

# The College

# VOICE

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## POVERTY FOR THE WORKERS, WELFARE FOR THE BOSSES



by Roy Rollin

CAPITALIST POLITICIANS ARE rightly renowned for their failing to keep campaign promises made to those foolish enough to vote for them. That is except for promises made to those of their constituents whose wealth, rather than their votes, makes both Democratic and Republican party politicians dance to the tune they whistle. So while more workers than bosses will undoubtedly go to the polls come election day, one can be sure that it will be the latter rather than the former who wins...no matter which candidate loses. Or to put it another way, no matter which one of capitalism's candidates wins this November, working people will once again lose.

TAKE BILL CLINTON. Unfortunately most working class voters did in 1992 and probably will do so again this year. Four years ago candidate Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it." However what he clearly had in mind was aid for the poor and needy and certainly not handouts to the rich and greedy. Thus Clinton had little trouble ending even the minimum level of income support that welfare provided for the desperate and the destitute. At the same time his administration continues to dole out over \$85 billion a year for a plethora of programs offering price supports and marketing and research aid for big business in addition to the \$167 billion spent on corporate tax breaks. Now on paper both welfare recipients and multi-millionaires have but one vote a piece...indeed they are theoretically equals when they step into the voting booth. However in reality it would seem that the votes of the few weigh far more heavily than those of the many under what passes for "democracy" in capitalist America.

The bi-partisan bill signed by Clinton this August completely eliminates the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, which guaranteed cash assistance for poor children, threatening to plunge an additional 1 million children into poverty. According to the Urban Institute, almost half of the current welfare recipients will be disqualified from the rolls. In addition the new law will adversely effect nearly all of the 26 million people who currently receive food stamps, half of whom already have some kind of job, so that 14 million people will have to make do with less food according to the Children's Defense Fund. The bill also denies benefits to most immigrants, includ-

ing those who are "legally" in this country. Nonetheless, Clinton, who came to Washington promising "change," trumpeted "this bill as a real step forward for our country, our values and for people who are on welfare." Only this wasn't the kind of "change" the millions of workers whose votes carried him to victory over George Bush had in mind.

Likewise when Clinton promised to "put people first," the "people" he had in mind were clearly not America's workers, but rather America's rulers amongst the corporate elite, whom Clinton and his cronies on the Democratic Leadership Council had sold their souls to long before the final results were in. So while Clinton barely lifted a finger on behalf of health-care reform or striker replacement legislation, the White House went all out for the boss-backed NAFTA and GATT trade agreements which only further worsened the job drain and put even more pressure on the already declining wages of American workers. In its first two years, NAFTA cost American workers 1,000,000 jobs. Small wonder that even the New York Times could write that "in almost every instance, he took the route favored by Wall Street, business executives and conventional economists."

FOUR YEARS AFTER putting a Democrat in the White House, workers find that their living standards have plummeted even further and faster under the Clinton administration than they did under previous Republican regimes while profits have, in turn, increased just as quickly. Indeed the latter is but a direct result of the former. By not taking any action to stop the flow of layoffs, plant closings or runaway shops, since all are key elements contributing to the rise in profits, Clinton and the Democrats (who controlled Congress prior to 1994), no less than Gingrich, Dole and the rest of the Republicans bear direct responsibility for the this sorry state of affairs.

Sorry, that is, for the great majority of Americans who have to work for a living and now find themselves working more and more hours for less and less pay, i.e., working more and living less. 40% of all workers have suffered a 20% or more decline in their

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**Stop The Imperialist Terror Bombing of Iraq, Page 2 & 3**

# U.S. Imperialism Bombs Iraq...Again

By Shaista Husain

"Over the past five years, these Kurds have been the cornerstone of our humanitarian relief effort." Glyn Davies, State Department spokesman, announced after the U.S. bombarded cruise missiles into Iraq September 3, 4 in their typical "humanitarian" way. The Iraqi supported Kurdish faction, The Kurdish Democratic Party, led by Barzani took the city of Sulaymaniyah, and triggered the departure of hundreds of new refugees fleeing to the border of Iran. This latest development between factional in-fighting between the Kurds is a good excuse as well as a conveniently timed one to justify the further policing of the region by oil hungry U.S. The raids on Tuesday and Wednesday morning destroyed Iraqi air defenses in Southern Iraq, clearing the way for U.S., British and French aircraft to control an extended 110 km no fly zone which reaches to Baghdad's suburbs. However, US control of Southern Iraq has nothing to do with the defending the poor Kurds but with the "endangered" oil resources south of Iraq's border i.e. Kuwait. Ironically the region where the Kurdish factional warring occurred, Sulaymaniyah, does not fall under the humanitarian "no fly zone." Nor has the U.S. offered any help to the Kurd refugees. In addition, the U.S. has been sending agents and buying out other Kurdish factions to further propel Iraq into a Balkanized region of fratricide. Divide and rule has always been the name of the game.

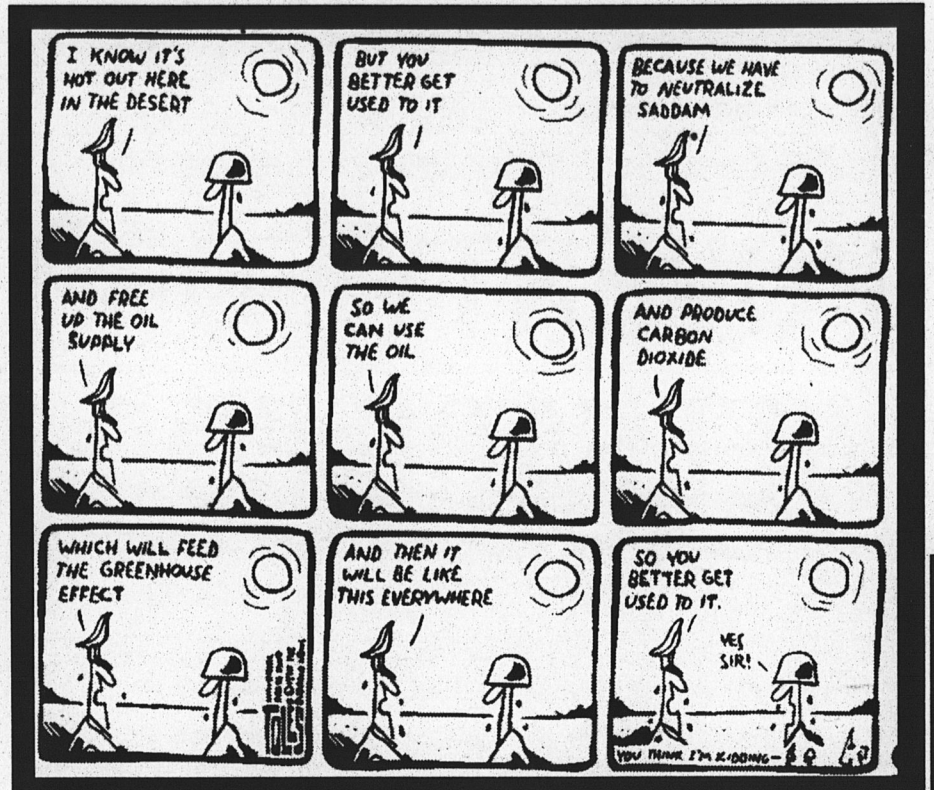
The U.S. does not need any resolution by the U.N. to "legitimate" its so called humane actions in the Gulf to pro-

tect the world from that great threatening monster Saddam (pronounced Sodom to evoke biblical vengeance). Surely Clinton's tough stance will earn him a few more patriotic votes from right wingers who must have constant reinforcement that the US is head policeman of the world.

Another irony is that this month the U.N. had been planning to allow Iraq to sell some of its oil in order to buy food and medicine for its malnourished and

*This latest development between factional in-fighting between the Kurds is a good excuse as well as a conveniently timed one to justify the further policing of the region by oil hungry U.S.*

sick population. Now that will be delayed. Who is paying for this whole catastrophe? The innocent people of Iraq. They do not see the U.S. as their saviour against a tyrant, but only for what it truly is - a multi billion dollar military machine intent on controlling and colonizing the Gulf for the sake of its natural resources and subjecting the population to its own selfish ends. The U.S. has killed more Iraqis directly than any claims made by the western media about Saddam Hussein's plot against



his own people; 100,000 plus during the Gulf War and hundreds of thousands after due to the cruel embargo that has reduced Iraq to a starving, warring nation. Another missile attack that broke all International sovereignty laws reinforces the U.S. as the greatest imperialistic, militaristic and fascist nation on earth today. Long live democracy, the great American

humanitarian Clinton has saved the poor Kurds from the great villain that the U.S. put in power - Saddam Hussein. What an allegory of good over evil- its too "surgically precise" just like the precise bombing of innocent Iraqi civilians.

**Stop the Bombing!**

U.S. OUT OF IRAQ, NOW!

## Self-determination & the struggle over the Mideast

By Brian Becker

What really provoked the Clinton administration to order B-52 bombers and U.S. warships to launch the 44 cruise missiles that crashed into Iraq Sept. 3 and 4?

Both Bill Clinton and his Republican presidential challenger Bob Dole would have you believe that the U.S. government was so concerned about the treatment of a minority people in far-away Iraq that they ordered the bombing. Is that even slightly believable? The U.S. government going to war to fight racism in Iraq? Wasn't it just four years ago that thousands of U.S. troops were sent to suppress the rebellion of African American and Mexican people in Los Angeles who rose up in rage after the acquittal of the racist police officers who beat Rodney King so unmercifully?

Doing their best to appear sincere, however, the news media here keep dishing out this nonsense about Washington's concern for the Kurds. "The U.S. seeks to protect the Kurdish minority in northern Iraq. The U.S. must make Saddam pay the price." And so on.

Never mind that Iraq moved troops into territory that the whole world recognizes to be part of Iraq. According to this argument, the sovereign country of Iraq should be bombed by a foreign power for the crime of having invaded itself-and at the invitation of one of the two largest Kurdish organizations, no less.

You wouldn't know it from the slavish U.S. media, but almost the entire world opposed this U.S. bombing of Iraq. The Arab League, representing all the Arab countries, condemned it. Only the heavy hand of the police in Pakistan prevented big crowds from sacking and burning the U.S. embassy in Islamabad.

It wasn't much better in the United Nations. In order to avoid a certain veto, England-U.S. imperialism's faithful sidekick and junior partner-was forced to withdraw its resolution condemning Iraq.

### Putting the U.S. Bombing of Iraq in Historic Context

News coverage was not just superficial. It was part of a deliberate propaganda blitz. The aim is to keep whipping up fear and anger among people in the United States against Saddam Hussein-along with the leaders in Iran, Libya, Yemen, Algeria. After all, each year \$50 billion in U.S. taxes maintain warplanes, aircraft carriers and thousands of troops in the Persian Gulf. What really lies beneath the new bombing of Iraq is a nearly century-old struggle over who will control the vast natural resources in the Middle East. At stake is oil. And, most of all, who will control the oil profits. Who will dominate this region? Will the Arab nations and Iran exercise any leverage? Or will a handful of giant oil monopolies and Western banks-backed by the military machines of the United States, Britain and France-destroy every government to emerge from the bourgeois-democratic revolutions that swept through the region in the 1950s and 1960s?

#### The Sykes-Picot treaty

Eighty years ago, in the middle of World War I, representatives of the governments of Britain, France and czarist Russia met. They signed a top-secret treaty. With the Sykes-Picot Treaty, these three imperialist powers agreed to secretly carve up the land and resources of the Arab, Iranian and Kurdish peoples.

Iraq, Palestine and Jordan were to become the property of Britain. Britain already controlled Egypt and the Suez Canal. Lebanon and Syria went to France. The millions of Kurds were to be divided into autonomous regions administered by British political officers.

In 1921, under the terms of the Sykes-Picot Treaty, the British Colonial Office proceeded to create a separate entity called Kuwait under British control. As the British did with Hong Kong in China, Sir

Percy Cox of the colonial office drew a border separating Kuwait from the Basra province of Iraq. This blocked Iraq's access to the Persian Gulf. Were the mass of working people in the area consulted about these agreements? No. They were to be the colonial slaves. No one, in fact, would have ever learned of the criminal Sykes-Picot conspiracy-except for the fact that the czar of Russia was overthrown by a popular revolution, which eventually resulted in the 1917 socialist revolution led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Lenin and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union discovered the secret treaty and renounced it before the entire world. Although the Bolsheviks exposed the Sykes-Picot plot to carve up and exploit the Middle East, the plan went ahead anyway. Minus Russia.

The division of the Middle East by Britain, France and later the United States was not a regional accident. In 1884, at

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the Conference of Berlin, the imperialists had already carved up all of Africa for themselves. On the whole of the vast continent of Africa only Ethiopia retained its independent status.

By the end of the 19th century the same process led to the total subjugation of the Chinese people. England, Germany, Holland and the other Western imperialists divided China into what they called spheres of influence. Latin America, too, had been divided among the colonialists-first by Spain and Portugal, later the United States jumped in.

The first World War, between 1914-1918, was a war among the various imperialist powers. They fought to redivide the world

and its markets. It ended in the defeat of Germany and the liquidation of the Ottoman Empire. It also presented the United States with the biggest single opportunity to emerge as a world power.

By the end of World War II, the United States had grown to be the most powerful imperialist state. It joined Britain and France as the premier arbiter over the Middle East region. Oil had been discovered. By 1960, half of all overseas U.S. corporate profit came from Middle East oil fields.

#### Anti-imperialist revolutions

What is the great historic change that has taken place in the Middle East since the Sykes-Picot Treaty was signed? The difference isn't inside the imperialist camp. Not a day goes by without some new maneuver, or some new military or economic initiative by Washington, Paris or London. Their goal is exactly the same as it was when they carved up the region 80 years ago.

But the Middle East has been changed forever-by a great political development among the oppressed masses of people. Anti imperialist revolutions rocked the region after World War II.

More than a million Algerians gave their lives between 1954 and 1962 to drive out the French. Hundreds of thousands of Iranians died to drive out the U.S.-backed shah in 1979. Thousands of Iraqis and Egyptians became martyrs in the struggle to topple British-backed monarchies in the 1950s. Revolutions raged in Yemen, in Libya. And of course the Palestinian resis-

Continued on next page

# Iraqi Attack Exposes Safe Haven Fraud

**No to all US intervention!**

CLINTON'S BOMBING of Iraq has once again shown the bankruptcy and hypocrisy of US policy in the region. Although it is portrayed as a response to Saddam Hussein's seizure in temporary alliance with Massoud Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party - of Irbil, this attack is mainly for US domestic purposes.

At the height of the US election campaign, Clinton cannot afford to appear weak in the face of such a provocation by arch-enemy Saddam. As we go to press, the first reports are coming in of the inevitable civilian casualties. It also appears that Iraqi troops were already withdrawing from Irbil before the US attack was launched. But none of this matters to Clinton, who is willing to slaughter as many foreigners as necessary in order to be re-elected. It is not clear if he intends to continue with the attack, though this is unlikely to involve the use of ground troops, with resulting US casualties.

As usual, the British government, which offered the use of its bases in Diego Garcia, is the most slavish supporter of US action. Socialists in Britain must be ready to respond to any British intervention, including possible military action.

The Iraqi hijackers currently on remand in Britain had all tried

unsuccessfully to apply for asylum in several countries. The hijack was a desperate attempt to escape Saddam's brutality and find a safe haven in the West. They should immediately be freed and granted asylum. Other western allies have been more sceptical, with Spain opposing the attack and Germany expressing doubts.

The Arab League has also condemned the attack. There has not yet been any public response from Turkey, which under its new Islamic government has been hinting at a realignment in its foreign policy

towards the Arab world and away from the West.

The latest developments once again demonstrate the emptiness of the UN's 'safe havens' policy. In Irbil, which was supposed to be just such a 'safe haven', dozens of Iraqi dissidents have apparently been murdered by Saddam's

Republican Guards. Saddam's attack is only the latest in a series of military interventions by Turkey, Iran and Iraq against Kurdish guerillas operating from the 'safe haven'. Iran - in alliance with Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan - is reported to have occupied a large part of the zone.

Last year when Turkey invaded the area as part of its vicious campaign against the Kurdish People's Party the West stood aside. These interventions are no surprise to those who have argued that 'safe havens' are a fraud. In both Bosnia and Kurdistan, they were designed to ensure stability for imperialism, not to protect victims of aggression, and certainly not to ensure self-determination.

In Bosnia, 'safe havens' were the alternative to arming those fighting for a multinational and united Bosnia. Massacre in Srebrenica was the result.

The Kurdish 'safe haven' was a way of denying the legitimate demand for an independent Kurdish state. This demand has been resisted by the West since the 1920's, when Britain bombed and gassed Kurdish guerillas in order to establish the present Iraqi state.

Factional and clan fighting between various Kurdish groups has assisted predatory neighbours in their fight against Kurdish self-determination. A Kurdish state cannot be achieved in alliance with the reactionary and bloodthirsty regimes in Iraq, Iran and Turkey.

## ...the struggle over the Mideast

Continued from Page 2.

tance to U.S.-backed Israeli occupation took on truly revolutionary momentum by the mid 1960s.

The development of anti-imperialist consciousness became a major obstacle for Washington and its predatory partners. Yet the Arab and Iranian revolutions con-

differs markedly from the Leninist approach. Socialism builds genuine solidarity against the imperialist enemy based first and foremost on recognizing the fundamental right of nationally oppressed people to self-determination. In the case of the oppressed Kurdish people in north-

### Putting the U.S. Bombing of Iraq in Historic Context

tained a gigantic contradiction that continues to hamper the struggle for liberation.

These revolutions were unable to achieve a transition to the socialist revolution-one that overturns the basic relations of property between the working class and peasants on one side, and the bourgeoisie on the other. What emerged instead of socialism was Ba'thism in Iraq and Syria, and variants of bourgeois nationalism in the other states. Merely nationalizing the oil industry, progressive as this may be as a stand against imperialist domination, does not in and of itself lay the basis for socialism. Ba'thism carried out progressive reforms. But it retained the bourgeoisie as the ruling class. This not only leads to gross inequality. In light of the bourgeoisie's international connections with imperialism it leads the country back onto the road of foreign domination. Saddam Hussein and the ruling group in Iraq are a classic example of Ba'thism in power. The regime straddles the fence between the workers and peasants on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie. In its fight to be independent against imperialism it leans on the workers for support. But it is constantly under pressure from bourgeois forces to go in the other direction.

The national question

The oppression of national minorities is a characteristic feature of bourgeois pressure. The bourgeoisie looks at the lands of oppressed people as "our property." This

ern Iraq it must be recognized that since the 1991 outbreak of the Gulf war, U.S. and British imperialism have cynically manipulated the Kurdish people's legitimate desire to exercise their right to self-determination.

Washington tried to use the Kurdish nation as a staging area to oppress the Iraqi people. It brazenly told the sovereign Iraqi government that no Iraqi plane could fly in this oil-rich region of Iraq. It sent the CIA with fistfuls of dollars to manipulate the various Kurdish organizations. Then one of the main Kurdish groups, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, broke out of the current U.S. arrangement and allied itself with the central government in Iraq. This is what provoked the new round of U.S. cruise missile attacks on Iraq.

No one should be fooled by the corporate-owned media. The imperialists have always opposed genuine freedom for the Kurds. Right now the U.S. government and NATO are avidly supporting the Turkish government's murderous bombing campaign against pro-socialist Kurds who have taken refuge in northern Iraq. The anti-imperialist revolution in the Middle East is still very much alive in the peoples' consciousness. It awaits a new and decisive phase.

Unless it overturns the foundations of bourgeois class rule, self-determination alone, independence alone will be inadequate to liberate the people from the never-ending encroachments of imperialism.

U.S. OUT OF IRAQ, NOW!

## WHAT, AGAIN?? Another Bombing on Iraq?

by Marco Sainte

You know, it seems that America just cannot get enough of bombing the "brown people" of Iraq. Ever since the 80s there has been a growing resentment and a need to send the inhabitants there to napalm heaven. Many have given various reasons why Saddam Hussain and his cohorts are scum: they are tyrants, dictators, anti christ's, they use American soldiers as shields, etc. However, I feel there are other reasons that the American government has decided to turn the middle east into a target, reasons which might make me hated for saying them, but hey, they have to be said.

There has always been some type of apprehensive feelings toward the Middle East among the American citizens, particularly the middle class, who incidentally happen to be the most influenced group of people to ever dwell in America. It really started climbing during the Iran Contra situation. Since they have been under the light they have been disguised as the bad guys in the movies like the russians were a few years ago. They are shown as a bunch of freedom suppressing, terrorist loving, missile launching bunch of people. It is a pretty bad image to have on a people, but then again a few fundamentalists did help to add to that stereotype.

But I'm degressing. The point is that America in general really doesn't have much sympathy for Hussain. The government doesn't either, but what the public at large doesn't know is that the good ole' boys in charge put that image in the masses minds so that the people would support them when America starts blowing things up over there. The government cries out

that they are fighting for oppressed people, when in actuality it's all about money.

You see, America has had a taste of Middle Eastern money, and now they're hooked. Iraq and many of the other nations have been benefiting from a gold mine; namely oil wells. Oil is very much needed in industrialized nations, so needless to say the Middle Eastern rulers are beyond rich. America had wanted to grab as much of the land that they could grab to add to the land they already owned. With Kuwait the door was opened wide. Now America is telling Hussain, by bombardment, what to do in his own nation. It's the police man role once again, but it's a crooked police man, sort of like the cop who busts up a drug ring just so he can get a piece of the action.

This is not a moral issue here. If it was, then America would have never given Iraq the weapons that they are now fighting against. It's all about business, and that is the main reason why Bill Clinton is still going to be president this November; he's a businessman. He knows the collateral to be had in Iraq, and being the politician that he is, he also knows what strings to pull on the American public to gain sympathy, you know like "We'll get those terrorists!" and all that rhetoric. So almost everyone agrees and get's mad, acting on their emotions, which is precisely the way that the powers that be want things, for it's very easy to control a person by their emotions. They don't use their brains and really analyze the situation, and so the

Government gets away with it once again.

