

From Axing Welfare to Slashing Pensions Feds Loot Social Security

For those who have sunk their life savings in real estate in the Florida swamps, the bourgeoisie's plans for Social Security should have a familiar whiff. Riding a well-funded scare campaign depicting the imminent collapse of the 60-year-old Social Security system, the greedy capitalists are planning to take our retirement benefits and sink them into the crap shoot of Wall Street.

Benefits have already been cut three times in the past 20 years, and in his first year in the White House Democrat Clinton effectively slashed them by \$17.5 billion by increasing taxes on benefits. Yet until recently, none but the boldest reactionary has been willing to burn their fingers by proposing a direct assault on this "third rail" of American politics. Following the federal axing of welfare, slashing of food stamps and cutbacks in a host of other social services, the capitalists are now poised to gut pensions for the elderly. The "balanced budget" proposal now being pushed by Clinton and Congress already projects cutting \$115 billion from Medicare. Greater cuts in Social Security benefits across the board are certain to follow, including through arbitrarily lowering the "consumer price index" through which pensions are adjusted to keep abreast with inflation.

The devastation of welfare has been accompanied by a racist propaganda offensive aimed at convincing white working people that their tax dollars go to providing for teenage black welfare mothers and their kids. The pro-capitalist trade-union tops have not only turned a blind eye to this assault but have enlisted as overseers of the government's slave-labor "workfare" schemes. As always, the racist rulers single out the most vulnerable sectors of the population in order to prepare attacks on the working class as a whole. As we warned two years ago in "Lurching Toward Economic Crash?" (WV No. 619, 24 March 1995), "The attack on welfare is a prelude to slashing Social Security



Leen/Matrix



Hosefros/NY Times



Hamburg/NY Daily News

Above: Protest outside White House against Clinton's signing of anti-welfare law last August. Now racist capitalist rulers have targeted benefits for the elderly as part of drive to slash all social welfare programs.

and Medicare." We explained:

"There is now a consensus among the U.S. ruling class that something radical must be done to cut government expenditure. American imperialism needs a strong military to police the world and, of course, interest on the debt is sacrosanct. So what's left? By West European standards, the so-called 'welfare state' in the U.S. is a paltry affair. The *economically significant* programs are Social Security pensions and Medicare benefits for the elderly, which together make up about a third of federal government expenditure."

On January 6, the Presidential Commission on Social Security announced its long-awaited recommendations. The various alternative proposals—whether from

"defenders" of the current system, including three AFL-CIO officials, or from die-hard Reaganites—agreed to cut benefits, increase payroll taxes, raise the retirement age and place a substantial portion of the Social Security Trust Fund into the stock market. The only significant difference was over *how much* Wall Street would get. The most generous variant called for maintaining a guaranteed benefit of \$410 a month (compared to today's monthly average of \$747), with most of the balance invested in individual accounts set up with Wall Street firms. America's rulers are acting as though they're in tiny, impoverished Albania,

where high-flying con artists managed to bilk a quarter of the population of what little savings they had through pyramid investment scams.

Revolutionary leaders Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels noted as far back as 1847 that the capitalist state is basically an executive committee for managing the common affairs of the ruling class. The push by the White House and Congress to seize Social Security funds and invest them in the stock market is simply a reflection at the national level of what every capitalist tries to do to his "own" workers—rip up health, retirement and

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French Trotskyists: For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Austerity Elections in France

MAY 26—French voters went to the polls yesterday in the first round of parliamentary elections called by right-wing president Jacques Chirac, who is trying to position himself for renewed assaults on national health insurance, retirement pensions and other social services. As throughout Europe, the French bourgeoisie's attacks on the working class have been carried out under the banner of the 1992 Maastricht

Treaty, which calls for slashing budget deficits as a requirement for member states of the European Union (EU) joining a projected common European currency in 1999. The draconian austerity program introduced by Chirac's prime minister, Alain Juppé, has provoked a series of hard-fought strikes, most notably the massive strike wave by public sector employees in December 1995. With his governing conservative coalition swamped in yesterday's voting by the electoral alliance of Lionel Jospin's Socialist Party (PS) and Robert Hue's Communist Party (PCF), Juppé has already announced he will step down after the June 1 second round.

But the PS/PCF bloc, tailed by a myr-

riad of "far left" groups, offers nothing more than an updated version of the class-collaborationist Union of the Left governments of former PS president François Mitterrand, which carried out anti-working-class attacks and anti-immigrant terror during the 1980s. The Juppé government's deportations and other racist attacks on immigrants have been met with repeated protest demonstrations, often including sizable contingents of workers. Yet the bankruptcy of the reformist parties has allowed a sinister growth of Jean-Marie Le Pen's fascist National Front (FN), whose stock-in-trade is racist terror against immigrant workers as scapegoats for massive unemployment and economic stagnation.

The FN won an ominous 15 percent.

We publish below an abridged translation of a 15 May leaflet by our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France.

President Jacques Chirac's aim in these elections is clearly to get a "popular mandate" for the new wave of anti-working-class austerity, layoffs, anti-union attacks and anti-immigrant repression which will be necessary in the coming months in order to satisfy the "convergence criteria" of the Maastricht Treaty. The alternative proposed by Jospin and Hue is a new class-collaborationist alliance uniting the PS and the PCF with bourgeois

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Indonesia: Free Dita Sari and All Victims of Suharto's Repression!

MAY 26—The number of people killed at the hands of Indonesian dictator Suharto's troops and cops has steadily mounted in the weeks leading up to the sham May 29 parliamentary elections. This weekend, over 140 charred bodies were pulled from a shopping mall in a provincial capital after riot police trapped hundreds of supposed "looters" in buildings which were set aflame. For a month, there have been repeated clashes in the capital of Jakarta between government forces and supporters of the two tame "opposition" parties permitted to contest the elections, which are rigged to give the regime's Golkar party an overwhelming majority.

The main target of Suharto's repression is the leftist People's Democratic Party (PRD) and leaders of newly emerged independent trade unions, many of whom are supporters of the PRD. We reprint below a 14 May protest letter by the Partisan Defence Committee in Australia to

the Indonesian embassy there, denouncing the heavy sentences recently handed down to Dita Sari and other labor and leftist militants.

Despite the courage of its militants in fighting against the police-state regime, the PRD's strategy is based on political support to bourgeois "opposition" figure Megawati Sukarnoputri, a suicidal perspective which would bind the left and labor movement to a "liberal" wing of the bloodsoaked Indonesian bourgeoisie. The struggle to mobilize the combative proletariat at the head of all the oppressed in the Indonesian prison house of peoples requires a fight for the political independence of the proletariat from all wings of the bourgeoisie. For a Trotskyist party! For workers revolution to sweep away the Suharto dictatorship!

* * *

On 22 April in Surabaya, Dita Indah Sari, president of the Indonesian Center

for Labour Struggles (PPBI), was sentenced to six years jail for "sowing hatred against the government," and Sari's co-defendants Coen Hussein Pontoh and Mohammed Soleh were both sentenced to four years jail.

On 28 April in the Central Java District Court, Budiman Sudjatmiko, chairman of the Partai Rakyat Demokratik (PRD), was sentenced to 13 years jail for "undermining the state ideology and inciting students and workers to demonstrate against the government." Sudjatmiko's co-defendants also were sentenced to long jail terms: Suroso (seven years), Ignatius Damianus Pranowo (nine years), Yakobus Eko Kurniawan (eight years) and Garda Sembiring (12 years). Five supporters of the defendants, protesting outside the court, were arrested on 28 April.

In the South Jakarta District Court on 28 April Petrus Hari Hariyanto (PRD secretary general) was sentenced to six years jail alongside his co-defendants Ken Budha Kusumandaru (four years), Victor da Costa (18 months) and Ign. Putut Arinoko (18 months). Wilson Bin Nurtias and I Gusti Agung Anom Astika are still being tried in South Jakarta.

We demand that these brave militants as well as Muchtar Pakpahan (leader of the banned SBSI trade-union federation) and all victims of right-wing repression be released immediately and the charges and sentences against them be dropped!

These militants were arrested after, and made scapegoats for last year's 27 July anti-government demonstrations protesting the military's brutal eviction of supporters of Megawati Sukarnoputri from the headquarters of the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party. But the size and determination of the 27 July protests, where thousands battled troops

and armed riot police who were ordered to "shoot on sight," speak to a deep-going opposition to the repressive Suharto dictatorship.

The regime's tirades against a supposed "Communist threat" evoked—as was intended—the spectre of the horrendous anti-Communist bloodbath of workers and peasants carried out by the Suharto-led military and by anti-communist mobs in 1965. Australian and U.S. imperialism aided and abetted this massacre in order to keep the region safe for capitalist exploitation. The message is as clear as it is brutal: All who oppose Suharto's "New Order" government will be slaughtered in the same manner as were more than one million supporters of the Indonesian Communist Party and other militants in 1965 and the workers and peasants of East Timor who have been fighting for their independence for over 20 years.

Dita Sari's "crime" was to lead more than 10,000 workers from ten factories in the Tandes industrial district of Surabaya on strike against starvation wages on 7 and 8 July last year. The very existence of the 1962 anti-subversion laws (which carry sanctions up to and including death) and the draconian sentence meted out to Dita Sari and the fact that Muchtar Pakpahan is still being dragged through the courts despite his serious ill-health, all bear testimony to the regime's mortal fear of the spectre of the huge and combative Indonesian working class organized in struggle.

The crimes of the Suharto regime have not escaped the attention of the organized working class internationally, witness the Maritime Union of Australia's recent bans on Indonesian shipping in defence of their imprisoned Indonesian brothers and sisters.

Those murdered, disappeared and imprisoned by the Suharto dictatorship will not disappear from the memory of the international working class! The Partisan Defence Committee demands that all detained leftist militants and workers leaders be released and all charges be dropped! ■



TROTSKY

Gracchus Babeuf, Egalitarian Communist

This month marks 200 years since the trial and execution of Gracchus Babeuf. Babeuf was the principal leader of the Conspiracy of Equals, the first attempt in history to establish communism through the insurrectionary overthrow of the bourgeois state by the working class. Shaped by a society which was still pre-industrial, at a time when the working class was largely artisan in character and not an industrial proletariat, the communism of Babeuf was not the communism of Marx and Engels, nor could it be. It was a communism based on equality of distribution rather than one based on collectivized production utilizing the most advanced scientific and technological methods. Yet despite its historical limitations, the Babouvist movement, occurring in the final phases of the French Revolution, inspired future generations of communists. On trial for his life in May 1797, Babeuf courageously defended his principles.

The masses can no longer find a way to go on living; they see that they possess nothing and that they suffer under the harsh and flinty oppression of a greedy ruling class. The hour strikes for great and memorable revolutionary events, already foreseen in the writings of the times, when a general overthrow of the system of private property is inevitable, when the revolt of the poor against the rich becomes a necessity that can no longer be postponed....

Nature has placed everyone under an obligation to work. None may exempt himself from work without committing an antisocial action. Work and its fruits should be common to all. Oppression exists when one man is ground down by toil and lacks the barest necessities of life, while another revels in luxury and idleness. It is impossible for anyone, without committing a crime, to appropriate for his own exclusive use the fruits of the earth or of manufacture.

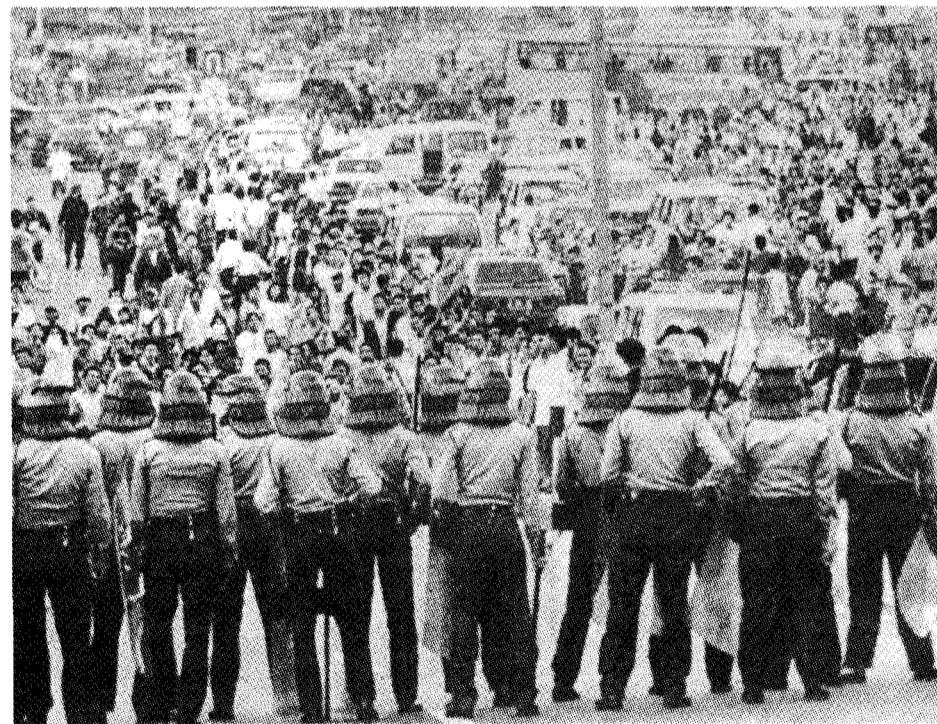
In a truly just social order there are neither rich nor poor. The rich, who refuse to give up their superfluous wealth for the benefit of the poor, are enemies of the people. None may be permitted to monopolize the cultural resources of society and hence to deprive others of the education essential for their wellbeing. Education is a universal human right.

