Rescue” bigots were stopped cold in their deadly provocation against an abortion clinic in San Jose. They had been emboldened after O.R. thugs terrorized a San Jose clinic two weeks earlier; in SF, an outnumbered group of clinic defenders managed to beat back the O.R. attack (see WV No. 595, 4 March). This time, the anti-abortion bullies suffered a defeat at the hands of clinic defenders, who mobilized in the pre-dawn hours to stop these sinister thugs.

When the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR) put the word out that Operation Rescue was planning to target a clinic, Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club supporters joined with BACORR to defend the Women’s Community Clinic in San Jose at 5 a.m. Among the 75 defenders at the clinic were a handful of bourgeois feminists from NOW, supporters of the Revolutionary Workers League, a lesbian group from Santa Cruz, and others. O.R. arrived at the clinic and found defenders shoulder to shoulder at the entrances, ready to stop them.

A cluster of the Operation Rescue reactionaries preached and prayed across the street, but their bolder supporters charged the line of clinic defenders, trying to break through to the clinic entrance. The clinic defenders linked arms and kept O.R. out, but aided by the cops, some O.R. scum were able to infiltrate the crowd. Despite police efforts to undermine the clinic defense, every patient with an appointment that day got into the clinic safely—thanks to the con-



At March 9 demonstration honoring Dr. Gunn in San Francisco, Spartacist spokesman Anna Owens (left) calls for mobilizing working class to sweep away the O.R. anti-abortion terrorists.

certed efforts of clinic defenders.

After being routed in their attempt to break through the defense line and shut down the clinic, a female O.R. member notorious for goading the cops chatted up a police officer who then quickly arrested Spartacus Youth Club member Anna Owens. Outrageously, Anna was chained to a table at the police detention center for half an hour. Her arms were twisted painfully behind her back the entire time, handcuffed so tightly that welts formed on her wrists. She was then carted off to jail on

trumped-up charges of battery.

One BACORR supporter who witnessed the cop/O.R. frame-up later called the Spartacist office to offer his support, saying “everyone knows she was arrested because she’s a communist.” Anna’s first court date is May 5. We demand that these frame-up charges against her be dropped immediately!

On March 9, a rally and march from the State Building in San Francisco was held to mark the anniversary of the murder of Dr. David Gunn in Pensacola, Florida. Dr. Gunn, who courageously pro-

vided abortion services in the most backward regions of the South, was murdered last year by a “right to life” terrorist with connections to the KKK. The killer, Michael Griffin, was recently found guilty of first-degree murder by a Florida jury and sentenced to life in prison with parole possible after 25 years.

At the March 9 demonstration, comrade Anna Owens addressed the crowd, speaking of the need to mobilize labor’s social power against the reactionary O.R. scum to make sure there are no more martyrs in the fight for abortion rights:

“Bourgeois feminists in NOW and NARAL may get off on wheeling and dealing with the racist Dixiecrats in the corridors of Washington, but only so that the daughters of the ruling class can share exploitative power alongside their bourgeois brothers. We’ve seen this with so-called ‘sisters’ Boxer and Feinstein’s vicious attacks on immigrants.

“Working women, poor women, black and Latino women will never have power under capitalism. The cops and courts, behind whom the bourgeois feminists stand, are not neutral arbiters, but the main defenders of this capitalist system of misery for most of us and privilege for the few. Clinton and Reno—the butchers of the integrated group of 86 men, women and children near Waco—and their racist Democratic Party are the mortal enemies of all the oppressed.

“If the working class mobilized in a political fight for its own interest under the leadership of a revolutionary party, then O.R. would scurry like frightened roaches back into the shadows!

“We honor Dr. Gunn, heroic defender of women’s rights. The best way to avenge his death is to build a society where free, safe abortion on demand and free quality medical care for all are reality. But that will take an international socialist revolution. And that can only be made by the working class.

“Help us build the integrated, revolutionary workers party that can lead that revolution to victory! Instead of fighting for what others deem possible, fight for what’s necessary! Let’s stop these women-hating, anti-gay bigots once and for all! Free abortion on demand! For women’s liberation through socialist revolution! Check out the SYC!” ■

Spartacus Youth Clubs 4 Events

SYC Forum/Video Showing

FOX TV News Series Exposes FBI Frame-Up! Free Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) Now!

Wednesday, March 23, 8:00 p.m.

Howard University, Undergraduate Library Lecture Room

For more information: (202) 872-8240

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Tuesday, March 22, 12:00 noon

East Madrone Room, ASUC Building University of California

For more information: (510) 839-0851

BERKELEY

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

Defend the Cuban Revolution! Down with Yankee Imperialism!

Next class:

Wednesday, March 23, 7 p.m.

West Madrone Room, ASUC Building University of California

For more information: (510) 839-0851

BERKELEY

Next class:

Wednesday, April 6, 6:30 p.m.

Room B114, Student Union San Francisco State University

For more information: (415) 777-9367

SAN FRANCISCO



WV Photo

Next class:

Saturday, March 19, 3:00 p.m.

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution

La Casa, 510 E. Chalmers University of Illinois

For more information: (312) 663-0715

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

Next class:

Tuesday, March 22, 7:30 p.m.

How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled

Room 205, Sever Hall Harvard University

For more information: (617) 492-3928

BOSTON

Next class:

Tuesday, March 22, 7:30 p.m.

The State and Revolution

Room 317, Hamilton Hall Columbia University

(take the #1 or 9 train to 116th and B'way)
For more information: (212) 267-1025

NEW YORK CITY

Southern Black Students Protest Cop Brutality in Birmingham

In Birmingham, Alabama on March 4 more than 200 people marched to protest a savage cop attack on 40 black youth last January 15, the anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. The cop riot recalled racist sheriff Bull Connor's vicious assaults in the 1960s—only now the city has a black mayor, a majority-black city council and a black police chief. As Clinton's Democratic Party has shoved blacks to the "back of the bus," it's blatantly obvious that no black Democrat can control the racist bonapartist cops who are on a rampage.

Spartacists from Atlanta and Washington formed a militant contingent in the march and rally, which was called by the Malcolm X Grass Roots Movement, Ujima and the Youth Task Force of the Southern Organizing Committee. The Partisan Defense Committee made a \$50 contribution to the legal defense of demonstrators who still have charges pending from the earlier march.

The following is an account of the day written by members of the Howard University Spartacus Youth Club, who rode down to Birmingham from Washington with students.



Birmingham, March 4: Over 200 militant youth came from as far away as Washington, D.C. to protest racist cop brutality.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Bull Connor-style attack on young black protesters in Birmingham provoked a militant demonstration of black students from throughout the South, including North Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia and Washington, D.C. As members of the Howard University Spartacus Youth Club, we rode the bus with 30 other students and black youth on the 14-hour trip from D.C. to Birmingham, a journey reminiscent of the "Freedom Rides" of 30 years ago. Students from the University of the District of Columbia, the University of Maryland at College Park, individuals from various community support groups and graduates of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts High School all took part in this important action.