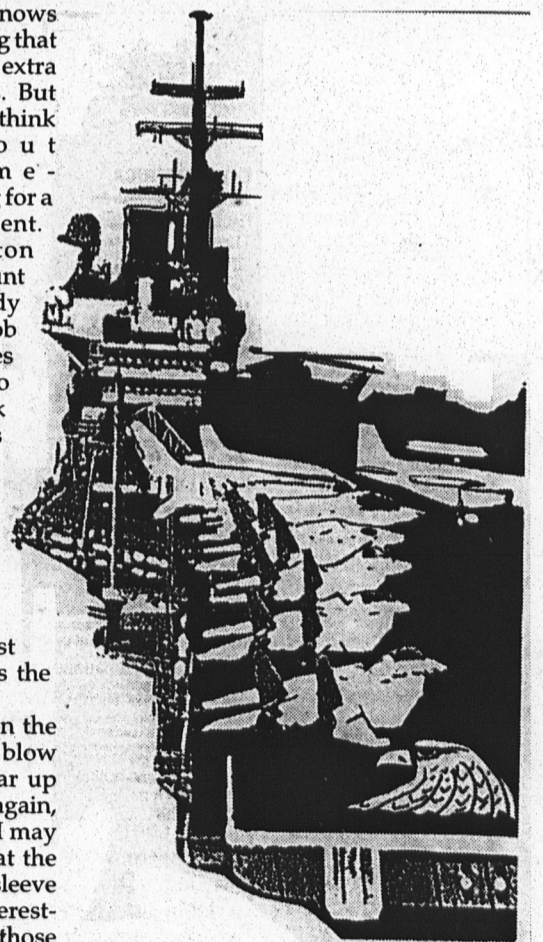
Let us not forget the fact that this is an election year. Oh wait, everyone knows that. People all over have been stating that this is just another ploy to get some extra

*It's all about business... main reason why Bill Clinton is still going to be president this November; he's a businessman.*

votes. But let's think about something for a moment. Clinton

doesn't really need a publicity stunt like this to get extra votes. He's already got the presidency in the bag, with Bob Dole running his campaign like a Bartles and James commercial (thanks to Christopher Caldwell of the New York Press for that description!). Clinton's ahead in the polls. What people don't see is that bombing Iraq was not an opportune ploy to help win the election, but the election was an opportune time to bomb Iraq. Think about it. The worst anyone not analyzing the situation would say about the motives is "Ah, he's just playing another election trick." It's the perfect cover.

So it looks like the first agenda on the president's list for this new term is to blow up Saddam Hussain's land and gear up the "Nintendo pilots" for action once again, but let me drop something on you. I may be wrong about this, but I think that the "wily dictator" has something up his sleeve to make this little conflict more interesting. I mean, where do you think all those nuclear weapons that were being secretly manufactured in Korea to be sold were going?



# Defend Immigrant Workers Against Racist Capitalist Attacks

*This Article is taken from "Workers Voice" newspaper.*

Riverside, Calif., April 1 — The cops were caught on video, doing their routine brutal beating once again. The immigrant workers who were victimized by the Riverside County sheriffs were unarmed and were not resisting arrest.

The brutality of the police and the capitalist state against the most oppressed sectors of the working class knows no borders or limits. As in the case of Rodney King, April's savage attack on two immigrant workers by Riverside sheriffs represents only the tip of the iceberg. Hundreds if not thousands of immigrant workers have been killed by racist U.S. police and INS agents as they tried to enter the country.

It has been reported that over 1,000 bodies of immigrants have been found in the Rio Grande river between Texas and Mexico in the last five years. These workers were either drowned or killed by the INS or the police as they struggled to cross the river looking for a job.

Dozens of workers at the California border are chased and beaten or murdered by the cops or INS. Some are killed by cars on the freeway as they try to escape these racist murderers. The only crime of these workers is that in order to get a job, they need to escape the depressed economy of Mexico and come to the U.S.

**Anti-immigrant repression worsens**

Congress is hard at work on laws designed to impose massive repression on immigrant workers, so as to guarantee that those who avoid deportation will live under terror and near-slavery conditions. Their purpose is to maximize the profit of U.S. capitalists.

The Senate has passed a proposed anti-immigrant bill, S-1664, which is similar to California's Proposition 187, but includes many other repressive measures funded with federal money. Once signed into law, this bill and other similar legislation will expand nationwide the attacks instituted by Prop. 187. Like Prop. 187, S-1664 would deny immigrants many government-funded services, including health care and welfare benefits. The legislation attacks both documented and undocumented immigrants. For example, in deciding whether documented immigrants are eligible for welfare, the government would count the income of their "sponsors," i.e., their family and friends who signed papers so that they could enter the country.

**Militarization of the border**

In addition to the denial of basic benefits, S-1664 doubles the number of INS agents at the border. Both S-1664 and the parallel House bill would allocate about 5,000 more Border Patrol cops. The bill also provides funds for a 14-mile triple fence at the California

border. Thus, the border will become fully militarized, and many more immigrants workers will be murdered by the INS and the cops as they try to enter the U.S. to find jobs. If they managed to escape the beefed-up military-style police at the border, they could be caught by the 1,200 new regular INS agents that S-1664 wants to fund in addition to the increased Border Patrol. S-1664 also provides for harsh sentences — up to 15 years in prison — for immigrants who try to avoid deportation by using fake papers, and for those who provide them. It also increases punishment for those who assist immigrants to come to the U.S. and stay.

**Mass imprisonment**

To facilitate the planned mass repression of immigrants, the legislation orders the INS to increase its detention space to at least 9,000 beds — a 66 percent increase! The bill also starts a pilot program to use closed military bases as detention centers. In other words, the capitalist state will

transform military bases into mass prisons that are likely to bear a striking resemblance to concentration camps.

As a result, there will be more racist mistreatment and abuse. The June 18, 1995 uprising in a privatized detention center for immigrants in Elizabeth, New Jersey, which even the INS admitted later was caused by abusive and inhumane treatment, testifies to the increasingly unbearable conditions in special prisons for immigrants.

The truth is that immigrant workers are expendable in the eyes of the racist politicians and their agents of repression. The capitalists make them work like animals, under super-exploitative conditions without basic human rights. And when the capitalists no longer need them, they lock them up and abuse them until they are deported, treating them like animals who have lost their usefulness.

Other rights to be curtailed S-1664 and its House parallel also propose pilot programs to develop a national computer system to verify the legal status of any worker who applies for a job. This racist big-brother computerized system could be used later to flag anyone to whom the capitalists and their state want to deny a job or benefits, and to track down and oppress any opponent of the system.

*The current racist attacks and chauvinist anti-immigrant hysteria are not aimed at deporting all undocumented immigrants...*

The final version of the pending anti-immigrant bill will not emerge until after the Senate and the House have worked out the differences between their two versions. But there are only a few significant differences. The House bill proposes to allow the states to deny children of undocumented immigrants the right to a public education.

The Senate has not gone that far — for now. The House version also makes it far more difficult to get political asylum. At present, those who ask for political asylum have the right to a hearing. Under the House bill, if an asylum seeker tries to enter the U.S. without papers, the INS agents at the airport can deny the asylum claim on the spot and send the person immediately back to the firing squad, torture, or persecution from which he/she was trying to flee.

**Effect of anti-terrorist bill**

Even if the final bill does not contain the asylum limits, this "concession" will have little practical effect. The recent anti-terrorist bill, which has already become law, already permits the government to deport any immigrant that it does not like politically.

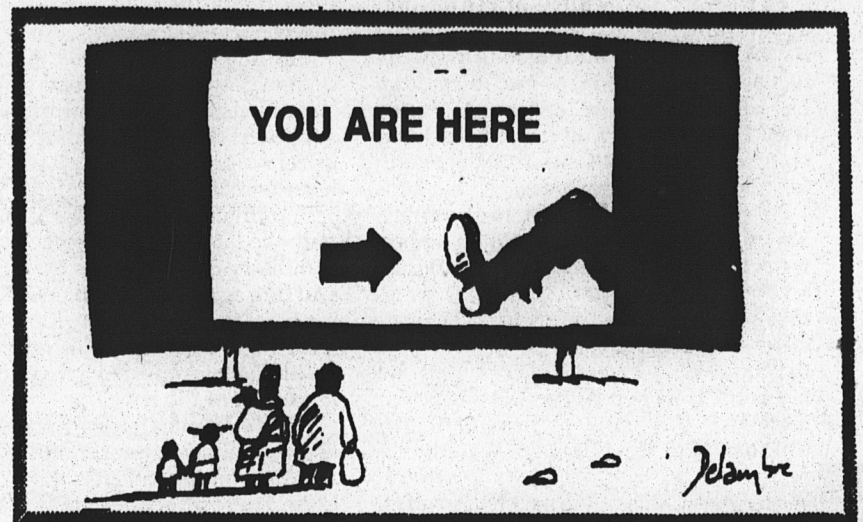
The anti-terrorist law gives the government the right to deport any immigrant whom the government claims is connected to a "terrorist" organization based on secret evidence which the immigrant and his or her lawyer will not have the right to review.

This kangaroo court procedure denies basic democratic due process rights to immigrants. It is designed to give the government the ability to deport any immigrant whose politics it does not like, without having to prove anything to the public.

**Democrats are not "friends" of immigrants**

Many reformist immigrant organizations are trying to fight anti-immigrant laws and repression by appealing to the Democratic Party. Immigrant workers and their allies must reject this approach.

The Democrats support anti-immigrant



laws and repression. S-1664 received nearly unanimous support in the Senate, with only three no votes.

Clinton, the presidential choice of most reformist immigrant organizations, advocates the anti-immigrant bill, and willingly signed the anti-terrorist law. Senator Edward Kennedy, a so-called liberal who "cares" about human rights, said in reference to S-1664 that "This legislation... I believe will be effective in stemming the tide of illegals."

Like conservative Republicans, liberal Democrats support the creeping dictatorship against immigrant workers because this terror campaign is good for capitalists, enabling them to superexploit these workers more easily.

The only way out for immigrant workers and non-immigrant workers is to break fully with the capitalist parties and build together a militant workers' party that can fight the source of these increasingly repressive laws — the capitalist system.

**Behind the current attacks**

The current racist attacks and chauvinist anti-immigrant hysteria are not aimed at deporting all undocumented immigrants. In truth, the capitalists need immigrant workers to maximize their profits.

The international capitalist crisis, and the increasing competition between the main capitalist countries, demand greater

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superexploitation domestically. The truth is that the anti-immigrant repression is designed not only to keep immigrant workers out of the country, but also to terrorize them. By depriving immigrant workers of basic rights and making it easier to deport or jail them, these laws intimidate those immigrants who do manage to stay in the U.S. into accepting nearly slave-labor working conditions and wages. This permits the capitalist bosses to maximize their profits.

**Workers suffer, employers profit**

Recent reports describe attempts to crack down on employers who use undocumented workers as a joke (San Francisco Chronicle, March 18, 1996). The INS's token "enforcement" efforts do nothing to discourage the hiring of undocumented workers. The small fines paid by a few companies are nothing compared to the profit that they make from the super-exploitation of these workers.

Indeed, the ability of U.S. employers to hire immigrant workers under conditions and wages almost as low as in Mexico gives certain sectors of the capitalists an

advantage in global competition. The superexploitation of immigrant workers goes hand in hand with downsizing, union-busting and other attacks on workers' standard of living as a strategy to maximize the bosses' profits.

**A new kind of slavery**

In some cases U.S. capitalists have been able to achieve virtual slavery, all the better to increase profits. Take the case of the Thai immigrants who were kept as slaves for years by a garment company in Southern California.

These workers were never allowed to leave the facilities. They were forced to live in appalling conditions and work 17 hours a day for about \$1.70 an hour. For over a year the INS knew about it, but did not raid the factory.

After rumors began to spread, the INS and the government were forced to act. But even then, the bosses who had enslaved the workers were not even charged with kidnaping!

**Workers beware!**

The capitalists are waging a campaign to dramatically lower the standard of living of all U.S. workers, and to destroy workers' organizations through union-busting. They have been so successful that by now all the wings of the bourgeoisie, including the liberal Democrats, feel confident enough to attack workers' democratic rights, starting with immigrant workers, who are the most vulnerable.

The new anti-immigrant and anti-terrorist laws are not aimed only at immigrant workers or left-wing immigrant groups. They can be used to repress any group or person that wants to fight capitalist oppression. An organization that has foreign workers in it, or is associated with a foreign group, can be targeted under the anti-terrorism law. This tactic can be used to repress militant trade unions, black organizations, and other groups struggling against exploitation and injustice.

The ability of the government to deport political opponents on the basis of secret evidence under the new anti-terrorist law represents a devastating attack on the democratic rights of the entire working class. It must be opposed by mass actions such as general strikes, or at least by massive demonstrations to start with. Otherwise, if the government sees that there is no mass opposition against the law, it could be expanded for use against non-immigrant workers.

**Just say no to chauvinism and racism!**

The capitalists are combining attacks on immigrant rights with appeals to racism and chauvinism by scapegoating immigrants for the growing misery and discon-

*Continued on page next page*

## ...Defend Immigrant Workers

tent caused by the capitalist system. They are lying to the people, telling them that immigrants take American jobs. This scapegoating has risen to the point of provoking racist violence against immigrants.

But the truth is that what is forcing massive layoffs and "downsizing" is the anarchy of world capitalism. Immigrant workers have nothing to do with it. Immigrants most often take "dirty" jobs that U.S. workers are unwilling to do, such as jobs in garment sweatshops.

The lies about immigrants taking American jobs are deliberate, racist propaganda aimed at enabling the bosses to pass measures like Proposition 187. They are calculated attempts to create a wedge between immigrant workers and the rest of the working class.

Many American workers buy into the propaganda that because they are U.S. "citizens," they should have first priority for jobs and services. But this nationalist patriotism is misguided to the core. The capitalist system attacks every worker. It is an international system that is responsible for cutting budgets and laying off workers not only in the U.S., but also in Latin America and other semi-colonies.

For mass struggle against creeping dictatorship!

For U.S. workers to succeed in their own class struggle, we must break with U.S.-centered chauvinism. The working class should not capitulate to the growing open racism and chauvinism of the capitalists. If U.S. workers do not unite with immigrant workers against our common enemy, we will find that the capitalists go on to use the same repressive measures against the rest of the working class.

As the capitalist crisis intensifies, Congress will enact more repressive laws against all workers, immigrant and non-immigrant. The bosses and their government will use layoffs, budget cuts, and union-busting to attack workers' wages and benefits. They will try to bring working conditions down as close as possible to those of undocumented workers.

If U.S. workers are to fight back, they must break with every vestige of chauvinist attitudes. The defense of immigrant workers by U.S. workers is a critical test of workers' ability to achieve unity in fighting the bosses.

### BACOF/AYUDA and immigrant defense

Workers' Voice is part of a San Francisco-based coalition to defend immigrants that was initiated in early 1996 by Acción Y Unidad Para el Desamparado Latino (AYUDA) and the Bay Area Coalition Opposing Fascism (BACOF). The points of unity of the coalition are:

*Stop the INS raids and police harassment; Stop the deportations; Mobilize to abolish Proposition 187; Defend the rights of all immigrants, documented and undocumented; Mobilize to make the Mission an INS-free zone; Defeat the English-only campaign, Defend bilingual*

screening of Alambrista (Wire

Breaker), a film about the life of an immigrant worker who comes to the U.S. and is arrested and deported by the INS. The event attracted 300 immigrant workers and their children. It was a moving cultural/political experience for the day-laborers in the community, who identified with the struggles of the movie's charismatic central character.

The Alambrista benefit also provided an opportunity for political discussion on what we need to do to defend the day-laborers and the workers in the neighborhood against the increasing racist brutality and attacks by the bosses and their INS and police agents.

The movie was followed two weeks later, on May 11, by a march and rally in defense of immigrants, led by BACOF/AYUDA. The majority of the people who spoke during the rally were immigrant workers. Fear of INS attacks, however, prevented many immigrants from joining the march. BACOF/AYUDA is working hard to build an immigrant defense

movement led by immigrants workers with deep roots in the community. This is the only way to overcome such fear.

Through these kinds of events, the organizations behind BACOF/AYUDA are rooting themselves in the most oppressed sectors of the working class. This is unusual, because it is a departure from the routine of building united fronts based on activists from the left and the union bureaucracy.

But we still have a long way to go. To succeed, the BACOF/AYUDA coalition must recruit immigrant workers to become the principal organizers in the community. This means a political struggle and education to make this happen.

In the long run, coalitions to defend immigrant workers must link the defense of immigrant workers with the broad anti-capitalist struggle. But U.S. workers first have to take responsibility for overcoming chauvinism, and get actively involved in defending immigrant workers. Only this way is it possible to achieve much-needed unity between immigrant workers and their "gringo" brothers and sisters.



*In the long run, coalitions to defend immigrant workers must link the defense of immigrant workers with the broad anti-capitalist struggle.*

*education; and organize our neighborhoods to defeat the INS, and to stop INS-police collaboration against immigrants.*

On April 5, 1996, BACOF/AYUDA organized a militant emergency demonstration after the beating of the immigrant workers by Riverside cops in April.

In just three days, BACOF/AYUDA mobilized several hundred immigrant workers who marched through the streets of the working class Mission District in a rousing display of anger against the brutality of the police and the INS. The march was cheered and applauded by the workers in the neighborhood.

The coalition also sponsored a benefit

## ...Immigration and Imperialism

...Continued from Back Page

both by the profit hungry policies of US imperialism and its junior partners in western Europe and Japan.

**"So what can ordinary American people do?"**

First, they must defend immigrant workers from the anti-immigrant, anti-human policies of the US government. This includes the fight to repeal all anti-immigrant legislation being adopted by the US government like a) Proposition 187 of California, which seeks amongst other things to deprive children of so-called "illegal" immigrants of education, b) "Welfare Reform", which has as its centerpiece the deprivation of legal residents from access to welfare. The fight to defend immigrant workers from unfair discrimination by the government is an issue of basic democratic rights and is inextricably tied to the defense of the civil rights and living conditions of American workers. Ghettoizing immigrants allows them to be manipulated by the bosses and the gov-

*The fight to defend immigrant workers from unfair discrimination is an issue of basic democratic rights and is tied to the defense of the civil rights of American workers.*

ernment as a means of pushing down the general level of wages and as a means of weakening, through racism and national chauvinism, the solidarity of the working class as a whole. The fight must extend beyond also the borders of the US to the prevention of imperialist aggression both military and economic around the world. It is the American workers, particularly those that are organized in unions, who by refusing to go along with imperialist policy, can bring it to a dead halt.

**"How can this be done?"**

As Malcolm X said, "by any means necessary". Mass actions, in particular industrial strikes and great rallies are the best tools but all pressure made to bear on the politicians of both imperialist political parties is useful. The building of an independent working class party, that champions the rights of all workers irregardless of national origin, race or any other division is instrumental both as a political space within which workers can discuss their problems free of the control of the bosses and as a tool with which workers can change State policy.

## Staten Island Cops Target Taxi Drivers

by Vimukthi Jayadeva

Taxi drivers in St. George, Stapleton and West Brighton are under attack by the Staten Island police. Four, five, six tickets at a time amounting to hundreds of dollars are regularly given out to cabbies. Towards the end of the month when cops have to fill their assigned quotas for tickets issued, the taxi ramp of the SI ferry is a dangerous

place for cabbies. Cops would wait behind walls after the new stop signs were placed to snag any cabbies who had not seen the new signs. The cops pull over cabbies without ever offering any explanation why. If asked why, the cops are almost surprised that anyone dare question them. The tickets issued extend from the unjust to the absurd, from "dirty license plates" to "failing to signal a turn" when one was driving straight. The cops act with impunity feeling confident that the largely immigrant - Middle Eastern, South Asian, African - drivers are the least politically organized and therefore the most vulnerable to gross violations of their rights. In addition to their non-existent political power, they are also amongst the hardest working segment of the SI's working class, with workdays averaging 12 hours and the work week usually 6 or 7 days. The task that they perform of moving the residents of the North Shore to their destinations is invaluable. With the sorry state of public transportation, severely undermined by budget cuts, the "car services" and the "gypsy cabs" perform a vital public service. In addition to the long hours and the low pay, cabbies are often robbed, beaten and even killed in the line of

*The cops act with impunity feeling confident that the largely immigrant - Middle Eastern, South Asian, African - drivers are the least politically organized and therefore the most vulnerable to gross violations of their rights. In addition to their non-existent political power...*

duty. Staten Islands so-called "finest" - cops - are right up there with criminals in who a cabby has to look out for. In fact the average driver would suffer economic losses much greater at the hands of the cops than of petty criminals in the course of the year. For a cabby who drives 70-80 hours/week and brings home \$400/week how fair is it, how human is it to issue this hardworking person \$500 or \$600 in tickets. All this points to is a police department that is out of control, drunk with their power and driven by the racist, xenophobic policies enacted by the White House down to City and Borough Hall. However the decent working people of Staten Island must recognize this gross injustice that is taking place in their midst and take action to bring it to a stop.

Organized labor on Staten Island particularly the Amalgamated Transit Union led by Larry Hanley must have a policy to engage the informal transit system of car services and independent operators that due to the attacks on the budgets of public transit have been playing a greater role in moving Staten Islanders to their places of work, recreation and homes. We at the College Voice feel the most logical approach for the ATU towards the informal sector should be one of providing organization and support. This should take the form of helping to unionize this sector and defending the drivers against police harassment. Bus drivers meanwhile will benefit from the support of the cabbies in case of a strike instead of being used as scabs.

## ...Bill Clinton: "Lesser Evil" for Workers or Greater Good for Bosses? ...Continued from front page

at a 30-year low. The bottom 20% of the workforce have seen real wages decline by 23% in the last 20 years while the next-to-bottom 20% have lost 21% of their real purchasing power.