The purpose of the Revolution is to abolish inequality and to restore the common welfare. The Revolution is not yet at an end, since the wealthy have diverted its fruits, including political power, to their own exclusive use, while the poor in their toil and misery lead a life of actual slavery and count for nothing in the State.

—Gracchus Babeuf, *The Defense of Gracchus Babeuf Before the High Court of Vendôme* (Schocken Books, 1972)



LENIN



Santana/NY Times

Suharto dictatorship deploys murderous riot police on Jakarta streets to suppress protests in run-up to sham elections.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR: Len Meyers

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Joe Sol

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mindy Sanders

EDITORIAL BOARD: Ray Bishop (managing editor), Bruce André, Helene Brosius, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Frank Hunter, Jane Kerrigan, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer

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NEW YORK CITY

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Administration Stirs Cauldron of Ethnic Strife

S.F. State University: Bosnia by the Bay

To enforce Proposition 209, which is aimed at eliminating what minimal access to a college education exists for blacks and other minorities, the administrators of California's public universities are viciously squelching student protest against this racist purge. In April, campus cops at the University of California (UC) at Berkeley rioted against students who had occupied an administration office in protest against Prop. 209. Protesters were beaten with clubs and repeatedly gassed in the face with potentially lethal pepper spray.

On the other side of the Bay at the heavily plebeian San Francisco State University, the campus administration threatened black, Latino and leftist students with loss of student group status or expulsion for organizing an "unauthorized" campus demonstration against Prop. 209. At the same time, the administration, through its lackeys on the editorial board of the student newspaper, the *Golden Gater*, has initiated criminal charges against members of the black nationalist Pan Afrikan Student Union (PASU).

Some years ago, San Francisco journalist Herb Caen facetiously nicknamed the city "Baghdad by the Bay." Today, SF State could well be characterized as "Bosnia by the Bay," as the administration stirs up a boiling cauldron of racial and ethnic hostilities. Far from opposing this, the various purveyors of nationalist and reformist student politics are playing straight into the administration's hands.

PASU hails former Farrakhan aide Khallid Muhammad as a "revolutionary," inviting this black nationalist demagogue who alibis the Nazi Holocaust to spew his anti-Semitic filth on campus. The Zionists of Hillel House equate anti-Semitism with opposition to the murderous, racist Zionist rulers of Israel. On the other hand, the General Union of Palestinian Students reinforces the lie that anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism by identifying liberal Zionist students with the war criminals at the head of the Israeli state. Not to be outdone, the Muslim Student Association raves that "Zionists" financed the last two world wars and the Bolshevik Revolution. Then, when Khal-

id Muhammad did appear on campus on May 21 under PASU's auspices, he was met by members of the fascist Jewish Defense League, who reportedly chanted, "Sieg Heil!"

The "alternative" offered by some so-called "leftists" who have rallied under the auspices of the "Coalition to Defy Prop 209," including the International Socialist Organization, the Revolutionary Workers League and the Committees of Correspondence, is to grovel before the administration. The central demand of their "unauthorized" May 7 demonstration was to call on university president Robert Corrigan to "defy Proposition 209 and show solidarity with UC Berkeley students." When Corrigan responded by threatening them with expulsion, the Coalition held a rally on May 14 appealing to the good graces of the administration to "publicly apologize for their threats!"

At the May 14 rally, a Spartacus Youth Club spokesman put forward a class-struggle perspective. In counterposition to a Coalition leaflet pleading with

the university administration to "protect freedom of speech and the right to assemble," our speaker declared:

"We say: No way! This administration runs a capitalist system of education which has no interest in educating blacks, minorities or working-class youth. This is the administration which put police snipers on the rooftops at the '94 graduation, which just a few months ago tried to drive a young woman off campus for defending herself. We call for open admissions and free, quality education for all! Abolish the administration! Cops off campus! For student/teacher/worker control of the university! But to get that we need, as students—black, white, Asian, Latino and Jewish—to mobilize with the multiracial working class in integrated class struggle against capitalism."

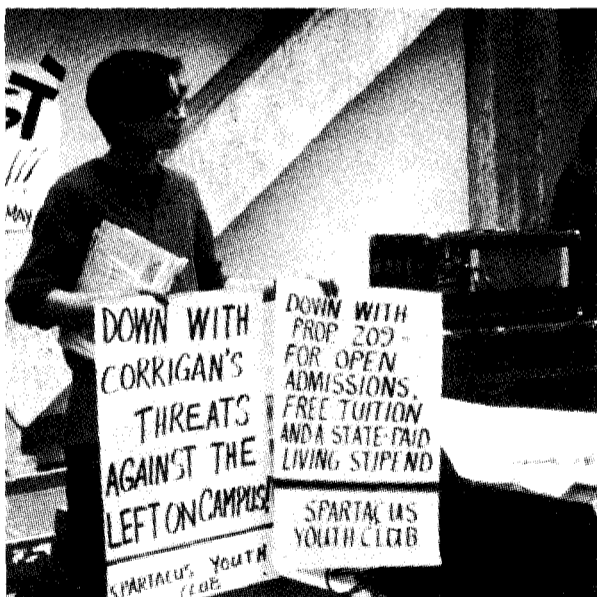
Anti-Semites, Zionists and Agents of the Administration

When PASU put up a banner in the university plaza on April 23 which featured a swastika superimposed on an Israeli flag and the slogan "One Settler, One Bullet," it provoked an uproar. The Hillel Zionists demanded that the banner be removed. They were backed by Corrigan, who issued a memo denouncing "ugly, divisive and ultimately hateful behavior of this kind" and calling for "repudiation of the hate messengers." What rank hypocrisy! In 1975, the SF State administration mobilized its cops to defend the "right" of Bay Area Nazis to spew their racist filth on campus. Ten years later, they did the same in defense of Israeli fascist führer Meir Kahane.

PASU argued that its banner was not anti-Semitic but anti-Zionist. Indeed, to draw attention to the fact that pogroms against the Palestinian people by the Zionist state and fascist settlers have very much in common with the genocidal policies of Adolf Hitler is hardly anti-Semitic. But PASU's professed anti-Zionism serves primarily as a thin cover for pushing virulent anti-Semitism. In April, PASU sponsored Khallid Muhammad as a keynote speaker at a conference of the African/Black Statewide Student Association. This was followed by inviting him to campus on May 21 to address a meeting "In Honor of Malcolm X's Birthday."

Muhammad's grotesque anti-Semitism and his calls to "kill the white man" were seized on by the *Golden Gater* to provide ammunition for the racist administration to go after PASU. The *Gater* found a golden opportunity to do so when thousands of copies of an issue of its paper labeling PASU a "hate group" went missing. Although PASU leaders denied taking the papers, *Golden Gater* editors are pressing *felony grand theft* charges, carrying a sentence of one to two years in jail, against PASU. Whoever dumped the papers should be condemned

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Young Spartacus



Larsen/SF Examiner

SYC joins SF State protest in May against racist Prop. 209. Right: In 1994, campus administration called in riot cops against students who opposed removing mural of Malcolm X.

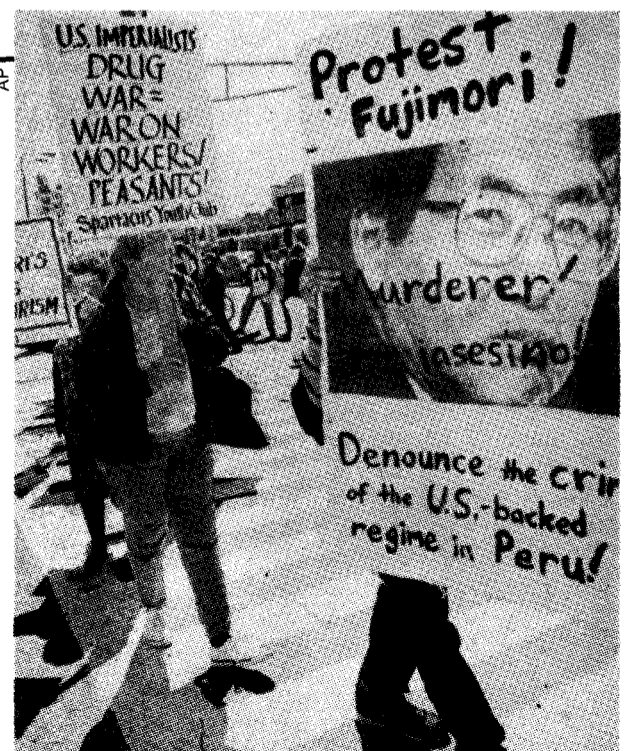
Boston University Protest

"¡Fujimori Asesino!"

Chanting "Fujimori, asesino, we will not forget!" some 40 people protested outside the Boston University commencement ceremony on May 18 against the Peruvian dictator who last month ordered the slaughter of 14 Túpac Amaru (MRTA) leftists in Lima. At the same time, the parents of Lori Berenson and several others held a press conference across the street to demand the release of their daughter, imprisoned by the Fujimori regime on charges of assisting the Túpac Amaru rebels.

The protest was called by LACASA, Workers World Party and the July 26 Movement upon learning that

Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori would be attending his daughter's graduation at Boston University. A 16-strong Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club contingent carried signs reading "Free Imprisoned Túpac Amaru Supporters and All Victims of Fujimori's Terror!" and "Workers/Peasants: Sweep Away Bloody Fujimori Dictatorship!" While much of the left has been prostrate in the face of Fujimori's U.S.-backed bloodbath, the SL/SYC seeks to sear this into the memory of the international working class. As our chant put it, "Washington, Lima, Tokyo—The whole damn system has got to go!" ■



Social Security...

(continued from page 1)

other benefits while driving down wages and speeding up production. This is inherent in the workings of the capitalist system. Driven by the lash of competition, the bourgeoisie is obliged to force the working class into ever-deeper immiseration in the drive to maximize profits.

Pinochet's Chile: Wall Street's Model

For the past two years bourgeois economists, right-wing think tanks and Wall Street brokers have flooded the media with projections of the imminent collapse of the Social Security system. The fear campaign is based on the fact that by the middle of the next century, there will be a vast increase in the number of those receiving Social Security retirement benefits relative to the number of workers whose payroll taxes fund those benefits.

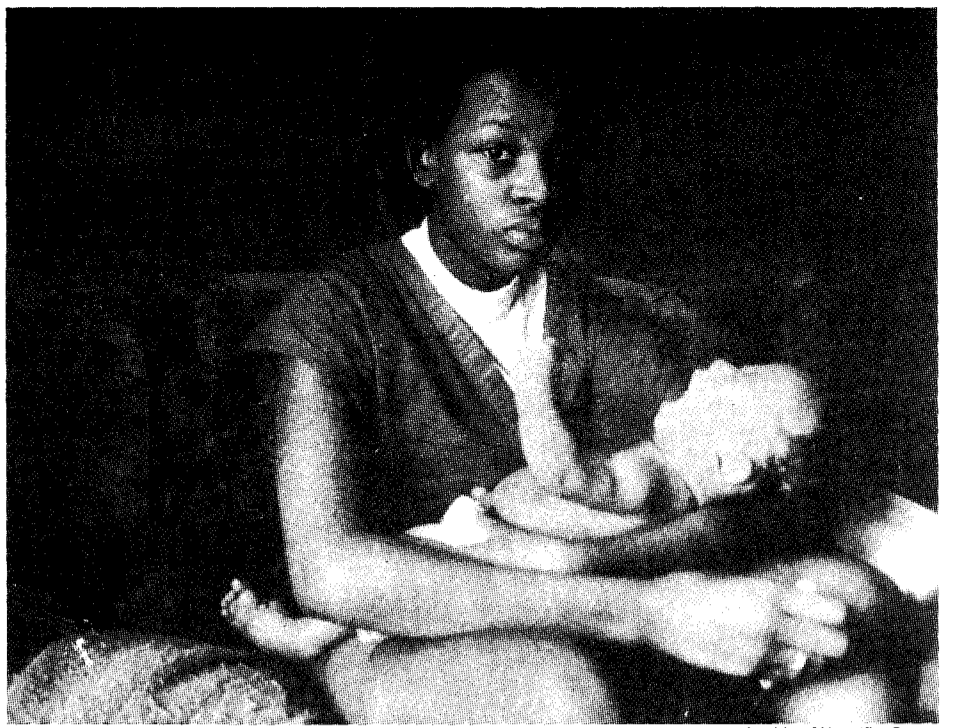
There is good reason to fear for the future availability of Social Security benefits, but it has nothing to do with demographics. The government is pretty much already doing what the bankers desire for themselves, looting the Social Security Trust Fund to the tune of \$35 billion a year. Washington takes our cash from the fund, spends it on missiles, bombers and submarines, and leaves low-yield government bonds in its place. The ledgers say there are hundreds of billions of dol-

of capitalist competition have only been amplified manyfold by the imperialist system, in which giant monopolies and financial empires, backed up by the military might of powerful nation-states, compete on a world scale for markets, foreign investments and sources of raw materials. As Leon Trotsky noted in the 1920s, "The international capitalist system has already spent itself and is no longer capable of progress *as a whole*."