The WV article featuring the recent Birmingham police riot (WV No. 595, 4 March) was snapped up by the youth, who were pleased to see we reported and protested the attacks. On the bus, a video of the demonstration was shown—recalling the vicious beating of Rodney King—a vivid and graphic display of naked cop bonapartism unleashed.

The camerawoman heroically recorded the brutality of the thugs in blue, getting close-up shots of the attack: the macing of 12-year-old boys and girls, the violent handcuffing of anyone who made even a peep against the cops' disgusting behavior, and the flagrant disregard of the rights of black people that is standard operating

procedure in racist capitalist America.

The long trip allowed for lots of discussion on racism, the capitalist state, and perspectives and strategy for social struggle. We pointed to our program for integrated class struggle, emphasizing the recent successful Springfield anti-Klan mobilization, as well as Atlanta in 1989 and Philadelphia in '88 which we had initiated. We also emphasized that the Birmingham/Bessemer area is considered the "Pittsburgh of the South" because of the big steel mills, and that the heavily black working class is the effective social counterforce to the rampant brutality of the police.

We caused quite a stir at a truck-stop on Interstate 85 somewhere near the Georgia-Alabama state line. Taking a moment to stretch, Duke Ellington School graduates, members of the gospel group Testify, started to choreograph a few dance steps. The sight of these artistic, synchronized and high-spirited black youth drew vexed stares from the "locals." So a dose of modern D.C. culture really rocked that rural backwater!

Arriving in Birmingham, we disembarked at the 16th Street Baptist Church, where four girls attending Sunday school were murdered in cold blood more than three decades ago. We met with our comrades from Atlanta there, and we looked at the memorial to the victims of the bombing, which had photos of the children, the church after the explosion, some charred parts of the old building and the ensuing protests. The visit gave a real appreciation of the sacrifices made in the era. The power of the exhibit made our blood boil with a burning vengeance to complete the unfinished business of the Civil War—destroying forever the special oppression blacks have always faced in racist capitalist America.

The protest itself was very militant: one could really get the sense that people were furious and defiant and wanted to express their outrage at the beatings. Yet the organizers offered up either liberal reformism (inviting a nonviolent preacher and the mayor [!] as guest speakers) or black nationalism (which is

expressed in periods of *defeat* for black rights). To add insult to injury, the organizers were even bemoaning the fact that the black police chief didn't show up—even after being invited to speak!

The tragedy is that in the absence of a revolutionary Marxist vanguard party to lead the masses in struggle all this well-spent energy and legitimate outrage is channeled into those ideologies of despair. What was urgently needed was a strong organized labor presence. In a situation where the Birmingham police have *already shown* their role, a fighting labor movement, led by a revolutionary party, would compel those vicious cops, no matter what color they are, to think twice before they lay even a finger on any defenseless black school kids. The point is, both liberal reformism and black nationalism are dead ends. The only way forward is *revolutionary integrationism*.

We marched through the streets of Birmingham with our signs: "For Black

Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!" "Drop the Charges Against the Anti-Racist Protesters!" "Organize the South! For Integrated Class Struggle to Defend Black Rights!" "Clinton's 'War on Crime,' 'War on Drugs' Means Racist State Repression." "Unchain the Unions, Oust the Bureaucrats! Build a Multiracial Workers Party!" Other protesters picked up our slogans and were eager to talk to us about a revolutionary perspective.

The Spartacus Youth Clubs nationwide are dedicated to winning students and youth to the program of class struggle, which is the only way forward to black freedom. Students won to a revolutionary program can help to forge the required leadership to build militant, fighting and defiant mobilizations of all workers—be they black, white, Hispanic or Asian—to defend black rights and the rights of all the oppressed. Ultimately, it will take a working-class revolution to end all police brutality, and through that, we will finish the Civil War. ■

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Mexico...

(continued from page 1)

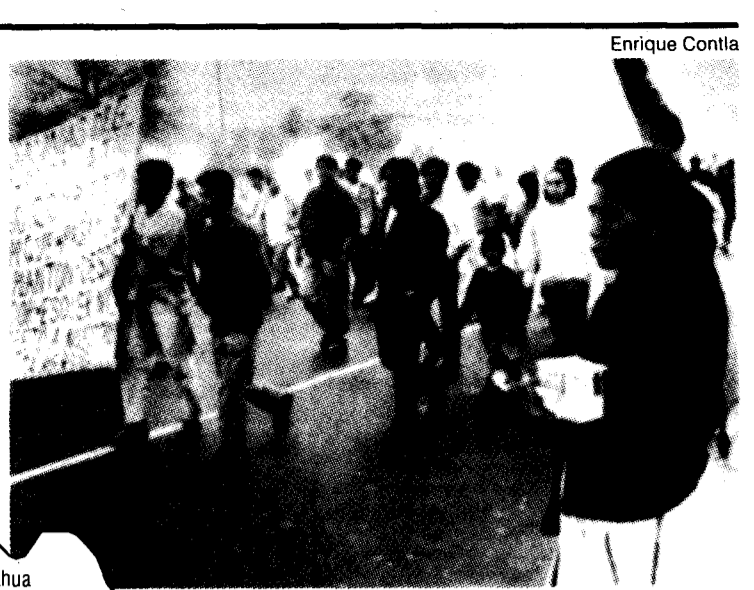
Across the ocean in Europe, militant Alfa Romeo workers protesting mass layoffs in Milano, Italy raised signs proclaiming "Viva Zapata!" as did workers in a general strike against the anti-union plans of the "Socialist" government of Spain. The cry of rebellion from the remote Lancandón rain forest came to symbolize those who challenged the imperialists' "New World Order."

On March 2, the press announced that an agreement had been reached between the rebels and the government "peace commissioner." This was a list of 34 "commitments" by the government in response to the EZLN demands. While offering to spend more money in the impoverished state and to distribute some land, it said nothing about demands for an end to rigged elections and for a reversal of the government's agrarian counterreform. The media's "peace" euphoria began to dissipate as thousands of peasants seized and occupied city halls in four Chiapas towns. In response, counterrevolutionary "white guard" private armies of the big landowners have stepped up terror against peasant leaders. In San Cristóbal, businessmen are hiring gunmen and demanding the expulsion of the bishops and closing of Catholic churches accused of spreading "liberation theology."

In a matter of a few weeks, the semi-bonapartist regime of the "Institutional Revolutionary Party" (PRI), which has ruled Mexico for the last seven decades, has been severely shaken. But the road forward is not a replay of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-17 but a workers revolution which must extend across the northern border into the U.S. itself. Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM) put out a January 6 statement denouncing the army massacre in Chiapas (see WV No. 592, 21 January). We print below translated excerpts from their article in the latest issue of *Espartaco* (No. 5, Spring 1994).