Welfare "reform," by forcing more people to work for less money (or noncash benefits) at fewer jobs, will put even more downward pressure on all wages. Thus the lowest 30% of wage earners can expect a 13% reduction in income thanks to this legislation. Meanwhile the first 5 months of 1996 saw layoffs totalling more than 230,000, up 34% from 1995. An independent analysis by a Wall Street firm showed that the total number of layoffs in June was the highest on record ever. Yet Clinton continues to assure American workers that this "is a time of real progress and real opportunity for America's working people." Perhaps what he had in mind was his increasing the minimum wage...after doing nothing about it during the two years that the Democrats controlled Congress. Not that working people can support themselves, let alone their families, on \$5.15 an hour!

IN FACT, THE past two decades have seen both bosses parties take turns in further fleecing the poor in order to further fill the pockets of the rich so that the income of the top 20% rose 28% from 1977 to 1992. One long-time Democratic party stalwart called the process "the greatest redistribution of wealth upward since before the Great Depression." Both promise to do more of the same no matter who occupies the Oval Office next year, for as Clinton stated recently, "we have two parties committed to reducing the deficit." Thus Clinton, after signing a Republican backed bill to slash \$16.4 billion from the budget in July of 1995, hailed "the budget-cutting in this bill (as) the kind of thing we should be doing...how we should work together" and in his 1996 State of the Union address he "compliment(ed) the Republicans for the energy and determination they have brought to this task." Bob Dole returned the compliment, commending "President Clinton (for) sign(in) the Dole welfare bill." Commenting on this symbiotic relationship, The Nation magazine wrote that "Bill Clinton and much of the Democratic Party have made the Republicans' dream...to dismantle the social safety net...a reality." Indeed, Clinton has signed cuts amounting to half the budget of the federal government, including the elimination of over 200,000 government jobs; far larger than anything Reagan or Bush dared propose when they held office.

Of course cutting spending on social services while increasing the amount spent on repression go hand in hand. And here too the Democrats are co-opting the Republicans' rhetoric, endorsing an expansion of the federal death penalty to 58 more offenses, limiting death-row appeals and spending millions more on prison construction and thousands more cops. This earned them the endorsement of the Fraternal Order of Police, the same outfit clamouring for the death of Mumia Abu Jamal. At the same time as the Democratic

Party platform proclaims that "the era of big government is over," Clinton pushes bill after bill, which while supposedly directed against "crime" or "terrorism," in reality aim at increasing the amount of government intervention into the lives of ordinary Americans, i.e., curtailing basic civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution. But with Clinton pushing more and more people into poverty, more police and prisons are obviously on the order of the day since many of these driven to desperation will obviously turn to either crime...or revolt.

If the Democrats are virtually indistinguishable from their Republican "rivals" on every domestic issue, the same holds just as true on foreign policy. Both supported the Helms-Burton Bill against Cuba, and the (conservative Republican) D'Amato-(liberal Democrat) Kennedy Act against trade with Iran and Libya. Both

September 19th, 1996 New York Times



### A Chain Gang of Women

The nation's first female chain gang began work yesterday, picking up trash and pulling weeds in downtown Phoenix. The 15 women were chained at

## WELFARE RECIPIENTS ORGANIZE AGAINST "WORKFARE" EXPLOITATION

On July 2, fifty people met in a church in Brooklyn. Most of them were welfare recipients who were participating the new "workfare" program called the Work Experience Program (WEP). All of them were unhappy. They talked about their experiences as WEP workers: cleaning the parks, sweeping the streets, and performing menial task in city agencies. Some talked about how the long hours they worked had forced them to drop out of literacy classes, GED programs, or even CUNY. Some talked about doing dangerous work, such as spraying pesticides or cleaning asbestos, without proper safety training or even respirators. One person told how he was a former city worker who had recently been downsized, then sent back to his old agency as a WEP worker to perform almost the same job, but this time for free. All of them talked about wanting to find a real job that paid a salary, and agreed

trash in the streets and parks and shoveling snow. Those who already have clerical skills are assigned to work in office buildings. The great majority of workers report that they learn no new skills.

WEP often stands in the way of better opportunities for workers. WEP participation is strictly enforced, and no exemptions, or even flexibility of hours, are given to workers who are attending other programs or classes that could be genuinely helpful to them. As a direct result of WEP interference, the City University of New York has reported that an estimated 5,000 students have dropped out. This number will rise dramatically as WEP rolls increase. Thousands more welfare recipients have been forced to drop out of literacy, GED, ESL, home-care, nursing, and other types of training. In fact, some of these programs no longer accept whole categories of welfare recipients because so many are forced to drop out in mid-semester.

WEP workers are treated badly on the job. They have no right to vacation time or sick leave, and even workers performing dangerous jobs are given no health and safety training. Workers are regularly "sanctioned", or cut off of welfare for a period of months, for often minor infractions, such as showing up late or staying home sick for a day without a note from a doctor.

WEP does not lead to employment. Significantly, the city government does not collect official data on the success rate of WEP in helping people get off welfare. However, a report by New York Newsday shows that only 5% of WEP workers per month move into paid employment, as compared to an employment rate of over 10% for welfare recipients who are not in WEP.

If WEP is not an effective employment program, why is the city government expanding it so dramatically? The answer is apparent. In the past 2 years, the city has downsized its workforce by 17,000 workers. That formerly paid work is now being done by unpaid WEP workers. This is immediately obvious on a visit to almost any WEP work site, where the paid

city employee supervisor will tell you that the site used to employ many more paid workers who have now been replaced by WEP workers. In fact, there are cases of downsized city employees who go on welfare and return to their workplace as WEP workers. A recent study from the University of Massachusetts estimates that the massive presence of 30,000 unpaid workers in the city labor market will "result in the displacement of 20,000 other workers or the depression of wages by 9% for the bottom third of the workforce, or some combination of the two."

**WEP Workers Together! is dedicated to fighting this exploitation, improving conditions, and increasing real opportunities for WEP workers. Membership is open to anyone who is a WEP worker, or is on Public Assistance. If you would like to join, or participate in WWT! activities, please contact the Fifth Avenue Committee at (718) 857-2990.**

the ankles in groups of five. "I don't believe in discrimination in my jail system," said Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Annette Torrez took a drink in a rest break

supported Boris Yeltsin's assault on the Russian Parliament as the defense of "democracy." Both supported invading and occupying Haiti as well as sending Haitian refugees back to their tormentors. Both supported bombing and occupying the Balkans, after backing Croatian and Bosnian Muslim ethnic cleansing...in the name of preserving "multi-ethnicity." And both supported starving and bombing Iraq in order to boost oil profits...five years after the ending of the Gulf War, which, needless to say, both supported as well. Clinton even agreed to accept a "defense" budget \$7 billion larger than the Pentagon had requested in exchange for congressional support for his policy in Bosnia.

THE REPUBLICANS HAVE long made no secret of their commitment to upholding the interests of the ruling rich, all claims to "diversity" and "inclusiveness" aside. Clinton's "new" Democrats, however, are no less zealous in openly associ-

that WEP was not helping them. By the end of the meeting, a decision was reached to form a union of WEP workers to help participants fight for their rights. Called WEP Workers Together! (WWT!), this effort has now grown into a city-wide campaign.

Under Mayor Guiliani and the new Republican agenda, workfare programs in NYC exploded in size, now including 34,000 welfare recipients and expected to grow to over 100,000 within two years. Participants in the program work for their minimal welfare benefits, and receive no extra subsidies. According to justifications by the City government, WEP is designed to help welfare recipients learn job skills and find employment. The reality, however, is far different.

WEP is not a training program. WEP workers work a high number of hours, often more than thirty a week. Ninety percent are sent to government agencies such as Parks and Sanitation, where they perform unskilled labor such as picking up

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## ... "Lesser Evil" for Workers or Greater Good for Bosses?

...Continued from previous page

living standards. According to Census Bureau statistics, average overall income is where it was in 1992...which is about 6% lower than the was average in 1988. Labor Department figures show that real average weekly pay continues to fall sharply and is ating themselves with the greed is good gospel and that what America needs today is not a war on poverty but a war on the poor themselves. By cutting a few million dollars less than the GOP proposes to do every once and a while, Clinton occasionally pretends to "feel the pain" and stand up to "extremists" like Gingrich. Even Sen. Moynihan was forced to admit, "that's what liberalism in this country has come to down to," Or as New York Times columnist Russell Baker commented, "(W)e can only conclude that a "New Democrat" is just another Gingrich Republican, except...for lacking the Republicans' philosophical consistency..."

Indeed, both parties' platforms could have been penned by the same set of scribes since their only real difference is that the GOP's sports more religious rhetoric and bible babble due to the presence of all those holy rollers from the religious right within their ranks. Advisors and consultants like Dick Morris routinely change party "allegiances" as frequently as most people change their underwear. Thus Lester Thurow, an MIT professor and Newsweek writer, was forced to ask, "what does democracy mean when political parties don't have different ideological beliefs...Elections come to be seen as the replacement of one set of crooks by another set of crooks." Even the Wall Street Journal had to note that "White House advisors figure that by defining the debate in their own terms, they have a chance to deny Republicans the opportunity to seize the issue(s) and use (them) against the president at a later date." Needless to say, this is a "debate" that is "defined" by its being of, by and for the rich and off-limits to working people and their felt needs. Small wonder then that the Republican House Leader, Dick Armey, could complain that "most of what (Clinton) took credit for was ours."

Thus the new Democrats don't even make a pretense of offering any more crumbs off the tables of the big business banquets they continue to cater to the

working people who are forced to foot the bill for them in the first place. As if to emphasize that fact, Hillary Clinton told an interviewer last May that "there is no left wing of the Clinton White House" while top Clinton aide George Stephanopoulos added that "we had to kill the caricature (of liberalism) to save the essentials" after Clinton had signed the GOP's welfare "reform" bill. In other words, the "social" liberalism ushered in by FDR's "New Deal" back in the 1930s is now a thing of the past and 19th century laissez-faire liberalism is back, under the guise of "freeing" the poor from "welfare dependence," even if, according to its own authors, the new law is \$12 billion short of the funding needed to put welfare recipients to work.

DUE TO THE staunch support Clinton enjoys within the trade union bureaucracy and amongst the middle-class Black and feminist organizations, all of whom regularly reign in any and every social struggle so as to stay within the good graces of the White House, Clinton can take for granted the votes of millions of workers and Black people since it is assumed that they have no place else to go. For in spite of his claims to being a "new voice" for labor, AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney still sings the same old song as his predecessors did, mainly support for the Democrats no matter much they continue to take swipes at working peoples living standards and opposition to the creation of an independent party of the working class, based on the trade unions. As James Ridgeway, writing in the Village Voice, put it Clinton "knows that the liberals in the party are totally spineless and will swallow hard and vote for him rather than leave. He knows they'll bitch and moan about his cynicism. But he also knows they're just as cynical as he is, and after bleating about the poor little



children, they'll line right up and vote for him once more..."

Having thus written Clinton a blank check (in addition to the \$35 million that the AFL-CIO has already poured into the campaign coffers of the Democratic party),

*...the new Democrats don't even make a pretense of offering any more crumbs off the tables of the big business banquets ...*

Sweeney, along with Patricia Ireland of NOW and Black misleaders like Jesse Jackson, have all insured that Clinton is now in a position to do anything and everything he pleases in order to woo white middle-class voters back into the Democratic fold...no matter how many millions of working class lives he ruins along the way. By keeping his promise "to end welfare as we know it" Clinton only added injury to insult insofar as his supporters are concerned. After, if in 1992 then Governor Clinton of Arkansas could have a mentally ill Black man killed in order to prove that he too was "tough on crime," than why not kill off welfare in order to prove

how tough on the poor now President Clinton could be.

Clinton had previously turned thumbs down on other less drastic attempts by the Republicans to gut the so-called safety net, but with the elections fast approaching he

clearly sensed an opportunity to steal Bob Dole's thunder and net a few more middle class votes along the way. All Dole could do to get back in the limelight was propose yet another tax cut for the rich. Promising the richest 1%

of families an average of \$25,000 a year in tax breaks is hardly as popular a measure in the minds of the angry white males they both are courting as Clinton's dealing a crushing blow to all the "cheats," "free-loaders" and "foreigners" allegedly making a living off of welfare.

So cynical and callous was Clinton in pulling the plug on aid to the homeless and hungry that even some of the Democratic party faithful were forced to slap the presidents wrist over it. After, while condemning millions of inner city residents to destitution and despair may make Clinton more popular in the suburbs it's not going to make things any easier for Democratic party politicians in places like New York, with 470,000 adults on welfare, or Detroit where 25% of the population is currently on the dole. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan stated that "this is not welfare reform, it is welfare repeal" while Rep. Charles Rangel proclaimed on the House floor that "my president will boldly throw one million into poverty." Sen. Patrick Leahy pointed out that "the average level of food stamp assistance will drop from 80 cents to 66 cents, one person, per meal. I wonder if the ones who wrote this ridiculous formula could feed themselves or their children for that amount."

Come November, however, you can be sure that Democrats like Moynihan, Rangel and Leahy, not to mention the AFL-CIO's John Sweeney, NOW's Patricia Ireland and Jesse Jackson, none of whom will ever have to worry about "feed(in) themselves or their children," will tell workers, blacks and poor people to cast their votes in the millions for the same Bill Clinton...as the "lesser of two evils." In fact, Bill Clinton and the Democrats are the greater good insofar as the ruling rich are concerned. For only a Democrat, who enjoys the support of the trade union bureaucracy and the middle-class Black and feminist outfits could get working people to not only swallow such bitter pills but thank those who shoved it down their throats in the first place by asking for more of the same.

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## As Both Bosses' Parties Wage War on the Poor: A Working Class Program to Fight Poverty

by Roy Rollins

SINCE BOTH BOSSES' parties take their marching orders from Wall Street, more belt-tightening is the only item on the menu for working people regardless of who comes out on top this November. Instead of fighting poverty, Democrats and Republicans will only help to create even more of it. For Clinton, Dole and Perot all agree that insofar as the majority of the population which creates all the wealth is concerned, more of less is better. They all also agree that for the tiny minority which creates nothing, but takes everything, there needs to be even more taken...out of the pockets and paychecks of the poor. Socialists, on the other hand, say enough is enough; the capitalist system, not its victims, caused the current crisis, so make the bosses take the losses. Our program thus calls for:

- No more layoffs, plant closings, "restructuring" or "downsizing." Repeal NAFTA and GATT; unionize the south (and south of the border as well) so there's no place left for sweatshops to run to. Open up the books of the corporations to representatives of the trade unions so working people can see just where the money is and where it goes. If companies can't cut the mustard then they should be nationalized under workers control.

- For full employment at wages workers can live on. Raise the minimum wage to at least \$12.50 an hour and keep it pegged to the cost of living. Reduce working hours with no loss in pay (30 hours work for 40 hours pay) so that jobs are available to all who need them. Rebuild America's cities through a massive public works program at union wages and under union control.

- Make the rich pay for it all: Raise taxes on corporations, cut them for working people and the middle class. Cancel the debt and expropriate the banks. Not one dime, not one man or woman for the Pentagon war budget or for aid for anti-working class regimes or conter-revolutionary cutthroats abroad. No more prisons, police or legal lynchings. Abolish the death penalty instead of expanding it. Smash the prison-industrial complex: Use the money to build hospitals, housing, schools and mass public transportation instead.

- Extend and expand all social services. End hunger and homelessness by providing free quality housing, healthcare and higher education and job retraining with state stipends to all who need them.

- US out of the affairs of other countries once and for all. Dismantle all US bases around the world. Hands off Cuba, Iraq and the Balkans; end the embargo and all the sanctions, withdraw all troops. Full

diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba; trade with Cuba means jobs for American workers.

SINCE THE DEMOCRATS and the Republicans are the private playthings of the ruling rich, the implementation of any, let alone all, of this demands requires that working people have their own political party, based on their own organizations, the trade unions, to fight for it. The newly-formed Labor Party is a step in the right direction but it still has a long way to go. It can start by breaking with the Democrats altogether and beginning to fight at all levels, from the polling place to the picket line for the interests and needs of all working people.

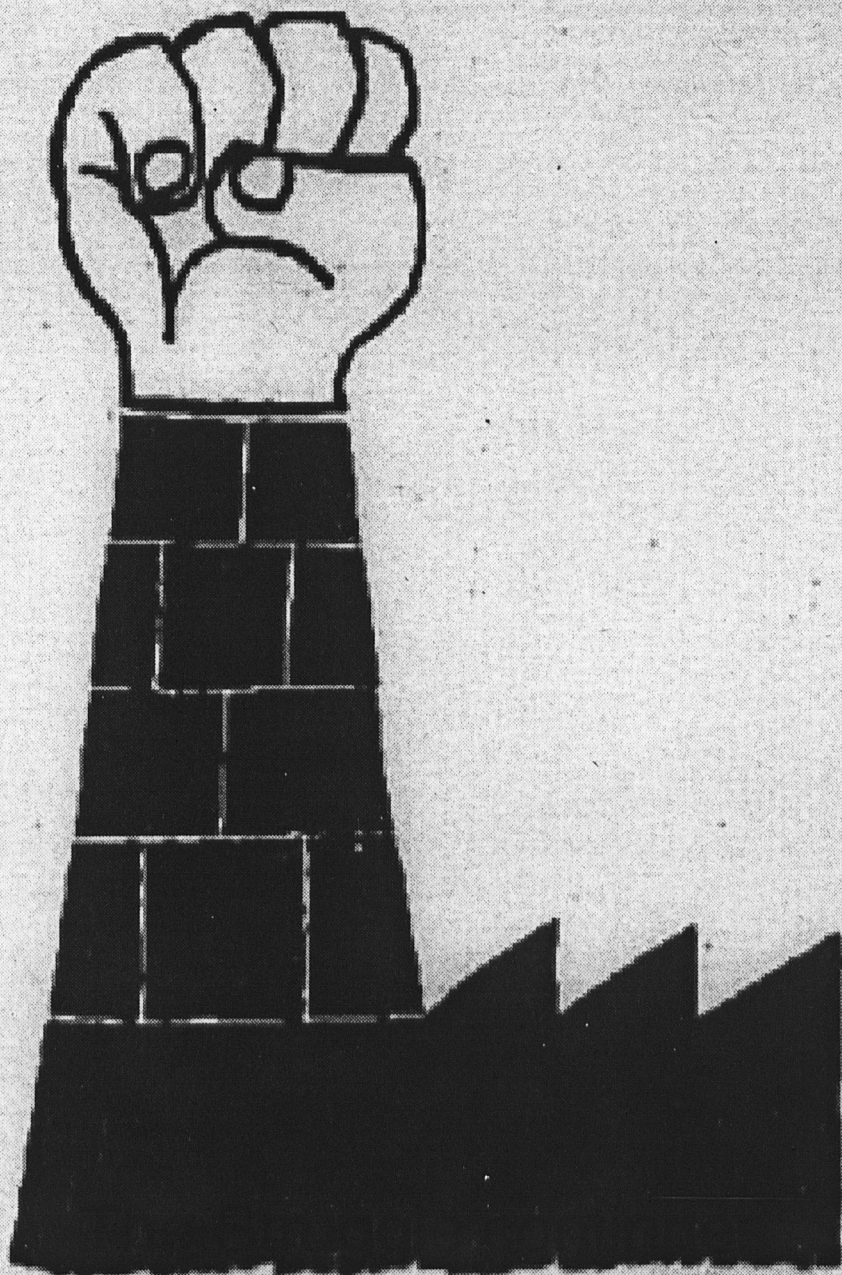
Obviously the bosses will never accede to any demands that threaten their power and privileges...no matter how many votes any party may get. Workers need to make and take the power to remake America so that the interests of the majority who work for a living are addressed. That requires a workers government, that democratically plans what is produced, how it's produced and where and how it's distributed after it's produced. That means expropriating, ie, taking back, all the wealth the workers, who do everything, created and the bosses, who do nothing, appropriated. And that's what a socialist revolution is all about!

# EDITORIAL

In this issue of the College Voice we deal with the bi-partisan gutting of the social safety net - "welfare". The so-called "welfare reform" tears up the system of federal public assistance for the victims of capitalism forged through the calamitous experience of the Great Depression in the 1930's. The US prior

*The destruction of the standard of living of American workers is a prime goal of the rationale of the US rulers.*

to the 30s had no such comprehensive system of public assistance to protect those workers that are unemployed or sick, simply leaving them to the mercy of private charity. Indeed this was a major factor in the turning of the crash of 1929 into a prolonged Great Depression. Clinton and his Republican counterparts seem to have completely forgotten the implications of this for the health of their system. However, in the process leading up to what will most likely be another depression of far deeper and wider scope, millions of workers will be plunged into a permanent state of economic depression. Meanwhile the most vulnerable such as the very poor and homeless will most likely die with the absence of even minimum relief. This barbaric state of affairs domestically is mirrored by the barbarism of US imperialism abroad as it once again bombs Iraq to protect the interests of multinational oil companies in the Gulf. The New World Order of the US is becoming clearer by day to millions of people from those suffering from US intervention and provocation's in the Balkans, to Russians learning about the glories of capitalism on the soup lines, to the millions of "Third World" peoples literally dying under enforced policies of privatization and free markets. The many thousands who flee the carnage caused by US imperialism abroad to take refuge in the US itself are facing racist legislation making them second class people upon their arrival in the "land of the free". The destruction of the standard of living of American workers is a prime goal of the rationale of the US rulers. A vast ocean of cheap and malleable labor stretching from the Pacific to the Atlantic is the great dream of the tiny handful of capitalists and their representatives in the two parties. We have no doubt however that the American working class and its brethren abroad will slowly but surely for the sake of its own survival fight this onslaught first in defensive struggles but then increasingly as mass political conscious movements for the overthrow of this sick, dying, rotten system. The struggle continues. Forward to a society of equality and peace. forward to socialism.