The moves to privatize Social Security are part of a broad offensive by the American capitalist class, facing increasing interimperialist rivalry, to ratchet up the rate of exploitation. The same project is being pursued by the ruling classes of West Europe, where attempts to gut government pensions and other programs associated with the "welfare state" have provoked huge working-class protests and strikes, particularly in Italy and France.

By slashing Social Security, the U.S. rulers aim to cut the living standards of American working people at two levels. First and most obviously, by reducing the incomes of older people no longer working or, in many cases, able to work. Many retirees are already forced to rely on soup kitchens or to work at minimum-wage jobs to survive. As far as Wall Street is concerned, if more of them die sooner for the sake of the Dow-Jones average, so be it. Secondly, the gutting of Social Security is intended to force younger workers to cut their own consumption level in the hope of having something to live on when they're too old to work.

The bourgeoisie is also trying to force



Avakian/Woodfin Camp

Gutting of welfare will consign millions of poor and minority women and children to hunger, homelessness.

ingly to act as open enforcers for capitalist takebacks and layoffs while preaching a one-sided class "peace." The fight to forge a revolutionary workers party is intimately linked to a political struggle to oust the pro-capitalist union tops.

Tailing the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, the reformist left sees no possibility of class struggle. Typical is *Workers World* (30 January), which pleads with the union tops to "make the rich pay" for Social Security and to demand a "tax on stock transfers." The utopian call to "tax the rich" has long been a hobbyhorse not only of reformist "socialists," but of petty-bourgeois populists of both left and right coloration. Even capitalist press reports make clear that, whatever the tax structure, the rich and their high-priced accountants and tax lawyers will always find myriad "loopholes" to allow them to pay little if any taxes. At any rate, this slogan is premised on the fantasy that the capitalist rulers can be made to reorganize *their* finances in order to benefit the working class.

At bottom, the perspective of the labor tops and their reformist hangers-on is reduced to pressuring liberal Democrats to act as "friends of labor," in particular through futile attempts to revive the New Deal coalition of the 1930s. The New Deal was in fact aimed at suppressing class struggle by offering some palliative reforms in order to tie the workers organizations to the capitalist Democrats—an unholy alliance including not only labor's liberal class enemies in the North but also the Southern Dixiecrats who employed police terror against blacks, unions and reds. And what reforms were granted to the workers were secured primarily as a result of class struggle in what was the world's richest imperialist power. Exposing illusions in New Deal reformism pushed by the Stalinists of the Communist Party and others, Leon Trotsky wrote in the 1930s:

"The policy of the New Deal, which tries to save the imperialist democracy by way of sops to the labour and farmer

aristocracy, is in its broad compass accessible only to the very wealthy nations, and so in that sense it is American policy *par excellence*. The government has attempted to shift a part of the costs of that policy to the shoulders of the monopolists, exhorting them to raise wages and shorten the labour day and thus increase the purchasing power of the population and extend production.... The New Deal policy with its fictitious achievements and its very real increase in the national debt, leads unavoidably to ferocious capitalist reaction and a devastating explosion of imperialism."

—Leon Trotsky, "Marxism in Our Time" (1939)

Indeed, liberal and reformist myth to the contrary, it was not Franklin D. Roosevelt's Keynesian economic policies which pulled the country out of the Great Depression, but rather U.S. imperialism's preparation for and entry into World War II.

Until the mass radicalization of the Great Depression, the only social insurance program the U.S. capitalists would concede was Workers Compensation, a means to shield industrial employers from costly lawsuits resulting from industrial accidents. Not only was the U.S. the last of the industrial nations to institute a system of pension benefits—over 50 years after Chancellor Bismarck decreed a social security program in Germany—but the American system was also the worst, requiring workers to contribute part of their wages. Social Security was and remains a steeply regressive payroll tax, with lower-income workers paying a larger percentage in taxes and incomes over \$64,000 exempted entirely.

The American bourgeoisie has never been keen on the idea of Social Security. How the American capitalist class prefers to treat those too old or disabled to produce profits for it was exemplified in the army assault on a 1932 pensioners' march, the "Bonus Army." Twenty-five thousand World War I veterans from around the country marched to Washington, D.C., many on crutches or in wheelchairs, to demand payment of overdue pensions, only to be viciously attacked by



Don Wright

lars in the trust fund—in reality there are government bonds which Washington may not have the money to cover when the debt comes due.

Promoters of privatization paint rosy pictures of how investing the same funds in the market will make everyone millionaires. Of late, Wall Street has been trumpeting Chile's private pension scheme as a model for replacing Social Security. The Chile plan, drafted by U.S. economists known as the "Chicago Boys," was imposed in the aftermath of the bloody 1973 CIA-backed military coup led by General Pinochet, which left tens of thousands of workers and leftists dead. While many working people live in dire poverty, foreign and domestic investors have benefited from a huge bonanza.

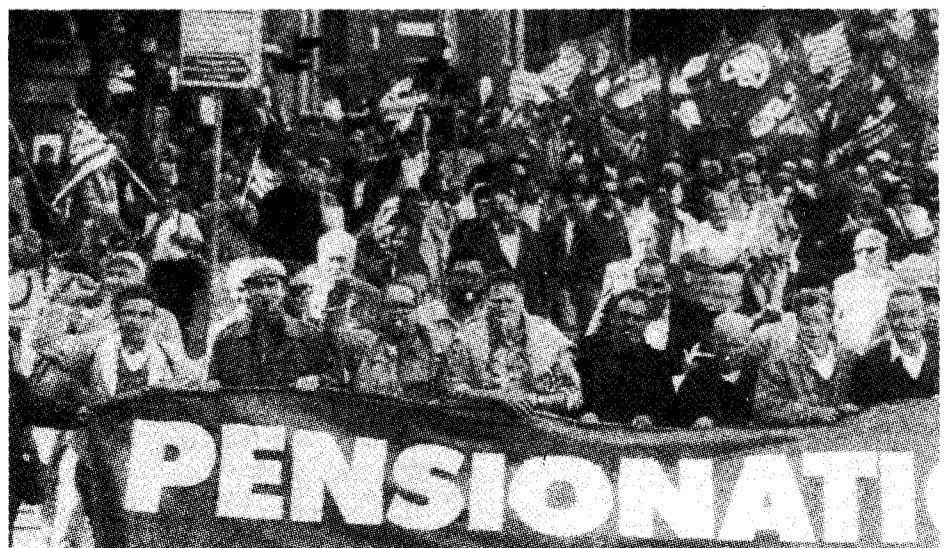
At its best, Wall Street's privatization schemes will leave millions of individual retirees penniless as a result of investments gone sour. More generally, the whole system may go bust. Today's bullish stock market recalls the speculative boom of the 1920s, which was immediately followed by the 1929 stock market crash and Great Depression of the '30s. Only a few years ago, Japan was being touted for its supposedly inexorable capitalist expansion. Since the start of the decade, a sharp slide on the Tokyo exchange has wiped out fully 50 percent of the value of Japanese stocks.

The repeated financial crises and economic depressions which have marked the history of industrial capitalism since its rise two centuries ago are an expression of the inherent chaos of the capitalist market. And the vagaries and instabilities

through an increase in the rate of savings in order to expand the funds available for investment at home and abroad. A large part of the country's economic surplus is absorbed by military expenditures to facilitate U.S. imperialism's self-appointed role as "policeman of the world." Yet borrowing from abroad threatens to undermine Wall Street's control of the country's productive wealth. For American capitalism, this constitutes a serious problem. The U.S. has the lowest level of personal savings of any major industrial capitalist country. As real wages have fallen by 20 percent over the past generation, working people have gone massively into debt through mortgages, bank loans, credit cards, etc. In 1995, American families saved only 4.5 percent of their after-tax income, compared to 13.5 percent for Japanese families. But a major factor behind Japan's high personal savings rate is the low level of state-funded retirement benefits. In fact, Japan cut state pension benefits by 20 percent in the late 1980s.

Reformists' New Deal Myth

The fight against the wholesale attacks on working people, minorities, the poor and immigrants must be linked to the struggle to overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with a socialist planned economy. But such a perspective runs right up against the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, the lieutenants of capitalism in the workers movement. With the bourgeoisie today no longer even offering the workers crumbs from its banquet table, the bureaucracy's role is increas-



La Repubblica

Italian trade unions demonstrate against government plans to cut old-age pensions, 1994.

troops led by future World War II "hero" Douglas MacArthur. MacArthur's aide was Dwight Eisenhower, another WW II military icon and future president.

After a decade in which union membership dropped from five million to two million, the Great Depression of the 1930s radicalized the working class. A slight revival of industry in 1933 ushered in an explosion of strike activity. By August, an average of over 2.3 million work days per month were being lost to strikes. The mass industrial unions of the CIO were born out of the three citywide general strikes in 1934 (Minneapolis, San Francisco and Toledo)—all led by "reds"—and were built through militant class-struggle tactics like the sit-down strike. Contrary to the union misleaders and their reformist tails, the right to organize wasn't won in Washington, but through pitched battles with scabs, cops and government troops. The vaunted Section 7A of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and the subsequent Wagner Act were designed to derail militant labor struggle and confine it in the straitjacket of capitalist legality.

Mass dissatisfaction with the greedy capitalists also led to the rise of electoral movements to the left of the Democratic Party—the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, novelist Upton Sinclair's End Poverty in California plan—and right-wing demagogues like Huey Long. Mass support for some form of retirement benefits was reflected in the vast popularity of the Townsend plan to provide \$200 per month pensions to the elderly. With an eye toward the 1936 elections, and seeing an increasingly restive working class, FDR & Co. offered Social Security as a sop to the workers.

The 1935 Social Security Act was one of the crumbs thrown to the working class in the hope of dousing the fires of class struggle and stemming mounting dissatisfaction with the New Deal. Encompassing several different programs, it provided benefits to workers over the age of 65 (which was greater than the average life expectancy at the time), as well as federal grants for the disabled. Unemployment insurance was also initiated



National Archives

Left: Troops brutally disperse 1932 Washington, D.C. "Bonus Army" march for unpaid pensions. Rulers granted Social Security in response to upsurge of class struggle. Right: CIO organizing drive in steel industry in late 1930s.



AFL-CIO

under the Act, to be administered separately by state governments. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), another of the provisions, was eliminated in Clinton's welfare "reform" last year.

Even the few reforms that were secured under the New Deal were by and large designed to exclude black people, not surprising given that the Southern Dixiecrats were a substantial part of Roosevelt's coalition. FDR's works programs never provided jobs for more than 25 percent of the jobless, with the greatest burden falling on black workers. While Works Project Administration (WPA) workers in the North were paid barely livable wages as low as \$40 a month, in the South the pay was less than half that. And Southern industries whose workers were mostly black were exempted from even the lower Southern minimum wage. Those most in need of Social Security coverage—predominantly black farm and domestic workers—were excluded. Today, a significant portion of the black population is still not covered by Social Security.

Break with the Democrats!

The men who rule this country want to return to the "free market" capitalism of the 1920s, which they now idealize as a golden age—no unions, no welfare, no Social Security, little or no government

control over financial speculation. The American (and also West European) bourgeoisies have convinced themselves that nothing like the Great Depression can ever happen again, that the business cycle is a thing of the past. Wall Street bankers and CEOs of Fortune 500 corporations seem to believe that the stock market can and will go ever higher as long as money keeps pumping into it. There is no acknowledgement that the market value of a capitalist enterprise is ultimately based on its actual earning capacity.

The current political, economic and financial climate increasingly resembles that of the late 1920s when U.S. president Calvin Coolidge triumphantly proclaimed "the highest record of years of prosperity"—on the eve of the 1929 crash. Echoing Coolidge today is Sylvester Schreiber, a member of the Presidential Commission on Social Security, who enthuses about "this economic miracle that we call America." Today, however, the entire complex of New Deal-derived reforms is being scrapped or dismantled at the very moment when conditions are more than ripe for a major financial/economic crash.

It is, of course, necessary for the working class to defend gains of past struggles like Social Security. But it is just as necessary to reject and oppose a

reformist framework which accepts the capitalist economic system as eternal and immutable. This is all the more true in this epoch of imperialist decay when, as Trotsky noted in the 1938 Transitional Program:

"...in general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards; when the bourgeoisie always takes away with the right hand twice what it grants with the left (taxes, tariffs, inflation, 'deflation,' high prices, unemployment, police supervision of strikes); when every serious demand of the proletariat and even every serious demand of the petty bourgeoisie, inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state.

"The strategic task of the Fourth International lies not in reforming capitalism but in its overthrow. Its political aim is the conquest of power by the proletariat for the purpose of expropriating the bourgeoisie."

There can and will be no genuine social security, no end to poverty and unemployment, to homelessness and racist oppression except through a planned, collectivized economy governed in the interests of the working people. To achieve this goal requires the construction and victory of a multiracial workers party dedicated to leading all the exploited and oppressed in struggle against the capitalist bosses and their state. ■

S.F. State...

(continued from page 3)

for political censorship. But the *Gater's* sinister escalation of its anti-PASU campaign, calling on the racist capitalist state to persecute black students, is an outrage. We demand that all charges against PASU be dropped now!

Echoing the *Gater's* diatribes, Corrigan issued a letter denouncing PASU as a threat to "the tenets of freedom of the press and free speech that we hold very dear." This comes from the man who, in 1994, ordered in a cop riot squad to brutally disperse a multiracial group of students who were trying to defend a mural of Malcolm X against administration attempts to remove it from the wall of the student plaza. At that year's graduation ceremonies, Corrigan had police snipers stationed on campus rooftops, scanning the crowd of parents and students through their rifle sights for "trouble."

