

American Workers Revolution Needs Black Leadership

Spartacist League (U.S.)

1982

Introduction

The racist oppression of black people is historically fundamental to American capitalism. It will take a revolution to liberate black America—a working-class, socialist revolution in which black workers will play a central role. This pamphlet presents the Marxist viewpoint of the Spartacist League on forging revolutionary black leadership in the fight for black and white working-class power.

“American Workers Revolution Needs Black Leadership” is a section of a speech by Don Andrews of the SL Central Committee. The presentation, given at a Chicago SL public meeting last July 10, followed the successful SL-led labor/black mobilization against the Nazis there on June 27. “Thousands Mobilize to Stop Nazis in Chicago” is an account of that demonstration. Also included in the pamphlet are two other items relating to the mobilization: a radio interview by comrade Andrews taped during the weeks of building the demonstration, and a speech by Myra Owens, spokesman for the SL’s youth organization, at the June 27 rally.

“Labor/Black Struggle in Reagan’s America” is also a speech, this one by black American union militant Ed Kartsen in Paris. Brother Kartsen was the guest speaker at a series of international Spartacist tendency public forums in Europe following the massive European peace demonstrations in early July, where we intervened posing the defense of the USSR against U.S./NATO imperialism and Leninist opposition to one’s “own” ruling class.

“Huck Finn in Racist America” appeared originally in Young Spartacus, monthly press of the SL’s youth organization.

Two other items included here document our campaign of protest against the 1979 “Greensboro massacre.” On 3 November 1979 in Greensboro, North Carolina, five left-wing union activists were fatally gunned down in broad daylight by the Klan and Nazis, with the connivance of federal and local cops. The Klan then announced it would celebrate the massacre at Detroit’s Kennedy Square. In that city, heart of this country’s black proletariat, anti-Klan activists at the

giant Ford Rouge plant demanded the UAW mobilize to stop this provocation. When the union tops defaulted, the Spartacist League came forward to initiate a rally at Kennedy Square: “The Klan Won’t Ride in the Motor City!” Coleman Young, black Democratic Party mayor, threatened to treat the Klansmen and the anti-Klan protesters the same, promising to arrest any anti-Klan militants that showed up. Virtually all left-wing, labor and black organizations contacted by the SL refused to back the mobilization in the face of the mayor’s challenge, clinging to the suicidal perspective of pressuring the racist capitalist state to “Ban the Klan.” Nevertheless a “hard core” of some hundreds of Detroit auto workers, mainly black, came out to join the SL to interdict the fascists from downtown Detroit. We reprint here the leaflet distributed in the tens of thousands which built the November 10 labor/black mobilization among workers and black militants betrayed by the inaction of their “leaders.”

We also include here an account of our youth organization’s campaign at Wayne State University in Detroit against the racist, anti-communist apology for the Greensboro massacre which appeared in the Wayne State campus paper, the *South End*.

“No to Gun Control” is a speech by SL spokesman Diana Coleman at a San Francisco public hearing June 10. Finally, we include a recent leaflet issued by Ed Kartsen calling on his union to act against race-terrorism, following the lynch mob murder of a black union brother in Brooklyn.

Readers are also referred to the SL’s 1981 plenum resolution, “For Labor Action to Bring Down Reagan,” adopted by the SL Central Committee on 28 November 1981, and particularly to the expanded section on the black struggle dated 15 April 1982. This document appears in our magazine *Spartacist*, No. 34, Summer 1982.

—4 September 1982

American Workers Revolution Needs Black Leadership

Don Andrews: “We Need to Finish the Civil War”

—reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 311, 6 August 1982

On July 10 the Spartacist League held a public forum in Chicago on “Reaganism Breeds Fascism.” We publish below an edited transcript of the closing section of the main presentation given by Don Andrews, of the SL Central Committee.

The labor movement in this country has to face a few realities before it can really achieve an understanding of its long-term historical interest. And what it has to understand and face very squarely is what Karl Marx put his finger on

in the course of the last Civil War. Marx said then that labor in a white skin can't be free if it's branded in the black. Now that's a profound statement even during that time.

This country, the United States of America, today, is a unique nation. It's one nation with two races, and a large, growing Hispanic population. The race question in this country is a question of American capitalism's enormous social crimes committed against minorities, essentially against the black population, and it cannot be evaded. It has to be faced head-on because it is the strategic question, the key obstacle that stands in the way of a victorious working-class revolution in this country.