## The College Voice - Who We Are

The College Voice is a publication committed to the interests of the working class. We as students at CUNY recognize that we are very much part of the multi-racial, multi-national working class of New York City. The severe attacks that CUNY is facing are mirrored by the severe attacks on our jobs, our unions and on our democratic civil rights.

We oppose the poisonous divisions fostered on the basis of race by the bosses who make us fight each other for their crumbs.

We oppose the systematic attempts to reduce women to a defined feminine position.

We oppose the vicious attacks on immigrants who are the most vulnerable victims of the bosses marketplace.

We oppose every form of bigotry on principle as unbecoming our species and recognize that the fight for liberation will be achieved only in the course of combatting these divisions.

We oppose the use of the environment as a source of material goods to be conserved for future commodities.

The College Voice recognizes that it is the system of capitalism based in the private ownership of the means of production that is fundamentally responsible for the fantastic hardship and misery for the vast majority of our species across the globe, in the midst of plenty.

The CV recognizes that this contradiction far from being some "natural" condition is one maintained by the armed power of the capitalist state apparatus that insures the domination of the few over the many. The bourgeoisie over the working class.

The CV recognizes the possibility and the burning necessity of a system in which the productive forces are democratically organized through the cooperative association of workers and production based on human needs instead of private profits, and in harmony with the ecology.

The CV recognizes the necessity for creating a political party of the working class that will organize internationally and will be democratic in its decision making. Grass Roots in its action.

The CV seeks to engage all those who are committed to fighting exploitation and oppression in united front action.

*"Though the Voice takes advertisements this "contradiction" is something forced upon us due to circumstance. Ideally we would like to be ad free, however, until that time comes please excuse us.*

## THE COLLEGE VOICE

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# Truth is Relative

By Alec Caldwell

I have a few things to say about an article in the May issue of the Voice: "Blood-suckers Die in Plane Crash," by Barry Lituchy. Like, have you no respect for the dead? Or, what do you base all these assumptions on? Here's another: what is the other side of the coin? Okay, enough questions. How about some answers from an alternate view... for instance, MINE.

First of all, yes, Ron Brown was a corporate pig; but so is a substantial part of the population of the world. Yes, he was a backstabber; but then, most everyone out there has stabbed someone they know in the back (this is NOT a confession!) I mean, all the man did was use corporate law to his own benefit. Just tell me what schmuck fights for a bunch of idiotic laws that just make things more complicated when, if you know what you're doing, you can take advantage of loopholes. Notice I say "if you know what you're doing." This means that not everyone can use these loopholes, due to the fact that not everyone knows how to. This fosters competition and ensures a balance of forces. I mean, everyone can't be wealthy; the more people make money, the more money there is (which just goes to prove that physics and logic are things that just doesn't apply to the monetary system).

Next, what is all this crap about "We'll be taking jobs away from the Yugoslavian construction industry?" The way I see it, if and when this war ends, there is going to be a lot of work for them rebuilding Yugoslavia (and, of course, building all those cement bunkers Barry is so fond of). Even if foreign powers are taking over (which I

tend to doubt; only those "there are conspiracies everywhere!" bozos truly believe that), chances are that since corporate rule of thumb #1 is "use the cheapest possible," they will use native resources. What idiot is going to fly in workers and material to Bosnia from other countries? C'mon, get real, guy. Now, about them thar petroleum engineering firms, corporate rule of thumb #2 is to use the best where possible, because it pays off in the long term; if the

*...Ron Brown was a corporate pig; but so is a substantial part of the population of the world. Yes, he was a backstabber; but then, most everyone out there has stabbed someone they know in the back...*

Yugoslavian petrol engineers are good, they will find employment because all of the successful corporations are capable of seeing in the long term and they know that the fewer cock-ups there are, the fewer things need correcting later on... and that means more profit, which is the universally agreed-upon primary motivation of all major corporations. So what are we supposed to do now? Take the easy road out and let the Yugoslavians just kill each other until there's nothing left? Or take the hard road and help stop the violence and sponsor the rebuilding process for the mutual benefit of the corporations AND Yugoslavians.

Last but not least, there is something called "respect for the dead," something Mr. Lituchy apparently does not have. Sure, corporations arguably have no respect for the dead, but we should be better than them and not stoop to their level, shouldn't we?

## To the Students at City College:

Recently, this particular institution has been the target of more budgetary attacks than any other part of the CUNY system. Last September, City College students found that 14 academic programs were missing from their curriculum. No one really needs to be told how this can hinder a student's ability to earn skills to make it in today's demanding world. And with even more cuts being proposed by Governor Pataki, any student might wonder if he or she is really wanted in college.

CCNY was one segment of CUNY which refused to let this indiscretion go unanswered. CCNY students were usually the most predominant group in protests and anti-budget cut meetings, save for Hunter in some instances. They were also the ones who seemed to be making the news. One example is an incident which took place a few days after the March 23 rally last year. There was an evening sit-in at CCNY, which the Administration didn't like very much. So they called the cops in, and several peaceful protesters were arrested for the charge of trespassing. Trespassing on property which they paid for. And let's not forget the David Suker incident. The things they've done to this man are an atrocity of the right to an education.

I had visited CCNY recently on assignment; actually I came on my own accord, for I needed some information on their cut attacks and its budget information. While there I couldn't help notice the atmosphere about the campus, which really impressed me, and I began to realize why City College was being bashed so; at least, I think I did. City College has a pro-student aura about the whole of the place, an aura which is not too pleasing to those political heathens upstate who want a more passive victim to hack away at. Almost everywhere I looked, there was something to

remind me of the fight: NYPIRG, the student government (a student activist student government!), and the college paper were all making their stand. I saw signs everywhere; there was one advertising the protest on May 8. If we did that here, it would be torn down the next day. There was even a socialist displaying various writings in front of the school. I mean, I'm not a socialist, but hey, if he's against the cuts, then more power to him. CCNY just seemed to be full of people who weren't going to take this lying down, and I think this made them a target.

Another factor in this situation that should be taken into account is the location of City College. It's right smack in Harlem, the largest concentration of blacks in Manhattan. I don't know, but I'm a little suspicious that this college in Harlem got the most cuts. We can't ignore the fact that race and social class are issues here, no matter how harsh that sounds, because these cuts are slowly depriving the less well-off from an education, and I feel that this is criminal.

CUNY campuses all over should sympathize with what City College is doing, and they should also rally up to join the fight. I wrote this little document to try to get people to do just that. I also did this to let City College know that they have support, to let them know that we condone whatever reasonable actions they are doing to fight against this outrage, and to let them know that we'll join them: we, and all the other student activists out there. The war isn't over, but we have some very good soldiers.

From all of us here at the Voice, we wish you guys the very best. Here's to a better CUNY experience.

sincerely yours,  
Marco Sainte Jr.

# Response to "Truth is Relative"

By Barry Lituchy

I certainly don't want to come down hard on Alec Caldwell. I have received a great many responses from people all over the world in regard to this article (which also appeared elsewhere), including a few death threats. So, I can't say I mind Alec's response. Although some of Alec's criticisms are muddled, I will do the best I can to answer them in a fair manner.

As I understand it, Alec makes the arguments: (1) my article shows a lack of respect for the dead; (2) Ron Brown was really no different than most people, just trying to make a living; (3) it's OK for the US to

"sponsor the rebuilding process" in Bosnia because this will be "for the mutual benefit of the corporations and Yugoslavs;" and (4) he tries to suggest (quite wrongly and misleadingly) that his opinions are "answers from an alternative view." I wish to disagree completely with all of the above.

Alec writes, "First of all Ron Brown was a corporate pig; but so is a substantial part of the population of the world." In my opinion, I think it's very unfortunate that you have this point of view because

this is precisely the cynical and anti-social view the ruling elites encourage us to have of ourselves as a way alienating young people and ruling us all the more easily. As a socialist and progressive person I make a distinction between the ruling class and the working class. Ron Brown was not "like most people" — he was a part of the ruling class. Ron Brown was a multimillionaire, government official who was under investigation continuously for his conflict of interest dealings as a lawyer-lobbyist and politician. He came from an elite background and did not rise from poverty as it was pretended in the media. Nor was he anything resembling a civil rights activist, as was pretended in the media. He was a slick criminal in a coat and tie who exploited people and who worked to perpetuate exploitation around the world. I certainly do not believe that most people are pigs, corporate or otherwise. From this statement it would seem that it is not me but rather Alec who has disdain and a lack of respect for his fellow human being. Nevertheless, I wouldn't blame Alec for this because I understand that this is the way Americans are trained to think.

As to the fourth point mentioned, nothing could be further from the truth. Alec's criticisms essentially are warmed over opinions from the mainstream media. A real alternative viewpoint questions the propaganda of the ruling elites and their mouthpieces, it doesn't stand up for the buckets of lies and deceptions that are thrown on the American people 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Alec's views are essentially those of the New York Slimes and the major media. This is not what the College Voice is supposed to represent. No doubt, it may surprise some at CSI to learn that the Voice is read eagerly by graduate students and faculty all across the CUNY

system (and points beyond as well), and that this readership has come to expect a true alternative viewpoint from the Voice that challenges the propaganda of the capitalist establishment in this country. As one sociology professor at Queens College told me, "It would be a very sorry situation indeed if CUNY could not produce a journal like the Voice. It's just strange that it's based at CSI." The sad fact is that the Voice is the only paper of its kind in CUNY, so real alternatives to the daily diet of lies provided by the mainstream media are almost non-existent in this "great and free democracy" of ours, including in this its so-called cultural capital.

This brings me to the "no respect for the dead" charges leveled against me by Alec. Well, do I have respect for the dead? Please, Alec! Of course, I am horrified to see people die in a plane crash. It is a terrible accident. I am sorry to see human suffering anywhere and everywhere. However, I do not and

*...this is precisely the cynical and anti-social view the ruling elites encourage as a way of alienating young people...Ron Brown was not "like most people" — he was a part of the ruling class.*

will not mourn the passing of people who are themselves guilty of inciting war and the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent people in the former Yugoslavia. In fact, I find it obscene that Clinton and the US government organized the state funeral they did for this criminal Ron Brown, with all of the imperial pomp and circumstance of a totalitarian, fascist state. And all this for a man who was a con artist and a criminal exploiter of people in the Balkans! This type of state spectacle should have worried Alec much more than my seemingly heartless and tasteless remarks. But there are times when the truth demands that less than decorous language be used. Oddly, Alec doesn't seem to notice that he himself uses insulting language. What's that about Alec?

Finally, Alec asks me what do I base my assumptions on? I base

them on the blood and bones of my murdered relatives who were brutally exterminated in World Wars I and II by the German imperialists (in W.W.II they were called Nazis and were aided by the Croatian and Bosnian Muslim fascists). My family happens to be from there. My relatives fought and died in these wars. These included innocent women and children murdered by German, Croatian and Bosnian Muslim fascists who believed then, as many of them believe today, that the Balkans are a colony of Germany and that Serbs and Jews should be exterminated. Unfortunately, I also have relatives who have been killed in Bosnia since 1992. In all of these instances, my relatives died to be free of foreign domination and extreme Islamic and Catholic fascism. I'm sorry if you don't understand this. All I can say is that I hope your family members don't have to die some day at the hands of imperialist butchers and bloodsuckers in order to be free.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?  
WRITE YOUR OPINION  
AND SUBMIT IT TO THE  
COLLEGE VOICE.

# Clinton and the Republicans Common Agenda Spells Racist Violence By Cops and Klan

by Vimukthi Jayadeva

The profoundly mean spirited, hateful, blame the victim logic of present capitalist State policies such as the attack on social welfare, the attack on affirmative action and the attack on immigrant rights and the rights of women have inspired the police, the courts and para-military hate outfits like the KKK, the neo-nazis and militias to greater and greater acts of brutality against the most vulnerable segments of society.

Firstly, we must unmask and explode the logic of the current policies of the capitalist State. "Welfare reform" is the great crusade of Democrats and Republicans alike. The primary goal of "welfare reform" and "cutting spending" is "balancing the budget".

The primary goal of a "balanced budget" is "economic growth". Of course if one listens to the big corporate media i.e. Time Warner and Turner Broadcasting, this formula is so often repeated that it attains the status of "public opinion" or the "way things just are", a natural, universal order handed down from God to the earth. Now if we concretely observe these policies one understands that this is an extremely anti-working class program sewn together with the rope of racism, sexism and xenophobia. "Welfare reform" in the concrete is the deliberate immiserization of poor and unemployed workers through the elimination or drastic reductions of subsidies for food, housing, education, health-care for the poor and their children.

However the capitalist "welfare reform" does not say a word about the many billions given to the capitalists e.g. the \$50

billion bail out of banks, bond and brokerage houses investing in the privatization of Mexican industry, it says nothing about \$300 billion spent on military expenditure each year, it says nothing about the bribes given to corporations to "prevent them

from leaving". This money and the "unprecedented profits" for the big monopoly capitalists like A T T, Citibank, Time Warner comes from the redistribution

of tax funds from "aid to mothers with dependent children", "school lunches", "public education", "foodstamps", etc.

The "economic growth" does not refer to the creation of union-scale jobs for the massive overhaul of the decrepit infrastructure, particularly of the urban centers or for the building of affordable housing, or for the expansion of health-care to cover the millions without any health coverage or for a thousand new projects for the advancement of the lot of the working class and the poor but it refers to the dizzying enrichment of the already filthy rich big capitalists.

So it is clearly not a question of "no money", there is a vast mountain of wealth in the capitalist coffers. So how is such an anti-worker, rob the poor to fatten the rich program, able to be implemented by the

capitalist State without massive resistance from the working class? Racism, sexism, xenophobia and the now open and now hidden stimulation of the most base, crude, rotten features of the human character by a vast network of government, media, labor

misleaders and police/courts. White workers and small business owners themselves suffering from rising unemployment and poverty are given an easy channel by the capitalist

politicians to vent their frustration - "it's the fault of all those minorities and immigrants getting handouts".

The level to which such a big lie, such a factual fallacy has become generally accepted by large segments of particularly white small owners and white workers is the very low level of working class organization - only 12% of the workforce organized and that 12% being led by the pro-capitalist fakers of the AFL-CIO who faithfully carry out the capitalists program with at best token resistance. So in the midst of billions being pocketed by the big capitalists, the white worker and small owner is blinded by racism and bigotry, unable to see that the impoverishment of the black worker only weakens his own wages by creating a larger reserve army of unemployed and underemployed desper-

ate and willing to work at low wages and often tragically driven literally crazy by their suffering.

Following the logic of "kill thy neighbor" that the capitalists use, public tax funds are increasingly directed towards expanding and extending the repressive apparatus of the capitalist State i.e. more police with deadlier guns, with greater liberties to "systematically" police whole communities of poor and non-white people, more jails, harsher sentences, extension of the death penalty. That 1/3 of black youth between the ages of 18-25 in the US are processed through the criminal justice system attests to the grossly racist character of the "justice" in capitalist America today. That the inadequate but utterly necessary measures to reverse the institutionalization of racism in the make-up of US capitalism through 200 years of slavery and Jim Crow segregation, referred to as "affirmative action", only some 25-35 years in existence, is under attack by racist capitalist politicians of both parties claiming that it is absurdly "reverse racism" further attests to the still thoroughly racist character of US capitalism.

The kkk and neo-nazi scum hearing better dressed but obvious attacks on minorities by "respectable" capitalist politicians are emboldened and crawl out of their holes to terrorize, kill and maim blacks, latinos, asians and new immigrants. The spate of burnings of black churches throughout the South and also NorthWest is a sign of how brazen these fascist bands have become under the political climate of Clinton and Gingrich's America.

*"affirmative action", only some 25-35 years in existence, is under attack by racist capitalist politicians of both parties claiming that it is absurdly "reverse racism" further attests to the still thoroughly racist character of US capitalism.*

## ... "Lesser Evil"

...Continued from Page 7

IF DEMOCRATS and Republicans can't be told apart without a scorecard that has far more to do with the economic interests of the ruling class than it does with the electoral exigencies of any of the candidates concerned, let alone the needs of the majority of voters. The latter, after all, are mainly workers and middle class Americans, none of whom have expressed any great desire to see their own living standards continue to diminish so that a handful of corporate magnates can get even richer at their expense. However cutting costs (i.e., driving down workers wages) to make American capitalism more competitive on the world market is the name of the game insofar as Wall Street is concerned and that means taking from the poor and giving to the rich. (American workers already earn less than half the wages and benefits of German workers and are below those of Japanese workers as well.)

So in order to make endless austerity acceptable and make sure that those on top are never blamed for the mess they and their system have spawned (just remember what a stir Pat Buchanan caused when he took a few pot shots at corporate greed last Spring) scapegoats at the bottom must be found for those in the middle and demonized to the point where the average American thinks that welfare mothers in Harlem tenements rather than financial swindlers in Wall Street boardrooms are taking the money out of their pockets and paychecks and the food off their tables.

Yet as columnist Bob Herbert wrote, "none of this madness is necessary...there is no welfare crisis in the United States, only welfare hysteria." The bill just signed will cut \$56 billion on a range of welfare programs but this is just a small portion of the sum allocated for interest on the national debt which is close to a third of the federal budget. (During the 1980s, Wall Street made an average of \$300 billion per

year in interest payments.) In fact AFDC accounts for only 1% of the federal budget or \$400 per taxpayer whereas the federal government spent some \$167 billion on corporate tax breaks, an average of \$1400 per taxpayer. That's not including the \$830 million used to irrigate land where surplus crops are grown or the \$500 million used to promote arms exports or the \$300 million given to the military, which Clinton plans to increase by 50% by 2001. The much talked about federal deficit was thus the result of slashing tax rates on the rich in the 1980s from 70% to 28%, while billions were spent on the military budget and debt servicing. Indeed, corporations paid only 21 cents for every dollar paid by individuals and one third of the biggest corporations, with assets of \$250 million or more, paid no federal taxes at all. Meanwhile, taxes on workers and the middle class, direct and indirect (sales and property taxes) continued to rise as a result.

The bottom line is that so-called "welfare reform" has little to do with saving "middle-class" taxpayers money, let alone "balancing the budget" or bringing the federal deficit under control. The latter are little more than hyped-up hobby-horses of the mainstream media and their politician pals, all of whom take their marching orders from the same place. (Indeed, since 1992, the US government deficit, the smallest proportionally of the seven largest capitalist countries, has, in fact, fallen.) They are all designed to provide a rationale for brutally slashing spending on social services up to and including such supposed sacred cows as Social Security and Medicare. Thus the Wall Street Journal reports that the Democratic Leadership Council is now joining the GOP in pushing the privatization of Social Security while Clinton's plans to "save" Medicare and Medicaid amount to slashing "only" \$180 billion whereas the Republican plan to cut over \$220 billion within the next five years.)

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By doing away with any and every government program that benefits working people and the poor, both bosses parties hope to illegitimate any aspect of state intervention in the economy on behalf of those that the capitalist system is responsible for impoverishing to begin with. In other words, turn the clock back to the days before the "New Deal," when the raw deal was the only game in town for working people. That is the "America" that both Bob Dole and Bill Clinton aspire to "be the bridge to."

NO WING OF the ruling class ever has had any intention of waging a real war on poverty. To paraphrase Bob Dole, "that is the "America that only the knowing call myth." For poverty, i.e., an unequal distribution of wealth, is an integral aspect of capitalism, which is based upon inequality in the production of that wealth to begin with. Without such inequality it simply cannot exist. Welfare, like most of the other social programs currently under fire, first came into existence in the aftermath of the Great Depression in 1935. None of this was due to the generosity of FDR's New Deal Democrats. Rather, the more far sighted representatives of the ruling rich feared that American workers, then organizing into mass industrial unions (the CIO) and waging sit-down strikes, many of which were led by radicals and revolutionaries, and all of which questioned the prerogatives of private property, might take the next step and organize themselves politically into a class party that consciously challenged capitalism itself. In other words, it was a way of killing two birds with one stone; containing social unrest and coopting the labor movement

at the same time. Most importantly, it insured that organized labor remained politically chained to the chariot of the Democratic party by way of the trade union bureaucracy and its "leftist" lieutenants in the

reformist Communist Party, Both of them, to this day, remain staunch supporters of the Democrats, swallowing anything and everything the White House sees fit to force down workers' throats, even if many workers themselves recoil at the thought.

In the 1960's, when America's economy was still expanding and US imperialism was the uncontested top dog on the world market, American bosses were even willing to bring the Black middle class into the "consumer society," alongside of the layer of skilled white workers that it had already incorporated in the 1950s. This was a way of not only co-opting the civil rights and Black power movements but increasing the profits of those capitalists catering to the domestic market as well.

However, since the middle seventies, American capitalism has found itself floundering in a continuous conjunctural crisis that began with the recession of 1974-75 and continues to this day. So with social upheaval apparently a thing of the past, social reform become one as well as workers' living standards had to be driven down to restore profits. Business Week at the time pointed out that "it will be a hard pill for many Americans to swallow—the idea of doing with less so that business can have more..." And who better to get workers to swallow that pill than the same Democrats who enjoyed the backing of the trade union bureaucracy.

Beginning with the Democratic administration of Jimmy Carter, the war on poverty was replaced by the war on the poor as whole sectors of industry were dis-

Continued on page?

# ... "Lesser Evil" for Workers or Greater Good for Bosses?

...Continued from previous page

mantled and relocated to low-wage areas in either the south or south of the border in some cases. The workers that went with them were economically disenfranchised; deemed disposable along with the social services that previously were necessary to maintain them as a workforce. Hence the cutbacks in education, housing, health care and now welfare. What came to be known as corporate downsizing, restructuring and now "welfare reform" are but the latest links in a chain of endless assaults on workers' living standards by a string of Democratic and Republican regimes. Throwing millions off of the welfare rolls is, at bottom, yet another move to put even more downward pressure on wages and further divide the different sectors of the workforce, already in sharp competition with one another, over fewer and lower paying jobs. Private employers can now make use of low wage "workfare" recipients to fill

their employment needs at the same time they are subsidized by the gov-

ernment to do so! Meanwhile union membership continues to plummet; from 25% in 1970 to 16% in 1985 to around 8% today. And as industry after industry bit the dust, the AFL-CIO leadership did nothing for fear of offending the same Democratic Party politicians implementing the austerity, whom they continued to portray as "friends of labor."