The Malcolm X mural—which obscenely incorporated overtly anti-Semitic symbols—was commissioned by PASU. While opposing the Gestapo-style intervention of the administration, the SYC also denounced PASU for besmirching the legacy of Malcolm X, a courageous fighter for black freedom. Addressing a meeting of the Student Union Governing Board called to debate the question of the mural, an SYC spokesman said:

"Malcolm X was the enemy of the kind of nationalist demagoguery and bigotry, the vile anti-Semitism that is preached by people like Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam. Farrakhan, the man who said Malcolm X was 'worthy of death,' wants to divert the justified outrage of black youth against this racist society

into poisonous bigotry, into *accepting* racial segregation. Anti-Semitism is sucker bait and it lets the racist rulers of this country—who hold the real wealth and power—off the hook. It is capitalism which keeps black people forcibly segregated at the bottom of this viciously racist society of exploitation and oppression. Setting blacks against Jews only fans the flames of racist reaction, whose first targets will be black people."

Down With Nationalist Bigotry!

While PASU postures as oh-so "radical" and even "revolutionary," in fact their outlook reflects that of a despairing black middle class—what W.E.B. Du Bois called the "talented tenth"—who see the doors to advancement in this racist society increasingly slammed shut in their faces. Thus the appeals by Farrakhan and Muhammad to advance the utopian cause of "black capitalism" find resonance with PASU members, who see this as their ticket to success. The anti-Semitic, anti-Arab, anti-Asian bigotry of the black nationalists is aimed at clearing the road for them to become the exploiters of their "own" people.

In a leaflet titled "Zionism Exposed!" members of Hillel ridiculed the anti-Semitism of PASU and other student groups by satirically describing how "Zionists" control "the administration, the student government, the area code, your hair style, the weather." The idea that Jews control the levers of power in this country is a reactionary fantasy (shared by the fascists) which serves to divert anger away from the real enemy, the overwhelmingly white Anglo-Saxon Protestant ruling class.

Yet while Hillel denounces *black* anti-Semites of Khallid Muhammad's ilk, it has been deployed in the service of some of the most vicious enemies of Jews and

other minorities. In 1993, Hillel members at SF State were implicated in a massive spying operation perpetrated by the rabid Zionists of the Anti-Defamation League, who used the information to finger leftists, Palestinians and anti-apartheid activists to the FBI, the CIA, the Israeli Mossad and the South African apartheid secret police. These days, Hillel members at SF State have much more of a liberal posture, including sometimes proclaiming their own opposition to the genocidal policies of the Israeli government. Yet with their ardent defense of Zionist ideology, which can only mean ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people, Hillel is incapable of fighting bigotry in any form.

The hostilities that seethe on the SF State campus are a microcosm of the racial and ethnic hatreds that are whipped up by the racist rulers of America for the purpose of furthering the exploitation and oppression of the working people and the poor. The way out lies through building a multiracial revolutionary workers party that can forge an alliance of blacks, immigrants, Jews and all minorities behind the social power of the integrated working class. The forging of such a party—which aims to shatter the power of America's racist capitalist rulers through victorious socialist revolution—is the task to which the Spartacus Youth Clubs and the Spartacist League are dedicated. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office

Box 1377 GPO
New York, NY 10116
(212) 732-7860

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Box 390840, Central Sta.
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(617) 666-9453

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
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Lies, Damned Lies and Anti-Union Lawsuits

IG's Brazil Fraud Exposed

When the four members of the "Internationalist Group" (IG) precipitated their expulsions from the Spartacist League/U.S. last spring, they immediately formed an anti-Spartacist bloc with the small Brazilian Luta Metalúrgica/Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil (LM/LQB). Even while they were in the SL, IG leaders Norden and Negrete had for two years been covering for and/or braintrusting the LM/LQB, with which the International Communist League had maintained fraternal relations until last June. Together, the IG and the LQB have attempted to shift the terrain of our differences away from the fight to build a Trotskyist party in Brazil to the fiction that the ICL "fled the class struggle," in particular a supposed final conflict to expel the cops from the SFPMVR municipal workers union—in which LM exercised some influence—in the city of Volta Redonda.

Readers interested in the truth are encouraged to study *International Bulletin* No. 41, "The Fight for a Trotskyist Party in Brazil," a trilingual (English, Spanish and Portuguese) bulletin published by the International Secretariat of the ICL. This bulletin comprises the documentary record of correspondence between the ICL and the LM/LQB from January 1996—when this work was reclaimed from the exclusive control of Norden and Negrete—to our break in fraternal relations with the LM/LQB on 17 June 1996. Following a sufficiently long testing period, including with ICL representatives on site, we broke relations because it became abundantly clear that for LM, opportunist maneuvers to maintain control of a union took precedence over the crucial task of forging a revolutionary party. Moreover, in the union involved, in which LM held only an unelected position, a tenth of the membership is murderous cops.

Amid the IG's vituperative accusations against the ICL, we have doggedly pursued our work of introducing genuine Trotskyism to the labor movement, the left and intelligentsia in Latin America and everywhere we can reach around the globe. Thus, on a recent trip to Brazil, a team of ICL representatives sold new issues of our Mexican journal *Espartaco*, the new Spanish-language edition of



IG proclaims class-struggle victory by LM/LQB opposing cops, courts in Volta Redonda municipal workers union. But Volta Redonda newspaper headlines that LM/LQB supporter was ousted as union president and reports: "The expelled unionist appealed to the courts against the decision and awaits a court order to regain the post." So much for IG's lying "Dossier."

Spartacist devoted to writings on the fight for a Leninist party by James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, and the ICL's new Brazil bulletin. What our comrades discovered firsthand was evidence of the *class betrayal* carried out by the LQB in Volta Redonda, a betrayal which has been covered up through an international game of smoke, mirrors and outright lies by the IG.

This evidence exposes as a fraud the IG's February 1997 pamphlet titled "Dossier: Class Struggle and Repression in Volta Redonda, Brazil—Cops, Courts Out of the Unions," where it crows about a tremendous and principled fight and victory by the LM/LQB against the bourgeois cops and courts in the labor movement. Brazil is a country literally soaked in the bloodshed of unbridled, murderous police terror. So many people are killed by the police that real records aren't kept and the police almost always go unpunished. An article titled "Mean Streets of Salvador" in the *London Review of Books* (22 August 1996) gave a conservative estimate that one street child is murdered approximately every four hours in Brazil. Recently, a videotape of the kind of police terror that happens every day in

Brazil was played on international television and riveted public attention in Brazil.

Had the victory against the cops that the IG has trumpeted occurred, one would expect that the LQB would have broadcast this far and wide throughout the Brazilian left and labor movement. But the ICL team which recently visited Brazil—and contacted the CUT trade-union federation which covers the Volta Redonda region—found that *nobody* knew of this alleged victory against the cops in Volta Redonda, *because it never happened*. Indeed, at a May Day rally of some 20,000 workers in the "ABC" industrial belt surrounding São Paulo, in which our comrades participated and sold our literature to unions and left groups, the most common question asked by people attracted by our new Brazil bulletin was, "But who is the LQB?" In the country's major political and industrial center, we encountered nobody who knew that the LM/LQB even continued to exist after the ICL broke fraternal relations!

Contrary to the IG's grandiose claims, the truth of the matter is:

1) *The murderous municipal police (guardas) have not separated from the union, as claimed by the IG, but are still union members.* In regard to the IG's claim that the police had formed a separate association, in a face-to-face discussion in Volta Redonda on May 3, LQB leader Cerezo told ICL representatives: "You can't say that the cops have exactly separated from the union. The head of the association was killed by a municipal *guarda* so that really slowed the process down. Things really came to a standstill in the separation."

2) *LQB member and former union president Geraldo Ribeiro was driven out of the leadership along with his unelected "adviser" Cerezo, and the union is now controlled by the pro-cop faction led by Artur Fernandes.* In our May 3 discussion with Cerezo, he acknowledged, "Artur controls the union." When our representative pointed out, "That's not what the IG 'dossier' says," Cerezo confirmed, "It's true, Artur controls the union."

3) *LQB member Geraldo Ribeiro filed at least two lawsuits against the union in the bourgeois courts to try to maintain his position as president of the SFPMVR, i.e., he appealed to the capitalist state to decide who should lead the municipal union!* These lawsuits are a matter of public record in the First Civil Court (*1ª Vara Cível*) in Volta Redonda (*Autor: Geraldo Ribeiro, Réu: Sindicato dos Funcionários Públicos do Município de Volta Redonda*); case numbers 30,833/96

and 30,831/96.

In addition to the evidence obtained from the courts and through direct discussions with the LQB, there is supporting evidence, reproduced here, from the Volta Redonda newspaper *Diário do Vale*.

• On 30 July 1996, under the headline "Assembly Expels Municipal Workers Union President," *Diário do Vale* reports: "The expelled unionist [Ribeiro] appealed to the courts against the decision and awaits a court order to regain the post."

• On 31 July 1996, under the headline "Unionist Claims Not to Have Lost Mandate," *Diário do Vale* reports: "The elected president for the Municipal Workers Union, Geraldo Ribeiro, said yesterday that he did not recognize the decision of the evening meeting on the day before yesterday, when close to 25 municipal workers approved his expulsion. He asserted that the organization is still subjected to intervention and that the decision regarding the presidency should be made by the courts."

• On 2 August 1996, under the headline "Courts Will Decide About Union's Leadership Next Week," *Diário do Vale* quotes Geraldo Ribeiro as saying: "We know the courts are sluggish and it is worthless for us to wait for a decision while the union does not have representation." The paper goes on to note Ribeiro's "avoiding any comment, however, on what is being done to assure his regaining the presidency."

• On 12 August 1996, under the headline "Municipal Workers Union Will Defend the Null Vote," *Diário do Vale* reports: "The financial situation of the union is aggravated even more by the blocking of the organization's bank account with close to R\$2,000, which will only be released after the conclusion of the legal action pushed by Ribeiro in his attempt to regain the presidency."

Diário do Vale is a bourgeois newspaper in a company town and we have no reason to doubt that its editorial posture would be hostile to any leftist opposition in the local unions. Yet this one local paper of record carried no fewer than five articles in less than a month, all of which assert that union leader and LQB member Ribeiro dragged the bourgeois state into internal union affairs through lawsuits. *If this were not so, where then is the necessary refutation by the LQB or the IG?* The LQB has published not a single issue of their press since the first one—which was largely written and financed by the ICL prior to the break in fraternal relations, and then published as the IG's anti-ICL Brazilian adornment nearly a full year ago. Meanwhile, the IG itself has published a bulletin, two journals, a "dossier," numerous leaflets, and has a Web page on the Internet—yet they have maintained a deafening and guilty silence about these disturbing reports in the Brazilian press!

IG "Dossier"—International Eyewash and Cover-Up for Betrayal

We know that the IG has had access to *Diário do Vale* because when it ran an article with a false statement which served the IG's purpose, they criminally reprinted it without comment, much less correction. If the lie suits them, they flaunt it. Thus on page 20 of the IG "Dossier" we find a long quote from *Diário do Vale* (17 May 1996) which states: "Luta Metalúrgica made its support to the election campaign of Geraldo Ribeiro's slate—which ended up winning the election for the leadership of the Volta Redonda Municipal Workers Union—conditional on carrying out a program drawn up by the organization 'Municípios



Globo-ZN7

Workers defy troops during militant 1988 Volta Redonda steel strike. Capitalist state's cops, courts and army are enemies of working masses.

em Luta' [MEL—Municipal Workers in Struggle] which precludes municipal *guardas* being part of the union."

That statement is a lie. The election program of the MEL slate **made no mention of the presence of cops in this union.** Indeed, the issue of the cops was so deeply buried by the LM/LQB in the election campaign that **a majority of the cops in the union voted for Geraldo Ribeiro**, himself a former cop! The MEL slate was an unprincipled bloc that included the pro-cop agent Artur Fernandes! These significant facts are also "blank spaces" in the lying history presented in the IG's "Dossier." Meanwhile, the IG sputters in rage when the ICL points to a "deal" between the LM/LQB and the cops. But there was a deal: in order to cement unity with Artur to create the MEL slate, the LM/LQB did not campaign to expel the cops from the union, but only to keep cops off the MEL slate! This was openly admitted by all the LM/LQB comrades at the time.

In our first letter (29 January 1996) to LM after discussions at a January 1996 ICL International Executive Committee meeting in London attended by Cerezo, we wrote:

"Informal discussions at the recent IEC gathering brought to light the critical fact that police (*guardas*) are members of the municipal workers union, the union in which the LM-supported slate won the election. Having won the union election and now serving as officers of the union, LM has responsibility to act on the key programmatic point raised only in general terms in the campaign propaganda, to expel the police from the union. This task, and making the workers conscious of it, is rendered more difficult because the campaign propaganda did not specifically address the presence of police in this union where you campaigned.

"Another matter we seek to discuss more fully is the principle that labor should clean its own house and not resort to the bourgeois courts or government to adjudicate disputes in the labor movement. This question came up concretely in discussions over LM's public statement of intent to sue the candidate of the yellow company union, Força Sindical, in the bourgeois courts.