Now many of you have never heard of the Spartacist League before June 27th (the June 27 anti-Nazi mobilization in Chicago). And I've noticed some blacks, who are deeply alienated in this society, say: "Well, I like what happened on June the 27th but I don't know if I'd want to throw down with the Spartacist League. It has so many whites in it." And others would say: "Well, I'll give it a try but I don't know if it's going to work. You know I don't know if it's going to do any good, because things have always been bad for black people." But we have to step back and rise above these very impressionistic responses by looking at the actual force of historical development of the class-struggle fight for black rights.

It's no accident today that blacks are without organization, without any revolutionary leadership whatsoever. The last black organization that even promised to fight against this racist system was the Black Panther Party. They appealed to a lot of ghetto youth who were radicalizing during that period. That was the last organization that even promised blacks anything.

It's not an accident that there's no organization that stands for the elementary defense of even the most minimum needs of the black population. It's because of what happened in the civil rights movement. Because of the liberal-led civil rights movement in this country under Martin Luther King's leadership. When it tried to take the civil rights movement to the North, especially here to Chicago, it ran into a situation for which it was completely unprepared. The blacks in the North, they already had formal equality under the law. The symbols of Jim Crowism weren't there. However they had no jobs, no decent housing. And of course they had plenty of segregated inferior education and a lot of police terror and murder.

So in Chicago, when King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, attempted a drive for open housing in 1966, it fell flat on its face. Because Chicago has some of the country's meanest racist suburbs. And King's strategy of liberal pacifism, the idea that you can wear down your oppressor by demonstrating how much you can suffer, really invited racist attacks. Those who were here, especially in '66 or before, or grew up here, remember the vicious racist mobs that met King at Marquette Park when he was stoned to the ground. And when members of SNCC, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee,

went into Cicero, how they were bloodied up.

And King betrayed here! He betrayed here. Because after Marquette Park, he met with Daley and he signed an agreement on open housing—okay, they had some fine little language on paper. Daley did have some fine old legalese on paper, you know, recognizing that there's a need for equality in housing and blah, blah, blah. And King then held it up as a great historic agreement, called the Palmer House Agreement. Nothing had changed. Nothing had happened. And so after that the people in SNCC, the young black militants, began to shout him down in meetings. They went into Cicero by themselves. They lost. They were courageous. But they lost, because they hit a Nazi-infested racist enclave.

Now what allowed these racists to do this with impunity? To beat up those young militants with the approval of the Daley Democratic Party machine? It was primarily King's bankrupt strategy of preaching reliance on the so-called "good will" of the racist capitalist oppressors. Reliance on the federal government, the Democratic Party, to fight for black rights. But the cops and the courts (during that period as they do today—Greensboro's the proof) looked the other way when the racists went into action. So it couldn't be done then because you couldn't reform the government into becoming anti-racist fighters. That's why that strategy is not only ineffective but dangerous.

And if you hear, especially today, any leftist organization—and the Communist Party is **real good** at this—try to mislead you into thinking that cold-blooded racists can be pressured to ban the Klan, instead of us relying on the organized strength of labor and minorities, then you ought to pop them with a question. Ask them, why would the government want to do something like that, ban the Klan? When they're letting them train for race war in military camps in Alabama, Michigan and elsewhere in this country? Do you really think America's violently segregationist rulers are interested in settling accounts with the Ku Klux Klan and in setting up a new department of the federal government called the Department to Combat Race Terror? I mean that's the logic of this: come on, Reagan, I want you to set up a department to combat race terror. Yeah, with Haig at the head of it, somebody like that! But to pose the question really shows how ridiculous this strategy is.

And I'm not questioning King's commitment to his nonviolent, liberal pacifism. But it was, if you really think about it, a little hypocritical when he defended the suppression of the Watts rebellion by federal troops in 1965. But in politics personality and motivation are of secondary importance. What's of primary importance is the result of policies. And you have to say that the civil rights movement failed to address the basic economic oppression of the black masses, which has forced the bulk of the blacks in this country, then as today, to the bottom of the social and economic ladder—a despised and persecuted color-caste. That means that the color line is carried around everywhere you go.

Now in reaction to the collapse of that movement, many of the youth, around the Panthers especially, they rejected everything white. "We don't want to have

anything to do with whites.” And the cry for “Black Power” went up.