HAVING CONDEMNED MILLIONS more to hunger and homelessness with a flick of his pen, Clinton capped off his convention coronation by claiming that "we've made real progress for working families" and that "hope was back." Hope for whom? Certainly not for working families: median family income is now 5.2% lower than it was in 1989 while two million full-time year round workers already live in families below the poverty level. In spite of record profits and factory orders (the former climbed from \$201 billion in 1991 to \$500 billion in 1995 while business income rose by 10% alone last year), more Americans than ever are having to make do with less while working more to get it as real wages continue to drastically decline, 6.3% for male workers and "only" 1.7% for women workers. While the US continues to have the highest GNP in the western world, the portion of people whose income is less than 50% of the poverty-line level is now 40.5% while the poverty rate itself increased from 13.1% in 1989 to 14.5% in 1994. In spite of being the richest country in the world, the US now boasts the highest levels of child poverty in the west; 2 to 8 times higher than in Western Europe and 50% higher than in Australia and Canada. At the same time, preventable diseases like tuberculosis and asthma again ravage the poor while health care reform remains a dead letter.

Not surprisingly the gap between rich and poor has not only widened but accelerated during the Clinton administration's first two years so that it now rivals many a Third World country in most of America's big cities. One study reported that "the United States is now more unequal than at any other point in the last 75 years." The earnings of the top 1% of American families equals that of the bottom 40% while the top 20% have as much income as the bottom 80%. Perhaps this what Clinton means by making "real progress." Clearly if hope is back, it's hope for the bosses for whom another four years of Clinton are indeed a bridge to an even rosier future.

With Democrats like Clinton who needs Republicans like Dole? Certainly not the ruling rich, which by and large is throwing in its lot with the Democrats. But for the

vast majority of Americans, whose "future" now consists of hoping to just get by, there can be no "lesser evils" any more; only the greater good of organizing a party of, by and for themselves, based on a program that recognizes that reality and seeks to do something about it.

WHATEVER SOCIAL PROGRAMS existed in the US were won by militant mass action, not by relying upon the good graces of Democratic Party politicians. And that remains the only way to defend them and extend them as well. What stands in the way of a such a struggle are pro-capitalist union leaders like Sweeney and Black misleaders like Jesse Jackson, who sabotage any and every fight before it begins through their ties to the Democrats. For when the bosses say cutback, they say "share the pain," instead of fightback. As if those who inflict the pain in the first place have any intention of ever feeling it.

*Only by building a fighting labor party that can link up the struggles of all working people on a political level can American workers begin to pose a real challenge to the ruling class.*

The struggle to build a real political voice for labor thus entails a rank-and-file rebellion against all those pro-Democratic party bureaucrats, from Sweeney on down, who stifle labor's economic voice by refusing to fightback even at that level...because of their support to the Democrats.

This being an election year it should be clearer than ever that any struggle around economic alternatives to the endless austerity being proposed by both bosses parties entails a real political alternative: a labor party, based on the unions and a program of militant class struggle, that will fight for the interests of working people and not bow to those of Wall Street. That means fighting not just at the ballot box but on the battle lines and picket lines of all the struggles of the exploited and oppressed. And that can't be done by keeping one foot in the door of the Democratic party the way the leaders of the newly formed Labor Party (formerly Labor Party Advocates) hope to do. By soft-pedaling the special oppression faced by Black and women workers, they write off a sizeable portion of the American working class. And by avoiding any electoral activity, they continue to subordinate the interests of the working class to those of Clinton...and Sweeney by not challenging the Democrats out in the open for their anti-labor agenda. They thus miss an excellent opportunity to bring a working class program and perspective to all those looking for an alternative to both bosses' parties; instead ensuring that they turn towards either petty-bourgeois protest politics like those of the Greens or Ross Perot's right-wing, and thus phony, "populism," neither of which offers any alternative to capitalism and its prerogatives.

In a period when reforms are few and far between, a reformist labor party is no solution...it becomes part of the problem. Only a fighting labor party has the potential to unite behind it not just the working class and the poor, but those sections of the middle class hardest hit by the current crisis, the so-called angry white males, who turned in despair to the likes of a Pat Buchanan, and may turn to Perot, because the labor leaders offer no alternative outside of "lesser evil" Democrats. And as millions know now, Clinton, the last "lesser evil" they shoved down workers' throats, proved to be every bit as evil as George Bush.

THROUGH MILITANT MASS actions, French workers last year not only showed the world that "politics" need not be confined to electoral charades but what is possible when millions of working people

refuse to accept those parameters to begin with and start to take their fate into their own hands. Their actions also smashed yet another rotten idol of contemporary capitalist conventional wisdom, that slashing payrolls and paychecks is the only game in town. And the cuts proposed in France were, in fact, far less than anything already implemented in the US. America's reactionary rulers, on the other hand, take it for granted that their two-party system, which, in fact means one party rule of the rich, by the rich and for the

rich, will allow them to go on swinging the ax of austerity for as long as they please. Only by building a fighting labor party that can link up the struggles of all working people on a political level can American workers begin to pose a real challenge to the ruling class. Such a program begins with a fightback against the current round of austerity attacks but must end with working people making and taking the power for themselves through socialist revolution so that the riches and resources created by the majority can finally be used to benefit that majority and not the minority that monopolizes them now.

## INCRIMINATION

Oh, mourning faces  
our time has come  
to pick up the guns  
don't be shunned  
denounce the oppressions

*Expressions*  
we walk the paths of destruction  
from the alleys of gunfire  
to the front page headlines of  
death camps

Oh, mourning faces  
our time has come  
to pick up the guns  
fighting is our destiny

*Devastation*  
we see the corrupt faces of politicians  
far away from us they plan our  
.....extermination

tabloids run pictures of headless bodies  
plastered with stories of incarceration

*Assassination*  
machine guns  
tell stories of modernization  
in poverty stricken villages  
that have turned into battle grounds  
of blood shed and depravation

Oh, mourning faces  
**!PROCLAIM!**  
our time has come  
to pick up the guns!  
we no longer can be hostage to the modern industries  
or the dusty villages full of miseries.

by S. H.

Lebenon: a region of permanent slaughter

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# Bangladesh: Towards An Islamic State?

By Vimukthi Jayadeva

After more than two years of intensified mass political action against the ruling government of Prime Minister Zia, she was forced to step down at the end of March. Begum Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party had been in power since the country's first open elections in 15 years in 1990. The Awami League, the main opposition party, had boycotted the elections of March 1994 and resigned en masse from Parliament that December. They have been leading the mass opposition to the Begum regime charging them with corruption. A caretaker government under former Chief Justice, Habib Rahman was sworn in till elections are held within 90 days for a new government. Under a new law passed under pressure from mass strikes, the oppositions demand of a neutral caretaker executive to oversee the elections was granted.

Elections held in February of this year, boycotted the opposition, signaled the climactic showdown. The Awami League bolstered by the puny 15% turnout for the February poll and widespread recognition of massive vote rigging by the BNP declared that opposition forces will not allow Parliament to hold session. The two key cities, capital cities - Dhaka and port city - Chittagong were shut down tight, effectively bringing the functioning of the whole country to a halt. The army and para-military outfits of the government were called in to defend the Parliament. The military which has been an active player in Bangladeshi politics did not intervene as a third force and pledged support to the new Rahman caretaker government with the resignation of the BNP regime. Thousands are reported to have celebrated the overthrow of the Zia regime in the streets. Despite the mass energy of the people that was unleashed to accomplish this task, the interim chief adviser Rahman stated that it was his, "primary duty to restore law and order", a sentiment which was echoed by Awami League and BNP alike.

The weekly magazine, The Economist, an important barometer of international capitalist opinion, reports on this as if its main dynamic is a personal feud between Sheik Hasina and Begum Zia. Indeed even the venerable Economist falls prey to the old bourgeois vice of separating economic from politics. These fine gentlemen speak approvingly, with, of course characteristic condescension, of Zia's handling of the Bangladeshi economy: "...it is no longer the international basket case that Henry Kissinger once called it...by deregulating trade and industry the government has enabled business to push growth to nearly 5%." (2/24/96) Yet they fully succumb to the analytical level of a National Inquirer when attempting to explain the crisis of the superstructure of State/civil society: "Some observers-usually male ones-claim that the trouble with Bangladeshi politics is that it is run by two women who loathe each other." (ibid.) Sheik Hasina, the leader of the opposition Awami League, is the daughter of Bangladesh's first prime minister, who was assassinated in 1975. It has been reported that Begum Zia's husband, a now deceased General, knew in advance of the plot to kill Sheik Hasina's father.

Despite the no doubt ancient and legendary caliber of Hasina's hatred for Zia this by itself cannot command into action millions of Bangladeshi workers and peasants who struck against the government massively and repeatedly till it fell.

The anti-BNP forces comprised a motley alliance of parties that hitherto had opposed each other on numerous grounds. The secular, bourgeois-nationalist Awami

politics is viewed by both parties as an important electoral ally in seizing control of parliament. Feminist writer, Taslina Nasrin, became the object of vicious vitriol, death threats and mass actions by fundamentalists angered by her novel "Lajja" (Shame) which was critical of Islamic fanaticism in Bangladesh in the wake of the Ayodhya massacre of Muslims by Hindu fanatics in India. The government rather than condemning the reactionary mullahs legitimized their blood-thirsty, misogynist ravings by banning her book, which had sold 60,000 copies and issuing a warrant for her arrest for "outraging the religious feelings" of people in an interview

she had given The Statesmen. She is presently in exile. Numerous other attacks have been waged with impunity by fundamentalists against journalists and intellectuals for "UN-Islamic" activities. Newspaper offices have been firebombed, writers harassed and even newspapers hawkers beaten in a campaign by funda-

government. The present government in its own intention of clinging to power was giving indulgence to the Moulavis (clerics)" (Dhaka Courier, 24 June 1994.

The crisis of Bangladeshi society characterized by mass impoverization, privatization and the rise of reactionary, authoritarian and fascist political tendencies is identical to the crisis afflicting natural phenomena nor one rooted in some essential characteristic of tribe, race, ethnicity, or culture but one that has a very social, political, class basis. The worldwide intensification of exploitation through policies of privatization of public enterprises, elimination or drastic reduction in food, medical, educational subsidies has undermined the all ready weak States that gained independence from colonialism after WW2. So called "democratic" i.e. pro-capitalist political parties wedded to these policies like the BNP and Awami League in Bangladesh offer no alternative to the rapid immiserization and wholesale destruction of community, culture and ecology. In their stead reactionary organizations like the Jamaat offer what appears at least on surface as a radical break with the establishment. The fizzling out of Stalinist "socialism" as an organized state power i.e. Soviet Union, has created a temporary but destructive disorientation of workers and peasants in "third world" countries who by and large identified the bureaucratized Soviet Union as the socialist alternative to capitalism. Left-wing parties of the Stalinist, social democratic or petty bourgeois nationalist varieties have capitulated in varying degrees to the imperialist agenda of "Free markets" and privatization. The Awami League, which formed the first independent Bangladeshi government, referred in its program to the "building of socialism". All such pretension have been finally dropped by the Awami League of the post-Cold War era.

The vacuum of proletarian socialist leadership even in its reformist incarnation, poses a grave threat to the safety and well being of the masses of "third world" workers and peasants. The idea and organization of socialism - defined by its commitment to equality of all irrespective of race and religion, to secularism and to industrial/cultural modernization on a rationally planned basis - provided the firmest bulwark against religious fundamentalism and ethnic chauvinism. Indeed reactionary ideology progresses as socialist ideology recedes. Bourgeois parties like the Awami League and BNP are not politically or morally armed to battle the Jamaat and other more radical fundamentalists

which are the offspring of their pro-imperialist policies.

Workers in Bangladesh have shown considerable combativity in the mass strikes and demonstrations to oust the BNP. The continuation of "more of the same" poli-

tics by the Awami League, no doubt, hold the potential for greater class struggles in the future. However the key remains the creation of an independent working class leadership that could rally the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, who form the mass base for religious and national chauvinism, behind the banner of socialism and secularism.

*So called "democratic" ... like the BNP and Awami League in Bangladesh offer no alternative to the rapid immiserization... reactionary organizations like the Jamaat offer what appears at least on surface as a radical break with the establishment...*

League, the Islamic fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami and the right-wing Jatiya party were the main forces of the opposition. The Jatiya party and its leader Arched were forcibly deposed following a mass movement led by the Awami League and BNP in 1990. Ershad was subsequently jailed. In the elections that followed the



BNP aligned itself with the Jamaat in order to garner the necessary votes to form a BNP government. Both the Jamaat and the Awami League resigned from the government in 1994 the BNP of electoral fraud and corrupt practices. In 1994 Golam Azam of the Jamaat faced charges by the Awami League amongst others that Azam was guilty of war crimes and actions resulting in the deaths of many who favored an independent Bangladesh in the 1971 war of national liberation. Azam's citizenship, challenged by his opponents was confirmed by a Supreme Court decision in June of 1994.

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism has also had a profound impact on Bangladeshi politics. Fundamentalist agitation and attacks against women and secular intellectuals has been received by the two major secular bourgeois parties, the BNP and Awami League, indeed with conciliation, rather than condemnation and action against these forces. The Jamaat-e-Islami, the major expression of fundamentalist

mentalists to squash any opposition to their designs of setting up a Islamic State. Indeed the work of secular writers has been largely aimed at exposing how the Imams falsely translate and misinterpret Koranic verses to willfully mislead villag-

*...bourgeois parties like the Awami League and BNP are not politically or morally armed to battle the Jamaat and other more radical fundamentalists which are the offspring of their pro-imperialist policies.*

ers into supporting their reactionary aims. However the government has bowed to the reactionary onslaught bringing legal charges against these writers. Ahmed Sharip, a former professor of literature at Dhaka University, whose residence had been firebombed by fundamentalists explained: "All these happenings are occurring... with the protection of the

sector plunged the whole country into darkness for several days during the summer. Although this was purely an economic strike, not coordinated with other sectors of the working class, such actions show the power that the workers have. The Sinhala working class in the south in particular since it is not directly in the theater of the war can bring an end to the fratricidal conflict and place a new political and social order on the agenda.

## ...Sri Lanka

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ing an end to the war. With a large percentage of GDP devoted to the war against the LTTE, the health of the neocolonial economy and State is bleaker than ever. The masses of workers and peasants are feeling the debilitating impact of a war that has come to dominate every aspect of

their lives. Bombs, curfews, checkpoints, soaring prices for basic foodstuffs, disrupted public services are the lot of the Sinhala masses. Needless to say, particularly in the North but also the East, the Tamil masses suffer most acutely from the war happening literally in their own backyards. Massive destruction of property and human life is a constant for these beleaguered people.

Strikes and worker actions erupted after the completion of the Army offensive in the North. Indeed labor combativity increases in the intervals between major military campaigns. For the PA regime with its commitment to do its part to uphold the imperialist order of free market immiserization, the war serves as a convenient safety valve to divert the attention of the masses away from their immediate problems. A strike by workers in the power

# Sri Lanka: The LTTE Strikes Back!

By Vimukthi Jayadeva

In a stunning rebuff of the Sri Lankan State's policy to militarily defeat the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and impose a "peace plan" from above, the LTTE overran a major Sri Lankan Army camp in the Eastern Province. At least 1200 government soldiers were massacred in a well planned attack by the LTTE involving by some estimates over 4000 cadre. Some 500 LTTE cadre were also killed in the attack. The camp has been subsequently abandoned by the Army..

The LTTE has been waging a bitter guerrilla struggle to create a separate homeland for the islands Tamil minority encompassing the Northern and Eastern Provinces. In the largest military campaign of the war the Army took over the LTTE's northern stronghold of

Jaffna culminating in the end of 1995. This came after nearly ten years of de-facto control of the Jaffna region by the LTTE, considered the cultural center of the Tamils.

The Peoples Alliance (PA) regime of President Chandrika Kumaratunga swept into office in 1994 on a wave of anti-war sentiment by the islands majority Sinhalese masses, sick of the war, sick of the death squads of the previous regime and of the deteriorating living standards. A negotiated solution short of the right to secede was not acceptable to the LTTE which ended the talks by destroying several military targets. The PA then inaugurated the bloodiest chapter of the war, with the blessings and armaments of the US and European Community, they sought to crush the LTTE militarily and woo the Tamil masses with promises of development aid and regional autonomy. At the cost of 6-7000 lives on either side the Army managed to dislodge the LTTE from Jaffna but not without dislodging the whole population of Jaffna, some 500,000 people, who were evacuated by the LTTE into the jungles of the Vanni to the south.

Cautious but flush with its victory over the LTTE in Jaffna, the PA regime was planning on the diplomatic front to woo the Tamil masses back to Jaffna with promises of economic aid. On the military front

the PA was preparing to flush out the Eastern Province of LTTE cadre. The Eastern province was experiencing an increase in LTTE attacks after the Jaffna debacle.

The LTTE meanwhile had shifted its base of operations, with the Jaffna Tamils

*The overrunning of the Mullaitivu Army camp took the PA regime and the Army by complete surprise and seriously undermined the idea that peace can be brought about without the active participation of the LTTE.*

in tow, to the jungles of the Vanni. Several devastating terrorist actions were carried out in the capital city of Colombo including the blowing up of the 30 odd story Central Bank building and of a densely packed commuter train in apparent attempt to incite mob action by Sinhalese against the Tamil residents of the city. (It was the Black July events in 1983, where scores of Tamil residents were killed by Sinhalese mobs in Colombo and other integrated areas in response to the killing of 13 Sinhalese soldiers in the North, that led to the widespread escalation of the civil war). However the Sinhalese masses did not take the bait and were not organized clandestinely to do so by the government either as it had been in 1983.

While beefing up security in Colombo and the East, the PA regime under the tutelage of cabinet minister GL Peiris was busy putting the finishing touches on a "devolution" scheme that would transform Sri Lanka from a "Unitary Republic" into a "Union of Regions". Confident that the LTTE could now be "mopped up" the PA regime was planning how to sell the "devolution" scheme to the war weary but deeply suspicious Tamil masses while keeping at bay the opposition of the Sinhala chauvinist lobby. The overrunning of the Mullaitivu Army camp took the PA regime and the Army by complete surprise and seriously undermined the idea that peace can be brought about without the

active participation of the LTTE.

Several former Tamil guerilla organizations such as the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the Peoples Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) and some other smaller groups have been brought into the PA fold. However these groups have lost whatever popular base they once had amongst

the Tamil masses due in part to the LTTE's policy of exterminating its rivals and in part due to their own corruption. They in effect serve as a thin Tamil cover for the "devolution" plan of the PA regime.

Despite wide-ranging powers of autonomy the devolution package falls short of the LTTE's maximum demand of a separate Tamil State - Eelam- and does not even accede to the LTTE's minimum demand for a merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The Sri Lankan State argues that acceding to the merger would be tantamount to granting the LTTE its demand for a separate state. Another key weakness in the devolution plan from the standpoint of the LTTE is that the regional chief minister can be dismissed by the central government if they "violate the Sri Lankan constitution" or in other words take steps towards full sovereignty. For Prabhakaran, the leader of the LTTE, this still amounts to playing second fiddle to the Sinhalese dominated Sri lankan State. This is not a proposition he is willing to accept, particularly since the LTTE still remains a potent military and political force.

The recent blows to the Sri Lankan military in the North and East have erased what ostensible progress the PA regime has made since assuming office in bring-

*continued on page 12*

## DEFEND THE NSSP!

On June 1, armed police officers raided the headquarters of the Nava Sama Samaja Party, Sri Lankan section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec), while the party's Central Committee was in session.

The pretext for the raid was the NSSP's support for the electricity workers' strike, which resulted in a four-day blackout. This is the second attack on the NSSP in as many months. The Sri Lankan police attacked an NSSP demonstration on May Day. Sri Lankan popular front (People's Alliance) president, Chandrika Kumaratunga, said she would resort to any means "short of killing" to end the strike. Within hours, unidentified gunmen shot at the leader of the telecommunications union, J.B.P. Dissanayaka. He escaped unhurt. The attempted assassination was meant to intimidate other public sector unions that have been sympathetic to the strike. Dissanayaka is also the leader of the anti-privatization movement in the unions.

Several leaders of the NSSP have also received death threats. And there have been attempts by pro-government Sinhala groups, including some members of the parliament, to rouse ethnic chauvinism by claiming the strikes are hindering their war effort against Tamil separatists.

Workers' Voice (U.S.) vehemently condemns the terroristic raid on the NSSP by the Sri Lankan government. The raid against the NSSP exposes the anti-working class nature of popular front governments when faced with workers' resistance. Popular fronts are designed to shackle workers to the bourgeoisie. If that cannot happen, then the consequences are dawn in blood.

Workers and oppressed people must rally to the defense of the NSSP and militant trade unionists in Sri Lanka! International workers' solidarity is key to the building of a movement against capitalism.

Hands off the NSSP and the trade unions! For a workers' government in Sri Lanka as part of a Socialist Federation of the Indian Subcontinent!

The NSSP is appealing to all trade unionists and socialists to write or fax the President of Sri Lanka and condemn the attacks and raids. Please write or fax: The President of Sri Lanka, H.E. Chandrika Kumaratunga, Presidential Secretariat, Colombo 01, Sri Lanka. FAX: (941) 333 703. Please send a copy of the fax to the NSSP at (941) 334 822.