Indian Uprising in Chiapas Fight Against Bourgeois Repression and Imperialist Pillage! Toward Workers Revolution

New Year's Day was supposed to be a holiday for the regime of Carlos Salinas de Gortari and his imperialist masters in Washington. The Free Trade Agreement went into effect, the accord with which Wall Street proposes to build a trade fortress against growing competition from its rivals in Europe and Japan while intensifying its imperialist pillage of Latin America. But the news that went 'round the world on January 1 was of the Chiapas rebellion, with its denunciation of NAFTA as a "death sentence for Mexico's Indian ethnic groups, who are dispensable for the government" of Salinas. Declaring war on the "dictator" and his army, the EZLN demanded "work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence,



Núñez/Cuartoscuro



Zapatista uprising has fueled new struggles (clockwise from top left): Peasants on hunger strike come to the capital; striking sugar cane workers from Michoacán; university workers demand pay raise; dissident teachers march for wage increase and to support EZLN.

freedom, democracy, justice and peace."

After centuries of outrages, hunger and the thirst for land exploded in Mexico's poorest state. The insurgency brought to light the taboo subject of racism in Mexico and called attention to the brutal oppression of peasant women, underlining the age-old forms of oppression upon which capitalist rule rests. The uprising is not the product merely of isolation: a crucial background factor was the fall in the price of coffee and bananas on the world market; together with the deadly attack on the *ejido* (communally owned Indian lands which were constitutionally protected after the Mexican Revolution, now slated for liquidation) and the plundering promised by NAFTA, this literally meant death for thousands.

This rebellion of the "wretched of the earth" was received with demonstrations in Europe and the U.S., from San Francisco to New York, and declarations of solidarity by Indian organizations from Bolivia and Brazil to the Mohawks of Quebec. For his part, Democrat Clinton, leader of Yankee imperialism, followed in the footsteps of Republican Reagan, reinforcing the racist anti-immigrant "blockade" along Mexico's northern border and, under the pretext of "humanitarian aid" (like in Somalia?), sending Black Hawk helicopters and more than 4,500 troops to Guatemala, whose army is on maximum alert; U.S. soldiers were

seen in Huehuetenango, bordering Chiapas (*El Día* and *El Financiero*, 14 February). Meanwhile Washington's sinister clown in Buenos Aires, Carlos Menem, warned against the risk of an Argentine Chiapas.

The government unleashed a bloodbath against the uprising, seeking to terrorize all who would dare struggle against oppression. When the EZLN showed its capacity for combat by occupying a series of towns, the Mexican army launched a rain of death with air attacks. Now, in the most cynical manner, the army denies using bombs, claiming it "only" used helicopter gunships, machine guns and rockets! Helicopters fired randomly at vehicles and fired rockets close by the San Cristóbal de las Casas gas-storage depot. Troops machine-gunned a van on the road to San Juan Chamula, near the 31st Military Zone; among those murdered were an eight-year-old girl and a baby.

The wave of terror spread: even the liberals of Amnesty International denounced the "disappearances," torture, coups de grâce and mass graves, and the cover-up role played by the National Human Rights Commission—whose ex-director, now minister of the interior (Gobernación), recently held a meeting on Chiapas with the head of the CIA, according to press reports. Unarmed Indians were "disappeared" in military ambulances, their decomposed corpses found weeks later. But the insurgents' resistance, their knowledge of the terrain and the popular support for their struggle frustrated the first attempt at a lightning annihilation that would crush the rebellion. Thwarted as well were the demands for "extermination" made by labor chief Fidel ("Terminator") Velázquez [the 90-plus-year-old head of the pro-government CTM union federation] and by vengeance-hungry Chiapas landowners who—in the style of Porfirio Díaz [long-time dictator overthrown by the Mexican Revolution]—called for finishing off "all those Zapatista Indians once and for all."

The government has sought to mount a witchhunt against the "dark hand" of "foreigners." Central American refugees fear a wave of xenophobia, while the government threatens to take away the citizenship of Mexican Indians who, due to the military clashes, sought refuge in Guatemala. Troops are combing the state

of Guerrero in search of supposed guerrillas. In Coyoacán, a 14-year-old student was savagely beaten by police during an "art marathon for peace." Despite its reactionary editorials against Zapatista "violence" during the first days of the conflict, the Mexico City liberal daily *La Jornada* has received threats from a group calling itself the Mexican Anti-Communist Front.

The repression did not succeed in cowering the insurgents nor in stilling protests. On the contrary, the EZLN—which already had the support of the Indians of Chiapas' Los Altos highland region, unlike the isolated guerrilla struggles of the '70s, which were the death rattle of the defeat of 1968 (when the army mowed down hundreds of leftist protesters in Mexico City)—has won the sympathy of millions all over the country. A recent poll published in *Etcétera* magazine (10 February) found that 78 percent of the population considers the demands of the EZLN to be just. On January 12, 100,000 marched in Mexico City; the chant of "E-Z-L-N" from thousands of students and workers contrasted with the scolding against "violence" made by speakers of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas' PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) from the podium.

Meanwhile, the charismatic Subcomandante Marcos has become the man of the day, in contrast with insipid PRI candidate Donaldo Colosio (who fears being eclipsed by Camacho Solís, former contender for the PRI's presidential nomination and current "peace commissioner"). In part, the widespread sympathy reflects the fact that the EZLN puts itself forward as a force which has learned the "lesson" of the supposed "death of communism": that you can shake things up, but you shouldn't struggle for power. The Zapatista spokesman emphasized: "We do not even want to constitute a government, we only want a democratically elected government and respect for the ethnic groups" (*La Jornada*, 4 January).

Liberals, government institutions and "non-governmental organizations," student leaders and fake-leftists all seek to channel sympathy for the rebellion into bourgeois charity, with collections of food and blankets for "peace" and "reconciliation" between the insurgent Indians on one side and the oppressors with their massacring army, "white guards"

ESPARTACO

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Levantamiento Indígena en Chiapas

Luchemos contra la represión burguesa y la rapiña imperialista

Hacia la revolución obrera

Lecturas candentes de 1988... pág. 29

Espartaco

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and "rural defense" groups [landowner gun thugs] on the other. As the EZLN pointed out, it is telling that Salinas announced his "amnesty" under the portrait of Carranza (the military chief of the bourgeois right wing which emerged victorious in the Mexican Revolution): the Carrancistas assassinated Emiliano Zapata in Chinameca when he arrived at a supposed negotiation for "reconciliation." Nor should one forget the results of "negotiated solutions" in Central America, so insistently demanded by the fake-left, which as we Spartacists warned, become a death-squad-imposed "peace of the cemeteries."

Break with the Bourgeoisie! For Class-Struggle Politics!

The popular-frontist petty bourgeoisie hopes that Cárdenas' PRD will succeed in exploiting the rebellion in Chiapas in order to move into the governmental palace through an "electoral revolution." But among the working masses the Zapatista uprising has fired hopes of struggle and victory after a long chain of atrocities and defeats. Now sector after sector puts forward its own demands linking them to the struggle of the EZLN.

In Chiapas, peasant seizures of lands and towns are spreading, while 10,000 teachers courageously marched through the streets of Tuxtla Gutiérrez (the state capital) under the gun barrels of tanks calling for a 100 percent wage increase and carrying a huge banner proclaiming, "Total Support to the Demands of the EZLN!" (*La Jornada*, 12 February). Sugar cane workers in Puruarán, Michoacán, in their general assembly, called for their entry into the EZLN and that the latter include their demands in its negotiations with the government.