Now things didn’t have to go in that direction. The Spartacist League during that period of time was much smaller. We had been expelled from the Socialist Workers Party in part because we were advocating that socialists go into that movement and win those militants over to the understanding that the labor movement had to be won over to the perspective of fighting for black rights. We fought around that perspective then and we fight for that perspective today. Where you’ve got an integrated labor movement—where black and white workers struggle against the bosses together, especially in the North—that’s where you’ve got a chance to go forward on the question of fighting special oppression.

And our fundamental program is one of **revolutionary** integrationism. We say that the destruction of the oppression of blacks in this country can come only through a socialist revolution, that full equality between blacks and whites can only come under a socialist planned economy. We are not liberal assimilationists. The NAACP types say that a few blacks integrated into the government parliamentary bureaucracy means we have it made. That’s liberal assimilationism. You will not have the assimilation of blacks with full rights under racist American capitalism. And there are profound economic reasons for that.

So today there are no revolutionary leaders of the black population. You got plenty of professional black hustlers like Jesse Jackson who talk about Reagan cutbacks so that they can get the ear of some capitalist politician. You know, you don’t see these people down at no Lincoln Park on the 27th because **they profit** from segregation. They understand, see. When you hear some of these slick-talking hustlers talking about “black on black crime,” you know what it means? It means that as **we** make it, as we expand our black businesses, we want you to keep those unemployed, those chronically unemployed desperate black youth in line. That’s what it means. Black on black crime has nothing to do with fighting for jobs or anything else. You know, we’re supposed to be very proud, though poor, that one of our own has made it and is recognized by the Byrnes. So we have a lot of other awfully respectable black leaders in the city like Lu Palmer—I called him up. I said, “Lu, what are you going to do about this Nazi and Klan issue” “Aw, brother, I can’t deal with it. You know we have to put together. . . . He was working on the Streeter campaign, pushing for a black mayor of Chicago, putting this forward as a solution to the problems of blacks.

Now I just want to comment on those who call for more black mayors as if it’s going to make a difference in the situation of the black masses in this country as far as jobs and housing and education are concerned. All you have to do is look at Detroit. All you have to do is look at what [Detroit mayor] Coleman Young has done in terms of breaking one city union after another—AFSCME, the garbage workers. You know, during the Republican Convention in Detroit in 1980, what he did? He told the black population, “You can eat beans.” That’s what he said. Now if that’s not proof positive that black faces in high places don’t mean liberation, I don’t know what else is! (applause) Yeah, jellybeans

too.

And then he starts talking this madness about self-help: you guys ought to help yourselves out by, you know, a series of weed-abatement programs. My point is that to the extent that we have greater class consciousness in the black population, we see that we have nothing in common with the Andrew Youngs, the Jesse Jacksons, the Maynard Jacksons, who used to be mayor of Atlanta and who viciously broke the AFSCME workers strike in that city. Because those people are pliant tools of the ruling class in this country. And that's why they're put there in the first place, to keep the lid on things. Yes they have a right to run. We're against discrimination in all aspects of this society. But when they do we're not going to follow them or urge anybody else to.

We ran in Detroit last year. And everything I'm saying here we said to the people out on the street. Our tune didn't change because our goal remains the same: to change the system from top to bottom!

Now I just want to end with this. The bourgeoisie of this country in its newspapers is openly saying there's no solution for black rights in this country. They're openly saying it! In the pages of the *Chicago Tribune* this past week I noticed the terminology: the American Dream has been a nightmare for blacks. Now **they're** saying that. And that some blacks in the military will complain of genocide in future American military involvement. They had a recent study by the Brookings Institution on blacks in the military, about all the blacks that were complaining about the high, disproportionate number of blacks that died in Vietnam.

They're telling us that there is no solution to racial oppression under capitalism, and they are absolutely right. The bourgeoisie recognizes that they plan to do nothing about the vast reservoir of chronically unemployed people trapped in the ghetto. They are saying it very openly. The only way blacks can attain their freedom is through an American October Revolution along the lines of the Russian Revolution. They understand that's what's on the agenda.

There's a basis for this happening. A lot of unemployed whites now never thought they were going to be standing in welfare lines or unemployment lines. If they're lucky. Black workers, potentially the most combative section of the working class, can lead all the oppressed along with their white class brothers and sisters, through a vanguard party. And you've got to join us if you want a revolution in this country that will give us all the things we need and deserve, that nobody should have to beg for. Everybody has a right to a job—jobs for all. How you going to get it? You got to fight for it. So the question is posed in this country that if you want to change this rotten system you've got to stand in the front ranks of struggle for working-class revolution to end this racist nightmare called America. Because we can't let this country go the way of race war, which would profit the Ku Klux Klan and the bosses in this country. That's why we fight for socialist revolution here and everywhere else. To put an end to this boom-bust cycle of capitalism.