"The two issues cited above indicate a blurring of the dividing line between the workers movement and the bourgeois state, their cops and their courts. In contrast to the popular-frontist formations which deliberately foster illusions in the bourgeois state, we insist on the political independence of the working class, which has been the underlying political principle of the Marxist movement since the First International. This requires seeing the state and its many tentacles in a very clear way. Otherwise what you present, at best, is an incomplete separation from the popular front, i.e., some variant of centrism."

It is also telling that on pages 22-23 of the IG's "Dossier," there is a splashy spread of solidarity statements with the LM/LQB, presumably to show their far-reaching support. But sometimes what you don't see is more important than what you do: there is **not one** statement of support from an individual, organization or trade union **in Brazil**. They have not managed to add even one statement of support from within Brazil to those secured as a result of the solidarity campaign with the Volta Redonda municipal workers union organized in the spring of 1996 **by the ICL and Partisan Defense Committee**. In our campaign, we presented **hard evidence** to the international workers movement of dangerous encroachments by the state in the labor movement in Volta Redonda. In contrast, the IG ran with a fraud that could only be consumed at great international distance and without close inspection. In so doing they have recklessly and willfully damaged the tradition of internationalist, non-sectarian class-struggle defense established by Cannon's International Labor Defense in the 1920s and since painstakingly resurrected by the Partisan Defense Committee, which is associated with the ICL.

Even after the break in fraternal relations, the ICL repeatedly offered to assist the LM/LQB. For example, on 21 October 1996 we wrote to the LQB:

"After the March 13 Municipal Workers Union (SFPMVR) meeting in Volta Redonda was invaded by military police, the PDC initiated and coordinated an international campaign of solidarity demanding

that the cops and courts keep their hands off the Municipal Workers Union, and raised the demand for the separation of the police from the union. In order to credibly bring this case to the attention of trade union leaders from South Africa to Tokyo, we assembled and translated into many languages the necessary evidence which documented the police assault. We provided the workers leaders with evidence such as press clippings, signed affidavits from union officials and eyewitnesses to the attack, and a direct written appeal from the LQB itself.

"Currently we seek further information on the question of the continuing police presence in the union, the status of old



Six street children in Rio de Janeiro suburb massacred by Brazilian police death squad, 1991. Murderous cops have no place in trade unions.

charges and investigations (e.g., into the alleged shooting of Artur in May) as well as evidence of any new charges against leaders of the Municipal Workers Union or the LQB. We look forward to hearing from you and we request that you send us the necessary **evidence** required to bring cases in the interest of the working people to the attention of the workers of the world."

In response to this request for necessary information, we received nothing but blasts of rage fulminating that we had the audacity to ask for proof.

Indeed, the IG and LQB have yet to even agree on **when** the cops allegedly were thrown out of the union. (One can appreciate the difficulty in ascertaining when something that didn't happen, happened.) Page 12 of the IG's "Dossier" asserts that a union *seminário* voted overwhelmingly to disaffiliate the *guardas* on **June 13**. Page 25 claims that it was "the **19 June** 1996 union meeting that was to disaffiliate the *guardas*." At a 1 August 1996 SL forum in New York where the Norden group made its public debut, their floor speakers said **not one word** about the alleged victory in Brazil.

Only at a 13 September 1996 New York SL forum did IG spokesman Negrete take advantage of his time in our democratic discussion period to bluster that the ICL "broke fraternal relations in June, one day before those comrades went into a union meeting to throw the police, who in Brazil murder black street children every day, out of the union.... These comrades fought and **they have thrown the police out of the union!**" Norden, who was also present at the forum, was somewhat tongue-tied and noticeably green around the gills when questioned by other comrades about these alleged developments. Two weeks later, on September 26, an IG spokesman calling himself "Avram" was interviewed live on New York's WBAI *Building Bridges* radio program with Geraldo Ribeiro on the phone line. Avram said: "The union members on July 25th, despite enormous repression against them, voted in an assembly to disaffiliate municipal police from their union." June 13? June 19? July 25? In any case, whatever the date, the cops are still in the union! As the Scottish poet Sir Walter Scott wrote, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."

The Struggle for a Trotskyist Party

The ICL urged that LM/LQB leader Cerezo step down from his unelected post in a union with a sizable cop membership and in which the LM/LQB had

no members at the time in order to **carry out a political struggle for communist politics at the base of the union and other necessary tasks to build a party**. We warned that to continue on their course, coveting their unelected positions as a higher conquest than the struggle for revolutionary consciousness and its necessary instrument, a revolutionary party, would likely lead the workers and the union to a bad defeat. Calling the courts into the union after a long campaign for "cops and courts out of the union" can only breed cynicism in any subjectively

with the pro-cop Artur faction had predictably sorry results. We recall what Trotsky wrote of Stalin's adventure: "We discovered, after it was all over, that the Canton Soviet resembled an ancient Chinese dragon simply drawn on paper. The policy of pulling rotten strings and paper dragons is not our policy."

Norden and Negrete's fantasy operation in Brazil has done real damage, not only to the cause of building a revolutionary party but in weakening and undermining the municipal workers union. This has not been lost on the rotten centrists of the Brazilian Liga Bolchevique Internacionalista (LBI), who have long braintrusted the machinations of the pro-cop Artur faction in the SFPMVR. In a polemic in its *Luta Operária* (March 1997), the LBI sneers: "The LQB shows its real face: it seeks the State's intervention to lead it back to the Union's leadership." That takes some chutzpah, coming from the people who braintrusted the pro-cop faction. Now, this cynical centrist outfit tries to gain credence by hypocritically pointing to the IG/LQB's own unprincipled maneuvers.

Those inclined to learn a lesson about trade-union opportunism from the Volta Redonda fiasco would do well to consider these words from a 1924 speech to a conference of U.S. coal miners by James P. Cannon on "Our Aims and Tactics in the Trade Unions" (reprinted in *James P. Cannon and the Early Years of American Communism* [Prometheus Research Library, 1992]):

"In the discussions which took place here today, we heard the remark made by one of the comrades that our struggle in the unions is a struggle for strategic positions. This is a one-sided view and if we allow it to stand alone, we will fall into a serious error. We must adopt the point of view that our struggle is a struggle to develop the class consciousness of the rank and file workers and to win them over to the principle of the revolutionary struggle against capitalism under the leadership of our party.

"If we will connect the fight for strategic positions with this broad political aim and subordinate it to this aim, we will be on safe ground. Otherwise, we will be confronted with the spectacle of party members regarding the fight for office as an end in itself; of evading or putting aside questions of principle with which the masses are not familiar; of scheming and calculating too closely in order to get into office. Of course the comrades will justify all this on the ground that once they get into office they will be able to do big things for the party. But quite often we will be apt to find the very comrades who adopt this method of getting into

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Norden's "Group": Shamefaced Defectors From Trotskyism

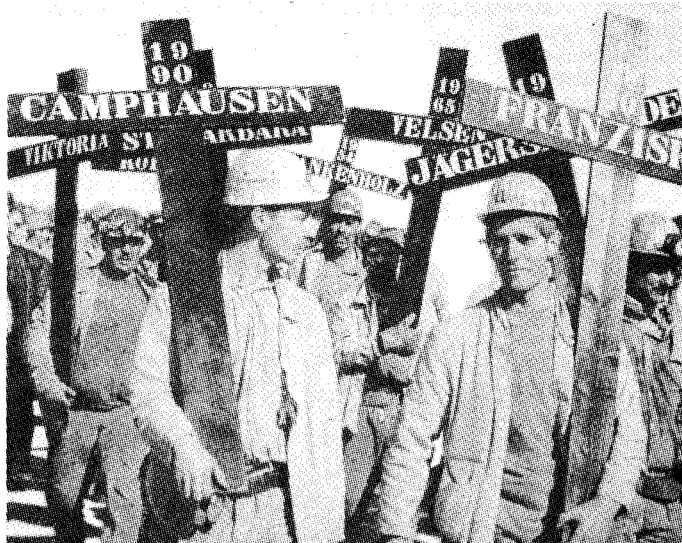
France...

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formations (Radicals, Greens and the ultra-chauvinist Jean-Pierre Chevènement). As good defenders of capitalism, they present nothing but a "left" cover for austerity and racism and promise to uphold the capitalist system with a "human face." And the various "far left" groups also accept the capitalist framework.

Workers and immigrants in Italy are today faced with this same type of coalition, as Prime Minister Romano Prodi, with the support of Rifondazione Comunista among others, imposes the austerity measures and anti-immigrant laws that Italian capitalism demands. In these coalitions, which Trotskyists call popular fronts, between bourgeois parties and bourgeois workers parties, like the PCF and the PS, the contradiction between the interests of the workers that the leaders of these reformist parties claim to defend and what they really stand for—the defense of capitalism—is suppressed with the ready-made excuse that "we can't do anything because our partners won't accept it." The reformist workers parties thus become representatives of a *bourgeois* coalition. Under these conditions, a vote for the parties in these coalitions is a vote for the class enemy. It is a break with the principle of class independence. **No vote for the workers parties in popular fronts! No to class collaboration!**

The spokesmen of the right are proposing to do away with the minimum wage in order to give the bosses the right to hire



Drive by capitalist governments throughout West Europe to push through drastic austerity cuts and layoffs has sparked mass protests: German miners march against mine closures, March 1997 (left); public workers in Paris, October 1996, protest threatened cutbacks.



AP photos

solved not by the ballot box but by class struggle, going beyond the immediate economic needs of workers and youth confronted by plant closings and rising unemployment. A conscious political fight is necessary, taking up the interests of *all* the oppressed and first of all the African and North African component of the private-sector workforce, which is strategically placed in heavy industry, and the "sans-papiers" (undocumented workers). The oppressed must be organized on the side of the proletariat by a Leninist party, which is a tribune of the people—a party of revolutionary action, not of parliamentary traitors—and which fights for the conquest of power by the proletariat

World" who are now deemed "superfluous," etc. The Maastricht Treaty, with its "convergence criteria," simply creates an additional pressure to launch these reactionary attacks within the timetable for establishing the common currency. And let's not forget that it was the PS, through former president François Mitterrand and former EU head Jacques Delors, who authored Maastricht! They set it up in the hope of allowing the French bourgeoisie to exert a modicum of control over the economic policy of its powerful "partner" across the Rhine, since Germany has emerged in post-Soviet Europe as the dominant social and economic power.

The working class and all the oppressed must oppose the imposition of this anti-working-class treaty. Thus, in 1992 we called for a "No" vote on the Maastricht referendum. Lutte Ouvrière (LO) and Pouvoir Ouvrier (PO), on the contrary, called for abstention on the pretext of not wanting to mix their votes with the right-wing opponents of Maastricht (thus bailing Mitterrand out). These organizations, each to the extent of their forces, share part of the responsibility for the draconian austerity which has accompanied the setting up of this treaty. If tomorrow "monetary union" were abandoned or postponed indefinitely in the face of workers' struggles, it would be a victory for the workers who, throughout Europe, have put up sharp resistance to the capitalist offensive. Down with the capitalist system! Down with the Europe of Maastricht!

Nevertheless, such a victory would necessarily be temporary and reversible. It is impossible, within the framework of the capitalist system, to do away with unemployment, austerity and racism. The latest illustration of this is the crisis of the European automobile industry, whose extent was revealed by the recent fight of Renault workers in Vilvorde, Belgium. With production capacity becoming much greater than market demand, the capitalists have no other solution than to close plants and throw thousands of workers onto the street. This provoked, among other things, the first strike organized on a European level by workers from the various Renault plants and a demonstration in Brussels in support of the Vilvorde workers by tens of thousands of workers from throughout Europe and from most of the auto companies. The workers' perspective—in auto and elsewhere—must be to set up a planned economy, to organize production on the basis of the needs of the population at the level of *Europe as a whole* under the rule of democratic workers councils. This requires the overthrow of the bourgeoisies and their states. For a Socialist United States of Europe!

The social-chauvinists of the PCF have for years made common cause with bourgeois forces opposed to Maastricht on the basis of protectionism and anti-German nationalism—including with the "republican" chauvinist Chevènement. Presenting "Maastricht" as the sole cause of the anti-working-class attacks carried out by the capitalists of West Europe deliberately obscures, in the conscious-

ness of the workers and the oppressed, the understanding that the main enemy is their own bourgeoisie, not Brussels or Frankfurt. The defense of the "national interest" ties the workers to their "own" bourgeoisie and inevitably sets them against the workers of other countries. The main enemy is at home! If today the PCF and the PS find themselves side by side on the question of Europe, even though they have divergent positions on Maastricht, it is because both defend the interests of the French bourgeoisie.

Why We Are Not Voting for LO

LO is presenting itself as a proletarian opposition to the candidates of the reformist "left" and talks of building the party which the working class needs. This is impossible for an organization like LO, which is passive in the face of racist oppression and the fascist threat that today polarizes French society. Many workers understand that the attacks against immigrants and their families are attacks against the entire working class. They are a way for the bourgeoisie and its fascist thugs to divide and weaken the working class and to make immigrants the scapegoats for the economic chaos created by the capitalist system. And tomorrow it will be the turn of other layers of society such as women, whom Le Pen wants to confine to the home in order to "free up jobs." The role of the revolutionary party is to mobilize the social power of the working class to defend all sectors of the oppressed, who have everything to gain from the overthrow of the capitalist system. The working class, because of its role in production, is the only class with the power to build a new society. For this, it needs to ally with other layers of society which face capitalist attacks; otherwise, the latter will turn toward reactionary illusions like Islamic fundamentalism and nationalism instead of strengthening the workers' class struggle.