Strikers in the Herdez cannery, where the workers are largely women, sent a letter to Chiapas, declaring that to their employers, "as with the bosses and corrupt officials who oppress you, justice is worth less than dog piss" and that "our greatest solidarity with you is to unite, from our battle position in the factory, with your struggle for social justice" (*La Jornada*, 8 February).

It is clear that the insurgency in Chiapas could be a spark that encourages the oppressed and spreads to the heavy battalions of the working class, producing class struggle with revolutionary perspectives. The question of questions is *program and leadership*. For approximately five years, since the big workers strikes, peasant mobilizations and student protests of 1987-88, the bourgeoisie has managed to more or less keep the lid on the pressure cooker that is Mexico, alternating the stick of repression with the carrot of handouts and corruption. This includes the fruitless attempt of the past year to try to use PRONASOL (Salinas' corruption-ridden "Solidaridad" federal works program) to defuse the Chiapas time bomb, and Salinas' recent announcement that he is going to pour big money into the Chiapas coffee industry.

Nevertheless, the principal force for "pacifying" the working masses during this period has been the PRD. When there is an especially shameless case of electoral fraud or particularly brutal police attack, this inflames the PRD's plebeian base and takeovers of mayors' offices and protests in the streets may result, especially in conflict-ridden peasant regions. But the social function of the PRD—a bourgeois party whose strategist and chairman (Porfirio Muñoz Ledo) is a former head of the PRI—is to subordinate the masses to the capitalist politicians, trapping them in the strait-jacket of the institutions of the bourgeois state, in the style of the "popular fronts" which opened the way to reaction from Spain in 1936 to Chile in 1973.

The working class has demonstrated an enormous will to struggle, but from Sicartsa (steel factory in Michoacán) to Dina (diesel truck and bus manufacturer in Hidalgo) to Cananea (copper mine in Sonora), from the bloody repression of the Ford strike (in Cuautitlán, near Mex-

ico City) and the bargaining away of the huge teachers mobilizations of 1989, to the most recent struggles, strikes have been isolated, derailed and generally defeated due to the subordination of their leadership to the new PRI—the PRD. What the workers need is the politics of *class against class*, to break with the class collaboration that is the popular front with the bourgeois politicians. Faced with the coming struggles, it is necessary to draw these lessons, including in the *maquiladora* (free trade zone) industry where the fight for unionization and against superexploitation of those workers—closely linked with their class brothers and sisters across the border—promises to be truly explosive.

In this context, it is significant that when Mixtec peasants in Puebla quit the PRD and withdrew their support from Cárdenas in order to create the "Zapatista Movement of the South," their spokesman explained that "the Indian peoples of this region are tired of the PRD because it does not meet social demands" (*Reforma*, 8 February). A revolutionary workers party that puts forward a class-struggle program to fight for proletarian power would be able to win the active support of millions of the poor and dispossessed.

Now Cárdenas' political credit ratings with the bourgeoisie are rising: there is rebellion and they may need him to calm it down. The PRD hopes that the blood of Chiapas will produce a flood of votes which will make Cárdenas president (and as a result commander in chief of the army); for this it needs to emphasize,

ary Party (PRI) of today, as a popular front in the form of a party, which subordinated the masses to the "national" bourgeoisie and therefore to imperialism. This is what Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and his pseudo-socialist followers seek to revive today, in order that the working masses should *not* break with the discredited bourgeois system.

Thus it is in keeping with the laws of popular-frontism that Cárdenas should compensate for his calls for "dialogue" with the insurgents with fervent declarations of loyalty to the armed forces, with which he has always cultivated the connections he inherited from his father. On January 14, in an address in Tepic which was extensively quoted by the major media, he reiterated that "we need a strong army," with "solidity" and "moral authority," lashing out at "the forces which wish to weaken the army."

The leftist apologists for these ex-PRI politicians complain to us that to not vote for the PRD is to "play the game of the PRI." But, as we have insisted since *Neocardenismo* appeared on the scene in 1988, the PRD is itself a "neo-PRI." Since the 1930s, when they were perfected by Lázaro Cárdenas, corporatist mechanisms have been of crucial importance to the bourgeoisie in controlling and subordinating the working and peasant masses in a country with a great tradition of rebellion. In recent years this has permitted the bourgeoisie to reduce wages *even more* than the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile was able to do. If today the old apparatus is now too rickety, corrupt and discredited, the bourgeoisie will get a

producers do not have the social cohesion or class interest to be able to install a "dictatorship of the peasantry"—and this revolution, which began with bourgeois-democratic demands and then evolved toward a profound social revolution, broke out in the period of imperialist domination. In the absence of a revolutionary leadership, the workers' Red Battalions stood apart from the radicalized peasants and were eventually used against them by the bourgeoisie. And without working-class leadership, the peasants in arms did not achieve their objectives. The forces of Villa and Zapata had to retreat. And the program of this revolution of the past is quite insufficient for the future workers revolution.

The Bolshevik Revolution, in which a working-class insurrection was combined with a vast peasant rebellion to produce the dictatorship of the proletariat, confirmed the perspective of *permanent revolution* put forward by Leon Trotsky, organizer of the October 1917 insurrection and of the Red Army: only a revolution which brings the working class to power, headed by its communist vanguard, with the support of the poor peasants, can resolve the urgent needs, including the democratic and agrarian demands, of the oppressed masses.

Revolutionary Leadership Is Key

The lightning bolts of the Chiapas rebellion have illuminated the question of *racism* in Mexico, where bourgeois nationalism has idealized the Aztec past for purposes of ideological control at the same time as it tramples underfoot the



Julio Carbo



Baldelli/Contrasto

Workers in Barcelona (left) during January 27 Spanish general strike, Alfa Romeo workers in Milano, Italy (right) hail Zapata as symbol of revolt.

for the ruling class and imperialism, its character as a "responsible" force which can be trusted to administer the exploitation of the masses.

Warning that it was necessary to "prevent" poverty leading to rebellions like Chiapas elsewhere in the country, Cárdenas stated that "it is not by resorting to violence that the great problems of the Mexican people today will be solved," and referred to the EZLN as "those gentlemen who are out there dodging bullets and killing soldiers." Together with the PRI and PAN (National Action Party—right-wing conservative "opposition") legislators, Muñoz Ledo, chairman of the PRD, signed a declaration lamenting that there had been a "breakdown of juridical order in the state of Chiapas."

Today in Mexico, where a leading group of bourgeois "oppositionists" and their "leftist" supporters have dedicated themselves to locking up the working masses and rebellious youth within capitalist politics, the question of the popular front has been sharply posed. Although in Mexico the masses of the proletariat never formed their own parties (not even like the reformist workers parties of Europe or Chile), Trotsky characterized the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM) of General Lázaro Cárdenas, the precursor of the Institutional Revolution-

new one. And today this is called the "Party of the Democratic Revolution," which copies the techniques of the PRI, incorporating worker, peasant and neighborhood sectors, etc., in order to control them better.

For Permanent Revolution!