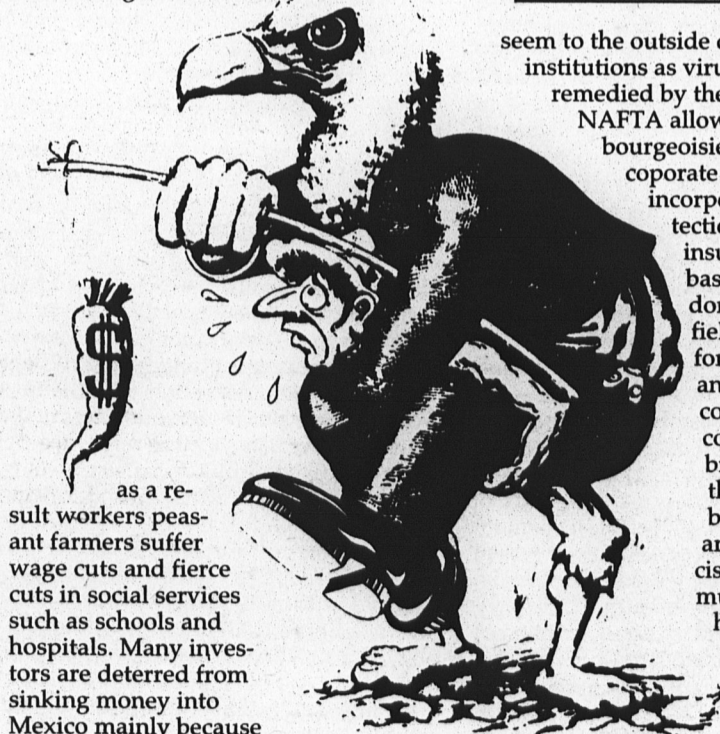
# NAFTA: An Update

By Kasadore Ramikosoon

Since the North American Free Trade Agreement better known as NAFTA was ratified by the international community in 1991 there have been many economic ripples in the countries it affects, particularly in Mexico and Canada where the primary aim of the pact is to bolster the US multinational economic power by creating a free trade zone for capitalist exploitation and immiseration of working class citizens. NAFTA is only one of the first international free trade pacts that imperialist governments use to control markets and to enslave developing countries and NAFTA may lead the way to other future contracts, that will expand the of imperialist forces in the Third world.

Newspapers and political campaigns deliver frequent filtered updates that seem to glorify NAFTA's implementation particularly in the Mexico's economic system. The imperialist founders of the pact planned to reap huge profits from the tremendous market availability and by implementing ruthless business strategies (that produce enough dollars to donate sizable amounts to our elected officials) Recently a handful of US and Canadian based corporations made public their economic progress in Mexico through NAFTA's allowances and these reports vigorous growth. The success these key industrial companies like Bechtel Corp., Associated Electrical and Tel-Mex, can serve as a markers that exhibit the failure and misery caused by

companies have exceeded of their premeditated profit and employment margins and



as a result workers peasant farmers suffer wage cuts and fierce cuts in social services such as schools and hospitals. Many investors are deterred from sinking money into Mexico mainly because of unstable political environment. Local revolutionary fronts such as the Zapatistas are considered as infectious Leftist seeds to the Mexican class structure and also to free trade markets that

*US. Multinational companies and the Pentagon continues to dominate the "Third world" via technology, rigged elections, death squads and slave-like treatment of innocent working class citizens.*

seem to the outside corporations and institutions as viruses that need to be remedied by the power that NAFTA allows the Mexican bourgeoisie to exercise. The corporate giants also have incorporate various protectionism measures to insure that the US based corporations dominate the various fields of technology for many decades and centuries to come such as telecommunications and biotechnology, keys that insure that US based corporations are allowed to exercise their economic muscles and control health and agribusiness industries that the working class families depend upon, successfully locking the poor into endless cycles of reliance and poverty. Within the NAFTA framework can be found many protective measures for property

rights while workers rights such as job environment and safety standards have completely been ignored. Clauses and policies about peasant land ownership is constructed to create loopholes to seize land for future capitalist business ventures. Businesses that shift their production line from the US to Mexico will have added benefit of lax governmental environmental and pollution enforcement measures thus the conditions of life and health in Mexico will be affected into the 21st century.

The trade agreements proposed by NAFTA continues to stifle the rights of workers, consumers, and the future generation of the "Third world" who have virtually no vote under NAFTA on trade, environmental and workers rights issues. US. Multinational companies and the Pentagon will continue to dominate the "Third world" via technology, rigged elections, death squads and slave-like treatment of innocent working class citizens. In order to topple NAFTA's ruthless imperialist trade policies Mexican citizens and workers have to form revolutionary vanguard parties to lead the class to victory over capitalism or suffer the proliferation of future treaties that continue to undermine the innocent workers and peasants around the globe.

# Despite Elections, Bosnia Remains The "White Man's Burden"

by Barry Lituchy

In the months and weeks leading up to the September 14th elections in Bosnia, the US and Western media blanketed the public with a barrage of feature stories proclaiming the upcoming elections to be fraudulent long before they ever happened. Journalists, one after another, performed a ritualistic wringing of the hands, lamenting that the elections would never create the Bosnia that *they* had wanted. On August 29th the New York Times lead editorial cried out "Delay Bosnia's Elections!" After shedding their crocodile tears, pundits across the country and in other imperialist lands then proceeded to pronounce the peoples of Bosnia unfit to hold free and fair elections. Not surprisingly, the Islamic regime in Sarajevo also denounced the elections in the Serbian half of Bosnia as illegitimate months before the elections took place and refused in advance to ever recognize their results.

Despite elections, Bosnia remains a militarily occupied colony, controlled by the US dominated NATO alliance, and part of the larger plan by the US and Germany for controlling and exploiting the vast economic resources of the former Soviet Union, Central Asia and the Near East. At the end of August it was quietly announced that the NATO occupation of Bosnia would be extended through November 1998. The military expenses alone for this joint colonial occupation are expected to cost American taxpayers between \$3.5 and \$4 billion a year. And the Serbs remain the principal targets of this aggression since the present partition of the Balkans specifically involves their division into separate states and the denial of real self-rule in their territories.

But no election can ever express the democratic aspirations of any people as long as they are under the jack-boot of foreign military domination. Western journalists covering the elections consistently omitted this "detail" from their reports, choosing instead to focus on supposed abuses by the three major political parties, especially that of the Bosnian Serbs, the Serbian Democratic Party. This brazen hypocrisy and deceit by the media is designed to justify the continued occupation of the region and further military aggression by the U.S. It reflects a mentality of racism and criminal depravity essentially no different than that exhibited by slave traders in the nineteenth century or Nazi concentration camp officers in the twentieth century. The justification for U.S. military intervention in Bosnia today is the same as that used for slavery and genocide in the past, and can be boiled down to the old imperialist theory used time and time again-- that certain peoples are simply inferior, and therefore incapable of governing themselves.

Contrary to the media's claim of election fraud, which international observers present during the elections have rejected, it would be very wrong to assume that these elections were not legitimate referendums on the kind of political future Serbs, Muslims and Croats would like to see for themselves. For, if these elections were not democratic, the fault lay not with "autocratic traditions" (a code phrase for peoples deemed uncivilized or inferior by racists) among the three main Bosnian peoples, but rather with US military occupation and gangsterism. In the Serbian half of Bosnia a large number of political parties ran candidates, and at least 30% of the vote is expected to go to parties other than the ruling Serbian Democratic Party. This alone represents a degree of democratic choice in the Serb Republic far exceeding anything known in the U.S. where a monolithic two party system effectively rules through a permanent dictatorship.

The people who did vote this past week in Bosnia, did so determined that their

individual and collective voices should count for something, even if only for the sake of history and nothing else. The Serbs in particular are painfully aware that their's was not a truly democratic election — not because they themselves are undemocratic, but because American imperialism precludes the possibility of true democracy or human freedom. Bear in mind that everyone in Bosnia remembers the elections of 1990 — also imposed by the U.S. and European imperialists as a means of dismantling Yugoslavia and recognizing a separate Bosnian state — which led directly to the war. The media would like us to forget this little episode, but those who lost their loved ones due to this scheme by the Western powers will never forget it. The Serbs were determined this time to use their vote to express their defiance toward the imperialist aggressors and to demand secession from U.S.-Muslim controlled Bosnia. This is really what upset the capitalist media the most. Thus, the truth about these elections is indeed much more complex (and interesting) than what was presented in the mainstream media.

## The Spin Doctors' Debate

To understand the reality behind the media coverage of these elections one must begin by recognizing that there are several different realities that need to be considered in isolation before each can be understood individually. First among these is the self-generated reality of the corporate media itself, which conflates American imperialist propaganda with its coverage of world affairs. Secondly, there is the reality of US and NATO foreign policy, strategy and tactics which often function in apparent contradiction to media propaganda. And finally you have the three different realities of the peoples involved, Serbs, Muslims and Croats.

The most immediate reality, though also the most confusing for Americans trying to understand the situation in Bosnia, is the reality of so-called "public opinion" or "news," which is manufactured by the

*... the history of late nineteenth century colonialism and 1930's Nazi fascism is melded together into a bizarre new reality of American imperialist aggression and genocide that goes by the name of "the New World Order."*

corporate media. The picture they present is distorted and complicated by a number of factors that go beyond the primary one of social control through ideological hegemony. Since the media relies on the government and on government related institutions for its sources and access to information, the "spin" or political bias of some articles can reflect conflicts between different economic, social or institutional segments among the ruling elites.

For example, the debate among some journalists and "experts" about whether the September 14th elections should have been postponed or not reflected policy disagreements between Clinton administration supporters and Republican and other hard-line critics. Neither side disagreed with the policy of continued military occupation by the U.S. and NATO or continued pressure on the Serbs to weaken their political leadership and replace them with pliable clients. The disagreement centered around the question of which tactics would be most effective for imposing a Muslim (and therefore U.S. controlled) government over the whole of Bosnia, including the Serb and Croat majority territories (which is at the very least 70% of Bosnia). The Clinton administration and its supporters believe, or at least have acted upon the belief, that building institutions that impose a unitary state over all of the territories and peoples of Bosnia, and then legitimizing them quickly

*Dayton did not end the war in Bosnia: it merely obtained better conditions for U.S. imperialism to fight it.*

with elections which grant them only limited self-rule, is the most effective way of achieving America's strategic goal of creating a Bosnian puppet-state that divides and rules the peoples of Bosnia through a reactionary minority elite (the Bosnian Muslims).

Richard Holbrooke, the megalomaniac behind this plan, called it creating "the connective tissue" for a Bosnian state. This is an ironically apt phrase considering that Holbrooke is the deranged Dr.

Frankenstein behind the fascistic Dayton agreement, the blueprint for U.S. colonization of the Balkans. (Could this very sick and racist man have invoked this metaphor intentionally, discreetly admitting to the world that he sees himself as this ghoulish character? We've heard of world leaders who idolized Hitler, but to idolize Frankenstein? What! Hitler's not good enough for you?! One can imagine Holbrooke shouting after the elections: "It's alive! It's alive!")

The other "spin" on the elections, the view that claimed they were fraudulent long before they happened and called for their postponement, came from hard-line critics of Clinton's Bosnia policy who believed that more aggressive military and economic action should have been taken against the Serbs (and, it must be noted, the Croats as well) before elections were held. Generally speaking, the reason why this view was so widespread in the media was three-fold. The first was to justify and prepare the American public for an extended military intervention in the Balkans that will go well beyond the one year initially promised by Clinton. Another factor driving this argument was the need by

journalists either to cover up or provide a correction to the false picture that they had portrayed earlier of a tolerant, Muslim led, multi-ethnic Bosnia that America had a moral duty to defend from Muslim-hating Serb nationalists. The old pretext for U.S. military intervention in Bosnia had outlived its usefulness and needed to be replaced by a new one. Stopping the evil Serbs was now replaced with the need to stop three evil nationalist leaderships that could never work together in the first place and cannot rule their own people. In such ways are new lies always replacing old lies in the corporate media.

But the logic behind this view also extends to the argument made by critics of the Clinton administration that the best way to guarantee election outcomes in the Serb Republic that result in support for a U.S.-Muslim controlled Bosnian state is to further weaken or obliterate all opposition to U.S. and NATO authority. The preferred means put forward for doing this included propaganda, military strikes against hard-line Serb forces, bringing the Serb leaders to trial, buying off and supporting a new hand-picked Bosnian Serb leadership, and (what for some journalists was most important) undermining the resolve and means of the Serbian people by maintaining economic sanctions which, according to the Dayton agreement, were to be lifted once these elections were held. This argument was most often expressed

by the very same people who earlier had criticized Clinton's so-called "arms embargo," calling instead for a "lift and strike" policy. What these opponents of the so-called "arms embargo" were really favoring was a more open and aggressive U.S. military intervention than the covert one Clinton carried out — in other words, a good, old fashioned war like Vietnam or Iraq, as opposed to the multilateral approach long favored by Democrats and certain financial elites.

Although not a small number of the people arguing this view were aging 1960's New Left-Liberals, like Susan Sontag and Christopher Hitchens (who make a very good living posturing as "the loyal opposition," sensible radical-democrats who want social justice but meanwhile called for the destruction of the USSR; criticize U.S. foreign policy but were more red, white and blue than Nixon, etc.) we should not overlook the fact that most were indeed Republicans, and that this view is consistent with Republican foreign policy which tends toward a more unilateral approach toward "defending" U.S. interests abroad. This difference of opinion was also reflected by institutions sent to influence the political process in Bosnia, such as the so-called NGO's or Non Governmental Organizations — which contrary to their charitable sounding name actually do receive their financing and their marching orders from the US government — and which tend to lean toward either more Republican or more Democratic policy views. For example, a leading NGO that called for a postponement of the elections and lobbied the media to adopt a more hard line view was the International Crisis Group. Their opinion was often called upon and cited as "expert testimony" by journalists arguing for a postponement of the elections. Actually, those working for this supposedly international humanitarian organization are themselves journalists and politicians (e.g.: Anna Husarska, former Senator George Mitchell), with hard-line, interventionist credentials, employed specifically to generate more "news stories" about Bosnia of this kind for media consumption.

## Clinton's Policy and The U.S. Election

Meanwhile, the reality of U.S. policy in the region was much less controversial and not very well understood. As mentioned earlier, the strategy mapped out by the Clinton administration depended on the elections moving ahead on schedule, the sooner the better. The U.S. and its imperialist allies spent at least another billion dollars just organizing the election itself, which was run by 2500 officials from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, a political arm of NATO. Tens of millions of dollars were given to various political parties and officials (e.g.: \$300,000 just to the tiny party led by Arkan). There was never any doubt in Washington that these elections were going ahead as planned. Moreover, having constructed this U.S. puppet state in less than a year, Clinton had taken the foreign policy issue away from the Republicans in the election — something no Democratic president had been able to do since F.D.R. The Clinton administration was determined to rule Bosnia in the meantime through "quiet diplomacy," by threatening the Serbs with massive military strikes should they do anything to disrupt Clinton's re-election campaign. The cynical and depraved use of nuclear radiated cruise missiles against Iraq being a clear example of what Clinton will do to those who stand in the way of his re-election. With the Bosnian state in operation — never mind that it is a colonial government that serves, to use Lenin's phrase, as a prison house of peoples — the U.S. has control of the strategic high ground

*Continued on Next page*

# BEHIND THE BURNIN' CHURCHES

It came slowly and quietly at first, like a vine climbing a wall. By the time we noticed a pattern there were already dozens of victims. The first national news story we saw appeared on Jan. 12, 1996. The headline read, "Unmistakable Terror." The story reported that the Tennessee church at which football star Reggie White was a pastor had been torched. Rev. White, defensive end for the Green Bay Packers, was "concerned police aren't doing enough to solve the crime."

The church had received a bomb threat the previous week. Before the bombing, police became aware of a threatening letter circulating through the Knoxville community written by a group calling itself "Skinheads for White Justice."

With a congregation of 400, a radio station, and a new day care center, Inner City Community Church was one of the largest churches in the area. The arsonist/terrorists used at least 18 "Molotov cocktail" firebombs. On the church walls they wrote "kill all niggers" and "white is right." Special agent Richard Garner of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) said he was confident that this arson was "not related" to the recent unsolved burnings of four other black churches in the area.

Agent Garner was wrong. In the months since this January's news story, reports of black church burnings or vandalism have become a weekly event. A national survey on June 28 found 64 arsons at black churches since January 1, 1995.

The study also discovered a frightening pattern to this arson epidemic. Of course, not all of the burnings were hate crimes. Every year, church fires result from vandalism, insurance fraud, personal grudges or other motivations. But in addition to routine cases, the study found well-defined "arson zones" — regions where black church burnings are up dramatically in the last few years. The patterns there clearly suggest that these are racist attacks.

One arson cluster is a 200 mile oval in the mid-South that includes parts of Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi. This small area has had 13 black church arsons since January 1995, including Reggie White's church.

The other fire zone runs along I-95 in North and South Carolina. In this area the rate of black church arson has tripled since 1993. There have been over 30 cases since then, about one a month.

## KLAN CONNECTIONS

Evidence is now coming to light that shows a clear connection between the KKK, other white hate groups, and the church burnings. As of July 2, twelve white men had been convicted of setting nine fires. Several openly admitted their race hate.

For example, Ernest Pierce is an admired Imperial Wizard in the Ku Klux Klan. This 53-year-old farmer was convicted of ordering Brim Tackett, 21, to torch the Barren River Baptist Church in

capped black man they found waiting for a bus near a local Wal-Mart. The victim survived this attack. Since their arrest, Cox and Welch have been moved to four different jails because they've been beaten by

*Evidence is now coming to light that shows a clear connection between the KKK, other white hate groups, and the church burnings.*



Bowling Green, Ky.. Pierce was reportedly upset by the pastor's anti-Klan comments. Pierce got a four year sentence; Tackett, nine years.

In South Carolina, Tim Welch and Gary Cox attended KKK meetings together. They're now in jail awaiting trial on charges of torching two churches. The Mt. Zion African Methodist Church was burglarized, set ablaze and destroyed. Two nights later the same thing happened to Macedonia Baptist Church in Bloomville.

Welch was carrying a Klan membership card in his wallet when sheriff's deputies arrested him. In the trailer where Cox lived, deputies found guns and a hooded white robe. "Those boys felt they had the blessing of the Klan," Welch's mother Wanda Mitchum said. "They take these young country boys who don't really know a lot and have never been out in the world, and they corrupt them." Cox is 22, Welch, 23.

These same Klan members are also charged with beating and stabbing a handi-

other inmates.

Macedonia Baptist has filed suit against the KKK on grounds that Welch and Cox, as members, were urged to commit acts of violence and intimidation against African-Americans. "Before the loss of their church, this congregation had suffered years of KKK harassment, including Klan rallies in a nearby field and racist fliers tacked to the door."

There are lots of other Klan connections. "KKK rules" graffiti was found in the area of the Effingham (S.C.) Baptist Church, burned April 26, 1996. The exact words, "KKK rules," were also found near the Mount Zion Baptist Church, torched one month earlier in Mississippi.

"KKK" was spray-painted on walls near two black churches burned in Greenville, Texas on June 9 and 10. In February, "KKK rules" was painted on a walk next to Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Tennessee. On May 15, arsonists burned the church down. The fire was so hot that vinyl siding melted

on the house across the street. Cars in front were scorched.

Three white teenagers were arrested in June for the April 16 burning of the historic First Baptist Church in Virginia. The church had been the target of KKK graffiti before the fire.

A letter sent to 15 black residents of Lake City, Florida contained threats against black churches. The letters listed a Lake City post office box as the return address. All the letters included a swastika, the letters "KKK," and a drawing of a hooded Klansman. The letter also contained a poem with implied threats against blacks and Jews, including this verse:

Our swords are sharp,  
Our sights are true.  
Make no mistake,  
We are coming for you.

## CONSPIRACY OF ATTITUDE

"Official" responses to this epidemic of church burnings have ranged from predictable to pathetic. The media and politicians have told us repeatedly that there is "no evidence of an organized conspiracy" by any single group. They have reported this as good news. But it may be more frightening that groups of white people, on their own initiative, have begun to terrorize their black neighbors. The lack of a single conspiracy, if true, is not so reassuring.

The government response has been to send in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF). This is a police force with dubious credentials, especially among African-Americans. Ten ATF agents recently received punishments ranging from verbal reprimands to suspensions for attending the Good Ol' Boys Roundup where racist acts occurred. And the ATF itself agreed on July 10 to pay a \$5.9 million settlement in a lawsuit brought by black employees. The settlement was for race discrimination in hiring, promotions and evaluations.

The police and politicians also have used this as another opportunity to ask for increased powers for themselves — to eavesdrop, wiretap and spy on everyday people.

The Religious Right has jumped into the spotlight. They have testified in Congress and held national news conferences to emphasize that they believe this is more of an attack on Christians than a racial issue.

Many of the victimized congregations have also reported a lot of grief from their insurance companies. Payments have been slow and pastors have been interrogated as suspects. A spot check by the Associated Press lends credence to the complaints, indicating that after white church arsons, insurers pay more promptly.

The people of America and the world have shown much more compassion. Everyone from the Dream Team to homeless people have sent donations to rebuild the churches. Volunteers from the Quakers, from Habitat for Humanity, and hundreds of other groups have pitched in. People of all races have stood guard at black churches. In Maryland, a black church and a white church exchanged ministers and choirs for a week.

But nobody is dealing with the root of the problem. The issue is not really church burnings. Next year these "white power" terrorists may stop burning black churches, and start burning the businesses or homes of African-Americans instead. Already some racists are burning crosses, making threats and, in some cases, murdering innocent people. The problem is the growing number of neo-Nazi terrorists who are hurting people in an effort to "start a race war." The question is: What are we gonna do about it?