Thus, during the December 1995 strike wave, we struggled against the working-class leaders—and the entire "far left"—who refused to fight racist terror. We



Young Muslim women in Lille, 1994, protest racist Bayrou directive threatening to expel students who wear Islamic headscarves in public schools.

youth at starvation wages. The power of the working class must be mobilized to impose a sliding scale of wages and hours with no loss in pay in order to spread the work among all the workers and to maintain the workers' standard of living. The attempt to eliminate the minimum wage is also aimed at using youth and immigrants to attack the trade unions. Now more than ever, the unions must fight to organize all non-unionized workers and the unemployed. And against the division of the trade unions along political lines, as is presently the case, industrial trade unions including all workers in the same industry are necessary. One industry, one union! All workers must be organized into the unions!

The crisis of capitalism will be re-

through socialist revolution. For a revolutionary multi-ethnic workers party!

In the post-Cold War world, the collapse of Stalinism and the victory of capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the USSR have brutally unleashed rivalries among the various imperialists which were previously put on the back burner in the face of their common Soviet enemy. The French bourgeoisie, like all the bourgeoisies, must sharply increase the rate of exploitation of "its" working class in order to raise its economic productivity. This means waves of layoffs, massive unemployment among the youth, temporary employment, attacks on women's rights, stagnating or reduced wages, speedup, destruction of social benefits, deportation of workers from the "Third

Spartacist

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Le Bolchéviek

LTF at 1993 protest calls on railway workers to stop trains deporting immigrants.

called for "Full citizenship rights for all who got here!" and denounced the campaign of cop terror against minorities, demanding "Down with Vigipirate!" In 1994, we fought side by side with the high-school students who mobilized to defend the girls expelled from school by the racist Bayrou directive because they wore a *hidjeb* (Islamic head scarf). As the Jeunesse Spartaciste (youth group of the LTF) wrote in a leaflet: "This directive, which under cover of 'defense of secularism' strengthens the hold of religious obscurantism, notably among the girls, aims simply to expel girls of North African descent from school" (*Le Bolchévique* No. 131, December 1994-January 1995). [See "France: Racist Edict Targets Schoolgirls," *Women and Revolution* No. 44, Winter 1994-Spring 1995.]

Under the pretext of "defending women," LO became the spokesman for the government by applauding the racist expulsions along with notoriously anti-immigrant interior minister Charles Pasqua. Remember that over Iran (1978-79) and Afghanistan (1979), where defending women from the slavery of the *chador* (head-to-toe "veil") was a central and vital question, LO never bothered about the plight of women, which they now use as a cover for their capitulation to the racist campaign. They had no compunction at the time about being on the same side as the Muslim fundamentalists, whom they so eagerly denounce in this country today. But the real threat in this country today is chauvinist and racist reaction, behind which stands the Catholic church, the historically dominant religion in France. In December 1994 in Lille, LO went beyond what the fascists themselves had dared to do: organizing a counterdemonstration to demand the expulsion of girls for wearing headscarves when the high-school students went on strike to defend their schoolmates against expulsion.

LO boycotted the demonstration against Le Pen's congress in Strasbourg last spring, with the excuse that the protest was controlled by the PS. This argument is sheer hypocrisy coming from the organization that in Vitrolles called for a vote to PS candidate Anglade, a notoriously corrupt, racist demagogue. LO thus left thousands of youth who want to get rid of the fascist scum politically disarmed, in the hands of the same reformist bureaucrats who try by any means to channel these youth behind the banner of "clean" capitalism. We went to the Stras-



Cambio 16
Cops round up minority, immigrant youth. Racist terror has escalated under both popular-front and right-wing governments.

bourg demonstration with our newspaper and our program for worker/immigrant mobilizations to smash the fascists, seeking to win from the influence of the reformists and centrists those who want to sweep away fascist barbarism. We intervened in a forum organized by the anti-fascist "Committee of Vigilance" to counterpose our red flag to the tricolor—the flag of World Wars I and II, of the massacres and repression in the colonies (as today in French Guiana) and of racist terror—with which these reformists, in the name of "republican values" and the "democratic image of France," wanted to rally the youth.

The FN has given a taste of what its program means in the city councils where it has won control: eviction of ethnic minorities, militarization of the population through a network of fascist-controlled "associations," municipal militias, the expulsion of the Jewish writer Marek Halter from the Toulon book fair, etc. The FN is fighting for power, and fascism in power means the physical destruction of the organized workers movement. It means the arrest of leftists and trade unionists, militarization of labor, gangs roaming the streets and attacking people from communities deemed "abnormal," war, etc. But LO does not characterize Le Pen as fascist because they are seeking to compete on the same terrain as the FN. Remember the televised "debate" between LO leader Arlette Laguiller and FN spokesman Martinez in March 1989! LO's goal was

to convince the racists who were voting for the FN that the latter is fooling them. No debate with fascists! For worker/immigrant mobilizations to smash the fascists before they smash us!

That is why we are not calling for a vote for LO. Nor do we call for voting for Voix des Travailleurs, an opposition grouping expelled from LO, which stands on the same program as LO regarding the two crucial questions in this country today: the fight against the fascist threat and against racist terror.

For a Revolutionary Party!

In order to tail the reformists, the fake revolutionaries hide the class nature of popular-frontist bourgeois coalitions. Thus, the social-democratized Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—affiliated to the United Secretariat), which is presenting a few candidates on the first round under the slogan "For a Left That Is 100 Percent Left," calls as usual to "beat the right on the second round" and to "vote left" (the voter being free to choose the percentage). The May issue of *Socialisme International* (SI—associated with Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain) headlines "Beat the Right! Vote Left!" With SI acting as electoral agents of the Socialist Party, the majority of SI has now liquidated wholesale into the PS Socialist Youth Movement (MJS). The Gauche Révolutionnaire (GR—linked with Labour Militant in Britain) ran the headline "Out with the Government!" and calls for a vote to the

PCF on the first round based on the PCF's opposition to Maastricht, while admitting that this opposition comes from a chauvinist standpoint. GR also calls for a vote to Voix des Travailleurs. While proclaiming its anti-racism during the struggle of the *sans-papiers*, GR nonetheless calls for a vote for an organization which closes its eyes to the question of racist terror.

PO, which unconditionally votes for the reformist parties everywhere and in every circumstance, calls for a "PS-PCF majority," explaining: "Let's test the PS and the PCF one more time, so that the workers can struggle and force their representatives to implement their promises, however meager; and if they refuse, let's break with the reformist policies in struggle and create the revolutionary alternative that we need so badly" (*Pouvoir Ouvrier*, May 1997). Fourteen years of Mitterrand governments showed "one more time" how each new "experience" of "left" class-collaborationist government, which in fact manages the capitalists' crisis at the expense of the workers and the majority of the population, only demobilizes and demoralizes the working class. It pushes the petty bourgeoisie and the most backward workers into the arms of reaction and the fascists—who have an easy time presenting themselves as the only "radical" alternative to established order. And what do Jospin and Hue promise except austerity, unemployment and ("left-wing") racism? PO wants to drive the workers once again into an impasse by calling on them to put a class-collaborationist coalition in power.

The sections of the International Communist League, which are today fighting propaganda groups, embody the revolutionary program. We intervene with our program to provide revolutionary leadership, and to build a revolutionary party along with those who want to fight to overthrow the capitalist system, by exposing in the day-to-day struggle the role of the reformist and centrist charlatans. We represent the revolutionary Trotskyist nucleus dedicated to building this party—a Leninist party rooted in the working class, a tribune of the people capable of uniting "French" and "immigrant" workers in a common struggle against their common enemy, capitalism. The role of this party is to introduce into the working class the consciousness of its historical interests and tasks. The LTF, French section of the ICL, fights for new October Revolutions led by a reformed Fourth International. ■

Brazil Fraud...

(continued from page 7)

office falling into the habit of continuing it in order to hold the office. They will thereby degenerate into mere office-holders and office-hunters. They will lose the confidence and respect of the militant rank and file workers, and our party, which stands responsible for them, will have its prestige greatly injured."

Anybody who reads the correspondence we have published documenting our months of political battle with the LM/LQB prior to the break in fraternal relations will see that the IG's absurd invention that we "fled the struggle" has nothing to do with the real political fight which led to that break, namely their persistent refusal to take the necessary steps to constitute themselves as the nucleus of a Trotskyist party in Brazil. The sole purpose of the IG's diversionary fiction is to obscure the real basis of a series of fights we had beginning in early 1995: against Norden's centrist course in Germany in politically adapting to the leftovers of the East German Stalinist bureaucracy, against the complicity of Norden and Negrete in creating a Potemkin village in Brazil, against Negrete's manipulation of the Mexican ICL section which denied the comrades the ability to be actively involved in a series of critical fights in the ICL (see *International Bulletin* No. 38, "Norden's 'Group': Shame-faced Defectors from Trotskyism").

The common denominator in all these fights is the party question. As Trotsky put it, the essential task of the revolutionary party is raising the consciousness of the masses closer to an understanding of historical necessity, raising the subjective factor to the level of the objective. Centrists, because of their theoretical amorphousness and eclecticism, do not understand the importance of class-conscious revolutionary activity in history. With our understanding of the role of consciousness in history, we strive at all times for theoretical and programmatic clarity, bringing key political debates out in the open so the most conscious workers can reach a higher understanding of their own interests. Therefore we've made public our correspondence with the LM/LQB and essential documents from the fight with Norden's group.

But because of their amorphousness and their attraction to groupings to their right, centrists like Norden's IG despise our insistence on clarity of position and purity of principles. They don't like being called by their right name and so they seek to conceal from the workers their opportunist maneuvering under cover of false and vicious attacks on the Bolsheviks, while denouncing us for our "sectarianism" and "passive propagandism."

It is said that hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue. The IG "Dossier" reprints a 31 December 1996 letter from Geraldo Ribeiro and Marcello Carega, five months after Ribeiro initiated his

lawsuit against the union, which says: "We reject any interference of the bosses' 'justice' system in the workers movement in general and the SFPVMR in particular. The union belongs to the workers, not the bosses!" These people lie to the world and probably have no qualms lying to each other. The IG cannot simultaneously stand by the verbal affirmation of class

principle in their "Dossier" and by the class betrayal carried out by their comrades in Volta Redonda.

We concluded our last article on the IG ("Potemkin Village Idiocy," *WV* No. 663, 7 March) with the warning: "Caveat emptor—Let the buyer beware!" To the IG, we say: You have consigned yourselves to a flea market of history. ■

Abortion...

(continued from page 12)

abortion ban. Only one day before the Senate vote, the AMA announced its decision, made by the 20 board members in a consensus conference call (it was not reported whether this was via cell phone from the golf links). It's the capitalist way of medicine for profit. To be sure, the AMA has a history of reactionary positions, opposing anything smacking of "socialized" health care, at one time including Medicare. But you'd think this doctors' organization would at least take a stand against a bunch of politicians telling them what they can and can't do when it comes to medical procedures. In its own way, the medical profession in this society functions as a kind of elite, arrogant secular "priestly caste," dispensing high-priced medical care to the rich, ignoring the poor, and raking in big bucks.

The AMA's decision is a big boost to the anti-abortion bigots. In many parts of the country, abortions are already effectively banned because there are no doctors or clinics willing to perform them. And it could get worse. Take Poland, for example, where abortion was recently legalized after the Solidarność government had abolished it. But most women still can't get abortions there, because doctors in public hospitals refuse to perform them under the new law's "freedom of conscience" clause, which was adopted to appease the obscurantist Catholic church.

The recent sordid Senate vote shows that the "lesser evil" is still plenty evil. Carol Moseley-Braun's proposed abortion ban couldn't be a clearer example of that. More broadly, it should be increasingly clear that it will take a fundamental break with all brands of bourgeois politics to mount a successful challenge to the wave of reaction sweeping this country. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! ■

Chicago...

(continued from page 12)

relative social quiescence, with the labor movement in particular paralyzed by its pro-Democratic Party misleaders. However, as we explained last year in "Down With Racist War on Immigrants and Blacks!" (WV No. 649, 2 August 1996):

"Despite the lack of any real social struggle, the rulers are cognizant that the massive income disparity has generated seething anger at the bottom of this society. Fearing explosions of discontent, to preserve their rule they must bring the iron heel of repression down harder. That is what's behind the 'war on drugs' which targets ghetto youth and the 'war on terrorism' which is particularly aimed at immigrants. The rulers calculate that they can get away with going after the most vulnerable layers of society, who have little or no social power. But the massive increase in repression is ultimately aimed at the workers movement, as evidenced in the rapid growth of professional strikebreaking outfits."