The Mexican left keeps returning to the unfulfilled promises of the Mexican Revolution. By proclaiming themselves "Zapatistas," the Chiapas insurgents place themselves within this tradition. In fact, as Marx pointed out in his pamphlet *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852), in revolutionary periods the insurgents "conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes...." However, Marx emphasized, "The social revolution...cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself before it has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past."

We revolutionary Marxists associate ourselves with the rebelliousness of the radical peasants in the Mexican Revolution. But it is not enough to recall this experience, it is necessary to transcend it. The armies of Zapata and Pancho Villa *won* militarily in occupying the capital of the country. But there is no peasant class rule—the petty agricultural

Indians of today. Mexico prides itself on being the mestizo (mixed race) country par excellence in Latin America, and the Mexican Revolution indeed made possible a greater level of participation by brown-skinned people compared to elsewhere in the continent. But, as in other parts of the world, class oppression overlaps and intermingles with questions of "race," color and ethnicity, and in this country the "educated" openly despise Indian women, referred to as "Marías," while ads are filled with blond women and racist cartoons of blacks and Asians are used to sell a wide range of products.

It is impossible to put an end to anti-Indian racism without emancipating Indians from poverty and exploitation, in the first instance by satisfying the overwhelming *land hunger* of the peasants. In order to accomplish this, what is needed is not an "integral agrarian reform" carried out with a "new constitution" (as proposed, for example, by the pathetic POS-Z [Morenoites]), but rather an *agrarian revolution* in which the peasants, joining together with the industrial and agricultural proletariat (day laborers), seize the lands of the large landowners, lumber barons, cattlemen—and the U.S. companies which seek to take them over through NAFTA. A workers state would nationalize the land,

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Oakland: Black Outrage Grows Over Racist Cop Terror

OAKLAND—On March 11, Oakland cops capped a trigger-happy week, in which they shot three people, by critically wounding 16-year-old Steve Crenshaw, a black student at Fremont High School. After first lying to the media that the unarmed youth had a gun, police later claimed he “startled” a gun-wielding cop while Crenshaw and his friends were celebrating a birthday in a vacant house, and the cop’s gun “accidentally” went off. So now another lying cover-up is in progress, and black Oakland is simmering. “They shot him to send a message, plain and simple,” a young friend of Crenshaw said. “They don’t want us around here. And if they don’t like you, they’re going to smoke you” (*San Francisco Examiner*, 13 March). With racist cop killings becoming sickeningly routine, the police force is acting like a permanent KKK lynch mob. *This racist cop terror must be stopped!*

On February 11, outraged black residents confronted the Oakland mayor and local police at a community meeting initiated by the family of Nathan Cosby, the victim of racist murder by an Oakland cop. Cosby, a black school custodian and member of AFSCME Local 257, was gunned down last January 6 in an invasion of his East Oakland home by a SWAT team of

more than 20 cops from two local police departments and two federal agencies—supposedly on a search warrant for “credit card fraud.” Police attempted to cover up by claiming that Cosby, who was not even the subject of the cops’ warrant, pointed a gun at the cop who shot him through a window from the backyard.

Now the coroner’s report has exposed the police story as a lie. The autopsy—performed the day after the murder but not released for more than a month—confirms Cosby was shot *in the back of the head* through his second-floor window (*Bay Guardian*, 23 February).

At the February 11 meeting, Oakland’s black Democratic mayor Elihu Harris, city manager Craig Cashan, Councilwoman Dessie Wood-Jones, Sergeant Ron Jones (a black cop representing the chief of police) and a Lieutenant Mike Sims of the homicide department faced some 50 angry residents demanding an accounting for the deaths of Cosby and other recent victims of racist cop terror: Baraka Hull, a black youth shot in the back as he was running away from an Oakland cop last summer; Jerrold Hall, a black teenager shot in the back by a trigger-happy BART police officer in 1992; and, last December, Luke Grinage and his

wheelchair-bound father Raphael Grinage, both shot down by Oakland cops when they objected to handing over their dog to animal control authorities.

Raphael’s widow, Rashidah Grinage, stopped Sims cold with a pointed series of questions about the murder of her husband and son. Nathan Cosby’s widow Melinda spoke powerfully. His brother Robert Cosby, noting that Nathan had been awakened in the early morning by a crowd of armed thugs invading his home, pointed out that “we have the constitutional right to bear arms!” The audience gave him a huge round of applause. Cosby’s AFSCME union steward demanded an end to the lies from the police. A friend of Nathan’s remarked, “There’s not much difference between a blue uniform and a white sheet.”

Mayor Harris fidgeted uncomfortably through this and then pronounced himself blameless, while talking about “black-on-black crime,” drugs and the need for...more black cops. Councilwoman Wood-Jones chimed in that people should stop denouncing cops all the time since it was discouraging young black people from going into police work! After Lieutenant Sims gave a long monologue on the “pain” that cops feel when they kill people, it took the combined efforts of the preachers in the

room to keep the lid on the audience.

Calls from some of those present for stronger civilian review boards reflected illusions that the racist capitalist cops somehow can be reformed. A supporter of the misnamed Revolutionary Workers League warned against reliance on police review boards, only to call for a more far-fetched version of the same thing—an impotent “independent tribunal” of the black community—with not one word against the racist, capitalist Democratic Party.

The audience applauded as Hursey Bush, speaking for the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Spartacist League, denounced the brutal, racist police murders and Clinton’s racist “war on crime.” They listened intently as he went on:

“The real role of the police is to protect the interest of the propertied class that rules this country by terrorizing black people and the poor. That’s why Nathan Cosby and all the others are dead. Having a black mayor or police chief doesn’t change any of this.... The L.A. revolt shows whether it’s [former L.A. mayor] Tom Bradley, [L.A. police chief] Willie Williams, Jesse Jackson, Elihu Harris, or [state assembly speaker] Willie Brown, the black front men are on the side of the oppressor class....

“Nathan Cosby was a union member. We’ve got a big integrated labor movement right here in Oakland and the Bay Area. It would be a powerful step forward and a real display of social power if all those unions mobilized to lead a labor, black and Latino protest to push the police back. Black people and all working people desperately need a multiracial workers party to lead the struggle to sweep away this brutal killing machine and the system of exploitation it defends. It is urgent that we act now!”

Mexico...

(continued from page 9)

fostering the formation of cooperatives and the eventual voluntary collectivization of agricultural production. Confronted with the rural bosses and their “white guards” who terrorize the Indians, the bosses’ professional scabs and the repression of the bourgeois state—which cannot be reformed—workers and peasants face the need to form *workers defense guards*, militias and workers councils, nuclei of the proletarian state which will replace the dictatorship of capital.

The wave of rebellion is heading toward the proletariat—the decisive force, filled with volcanic discontent after years of cutbacks and attacks. They have occupied the factories in combative strikes at Volkswagen and other auto companies; at Ford Cuautitlán the *granaderos* (riot police) ringed the plant and strikebreaking thugs shot at the workers. The bourgeoisie knows well that the industrial proletariat is central; that is why it unleashes so much repression.