This article was submitted courtesy of Anti-Racist Action, a national organization dedicated to fighting racism and fascism. For more information about the group contact; P.O. Box 82097 • Columbus, Ohio 43202, (604) 424-9074

## ...Bosnia Remains The "White Man's Burden"

in Bosnia. It's the end game that's important to the winner, and these elections legitimize everything the U.S. has done thus far.

The most sinister aspects of the Dayton agreement all revolve around Clinton's long term strategy for dealing with the Serbs, historically the only people capable of fighting foreign domination in the Balkans. Having provided the illusion on paper of an independent Serb Republic within Bosnia, U.S. insistence on these elections makes clear that Dayton was simply a ploy for disarming the Serbs and gaining absolute U.S. control over Bosnia. Dayton did not end the war in Bosnia: it merely obtained better conditions for U.S. imperialism to fight it. The Dayton treaty can be best understood as a new and improved version of America's so-called "Indian treaties" of the nineteenth century which gradually stole the land and freedom of Native American peoples until they were destroyed. The U.S. has just such a plan in store for the Serbs — should they falter

and lose their resolve to fight America to the end. In order to secure their Muslim client state in the Balkans, Clinton and company have in mind the mass destruction of Bosnia's Serbian population in their next term.

*The Serbs were determined this time to use their vote to express their defiance toward the imperialist aggressors and to demand secession from U.S.-Muslim controlled Bosnia.*

Clearly, this is an enormous challenge for the Serbian people to deal with, one that will test the sophistication and energies of their best political leaders. The Serbs know they did not submit willingly to Dayton: they were bombed into submitting by a new American fascism that threat-

ens to submerge the entire human race into barbarism. In July of this year it was revealed jointly by the Pentagon and the British Ministry of Defense that the U.S. used shells and missiles coated with radioactive depleted uranium in Iraq and Bosnia to make them more effective when fired from aircraft and land based weapons. Thus, not only did the U.S. murder innocent men, women and children in its attacks on the Bosnian Serbs last September, but they have created an environmental catastrophe with the potential to create ten cancer deaths from radiation for every pound of depleted uranium used in the bombing (London Times, 21 July 1996). And the bloodsucking murderers who call themselves the government of the United States of America have the nerve to talk about war crimes! America, your flag is missing its swastika.

## The Poetry of Empire

Like a bad dream, the history of late

Continued on page 16

the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
OPINION

Article I: The Columnist Manifesto

by gabriel lopez

It seems that in my study of college newspapers there are many caliber and breeds of writers, from the extreme right wing to the left wing. These writers pounding with intense emotion on the current political foopa which is the sure sign of the oncoming of the revolution, and there are those middle of the road writers who find nothing more stimulating to write about than why girls kiss guys or what the current football stats are. The first one we've heard before, and the second won't mean anything a year from now. So what level of a writer am I? Well, I cannot clearly state, because to tell the truth, I'm quite prejudiced in the matter. So, I lay down my manifesto as to what you, the reader, can expect from the column: *the third opinion*.

I find myself in a difficult position as a writer, in that I am roughly at the cut-off age, nineteen, of the Generation X media scam. However, I do not personally see any pleasure in being called a slacker, a void, an X, or a nothing. I disassociate myself from this because I am not apathetic; I am concerned with the outcome of our society. I do care about life and my future. I have respect for my opinions as well as those of others.

It is with this in mind that I ask for extensive feedback on my opinions in the upcoming year. If I write anything that you, as the reader, object to, then by all means please submit a rebuttal, and I would be honored to see it published beside mine in the following issue. I want to see the people become involved. Any student who takes the time to express their views shares that in common with me, if nothing else. So out of respect for one

another I hope those who may respond will respond in an educated manner and not merely be reduced to personal slander. Always feel free to comment!

So, now what the hell is it I am going to write about? Honestly, I'm not entirely sure. I do, however, intend to focus on what I find wrong with our society and our culture. I don't intend to blame any one particular faction, because we all, including the working man, have particular faults. Constant finger pointing to the "Man" is not merely enough, because we, as Americans, allow "Him" to be in control, whoever the abstract "He" is. I merely intend to point out the obvious subtleties in the life that we have been born into. These so called "necessities" that have been passed on to us are more damaging than anything else. I will discuss certain falsities that have been misinterpreted as truth, if there is such a thing as truth. That is why I plan to tackle issues in a hope of bringing about a higher level of consciousness by evoking questions, causing controversy, and raising eyebrows. I will attempt to find some solutions to the doldrum lives we seem destined to find when we exit college and enter the working class to become part of the so-called "fabled uneducated mass."

I don't think that we, the masses, need to be uneducated, but I think America doesn't allow us too much of an option. America, as in MTV, as in overcrowded schools, as in the aliens in the White House, as in Coca-Cola, Wonderbread, apple pie, white picket fences, spiteful parents, apathy angst ridden teens, and the constant bombardment of advertisement. Though we all smirk at and criticize them, we still shovel

them down our throats, barely stopping long enough to do the most challenging and creative obstacle in some of our lives like taking a shit.

Well, I renounce this way of thinking that's been subscribed to us on a 24 hour basis since we first grabbed our mother's blanket. I renounce being an apathetic slacker. You did just like everybody told you and went to the doctor for a second opinion; well, here is the third. And I encourage all of you to find a fourth, a fifth, a three hundred and twelfth opinion. It's time to ask questions.

Welcome to Generation Why!

*I ask for extensive feedback on my opinions in the upcoming year. If I write anything that you, as the reader, object to, then by all means please submit a rebuttal, and I would be honored to see it published beside mine in the following issue. I want to see the people become involved.*

If you are interested in the Voice come to the office located in the Campus Center, Rm 230.

The "White Man's Burden"

...Continued from page 15

nineteenth century colonialism and 1930's Nazi fascism is melded together into a bizarre new reality of American imperialist aggression and genocide that goes by the name of "the New World Order." While dozens of cruise missiles rain down on Iraq and CIA agents organize deadly police actions in Haiti, Bosnian Serbs and the government of Yugoslavia are threatened with further military attacks should Serbs take the whole idea of democracy too seriously and ask for self-determination and the freedom to rejoin a country that they never chose to leave.

During the course of the British Empire and the development of American slavery, some twenty (20) million Africans were killed as result of transportation to the New World. Along the way, entire Native American peoples were exterminated. China was forced as a country to buy and take drugs (the Opium War). And by 1914 almost the entire world was carved up and ruled by a few great capitalist empires. In honor of this great accomplishment the famed British author Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem entitled "The White Man's Burden." It was dedicated to American imperialism, which Kipling believed would take up where the English left off. In it he wrote,

Take up the White Man's Burden-  
Send forth the best ye breed-  
Go, bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need;  
To wait in heavy harness,  
On fluttered folk and wild-  
Your new-caught sullen peoples,  
Half devil and half child  
(And further on)  
Take up the White Man's burden-  
The savage wars of peace-  
Fill full the mouth of famine,  
And bid the sickness cease;  
And when your goal is nearest  
(The end for others sought)  
Watch sloth and heathen folly  
Bring all your hope to nought.

In short, Kipling glorified the bloody exploitation and genocide that resulted from imperialist intervention and occupation, justifying it all on the basis of racial and cultural superiority. Little did he know that he would be describing a world of imperialist aggression not unlike his own that would reemerge in the 1990's when "savage wars of peace" would be waged simultaneously in places like Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti and Iraq with a military technology far more deadly and coercive, and a media machine far more totalitarian than anything imaginable in Kipling's day. Indeed, when one considers the role of military technology and propaganda today, one must overlay the image of turn of the century imperialism with the image of Nazi Germany to form an historical analogy that begins to describe present day US world domination.

Starvation for the Poor, Handouts for War-mongers



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# Death of a Dream

by Michael Quinones

The untimely and violent shooting death of the young rapper and actor Tupac Shakur on Friday, September 13th, was a poignant end to a tumultuous life. The 25 year old was traveling in a procession of cars near Las Vegas's Sunset Strip after leaving the site of the September 7th boxing card that included, among others, Mike Tyson. According to police reports, the car in which Shakur was traveling was riddled by bullets from another car that had allegedly pulled alongside, hitting Shakur several times in the chest and back. Also wounded in the shooting was Marion "Suge" Knight, the president of Death Row Records, the label that Shakur rapped for. Doctors had to remove a lung from Shakur due to the severity of his injuries. A spokesperson at the Nevada hospital said, "He will survive" his wounds, but Shakur never regained consciousness, and remained on life support systems before finally succumbing to his injuries.

On September 14th, a private memorial service was held by his family and his remains were cremated. The only comments from the family were released by a funeral spokesperson: "The family had private services, Saturday and it was the wishes of the family that nothing be done. It's done and over with. There will be nothing more. There will be nothing more. The family doesn't want us to say anything else." These comments obviously mean they don't want any retaliation or more violence and senselessness to arise from this already tragic loss of life.

Tupac Shakur was no stranger to the criminal justice system, having been con-

victed of various charges over the years, ranging from weapons possession to a rape-related charge for which he had recently been released on bail pending his appeal in New York. Anyone who has followed Tupac's career, as both a rapper and motion picture actor, with any level of

*Tupac Shakur was no stranger to the criminal justice system, having been convicted of various charges over the years, ranging from weapons possession to a rape-related charge*

seriousness cannot dispute this young man's talent and, most of all, his sincerity. In 1991 we were blessed with his stirring role as a teenage boy struggling to cross the gateway into manhood amid the tumult and upheaval of the inner city, or more specifically, as movie director Jon Singleton entitled it, "the 'hood." Tupac's character was, at first, an innocent wise-cracking youth and then, through several unfortunate circumstances, found himself as the leader of a team that robbed the neighborhood bodega at gunpoint. Tupac's character was the one charged with holding the gun during the robbery. In this scene from Ernest Dickerson's film "Juice," his partners grabbed the money from the register of the bodega owner and, as they were on their way out, Tupac's character raised the gun at the owner and felt, no doubt, a rush of power over his victim, the power to end his life, a God-like power. This grasping for power is

rooted in the feeling of powerlessness in the communities of the inner-city and its unjust placement within the larger society. In other words, it seems that Blacks and Browns are considered subcultures, and therefore are unacceptable to the dominant culture. This is a feeling of degrada-

tion; the pistol in the character's hand was his frantic tool of self-validation. For him, the violence was addictive and insatiable.

Perhaps his role in that film, with his chillingly accurate execution of raw and wild human emotion, makes people want to believe, rather uncritically, that his personal behavior was essentially driven by hate and violence. Tupac, from my personal standpoint as a young Latino man from New York City, was an incredibly talented man. He was swinging, at least in his public self, towards being more responsible with his words and, especially, his actions. His personal life, or anyone else's, should be off limits to public criticism. The artistic symbols in his lyrics were beautiful in the honesty of their emotion. This same honesty and forthrightness is most likely the genesis of negative perceptions about him, especially in the context of the so-called "East coast-West coast" controversy. The substance of that

debate, or war of words, was only words. The amount of pressure to grow up in front of movie and news cameras - not to mention the microphone - where the only medium is speech, must be inconceivable; at the same time, your personality is developing and your opinions on life are also evolving. All the while, you are rapping away because people want to hear you, and if they didn't - or, shall I say, we didn't - you wouldn't have become a multi-platinum recording artist. For those who don't know, that means millions of people bought his records. We all got to see the life of Tupac Shakur in full view; however short it was, he was a gift to us from God and I am sure that if he had lived, he would have completed his growth and contributed more inspiring and richly talented musical poetry and whatever else; we will never know.

What I hope will not happen is that Tupac becomes seen as an example of someone who chose the wrong path and ended up where he deserved to be, as if death was some fitting punishment. The tragic act of his murder was evil, but his life was not evil and neither were his artistic creations. No one must let his memory and contributions be stained by the criminality of his assassination. We should search our hearts to heal whatever hate is within us and crush it beneath our feet. Hate is what killed Tupac, but love is what made him live.

**Art, Music,  
Film critics.**

## The life of a thug

By Latoya Hunt

"When I die I wanna be a living legend" This is a verse from Tupac Shakur's last album "All eyez on me" called "No more pain." When I heard that Tupac Shakur was dead tears filled my eyes and anger filled my heart. Tupac Shakur first was introduced to us when he started out dancing for the rap group Digital Underground. Shakur then became a member of the group, after awhile Tupac learned the tricks of the trade and left Digital Underground to begin his solo rap career.

His first single "Trapped" was aired on video Music box almost every day. It showed Tupac running from the police. This was the beginning of rap fame for Tupac. Later on down the road Tupac came out with his first album. He dropped a single sending a positive message to young teen mothers and youth out there having unprotected sex called "Brenda's got a baby." The single really did not do too well because other rappers at the time were discussing different topics. He then decided to get into the action business, he first starred in the movie "Juice" as Bishop, a boy who had a gun and felt like he had power. Tupac then went back into the studio and recorded another album, along with this album came the single "I get around" which discussed the way Tupac satisfied his sexual desires.

After this album things started flowing really well for Tupac. He put out a single for single mothers called "Keep your head up" which opened up many doors for Shakur. In this song he expresses his feelings towards single mothers and lets them know that they don't need a man who is going to disrespect them. For months females walked around singing this lyrics and thanking Tupac for understanding single mothers hardships. After this album Tupac decided to get into acting again, he played a role in the movie "Above the Rim" he played a part as a gangster. He also co-starred with Jane Jackson in "Poetic Justice" he played Lucky the Mail boy who falls in love with Justice played by Janet Jackson. Tupac was now making a difference in the movie industry as well as

the rap industry, he was living a dream come true.

It seems like shortly after this Tupac's Thug life rollercoaster began. In October 1993 Tupac was arrested for aggravated assault for allegedly shooting two off duty police officers in Atlanta. In November 1993 he was arrested in New York for allegedly holding down a woman while his friend raped her. In April 1994 Shakur was arrested when Los Angeles police stopped his car and found him with a loaded gun. In March 1994 he was sentenced in Los Angeles 15 days in jail for misdemeanor assault and battery on his former employer on a music video. In November 1994 Tupac's New York sex assault trial opens, following he is shot during an apparent robbery attempt outside a music studio in Manhattan owned by Bad Boy records Sean Puf Combs.

December 1994 Shakur is convicted of sexually abusing a woman. In February 1995 he was sentenced in New York to 4 years in prison on sexual abuse. In October 1995 Tupac was released from prison after the CEO of Death Row Records Suge Knight payed for his bail while he appeals. Later Tupac was released from prison he and Suge Knight discussed plans for Shakur to join Death Row. Tupac then went in the studio and began working on "Me against the World," an album that Tupac had started while in Jail. While in Jail he released three singles "Temptations", "Dear Mama" a song in which Tupac wrote to show appreciation for the things that his mother did for him. Then he released "So many tears" in this song he talks about suicidal thoughts that ran through his mind while in prison.

When Tupac finally got back on his feet he went in the studio and recorded his last album "All eyez on me" on this album Shakur talks about his conflict with east coast rapper Notorious Big. In a song called "Hit em Up" he talks about sleeping with the rapper's wife and talks about all of the violent things he wants to do to him and his crew. The chorus of this song is; Call the cops when you see Tupac, Grab

your glocks when you see Tupac, shot me five times but you punks didn't finish, now you 'bout to feel the raft of a menace.

Ever since Tupac's first shooting he has pointed the finger at the east coast. He honestly believed that the east coast had some thing to do with his shooting. With Tupac on Death Row it brought in a lot of money and it caused a major problem. Dr Dre left the label and left Suge Knight to handle Death Row's Weight. It was not heavy because Tupac was selling like hotcakes. His single "How -O you want it?" sold over 1 million copies along with "California Love" and "America's most wanted". On Sept.4 Tupac was in New York at the MTV music awards, where he presented an award with his label mate Snoop Doggy Dog. On Sept. 7 Tupac was shot in Las Vegas after coming from the Tyson fight. He was going to a club with his Producer Suge Knight when a white cadillac pulled up on the passenger side of Shakur BMW in which Knight was driving and fired 5 shots, one grazed Knight in the head and 4 bullets hit Shakur in the chest.

Tupac was rushed to the hospital where they had to do surgery on Shakur and removed his right lung that had collapsed. On Sept.1 Tupac Shakur died at 4:03 eastern time. He died of respiratory failure and cardiopulmonary arrest. On Saturday Sept.14, Tupac was cremated and put to rest. His memorial service was held in Los Angeles at 11 o'clock on Sept. 19th. My condolences go out to Tupac's mother Afeni Shakur, who is known for being a member of the Black Panther party and was acquitted on charges of plotting to bomb public places around New York city. Tupac was born a month after she was acquitted. Tupac Shakur was born in Harlem, he was 25 years old.

In Tupac's songs he often talked about death. He knew that one day he was going to die a violent death. Tupac was a very talented rap artist and if he would have survived would have been a very powerful person in the entertainment industry. Tupac will indeed be a living legend Today, Tomorrow, and Forever.

*Tupac was a very talented rap artist*

**"You were so young, But so strong"**

You were so young, yet but so strong,  
You played the game, as if nothing was wrong,  
you could trust no one, Because trust let you down, but you still pressed on,  
A rapping soldier, since the day you were born,  
Now you are gone, your enemies may laugh and cheer,  
But your "friends" we shed our tears,  
Now You're with the lord, your sufferung is done  
No more shooting, up there- there are no guns,  
So rest yourself, for you feel pain pain no more,  
We are gonna miss you, Tupac Shakur!!!!

By Latoya Hunt

**COME JOIN  
THE COLLEGE  
VOICE!**

# Socialism or Neo-Liberalism?

by Ernest Mandel

Since the mid-seventies there has been a worldwide offensive of capital against labour and the toiling masses of the third world.

This offensive expresses the sharp deterioration of the relationship of forces at the expense of the workers on a world scale. It has objective and subjective roots.

The objective roots are essentially the sharp rise of unemployment in the imperialist countries from 10 million to at least 50 million, if not more. The official statistics are all government statistics and they're all fake. In the third world countries at least 500 million are unemployed. For the first time since the end of World War II unemployment is rising massively in the bureaucratized post-capitalist societies, too.

The subjective roots lie essentially in the total failure of organized labour and mass movements to resist the capitalist offensive. In many countries these organizations have even spearheaded it: France, Italy, Spain and Venezuela, just to name a few; there is a whole list of these countries. This has undoubtedly made resistance to the capitalist offensive more difficult.

But all this being said, one should not underestimate the concrete impact of pseudo-liberal — in reality neo-conservative — economic policies on world developments. These policies, codified by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and symbolized by the governments of Thatcher and Reagan and their many imitators in the third world countries, have been an unmitigated disaster.

Under the pretext of giving priority to monetary stability, the fight against inflation, and balanced budgets, social expenditure and the expenditure for infrastructure have been ruthlessly cut. This has resulted in a world wide rise in social inequality, poverty, disease and threats to the environment.

I should point out the basic cynicism of the neo-conservative ideological offensive that accompanies the conservative economic policies. The neo-conservatives say that they want to reduce state expenditure drastically. In reality, state expenditure has never been as high as in the 1980s and the early 1990s under the neo-conservatives.

What really happened was a shift away from social and infrastructure expenditure to military expenditure, which for that period can be estimated at three trillion dollars, and to subsidies to business. The bailing out of bankrupt and near bankrupt financial institutions, like the savings and loan associations in the United States, as well as the huge interest payments on the steeply rising public debt, belongs in that category.

The neo-conservatives say that they stand for universal human rights, but in reality, given the unavoidable mass reactions against these anti-social policies, neo-conservative governments increasingly undermine and attack democratic liberties: trade-union freedom, the right to abortion, freedom of the press, freedom to travel, and so on. They create the appropriate climate in which extreme right-wing tendencies, racism, xenophobia and outright neo-fascism can arise.

## Deepening third world poverty

The worldwide growth of poverty is disastrous. In the third world it has become a historical catastrophe. According to official United Nations statistics, more than 60 countries with a total of more than 800 million inhabitants have suffered an absolute decline of per capita domestic product between 1980 and 1990. In the poorest of these countries, this decline is in the order of 30 to 50 per cent. For the poorest layers of these countries' populations, the figure oscillates around 50 per cent. Per capita domestic product in Latin

America in 1950 was 45 per cent of that of the imperialist countries. In 1988, it fell to 29.7 per cent.

Decades of modest rise in public welfare were wiped out in the course of a few years. What this means concretely can be illustrated by the example of Peru. According to the New York Times, more than 60 per cent of the population of Peru is undernourished and 79 per cent live below the poverty level, which is quite arbitrarily fixed at \$40 a month. Even college educated civil servants earn only \$85 a month. That is not enough to pay for a month's car parking in that country.

Practically one billion people in the world today suffer from hunger on this planet. And this is when there exists an overall situation of overproduction of food.

live below the poverty level. A dual society is developing, with a growing number of social groups less or not at all protected by the social security net: the unemployed, casual labourers, people living on welfare, mothers having to care for many children alone, demoralized petty criminals — these are some of the constituent elements of that underclass.

Here is but one example that is very telling, very sad and very revolting. In the heart of what has been historically revolutionary Paris, where five major revolutions have started, every day thousands of immigrants, workers and casual labourers are standing around waiting to be employed. Sometimes they are, sometimes they aren't. They are without any form of social protection, without permit of residence. They are competing among themselves to work for a pittance, because a pittance is still higher than what they can get in their own countries.

The situation in the United States ghettos is typical of that trend. Youth unemployment in the ghettos reaches 40 per cent and most of these youths have no hope whatsoever of finding any job in the future. The same phenomenon has spread in a more limited way to several southern European countries and Great

Britain. Privatization accentuates these trends.

While real wages actually declined in the USA, the number of people having gross annual incomes of one million stable dollars has risen 60-fold. That of people getting between \$60,000 and \$1 million has risen from 78,000 to two million, but there's literally not a single worker among this new rich.

## The rich get richer

The perverse effects of neo-conservative policies on the world economy are likewise evident. Both the growing poverty of the third world and the growing third world-ization of sectors of the population in the imperialist countries constitute one of the major brakes on any significant expansion of the world economy.