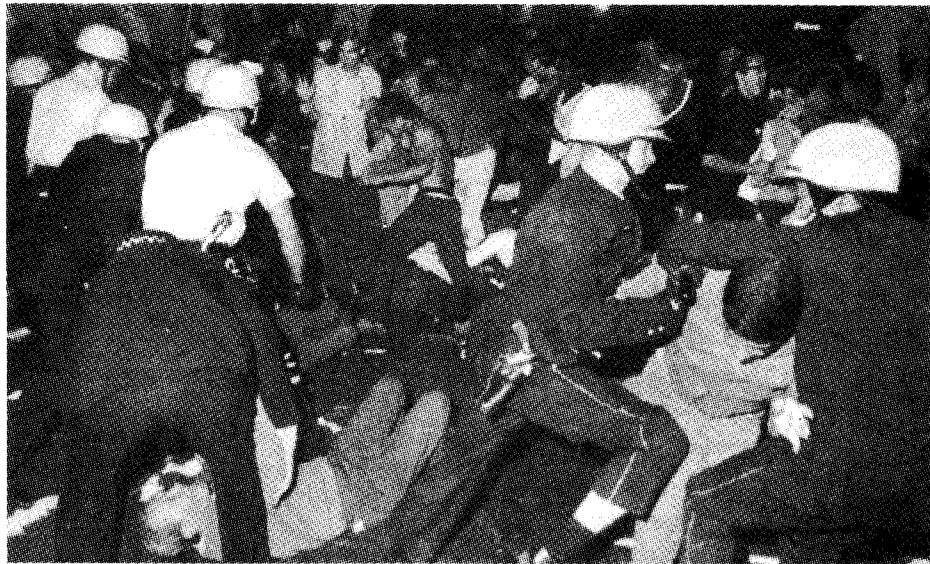
In recent months, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Alliance to End Repression (AER) have both filed lawsuits seeking to counter the Daley administration's moves to intensify and institutionalize police snooping. But while political exposure and legal action can occasionally hamper the cops in openly pursuing their disruption against the left, as Marxists we understand that the secret police are an integral part of the capitalist state.

The bourgeois state—with its cops, courts and prison system—consists in its essence of armed bodies of men whose purpose is the repression of the working class and the oppressed on behalf of the capitalist rulers and their profit system. These agencies cannot be "cleaned up" but must be swept away through a socialist revolution in which the capitalist state is smashed and replaced by a workers state which expropriates the bourgeoisie.

A Workers Party Has the Right to Organize!

The Chicago Red Squad was formally disbanded in 1975, following a grand jury investigation and lawsuits brought by the AER and ACLU. In 1981, a federal consent decree which settled the lawsuits placed certain nominal limits on the Chicago cops' "intelligence gathering" capacities. Now, the cops are arguing that the consent decree "interferes with the ability...to successfully prosecute charges of criminal offenses committed at public demonstrations" and are demanding expanded powers to maintain "enemies lists" and to videotape demonstrations. The notoriously racist Chicago cops are whining that the restrictions have prevented them from prosecuting racial "hate crimes."

The cynicism of these justifications is both breathtaking and transparent. In special pre-convention training sessions last year, the cops were supplied with a sinister "who's who in radical America" which sought to equate black and leftist groups with the right-wing "militia" movement and the heinous 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City (*Police—The Law Officer's Magazine*,



Mayor Daley Sr.'s cops riot against anti-Vietnam War protesters outside 1968 Democratic National Convention.

Bettmann Archive

August 1995). Ominously, first on the list of "radical groups" to "crack down on" was the Philadelphia MOVE organization, which has been subjected to some of the most atrocious state terror in U.S. history and whose most prominent supporter is death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, target of a nationwide cop vendetta. In 1985 Philly cops, backed up by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), bombed MOVE's home, killing eleven black men, women and children.

The Daley administration has made no secret of the fact that the main targets of police spying will be political activists, citing the need to keep tabs on "extremists" and "potential terrorists." If implemented, the new measures will simply formalize what the cops have already been doing. In taking up the prosecution of the Chicago Five, the recent AER suit against police abrogations of the 1981 consent decree describes how Countermedia and the Active Resistance Organizing Collective, a coalition that organized a "counter convention" last August, were subjected to particularly intense police harassment. Members were roughed up and detained for no reason. Without a search warrant and with their badge numbers taped over, cops carried out a nighttime raid on the groups' joint offices, destroying equipment, seizing documents deemed "subversive" and pepper-spraying two "counter convention" participants, sending them to the hospital.

Over the years, the Spartacist League has waged a number of successful legal actions against government authorities who tried to smear us as "terrorists" in order to set us up to be nameless, faceless victims of capitalist state terror. In 1983, the FBI issued new "Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines" which sought to equate Marxist political opposition to this capitalist government with criminal "terrorism." A year later, an SL lawsuit forced the FBI to retract its longstanding "definition" of the SL, which tried to paint us as conspiratorial outlaws. They agreed to define us as what we are—"a Marxist political organization"—thus denying them a legal cover for violent measures against us and countering the

capitalist rulers' effort to sow intimidation and fear among those interested in communist politics (see "Marxists vs. FBI Repression," WV No. 385, 9 August 1985). At the same time, we had no illusions that this would put an end to police spying against our organization or others. As we had earlier noted in "FBI Targets the Spartacist League" (WV No. 151, 1 April 1977):

"Revolutionists welcome any measure that actually makes more difficult the murderous business of the official and unofficial terror organizations of U.S. imperialism. But the liberal streamlining attempts [against "intelligence abuses"] have no such intent. Nothing less than the victorious proletarian revolution can abolish capitalism's secret police and their death-dealing 'dirty tricks'."

A History of Anti-Labor Subversion

The government habitually covers bids for increased repressive powers by singling out relatively marginal or vulnerable elements. But in fact, the target of police red squads in this country is ultimately the organized labor movement. Among the 77 organizations listed in the 1974 lawsuit against police spying were the United Auto Workers, United Steelworkers, Teamsters and other unions. Going back at least to the time of the 1887 Haymarket executions—when four anarchist and socialist labor organizers were framed up and then hanged during the struggle for the eight-hour day—the Chicago Police Department (CPD) has a long and bloody history of provocation and repression against labor and organizations of the oppressed. Police cadets have their political mission driven home to them every day by a grotesque monument in the courtyard of the Police Training Academy to the "officers martyred in the anarchist riot of May 4 1886." The cops were killed when a provocateur threw a bomb into a workers' rally, a day after police gunned down six striking workers in cold blood. That massacre is commemorated by May Day, the international workers holiday.

The "industrial squads," precursors of the red squads, were created in the 1890s in the wake of a nationwide campaign of police terror against the early trade-union movement—especially the Knights of Labor, an early union federation—carried out with the Haymarket provocation as a pretext. After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the electrifying impact it had on the American working class, the early red squads redoubled their attacks on the "worldwide Communist conspiracy." A reign of state terror epitomized by the 1920 Palmer Raids was kicked off in Chicago with mass round-ups of immigrants and leftists, particularly Communists and members of the revolutionary syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World. An immigration spokesman at the time bragged before Congress how his men "went to various pool rooms, etc., in which foreigners congregated" and rounded up anyone who "happened to be there."

Chicago's Red Squad took on its modern form in the 1930s, in order to target the burgeoning industrial union move-

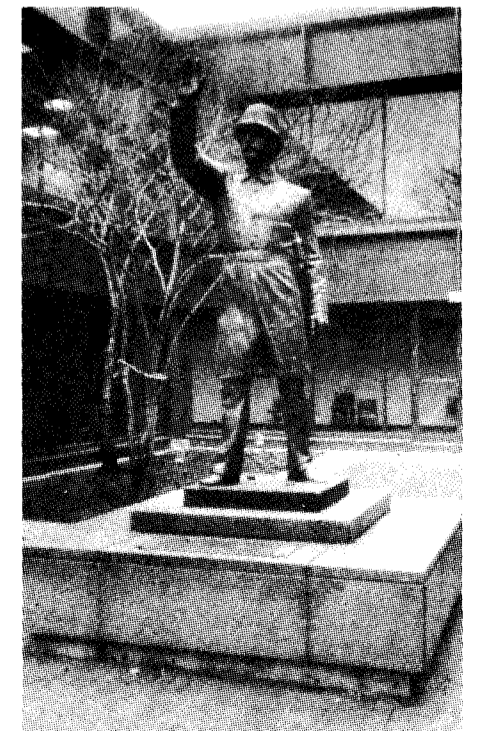
ment—and the Communists, Trotskyists and left-wing Socialists who led it—which culminated in the formation of the CIO. With the outbreak of the Cold War following World War II, the union tops—from open right-wingers to social democrats like the Reuther brothers—joined with the feds and the McCarthyite witch-hunters in pushing through an anti-Communist purge in the trade unions. Communist Party leaders and many suspected of being "sympathizers" were persecuted and jailed. The Stalinists had themselves laid the basis for the postwar witchhunt by their wartime alliance with the Democratic Roosevelt administration, during which they pushed a no-strike pledge and supported the victimization and imprisonment of leaders of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party and Trotskyist militants in the Teamsters union, who were the first victims of the anti-Communist Smith Act.

By 1960, the Chicago Police Department boasted that its intelligence unit had accumulated information on 117,000 "local individuals," 141,000 "out-of-town subjects" and 14,000 organizations. And this was *before* a further expansion of the Red Squad in the 1960s and early '70s. Under Boss Daley's direction, the Red Squad carried out infiltration, dirty tricks and surveillance against all perceived opponents, ranging from the PTA to the liberal NAACP and the American Jewish Congress to the teachers union. Even with the Red Squad officially disbanded in the mid-'70s, the Intelligence Division continued its work. To this day, a "Labor Relations Section" of the CPD operates to gather "information on labor-management problems," i.e., to spy on unions and help break strikes.

The chief target of the government's war against the left in the late '60s was the Black Panther Party. Under the FBI's infamous COINTELPRO (Counter-Intelligence Program) operation, 38 Panthers were murdered outright and hundreds more framed up and jailed. In Southern California, former Panther leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) has been imprisoned for more than a quarter of a century for a crime the government knows he didn't commit. And in Pennsylvania, courageous black journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman Mumia Abu-Jamal is on death row because of his outspoken political beliefs.

Racist Cop Terror: Business As Usual

The Daley administration and Police Superintendent Matt Rodriguez (himself a former Intelligence Division detective) have tried to whip up hysteria over "suburban gang activity," a racist code phrase for the recent influx of blacks and Hispanics into previously all-white suburbs like Cicero. Revising the 1981 consent decree would allow the Chicago police



WV Photo

Chicago police academy monument denounces 1886 Haymarket labor rally as "anarchist riot."

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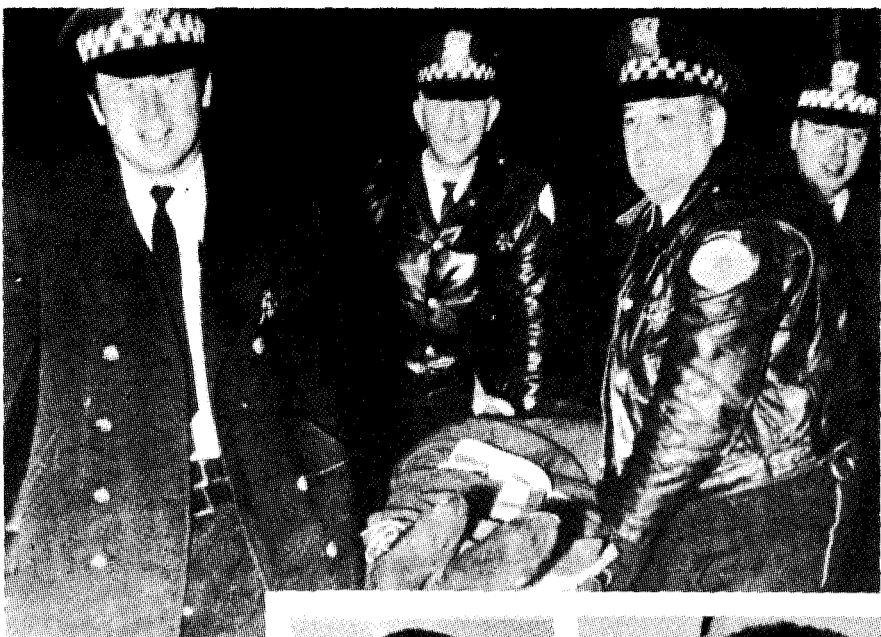
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Chicago Tribune

Cops carry off body of Black Panther leader Fred Hampton after police assassinated him (far right) and comrade Mark Clark (right), 1969, set up by Chicago Red Squad and FBI.



AP



UPI

to officially participate in a sinister national database that tracks thousands of "suspected gang members" as part of the capitalist rulers' drive to criminalize minority youth.

This is all part of the "routine" racist cop terror, complete with a well-oiled frame-up machine, which is used to keep down working people and minorities. Among the more recent victims of the Chicago police is Fernanda Royal, who was nearly killed when a cop shot her pointblank in the chest during a police rampage at the Cabrini-Green housing project on March 4. In 1995, homeless newspaper vendor Joseph Gould was blown away by an off-duty cop and Honduran immigrant Jorge Guillen was choked to death while handcuffed. Anyone who "looks like an immigrant" in the cops' eyes faces the constant threat of harassment, beating or deportation. Last October, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) launched a series of mass raids that has left many immigrant workers in the city afraid to leave their houses.

For years, Chicago cops have made a "sport" of picking up black youths and dropping them off in white enclaves like Bridgeport, where 13-year-old Lenard Clark was beaten into a coma by racist thugs in March. On April 6, when 26-year-old Edward Stacy tried to enter a North Side bar notorious as a hangout for white cops, he was told "No n-----s allowed" and was savagely attacked by a racist mob that included at least two cops, one of whom pointed his gun at Stacy and then fired in the air.