But politically these struggles have been dominated by a “leftist” version of the ideology of the Mexican Revolution, and when the bourgeoisie plays this card (the Cárdenas card), it tames them. At VW, workers believed in Article 123 (the *magna carta* of corporatist control of labor) of the Constitution—innumerable strikes have been buried in “conciliation and arbitration” by accepting the framework established by the capitalist state to *defeat* the working class. The strikes took place one by one. When in 1989 thousands of teachers struck, in an enormous revolt which defied the terror of the union bureaucrats’ *pistoleros*, the CNTE dissidents with their purely “democratic” program were not able to break the chains of bureaucratic control which bind the union to the bourgeois state. This program, which left the teachers politically defenseless in the face of Cardenism, stood in the way of the indispensable need to link up with the struggles of Cananea, Sicartsa, Ruta 100 (Mexico City bus drivers), etc.

Now the government is planning to

get rid of these various timeworn structures of “conciliation” in order to smash struggles even more openly. It is more urgent than ever to break through the framework of confidence in these bourgeois structures and narrow sectoral struggles with a broad *class* mobilization of the proletariat. This requires the political independence of the proletariat and a *class program*. A central question is internationalism, obviously key when confronting “multinationals” like Nissan, VW, Ford, GM, Nestlé and many others, and which is posed increasingly; along the southern border, where Chiapas abuts Central America, to the *maquiladoras* in the north, where workers solidarity mobilizations on the other side of “the wire” is a life-or-death question in the coming explosive class battles. It must not be forgotten that when the historic strike of Cananea broke out in 1906, on the eve of the Mexican Revolution, the capitalist governments cooperated in the repression while the revolutionary trade-unionists (including the IWW) worked together closely across the border.

In carrying out their program of “privatizations,” the Harvard-trained technocrats first attacked the nationalized companies notorious for corruption, such as

PEMEX (the state oil monopoly) and the port of Veracruz. We defended the leaders of the oil workers and longshore unions against capitalist repression, and we defend even these nationalizations against the greed of the imperialists and their junior partners of the local bourgeoisie, but it is necessary to transform them in a proletarian sense. This means the *expropriation* of the bourgeoisie as a class by a *workers and peasants government*, collectivization and democratic planning of the economy by workers soviets in the interest of the producers and consumers rather than the profits of a handful of capitalist exploiters.

The debt to the imperialist banks and their IMF must be completely *repudiated*, as the Bolsheviks did upon taking power in 1917. But facing imperialist attempts to impose an economic blockade, it is necessary to fight for a *Socialist United States of Latin America* and to mobilize—with the aid of the “human bridge” constituted by the immigrant workers—working-class solidarity from the U.S. and Canada to Japan, with the program of defeating imperialism through proletarian revolution in the belly of the beast.

The Latin American left, historically dominated by Third World nationalism

and Stalinism with its dogma of “socialism in one country,” is prostrate following the collapse of Stalinism. But the internationalist proletarian perspective, far from being “utopian,” is the only realistic one. A Mexican workers revolution would find fertile ground in the convulsive “new world disorder” of today. A red Mexico would come to the aid of the besieged working people of Cuba, of the starving masses of Port-au-Prince and Santo Domingo. To the north, the upheaval in Los Angeles shook the fortress of imperialism with its huge and combative multiracial proletariat. To the south are the inflamed lands of Central America, the dispossessed and starving from Caracas to the *favelas* (slums) of Rio de Janeiro and the workers of Santiago del Estero, millions of peasants hungry for land, and above all, the powerful battalions of workers of São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile.

Following the Chiapas upheaval, one commentator asked if the rebellion might turn out to be the present-day equivalent of the worker revolts in Cananea and Río Blanco which were the precursors of the Mexican Revolution that broke out in 1910. Yes, this can be the spark for a new revolution. But Mexico has had *three* bourgeois revolutions; what’s needed is workers revolution. In order to achieve the aspirations of the peasant fighters, from Zapata to the Zapatista Indians of today, in order to concretize the battle cry “Workers of the world, unite!” we must build a Leninist vanguard party as a section of a world party of socialist revolution, reforged on the programmatic bases of the Fourth International of Trotsky, the organizer of the Red Army which defeated the White armies and imperialist invaders in the great Bolshevik Revolution. This is the task which the Grupo Espartaquista de México has assumed as part of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). Join us!

Mexican army out of Chiapas! Fight against bourgeois repression and imperialist pillage! Mobilize the strength of the working class! Break with the bourgeoisie—for a workers and peasants government! ■



Mexican army launches wave of terror in Chiapas.

Valtierra/Cuartoscuro

Geronimo...

(continued from page 12)

justice for Mr. Pratt."

The time to act is now! Following the FOX broadcast, the Bay Area affiliate also aired a segment on Geronimo. The *Oakland Post* and *SF Weekly* have carried articles on his current legal battles. Ron Teninty, International rep of the powerful International Brotherhood of Teamsters, sent a letter to the D.A. on Geronimo's behalf. Ben Visnick, president of the Oakland Education Association wrote, "it is quite clear that [Geronimo] was in Oakland, our city, at the time of the tragic murder of Caroline Olsen. Twenty-three years is too long for an innocent man to be held for a crime that he did not and could not have committed. Please note that the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) and the California Teachers Association (CTA) are also on record for Mr. Pratt's exoneration and freedom."

As Geronimo told FOX news, "Blind Lemon Jefferson can see that based on this evidence I didn't do this murder." But year after year confirms the basic principle of racist American capitalism set forth in the 1857 Dred Scott case, that blacks have "no rights which the white man was bound to respect." So while Geronimo has endured over two decades of prison hell, the Ronald Reagans, Ed Meeses and numerous other federal and state officials who built their careers on the corpses of Panthers and the frame-up of Geronimo sip martinis in their exclusive clubs, content in the knowledge that court after court and parole board after parole board have refused to hear evidence of the government conspiracy that keeps America's foremost class-war prisoner behind bars.

Geronimo's fate must not be left in the hands of L.A.'s top prosecutor, whose job is to keep blacks, Hispanics and unionists in their place while making sure the perpetrators of racist violence—the trigger-happy LAPD—carry out their terror and frame-ups with impunity. These are the cops who beat Rodney King to within an inch of his life and walked away with a slap on the wrist after two trials, laying bare what capitalist class "justice" is all about.

It will take an intensified campaign of publicity and protest to smash this frame-up and free Geronimo.

We urge readers to call your local FOX station and demand they broadcast the Geronimo series. Community organizations and trade unions which have come to Geronimo's defense over the years must take action now, including by sending telegrams to the Los Angeles D.A. to demand that this courageous anti-racist fighter be released immediately. The April 14 hearing will be at the SF Federal Building, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, in Courtroom 8, 19th floor. Fill the courtroom with Geronimo's supporters! *Free Geronimo now!*

For more information contact the PDC at (510) 839-0852, or (212) 406-4252, or write to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■

Frazier...

(continued from page 12)

We at Local 808 demand justice for Brother James Frazier."

The day of the demonstration, a hard core of Frazier's supporters mobilized for his court appearance in the morning. Some track division officials came, but not the TWU Local 100 tops, who have opposed the union taking up the fight against this racist frame-up. They virtually boycotted the evening rally, sending only one full-time staff representative.