Third world debt has led to that perverse and scandalous development of a net flow of capital from the south to the north, with the poorest part of the poor countries subsidizing the richest part of the rich countries. One could say in a cynical way that that's nothing new, that's what capitalism is all about. Nevertheless, in this dimension and amplitude it's at least a new phenomenon in the twentieth century.

## New epidemics

The greatest danger of the third world-ization in the South, the East and the West is the spread of typical poverty-related epidemics like cholera and tuberculosis which were assumed to have been wiped out. But the ominous threat of AIDS is likewise poverty-related. The former director of the World Health Organization's anti-AIDS program predicts that at the end of this century, 100 million people will be HIV-infected, of whom 25 per cent will fall ill and die; 85 per cent of these deaths will occur in the third world.

This is not a result of some cultural or ethnic specificity, but of deficiencies in education, prevention, health care and sanitation. At the same time, \$7 billion have been spent in the struggle against AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic. Only 3 per cent of this sum has been spent in the third world, where 85 per cent of



The results of this are disastrous not only from a social point of view. They now begin to have results on a biological level, too. In the north of Brazil, there is a new race of pygmies which has arisen, with an average height 35 centimeters less than the average inhabitant of Brazil. The way the bourgeois ruling class and its ideologues characterize these people is to call them rat people. This characterization is completely dehumanizing, reminiscent of the Nazis, and has sinister implications. You know what is done to rats.

There is widespread malnutrition involving insufficient consumption of vitamins, minerals and animal proteins. Women and children especially have these deficiencies. As a result, children in the third world run a risk of dying or catching grave diseases 20 times greater than that of children in the imperialist countries.

The fate of children symbolizes the rise of barbarism in the third world. This is not a question of the future; in the third world, barbarism has already started on a huge scale. According to the statistics of UNICEF, every year 16 million children are dying from hunger or curable diseases in the third world. This means that every four years there is an equal number of deaths of children as all the deaths of World War II, Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and the Bengal famine combined. Every four years a world war against children. There you have the world reality of imperialism and capitalism in a nutshell. In addition, in South Asia, 20 per cent of baby girls die before the age of five; 25 per cent die before the age of 15. Baby girl infanticide is growing from year to year, combined with massive use of child labour under conditions of semi-slavery.

## Growing inequality in "advanced" countries

The disastrous effects of neo-conservative economic policies are in no way limited to third world countries or to the living conditions of the mass of the inhabitants of post-capitalist societies. They have started to extend more slowly, but in a real way, to the imperialist countries too. In these countries, depending on what source you use, between 55 and 70 million people

*The problem to be solved in order to beat doomsday in this case is not a technical, natural or cultural one. It is a social one.*

HIV-infected people live. It is obviously suicidal to believe, even for the capitalist class, that the spread of the epidemic will not reach the imperialist countries, too.

Under these circumstances, the Pope's call to limit the struggle against AIDS to self-restraint and the chastity of individuals and to oppose the use of condoms and the contraceptive pill is totally irresponsible. In light of these facts, the neo-conservative policies of cutting health and education budgets everywhere likewise appears irresponsible and suicidal. The overall effects are as economically obnoxious as they are socially obnoxious.

Destructiveness of the market economy. In all the university departments dealing with development policies, in all the countries in the world, it is considered to be a truism that the most productive investments are those for education, health care and infrastructure. But if you cross the corridor into the subdepartment of economics called public finance, then you suddenly hear that a balanced budget is more important than investment in education, health care and infrastructure, and that there have to be ruthless cuts in these budgets in order to stop inflation.

Humankind is facing frightful threats to its physical survival: nuclear, chemical and biological warfare; traditional massive wars that could become nuclear wars by the bombing of nuclear power stations with conventional weapons; growing risks of destruction of the environment necessary for human life typified by the greenhouse effect and the ozone gap, destruction of the tropical forests, desertification of large parts of Africa and Asia, and the cumulative effects of epidemic catastrophes.

Many people have raised the question, "Isn't it already too late? Isn't doomsday unavoidable? Will humankind be able to survive the coming 50 years?" We believe that humankind is not doomed. We believe survival can succeed. We believe that this is not wishful thinking or pure intuition. It is a belief based upon solid scientific data and the ongoing dynamic of scientific research.

Just one example: there exists a concrete, serious approach to completely reverse the desertification of Africa; to irrigate the desert in order to make it again into a rich food-producing region like it had been up until 1500 years ago; to inspire its inhabitants to apply nature-conserving agricultural techniques to switch back from commercial crops to crops that enable them to feed Africans in a healthy manner. The effect of a green, wooded Sahara on the world climate would be really stunning.

The problem to be solved in order to beat doomsday in this case is not a technical, natural or cultural one. It is a social one. In order for this solution to be applied, you need a social order in which greed, the desire to accumulate personal wealth regardless of overall social and economic costs, and short-term pseudo-rationality substituting for long-term rationality do not determine social and economic behavior. We need power in the hands of social forces that can prevent individuals, classes and major class fractions from imposing their will on society. Power needs to be in the hands of the overwhelming majority of the toilers willing to let solidarity, cooperation, and generosity prevail by democratic means over short-sighted egoism and irresponsibility.

I want to stress that it is not a question of awareness. The rich, the capitalists, the powers that be are not stupid. Well, there

are stupid ones among them, but many of them are perfectly aware of, for instance, the ecological dangers. They try to take them into consideration, include them in their economic planning and projection, but under the pressure of competition, under the pressure of a profit-motivated system, they are forced to act in such a way that the overall threat remains.

Some say that science and technology have developed an irresistible logic of their own, and that uncontrolled development of science and technology is bringing humankind to the brink of extinction and is threatening to blow up our planet, but this is not the correct way of seeing things. This is what you could call, in terms of Marxist philosophy, reified thinking. Science and technology are presented as forces divorced from the human beings who control them. But this is incorrect.

#### Struggle for workers' democracy

Science and technology have no power independent of the social groups who invented them, apply them, and bend them to their interests as they see them. The key problem is to subject science and technology to democratic social control in the democratically established interests of the great majority of human beings, to free them from submission to special interests that abuse them regardless of the long-term interests of the human race. For that purpose, the organization and structure of society itself must be subjected to demo-

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cratically determined conscious control.

What socialism is all about in the last analysis is the conquest of human freedom for the greatest possible number to decide their own fate in all key sectors of life. This is, in the first place, true for all wage earners, women and men, who are under the economic compulsion to sell their labour power and who represent today a mass of people bigger than they ever were in the past. There are now more than one billion wage earners. Those who plead for minority rule over and above that freedom — the freedom of these wage earners to decide in a democratic way for themselves which priorities to apply to production and how to produce and distribute at least the major chunks of it — those who state that this freedom should be subordinated to the rule of market laws, rule by the rich, or rule by the experts, rule by the churches, rule by the state or by the party, arrogantly assume the perfectness of their knowledge and their wisdom and underestimate the capacity of the masses to equal or overtake them. We reject these claims as empirically unfounded and morally repulsive, leading to increasingly inhuman consequences.

We share Marx's warning that the educators in turn have to be educated. Only the democratically organized self-activity of the masses can achieve that. Socialism is a social order in which these masses decide their own fate in a free way.

In order to look at the world as it is today, we have to look at it in a way that is different from what you generally read in

the newspapers or see on television. Reality is a bit more complex, and I would dare to say that the neo-liberal offensive has gone over its climax. People are starting to fight back.

In Germany, we have witnessed, and this is most heartwarming, a radical reaction of the youth, including even high school students, against the rise of xenophobia, racism and neo-fascism. We have seen this wonderful chain of light involving probably two million people.

This is completely different from what happened at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s. At that time, the Nazis conquered the high schools, the universities — the youth — much before they conquered political power. Today, it goes in exactly the opposite direction. The mass of the youth is moving against xenophobia, racism and neo-fascism while political parties, political shifts are going to the right.

The most gratifying example is that of Brazil, where there was a successful fightback of the working class against a corrupt reactionary government (along with the rise of a mass workers' party).

There is, however, a sober side to the world picture, and that is that many of these fight-back movements are generally single-issue movements and are discontinuous because of the lack of perspective of an alternative social order.

#### The credibility of socialism

Over this whole world development hovers what we call in my movement the worldwide crisis of credibility of socialism. Workers have no confidence whatsoever in either Stalinism, post-Stalinism, Maoism, Eurocommunism or in social democracy.

Under these circumstances, what we have today on a world scale is a situation in which neither of the two basic social classes, capital and labour, is capable in the short or medium term of imposing its historical solution to the world crisis. The capitalists can't for objective reasons; because the working class is much too strong. It is much stronger than it was in the 1930s. But the working class cannot solve this world crisis either because it has no belief in an alternative social order.

So we are in for a protracted crisis, the outcome of which is at this stage unpredictable. We have to fight for an outcome in favour of the working class, in favour of socialism, in favour of the physical survival of mankind. Because that's the real choice today. Not socialism or barbarism, but socialism or the physical extinction of the human race.

In this crisis, I see the key task of all of us socialists as being threefold. In the first place, to defend unconditionally all the demands of the masses everywhere in the world which correspond to their real needs as they see them, without subordinating this support to any priorities of a political nature in this or that sector of the world or of any specific power scheme. We have to go back to the example of what the labour movement did in its inception and during the period of its greatest growth from the end of the 1880s up until the eve of World War I.

Socialists had two key goals at that time: the eight-hour day and universal franchise, and they didn't start from the question, how are we going to realize that, in what form of power, what form of government? No, they said these are objective needs of human emancipation and we will fight for them by all means possible and necessary and we will see what will come out.

In some countries, the eight-hour day was conquered by general strikes, direct extraparliamentary mass action. In other countries, it was realized through governments that one could consider workers' governments. In other countries, it was given by the bourgeois as a concession to a powerful workers movement, thereby trying to prevent it from making a revolution.

But that's neither here nor there. The real fact was that the eight-hour day was, as Marx and Engels pointed out, in the objective interest of the working class, and that is the reason why you shouldn't subordinate the fight for such demands to any pre-established power scheme.

The second task of socialists and communists in the world today is basic socialist education and propaganda. Humankind cannot be saved without substituting for this present society a fundamentally different society, what we call a socialist society. You can call it a society in transition toward communism, you can call it anything you want to, the label makes no difference, but its contents have to be specified, the contents of socialism as it will be accepted by the masses. When I speak about masses, I speak about hundreds of millions of people throughout the world, not small groups.

After the disastrous experiences of social democracy, Stalinism and post-Stalinism, the image of socialism can only be one of radical emancipation, having a dimension of radical feminism, radical defense of the environment, radical anti-war pacifist consciousness, political pluralism and total identification with human rights without exception. Socialism will only be accepted if it is considered radically emancipatory on a world scale without exception.

Now I come to the third condition for solving the terrible crisis of credibility of socialism on a world scale. This is the reunification of socialism and freedom. The bourgeoisie has made a terrible strategic mistake in raising the human rights issue against socialists the world over. This will become a boomerang hitting it again and again and again. But in order for that to happen, the reunification of socialism and human freedom has to be complete.

In the mid-'20s, the traditional song of the Italian labour movement "Bandiera Rossa" contained these wonderful words, "Long live communism and freedom!" One of the gravest crimes of Stalinism, post-Stalinism and social democracy has been to provoke the historical divorce between these two values. We have to get back to that.

I'll just mention in passing that here in the United States, in the mid-'20s, two anarchists, anti-communists — they had absolutely no sympathy for communism — Sacco and Vanzetti, were condemned to death by the reactionary bourgeois government. Their cause was taken up by the Communist Party of the United States and by the Communist International. The fact that they were anarchists, anti-Communists, didn't make any difference whatsoever. I say with pride that our comrade James P. Cannon played a significant role in organizing that worldwide campaign for these two anarchists. That's the tradition we have to go back to without any restrictions.

Whoever commits crimes against human rights under whatever pretext in whatever country should be condemned by the socialists-communists of this world. That's the precondition to restore confidence among the masses in our movement. Once that confidence is restored we get a moral power, a moral credit, a moral strength which has ten times more punch than all the weaponry that the capitalists control.

#### Revolutionary internationalism

I hope it is no imposition on my friends at the Marxist School if I say a few words for my organization, the Fourth International, before the end of this lecture. I just want to make one point. In today's (February 21, 1993) New York Times, there is an article on the Uruguayan referendum rejecting privatization. Our press organ of the Fourth International, International Viewpoint, carried that information four weeks before the Times. Not because we are more clever journalists, that's not the point at all, or more clever theoreticians, but because we have a real implantation in

*As important as Marxism is as a science, its second basic component is just as important, and that is its moral component.*

the mass movement in many countries. The comrades just notice what's going on. You can't fool them; they know the score through their practical activity.

A few weeks ago we had a meeting of our international leadership. Similarly, we learned from our Polish friends that after the reactionary parliament voted on a law declaring abortion illegal, in a couple of days time 1.8 million signatures were assembled by the people to call for a referendum to restore the right to abortion.

I don't want to end my lecture on too positive a note! This integration of revolutionary Marxists with the real mass movements in many countries — not in all countries, it would be foolish to make that pretense — in and of itself does not solve the problem. It's just another contribution. We have a long uphill struggle to restore the credibility of socialism-communism.

#### In defense of Marxism

Having said that, I want to tell my friends at the Marxist School that they are absolutely right to stand for Marxism and not to give in the slightest way to the anti-Marxist pressures that are all around us. Some are open, some more diffuse, but they are all around us.

Marxism is the best thing that has happened to social thought and action in the last hundred and fifty years. Those who deny that, those who make Marxism responsible for Stalinist counterrevolution, for social-democratic support for colonial wars, are either ignorant or deliberate liars. Marxism has given humankind two basic conquests which we have to defend, but with the assurance, the self-confidence, that we are defending a good cause.

Marxism is the science of society. It is the understanding in a coherent way of what has been going on for the last two hundred years, if not much more than that, on the basis of a tremendous wealth of empirical information and without any valuable, even partially valuable, alternative among the social sciences.

We make no prediction about the future. The only scientific form of Marxism is open Marxism. Marxism which, like Marx himself said, integrates constructive doubt. Everything remains open to reconsideration, but only on the basis of fact. Those who do this in an irresponsible way without taking facts into consideration, those who throw away this tremendous tool of understanding world reality in exchange for nothing but skepticism, irrationality, mystification or mythology serve no positive purpose.

As important as Marxism is as a science, its second basic component is just as important, and that is its moral component. Marx himself formulated this in a very radical way. From his youth through to the end of his life he didn't waver for one minute from the definition of what he called the categorical imperative. That is, to fight against any condition in which human beings are despised, alienated, exploited, oppressed or denied basic human dignity. Whatever the pretexts are for the justification of such denials, we have to oppose them unconditionally. Understand that you cannot be happier than if you know that you have dedicated your life to this defense of human rights everywhere in the world; the defense of the exploited, the oppressed, the downtrodden, the despised.

There is no better way to be a good human being in this world than to dedicate your life to this great cause. That's why the future is with Marxism.

# The College Community



## Immigration and Imperialism

by Vimukthi Jayadeva

The rulers of the US in both their Republican and Democratic guises are whipping up a storm of hysteria about the "cost" of immigration to the American people. Immigrants are supposedly swelling the welfare rolls, smuggling drugs, stealing American jobs and generally being quite un-American. Contrary to this big lie, immigrants are in general the hardest working segment of the working class in America. They wash dishes, pump gas, clean homes and offices, harvest fruits and vegetables, care for babies and old people, landscape lawns, transport people and do a multitude of tasks that are essential for the smooth functioning of society. They do this at sub-minimum wage pay, with no benefits or security and for long hours. Most perform their duties with great patriotic fervour for their new country believing that some day they will achieve the American dream.

The government and its agencies believe in the grand old adage, "spare the rod and spoil the child", and go about beating good Americanism into them. The beating of a young Mexican man and woman by state police which was caught on camera and displayed on national TV captured as the beating of black motorist - Rodney King did, the ugly but usually hidden face of racist government policy towards the poor and the vulnerable.

"To the casual viewer immigrants seem to suffer a great deal by being underworked, underpaid, and ill-treated the question arises why do they continue to come in great rivers of migration from Latin America, West and East Africa, South and East Asia, Central America and the Caribbean Islands?"

Any avid reader of international news will notice that all of these lands are plagued with problems that range from unemployment to civil war. For many coming from the US or any other Western country it is a matter of life and death and not a free or unpressured choice. Immigrants must work diligently to support their families back home who without their support will be with out proper food shelter or clothing. For others it is a chance to make better conditions for their children who would otherwise

be condemned to poverty, early death and joblessness.

**"So what does the US have to do with the sufferings of these foreign peoples?"**

Firstly, the US has been built by successive waves of immigrants who came here from Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America. Africans and also Chinese brought here as slaves and indentured labor by wealthy plantation owners and industrialists were instrumental in the early development of the US economy. The point being that all American citizens apart from American Indians are immigrants. Current US policy ignores this basic reality of Americanism.

Secondly, the system of US capitalism and imperialism - the quest for international dominance of US capitalism - has a lot to do with the miserable conditions of these nations and states. Imperialism i.e. US, Western Europe and Japan, from the time of colonialism, subjugated the rest of the world to its economic and political interests. Imperialist policy has generally been characterized by the use of military power, through its use or threat of use, for the conversion of reasonably self-sufficient societies into a source of raw material and cheap labor and as a conduit for surplus capital and commodities for the imperialist economy.

The advent of imperialism roughly around the turn of the century saw the division of the world into "protectorates" i.e. colonies and "spheres of influence" i.e. neo-colonies. The history of the world ever since has been shaped by the competition of imperialism for global dominance. This gave rise to the two world wars in which millions of workers, peasants and poor were killed including many millions of imperialist subjects from Africa, Asia and the Americas who were totally deprived of the "freedom and democracy" for which they were supposedly fighting.

The most recent wave of immigrants from Russia, Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America have been displaced from their native lands by the policy of US imperialism, who have waged a ruthless struggle to

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capture their "markets", destroying nationalized and public industry creating mass unemployment (e.g. Russia, Poland) and wholesale disintegration of states (e.g. Yugoslavia, Rwanda), creating masses of refugees. Indeed most immigrants are in reality refugees expelled from their native lands by economic devastation, civil war or

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## Has Capitalism Changed Or Was Marx Wrong?

By JP Patafio

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the "socialist society," Western pundits and commentators have declared the utopian project dead and buried. Some political commentators even reach Hegelian heights declaring the "end of history" is here, proclaiming that capitalism and democracy are it, *in aeternum*. For the layperson who is subject to this distortion a more critical account of Marxism is needed in order to access if "the end" is here and the fight for a communism dead.

When Marx wrote *Das Capital* he did not lay out a theory for a socialist society. What he accomplished with scientific methodology and encyclopedic genius was to analyze the nature of capitalism and reveal its internal contradictions; the tendency towards economic crisis and class conflict.

As an economic order capitalism is prone to the "crisis of over production" that subsequently leads to a fall in the rate of profit; i.e., recessions, depressions. When markets are saturated and commodities remain in warehouses unsold, therefore the surplus value created by labor is unmet, the capitalist is forced to squeeze additional surplus value directly from the source of all value, i.e., the worker.

The pressure of the capitalist to increase the rate of profit is placed upon the shoulders of the working class, but this does not prevent an end to the problem. Indeed, in only deepens the crisis further by further flooding the market, and driving the wages of the worker further down and deeper into debt. This is due to the fact that the means of production are privately owned by the capitalist class.

The natural tendency under capitalism is to force wages and benefits to what Marx called the average "means of subsistence." The minimum amount of wages necessary

to sustain the reproduction of the working class. At the same time management seeks to maximize the amount of production within a workday, leading to both intensified labour and elongated workdays. The goal of all the

interests demand the opposite, i.e., less security (e.g., temporary employment) and a lowering of living standards. The social relationship between the two classes can be no other way under capitalism. The constant antagonism between the two classes can only intensify, as the natural needs of each class is driven in opposite directions by the economic order.

Then, like today, Marx revealed how this profit mad system leads to chaos and useless misery for a majority of the world's population. (Why is there a phobia of scarcity in a society of such material abundance? Why are a majority of people, one, two or three paychecks away from homelessness?) The class conflict ensuing from such exploitative and oppressive social relations eventually reaches a point of crisis in which revolution or counter-revolution is the end result.

The reason why Marx placed faith in the working class to lead society to a new stage in the social evolution of humanity was due to its position at the point of production. It is the only class able to lead society out of its absurd (man made!) conditions because it has its hands on the means of production (i.e., industry.) Forced by objective conditions to protect itself, the working class will invert a defensive struggle into an offensive one, leading society to a new social order, socialism based upon the collective ownership of the means of production.

Though today the class struggle in the US is mostly waged by the capitalist with little resistance from the working class in time the ideology of the working class, socialism, will rise to new heights. The irreconcilable class antagonism can not be mediated by the capitalist state via temporary reforms, or by religious sermons. A radical rupture from capitalist relations is the only solution. Marx drew such conclusions from the analysis of capitalism back then, and today though much of the form has changed we face the same capitalist order and the same conclusion. The need to fight for socialism today!

*Worldwide, 338 billionaires control assets greater than the combined annual incomes of countries with 45 percent of the world's people.*

*- NY Times (bourgeois journal) July, 15 1996; P. A3*



*The contradiction between the objective socialisation of production and the maintenance of the private appropriation of the products, profits and means of production ... is precisely when the interdependence of firms, sectors, countries and continents is at its most advanced that the fact that the whole system functions on the orders and profit calculations of a handful of capitalist magnates fully reveals its economically absurd and socially abhorrent nature.*

*- Ernest Mandel, revolutionary marxist*

downsizing taking place today is precisely this, which is why CEO's are paid record breaking millions of dollars in yearly income when they drive down wages so that the margin of profits increase. In effect the value of commodities are first realized at the point of production which is why they want more labour productivity for less money.

While the working class wants security and to keep pace with the increased living standard afforded by modern technology, the capitalists driven by their class