One of the chants by anti-Klan protesters last June 29 which particularly

enraged the police was "Cops and Klan go hand in hand!" The CPD is an object lesson in the truth of that slogan. The city's Red Squad was historically tied to organizations like the fascist Legion of Justice, which was used in the 1960s and '70s to carry out burglaries and terrorist attacks on leftist organizations. They have also employed "informants" from George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party. And while liberals look to the FBI and Justice Department to "clean up" the Chicago police, the feds themselves have a long record of working with Klan and Nazi outfits, particularly against civil rights activists. When Klansmen in Greensboro, North Carolina gunned down five supporters of the Communist Workers Party in 1979, they were aided and abetted by local police and BATF and FBI agents.

Civilian Review Boards Whitewash Cop Terror

Liberal politicians push "civilian review board" schemes as the answer to police brutality. A recent example is the call by black Democratic State Senator Rickey Hendon for a review board to "monitor" the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) cops, who were involved in the invasion of Cabrini-Green. Yet Chicago's existing "civilian" Police Board exonerated the killers of Jorge Guillen, while no charges at all were filed against the cops who beat Edward Stacy. It is telling that Hendon's proposal was unanimously passed by one of the most reactionary state legislatures in the country, and the first to enact a state "anti-terrorism" law. Meanwhile, the Illinois Joint Legislative Black Caucus is waging an all-out cam-

Drop the Charges Against the Cleveland Anti-Duke Four!

On May 18, David "Klan in a suit" Duke brought his program of lynch mob terror to Cleveland, where he spoke to a crowd of 200 at the Lithuanian Village restaurant. Duke was invited by the Hitlerites of the National Alliance, who vow to remove all nonwhites "from our living area and our breeding area." Some 50 anti-fascists, including members of the International Socialist Organization, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), the National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition and Refuse & Resist, protested outside under the slogan "Shut Down KKK Leader David Duke!"

An almost equal number of cops were mobilized to defend the fascist meeting. As the cops taunted the integrated crowd of protesters to "Come on!", they moved in on Cheryl Lessin, a well-known supporter of the RCP, throwing her to the ground and arresting her. The cops then went on a rampage, beating and pepper-spraying protesters, and driving those who attempted to leave the rally back into the melee to be beaten again. Lessin and three others face felony frame-up charges including "aggravated rioting," "assault on a peace officer" and "fleeing custody."

All four were held behind bars for nearly a week, with bail set at an outrageous \$100,000 each. One of the arrested protesters, whose nose had been broken, was denied proper medical care; another was refused vital prescription drugs; Lessin was not allowed access to a shower or even a change of clothes. On Friday, May 23 the four were finally released from jail after paying a reduced bond. Now they face years in jail on the cops' frame-up charges. We demand: Drop all charges against the Anti-Duke Four!

That Duke could get away with spouting his filth in Cleveland, with its sizable labor and black populations, is a sign of the bankruptcy of the current misleaders of the unions who are desperately opposed to the kind of social struggle necessary to smash the Hitler-lovers. Now the National Alliance is planning to host another race-hate rally on June 4. Labor should have been out in force on May 18, together with thousands of blacks, Hispanics and all opponents of fascist terror, to drive the would-be lynchers back into their sewers. Defend the Anti-Duke Four! For labor/minority mobilizations to smash the KKK and Nazis!

paigned to get a \$69 million prison built in Chicago as a way of "providing jobs"! More generally, black Democrats like Jesse Jackson and nationalists like Louis Farrakhan have been in the forefront of the racist "war on drugs."

Recent FBI "investigations"—like "Operation Betrayed Trust" and "Operation Broken Star"—have revealed widespread corruption, drug dealing and planting of "evidence" by Chicago cops, centrally in the heavily black Austin neighborhood. But this hardly comes as news to black and Hispanic Chicagoans. Current police superintendent Rodriguez is a champion of the same "anti-gang" Tac Squads that are the most brazenly crooked and viciously abusive units. And when the former commander of the Austin District was transferred in the wake of the FBI probe, he was promoted to head the CHA Police.

While occasionally slapping one or another "rogue" cop on the wrist, federal "exposures" and civilian review boards are simply whitewash operations designed to head off outrage over cop terror and to strengthen the system of police repression overall. And "community policing" plans, like Chicago's much-touted CAPS program, not only serve as window-dressing for police occupying forces in the ghettos, but more importantly are designed to develop networks of neighborhood informants and finks. Liberals seek to "cleanse" the racist police of "excesses" while upholding this institution of racist, anti-working-class repression because they embrace the capitalist state as their own. The reformist "socialists" who implicitly or explicitly look to the capitalist Democrats as a supposed "lesser evil" likewise foster the illusion that the bourgeois state can—through "mass pressure"—be reformed into serving as an agency to defend the interests of workers and minorities.

In the *Communist Manifesto* written 150 years ago, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels laid out the basic Marxist understanding that the capitalist state is "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." V. I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, elaborated on this in his 1917 book, *The State and Revolution*. Polemicizing against the reformists of his day, Lenin wrote: "That the state is an organ

of the rule of a definite class which *cannot* be reconciled with its antipode (the class opposite to it) is something the petty-bourgeois democrats will never be able to understand." Citing Engels' writings on the state, Lenin continued:

"If the state is the product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms, if it is a power standing *above* society and *alienating* itself *more and more* from it, it is obvious that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, *but also without the destruction* of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class."

In the wake of the brutal beating of Lenard Clark, the Labor Black Struggle League put out a call to the integrated unions to organize a march through Bridgeport as a show of labor's power and determination to fight racist terror. The LBSL's call got an enthusiastic hearing from workers and minorities across Chicago. But it is clear that any perspective for such labor-centered action requires a political struggle against the pro-capitalist union misleaders. Tied to the bosses' Democratic Party, the union tops have refused to lift a finger to bring out the unions in protest against Clark's beating or the cop invasion of Cabrini-Green.

On the contrary, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy's systematic sellout of strikes, suppression of any real labor struggle and pushing of anti-immigrant protectionism has helped pave the way for the capitalist rulers' attacks on workers and minorities. The massive deindustrialization of cities like Chicago has made minority youth a "surplus population" in the eyes of the ruling class, to be warehoused in prisons or shot down by killer cops. Today, on Chicago's West Side, on the same site where there was once an International Harvester plant that employed thousands there is a brand-new \$10.2 million "boot camp" for young "first-time offenders."

We fight to forge a revolutionary workers party committed to sweeping away the entire apparatus of racist capitalist repression and the profit system it is designed to defend. It will take a workers revolution to do that, a revolution that will bring into being an egalitarian socialist society which serves the interests not of a handful of exploiters but of the mass of working people. ■



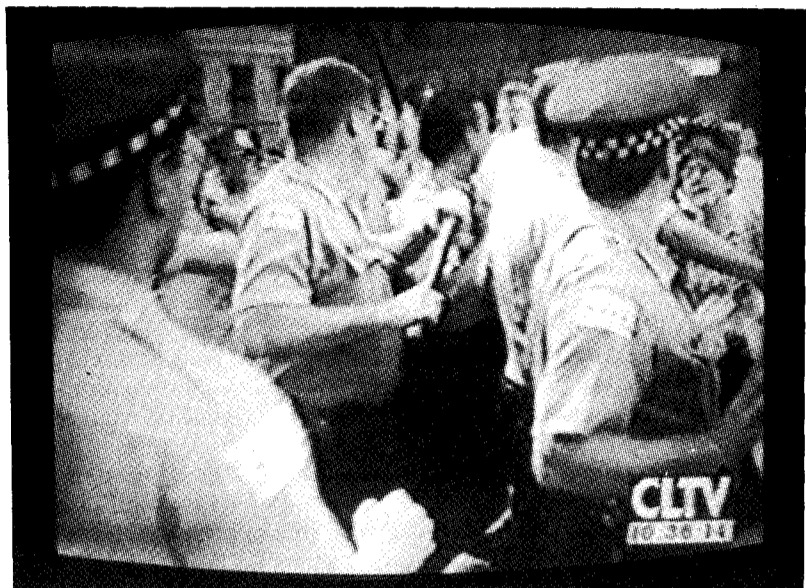
WV Photo

September 1995: Chicago demonstrators express outrage over cop's killing of Joseph Gould, a homeless black man.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Deadly Threat to Labor, Minorities

Chicago Cops Dust Off Red Squad



Racist Chicago cops in action: attacking Daley Plaza anti-Klan protesters last June 29 (as seen on TV), rounding up and terrorizing minority youth at Cabrini-Green housing project.

As we go to press, the Chicago Five prepare for their June 4 trial on bogus charges of assaulting police during a protest around the Democratic National Convention (DNC) last August. We call on trade unionists, leftists and all defenders of civil liberties to fill the courtroom in solidarity. At the same time, six members of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) still face serious felony charges stemming from a police attack on their march last summer. Drop the charges against the Chicago Five and the PLP Six!

Like the failed attempt by Chicago cops and prosecutors to imprison three participants in a protest against a violent KKK race-hate provocation in Daley Plaza last June 29, these legal vendettas represent attempts by the Chicago administration of Mayor Richard Daley Jr. to stifle any social protest, particularly targeting leftist and anti-racist militants. The

Anti-Klan Three case ended in a resounding victory after a trial earlier this month. One juror summed up a widespread sentiment when he said afterward, "We argued that this case was much bigger than what happened at the Klan rally. Every day, people in this country are having their civil liberties cut back" ("Victory for Anti-Klan Three!" WV No. 668, 16 May).

A case in point was the massive cop mobilization leading up to and during the DNC last summer. Following in the footsteps of his notorious father, whose cops brutally assaulted protesters against the Vietnam War during the 1968 Democratic Party convention, Daley Jr. ordered the Chicago police to prevent any hint of protest during Clinton's convention. Working with the sinister Federal Emergency Management Agency, the FBI and the Secret Service, the Chicago Police

Department's "Intelligence Division" declared virtual martial law on the mostly black West Side, where the convention site was located. Local residents, who were subjected to an apartheid-style pass system inside the one-mile "security perimeter," angrily called it "the Democratic occupation." The cops prepared emergency jail space capable of holding thousands. What little protest was allowed during the convention was confined to remote, fenced-in "protest pits" surrounded by cops. Protest organizers were continually harassed by cops, some of whom sported T-shirts reading, "In 1968 we kicked your father's ass. Wait 'til you see what we do to you."

The Daley administration also used the occasion to demand that restrictions imposed in 1981 on Intelligence Division spying and surveillance be lifted. As we have noted before, this is an attempt to

formally revive the "Red Squad" which was notorious in the 1960s and '70s for disruption and infiltration aimed at unions and black and leftist groups. The murderous terror which was the corollary to this police espionage was shown in the 1969 assassinations of Chicago Black Panther Party leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. The secret police infiltrated their organization, set them up, and then in the dead of night the cops kicked their door down and machine-gunned them in their beds.

The move to dust off Chicago's Red Squad comes amid a massive escalation of repressive powers nationwide, from federal legislation expanding use of the death penalty to growing cop terror in the ghettos and barrios and the juridical rollback in civil liberties. Unlike the 1960s, this is taking place against a backdrop of

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Down With All Bans—Free Abortion on Demand!

Liberals Team Up with Anti-Abortion Bigots

Following an earlier overwhelming vote in the House, on May 20 the Senate passed a measure to outlaw a late-term abortion procedure by a vote of 64 to 36. The Republican bill, which carried with significant Democratic support, would ban "intact dilation and extraction" abortions, misleadingly labeled "partial birth" abortions by bigots. The lopsided Senate vote means the bill only needs three more supporters to override President Clinton's anticipated veto.

Meanwhile, Clinton has long made it clear that if a few words in the legislation were changed, he too would support the ban. To this end, Democratic Senate minority leader Thomas Daschle put forward an "alternative" bill to outlaw *all* abortions once the fetus is supposedly "viable" except when a woman's life is endangered or there is a

risk of "grievous injury to her health." Democrats Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer of California and leading liberal Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois proposed a similar ban, but with a slightly better "health exception"! On the day of the Senate vote, most of the supposedly "pro-choice" liberals refused to even verbally object to the Republican measure, as the *New York Times* (21 May) reported, "letting the clock tick during most of their allotted debate time without a single senator on the floor making their case."

For the past two decades the exercise of a woman's right to abortion has been severely limited, through denial of Medicaid funding to poor women, squeal rules requiring women under the age of 18 to get the consent of a parent or judge, and outright terror attacks

resulting in fewer and fewer hospitals and health facilities willing to provide abortions. What is immediately at stake with the current legislation is the first direct rollback of the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion nationally, as part of a relentless campaign to ban abortion entirely. Indeed, the Christian fundamentalists who have been spearheading the anti-abortion drive hail the Senate vote for bringing them within range of "final victory" in their reactionary crusade. Christian Coalition head Ralph Reed gloated, "Clearly the momentum is with us."

As Dr. Warren Hern, a courageous fighter for abortion rights whose Boulder, Colorado clinic has been fired on by "right to life" terrorists, notes in an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (24

May), "The intent of the bill [is] to keep doctors from performing *any* abortion." Referring to the liberals' "alternatives," Hern cautioned that one "would do well to be suspicious of all such attempts to limit late-term abortions—even those 'compromise' proposals from legislators who claim to support abortion rights."

What gives politicians any right to decide when and if a woman can have an abortion? It should be a purely personal question, as all individual medical decisions ought to be. We Marxists say that women should have the absolute right to free abortion on demand, as part of free, quality health care for all.

Another sinister straw in the wind was the sudden decision by the board of the American Medical Association (AMA) to support the Republicans'

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