The Local 100 bureaucracy now led by Damaso Seda, hand-picked successor to Sonny Hall, has refused to call for dropping the charges against Frazier. The TWU tops instead whine, "How can it [T.A.] consider him guilty until it is proven in a court of law?" Their message to the D.A. and T.A. is clear—if Frazier is railroaded by the racist courts, the union sellouts will no more stand in the way of the bosses' state than they will defy strikebreaking Taylor Law injunctions against public workers strikes.

When the D.A. dropped the charges "without prejudice" on February 14 and sent the case to a grand jury, we warned that an indictment could still be filed. Sure enough, on March 1 Hynes came up with his indictment on trumped-up



Transit militants fight to mobilize union power to stop victimization of their union brother, James Frazier. WV Photo

gun charges.

The union tops had already issued a leaflet declaring the case over. They were tailed by the Communist Party's *People's Weekly World* (19 February), which claimed that the case was at "a victorious end" and Frazier was "a free man."

This blind trust in the bosses' injustice system is shared by a crowd of left-talking bureaucrats and their hangers-on in Local 100. Track Division vice-chairman Joel Fredricson early on called on track workers to come to the court, but refused to fight the Local 100 tops to bring out the power of the union to defend Frazier. At the March 7 rally Fredricson grotesquely appealed to the NYPD: "To all the hard-working and dedicated officers, we respect and honor you, but a terrible mistake was made." He also opposed marching on Democratic Party D.A. Hynes' office, calling him "a friend."

The shooting and later hospital assault on James Frazier were no "mistakes"—racist terror is NYPD policy. And the Democratic Party is no "friend" of blacks, Hispanics or any working people. Meanwhile, the bureaucratic New Directions "opposition" in Local 100 takes the same position as Seda in refusing to call for dropping the charges

against Frazier. This comes as no surprise to militants in the TWU, who remember ND's excited praise of striking *prison guards*, even as they terrorized EMS drivers and black and Hispanic prisoners in 1992. These out-bureaucrats see their chance to replace the Local 100 bureaucracy in the upcoming contract, and through their lawsuits against the union in the capitalist courts.

Bringing up the rear is a supporter of the "League for a Revolutionary Party," who beseeches the bureaucrats to create a sandbox committee that will serve as a diversion from the necessary task of *mobilizing the power of the entire union behind James Frazier*.

NYC workers, black, Hispanic and white, are boiling with anger at the budget cuts and slashes in social services announced by Mayor Giuliani as he declares war on the unions and poor. Scores have turned out in defense of James Frazier because they know that the victimization of this brother is an attack on all working people. As the racist frame-up continues, militants in the transit union must redouble their efforts to bring out the powerful, multiracial working class to demand: Drop the charges! Reinstate James Frazier now! ■

RWL Splits...

(continued from page 5)

between the CL, Sollenberger's TL and Sanderson's RWL is illustrated clearly by the shared eagerness of all three to march into a cop-lined corral at an anti-fascist demonstration in Painesville, Ohio on March 5. The cops, armed forces of the bourgeois state, protected the fascists' "right" to mobilize for genocide while locking up leftists and anti-racist militants in cages. Inside the pen, alongside the dueling fake-lefts, were outright fascists and local racist yahoos. Skirmishes between leftists and racists broke out repeatedly in the pen, which were responded to with cavalry charges by mounted cops, maintaining "order." One who submits willingly to such outrageous conditions may as well admit defeat before the fascist threat. Contrast this dangerous adventurism with the militant, orderly and democratic labor-centered demonstration in Springfield. That the RWLers weren't put in a pen there was directly due to the labor support gathered from the fights our party waged.

The "Good Old Days" When Peter Was in Charge

The CL longs for the RWL of the good old days, "four years ago," when Peter Sollenberger was still in charge and the RWL's capitulation to imperialist anti-Sovietism—from siding with the CIA's Afghan *mujahedin* to cheerleading for the Washington-sponsored Polish Solidarność—gave them a *raison d'être* in opposition to the Spartacist League. The trouble, for them, seems to have started

back in 1991. Having recruited a group of energetic youth from the liberal Simon's Rock school at Bard College, the RWL began to have some successes in recruiting radicalized youth to their peculiar brand of "Trotskyism" during the Persian Gulf War. This gave rise to the RWL's "turn to youth," and the two leaders maximos, with little difference in actual program, developed widely divergent appetites. The resulting split left Sanderson with the majority of the youth. Although it occurred in the midst of Yeltsin's August 1991 coup—the ascendancy of open counterrevolution in the Soviet Union—that monumental defeat was not mentioned once in the split documents.

Sollenberger tore away some aging union-bureaucrat-wannabees and a small group of Cincinnati youth, forming the "Trotskyist League" in order to fry bigger fish in the USec's "International Trotskyist Opposition" of Italian labor bureaucrat Franco Grisolia. To get a foothold in the USec here, the TL had to join the "Fourth Internationalist Caucus" of what was easily the most anti-Soviet organization yet claiming to be "Trotskyist," Solidarity. As a token of troth to this liberal swamp, the TL "critically" supported left *bourgeois* candidate and former front man for Jesse Jackson, Ron Daniels, in the 1992 presidential election. The CL now seeks to fuse with their estranged comrades, not two months after declaring the TL to be "opportunist."

Spectre of Spartacism Still Haunts RWL

Both sides of the recent split, as in '91, wave about the spectre of Spar-

tacism to ward off politics, as one would garlic to ward off vampires. The CL complains of being baited as "Spartacists" by the RWL "majority." Yet they themselves warn against the RWL becoming a "Stalinized, Shachtmanized, or Spartacized organizational toilet." The exact meaning of this confused formulation evades us. The "organizational" measures proposed by the CL are, one and all, carefully cultivated and maintained institutions in our party, developed with painstaking adherence to the model set by the Third Congress of the Communist International resolution on organizational structure, a translation of which we have published.

In a practice perhaps unique in the history of the radical movement, the SL keeps in our local halls up-to-date col-

lections of the press of our opponents in the socialist and labor movement. We not only encourage members to read our opponents' press, but we even publish what we believe is the most interesting material which deals with the SL in a series called *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacist League*.

The RWL is politically spiraling on a right-wing trajectory and it appears to be imploding organizationally. One can only hope that the impending organizational collapse will spark a "revolt of the damned," that may propel some of the better elements on a course toward revolutionary Trotskyist politics. The Spartacist League fights on a revolutionary communist program to build a workers party that can win. Get out and join us! ■

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Documents of a Political Struggle in the Revolutionary Workers League

Beyond the Impasse of the Revolutionary Workers League—For Precision of Principles and Trotskyist Regroupment, by Keith H., 30 March 1993

Letter to the Political Committee, by Keith H., Maggie H., Anna B., 16 April 1993

Letter to the Political Committee, by Anna B., 22 April 1993

Resignation from the Revolutionary Workers League, by Keith H., Maggie H., Anna B., 12 May 1993

Appendix: Letter from a "Majority" Comrade, by Joyce, 17 March 1993

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Black Panther Fights Prison Harassment

Free Geronimo!



Fill the Courtroom, S.F., April 14!

WV Photo

On February 24, attorneys for imprisoned former Black Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) won a preliminary courtroom victory in his continuing battle against persecution by prison officials. This latest legal action was necessary to counter prison harassment in retaliation for favorable publicity generated when FOX network news in Los Angeles ran a three-part series exposing the frame-up of Geronimo (see "Free Geronimo Now!" WV No. 594, 18 February). Prison officials immediately re-

sponded to the FOX series by transferring Geronimo to Mule Creek state prison, where he was denied his own cell, which he requires due to medical problems stemming from his Vietnam war wounds.

Responding to an emergency motion filed two days earlier by Partisan Defense Committee counsel Valerie West and Geronimo's longtime counsel Stuart Hanlon, federal district court judge Stanley Weigel said the prison officials' actions suggest retaliation for the recent

publicity. The judge granted a temporary restraining order compelling officials to provide Geronimo "single cell status at Mule Creek Prison or another Level III security prison pending further order of this Court." A hearing for an injunction to maintain single-cell status will be held in San Francisco on April 14.

Following the hearing, PDC counsel West noted, "We brought this motion as a necessary measure to stop the retaliatory and punitive treatment that came down on Geronimo two days after FOX

TV in L.A. broadcast a very strong story about Geronimo's case, about how he was framed up and who the likely actual killers are. Judge Weigel is aware that there is a history of retaliatory treatment of this man that goes back over the 23 years that he has been wrongfully imprisoned."

For 23 years Geronimo has been locked in prison hellholes for a crime he did not commit. He is a victim of the FBI's COINTELPRO campaign against black activists, which left 38 Panthers dead and many more behind bars due to frame-up convictions. The FOX series and a 5 January *Los Angeles Times* article reported new evidence uncovered by private investigator James McCloskey that powerfully demonstrates Geronimo's innocence. McCloskey's investigation linked two petty criminals on the fringes of the Black Panther Party to the Santa Monica murder for which Geronimo was convicted on the false testimony of an LAPD/FBI informer, Julius Butler. L.A. district attorney Gil Garcetti has acknowledged that his office will review Geronimo's case.

United-front rallies initiated by the PDC have brought together trade unionists and civil rights activists demanding Geronimo's freedom. Amnesty International has recognized Geronimo as a political prisoner. Congressman Ron Dellums has sponsored a bill calling for his release. The Oakland-based International Campaign to Free Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) has publicized the case. Trade unions representing over two million workers have taken a stand in support of Geronimo, including the American Postal Workers Union and the Alameda Central Labor Council. Last October NAACP executive director Ben Chavis wrote D.A. Garcetti, "I have very enthusiastically agreed to do all I can personally and to dedicate the resources of the NAACP to this very important quest for

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NYC Transit Workers Rally for James Frazier

Drop the Charges! Reinstate Frazier Now!

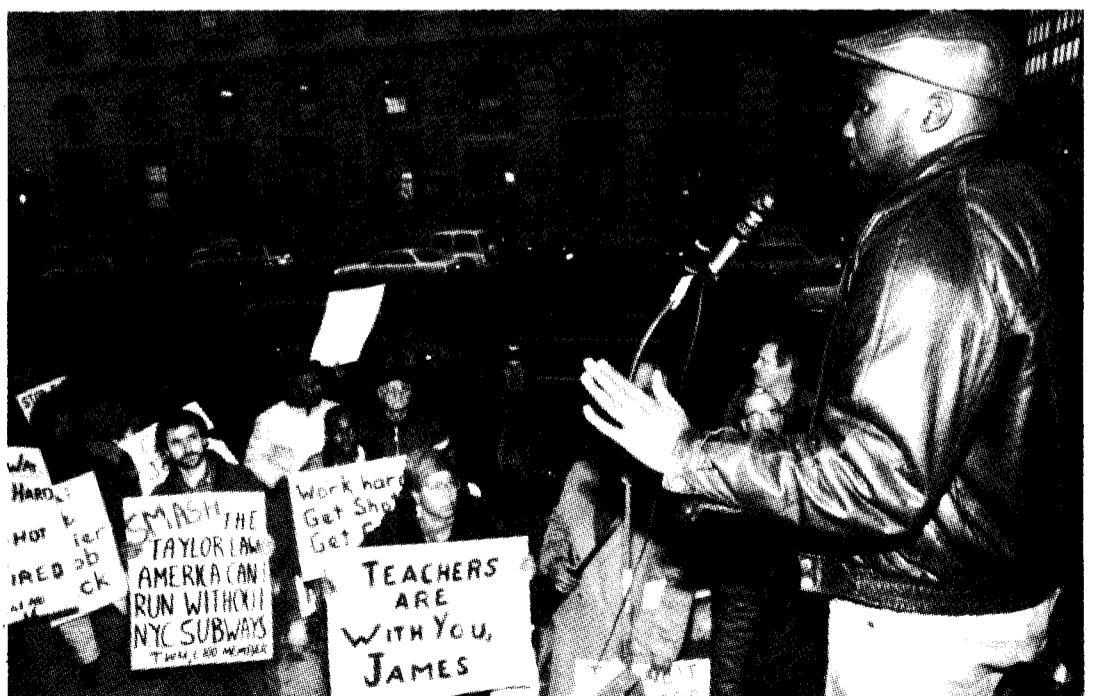
Turning heads in downtown Brooklyn, a multiracial demonstration of more than 75 New York City transit workers and other unionists rallied on March 7 at Transit Authority headquarters and marched to the office of Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes, demanding that he drop charges against black track worker James Frazier.

The Track Division of Transport Workers Union Local 100 called the rally to demand: "T.A.—Reinstate James Frazier Now! D.A.—Hands Off Transit Worker James Frazier!" It was the first union-called demonstration against racist cop terror seen in years in NYC.

Frazier was the victim of a vicious cop attack on the streets of Crown Heights last October, when cops shot him in the head, destroying his left eye. His alleged "crime"? Driving a nice car without plates to visit an injured friend in the hospital! The next day, before Frazier was even operated on, the T.A. fired him. Days later, as Frazier lay recovering from surgery in Kings

County Hospital, he was again assaulted by a cop spitting racist epithets.

Now, in an effort to cover up the cops' murderous assaults, James Frazier has been indicted on frame-up charges of weapons possession that threaten him with 15 years in prison. This is an obscene example of racist, capitalist class "justice"—they shoot a black worker, fire him from his job, impound his car, and then throw the book at him!



WV Photo

At the rally were track workers, train operators, conductors and dozens of workers from the shops and barns. A member of the Committee for a Fighting TWU, which has brought out transit workers to every court appearance and put forward the motion for the rally at a track meeting in February, said, "This is a racist injustice and the whole union has to take a stand." Members of the Partisan Defense Committee and the

New York Labor/Black League marched in the union demonstration, as did supporters of the Spartacist League and the League for a Revolutionary Party.

Other unions have also vigorously protested the cop assault on Frazier. Teamsters Local 808 in Queens faxed the D.A., saying: "Being an American of African descent is NOT a crime. This brutal assault must not go unpunished!"

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