We can go forward if we understand that we need to finish the Civil War, we need a third American revolution. And we can go forward if we understand that our capitalist enemies are not invincible. If we understand that it's not in our interest to support the bosses' international wars of conquest, the imperialist wars that are fought for their profit. If we understand that the racial divisions within the American working class can only be overcome through united class struggle, not moral suasion. And finally if we understand that the workers and the oppressed must rule, smashing every obstacle standing in its way on the path to international working-class revolution.

So let us soberly face up to these tasks. We don't have a lot of time. The fascists and the assassins and the pogromists, they have a dream—race war, We have a dream—a war of the international workers and oppressed against the oppressors. Let's go forward, forward to a workers party. Workers, blacks, Latinos, all the oppressed—join the Spartacist League, the party of the coming American workers revolution!

Thousands Mobilize to Stop Nazis in Chicago

June 27: Labor, Blacks, Jews, Gays Respond to Spartacist Campaign

—reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 309, 9 July 1982

CHICAGO—Sunday, June 27 here was a big victory for opponents of fascist terror throughout the country. It was the largest militant anti-Nazi protest in the area in decades, with more than 3,000 participating. And the presence of protesters from a broad cross-section of the Chicago population in a demonstration led by socialists is a landmark in anti-fascist actions nationally. As Ronald Reagan's killer cutbacks and the Klan/Nazis' guns target black and working people, it is clear that there is no future for the oppressed and exploited in this rotting system. The class-struggle strategy of the Spartacist League (SL), for labor/black mobilizations to stop racist terror, shows how to fight back and win. June 27 proved it can be done.

They came from the steel mills of East Chicago and the Harvester plant in Melrose Park, from heavily gay New Town and the largely Jewish suburb of Evanston. There were even East European Catholics from North Side neighborhoods. But most important in this the most segregated city in the U.S., with the meanest white suburbs in the country, they came from the giant South Side ghetto on Sunday to **stop the Nazis and defend themselves**. "Wherever the Nazis march, that means 'whites only'," they said. And wherever the fascists are stopped, it means hope for the future of black people and all the oppressed. On June 27 a breach was made in the wall of fear engendered by the racist front that stretches from the Nazis to the White House.

When the gang of Nazi storm troopers drove a rented truck up to the edge of Lincoln Park Sunday afternoon, they found the site where they planned to stage

a provocation against the Gay Pride Day march already occupied by several thousand anti-Nazi demonstrators who turned out in response to determined organizing by the SL-initiated June 27 Committee Against the Nazis. As the fascists were spotted, the crowd surged forward chanting “No Hitlers in Chicago—Stop the Nazis now!” Unable to enter the park, the two dozen Hitlerites in brown and black uniforms clustered behind a chain-link fence, protected by hundreds of Chicago cops, including a line of mounted cossacks.

The whole rally—podium, sound system and all—charged up to the front lines as anti-Nazi demonstrators pressed against police barricades. The pudgy little Nazi *Führer* paced back and forth behind the fence like a caged hyena. Next to the jackbooted brownshirts of the American Nazi Party from Chicago, the SS Action Group from Detroit, dressed up like a punk motorcycle gang, lamely waved their swastika-emblazoned shields. But no one could hear them as a steady din of anti-fascist chants effectively drowned out their “death to queers” poison. For an hour the crowd boomed out, “Chicago is a labor town, Chicago is a black town, Chicago is a gay town, Chicago is a Latino town, Chicago is a Jewish town—No room for Nazis!”

The demonstrators brought out by the June 27 Committee took over the “public forum” area of Lincoln Park where the fascists had threatened to goose-step on Sunday. The protesters were angry and militant and only the massive police presence stopped them from driving the fascists out. More than 165 uniformed cops were officially on hand, and many scores of plainclothes-men circulated in the crowd, ostentatiously sporting their red, white and blue buttons. Thirteen protesters were arrested during the afternoon, charged with disorderly conduct and released. But the crowd would not be provoked into a disastrous confrontation with the Chicago police force. The protesters drowned out the Nazis with spirited chanting for an hour, until the Hitler-lovers gave up and were ushered out by the police to a thunderous roar of “Nazis Out! Nazis Out!”

As the Nazis left, Don Andrews, a spokesman for the Committee and member of the Spartacist League Central Committee, declared to the cheering crowd, “We did it! We prevented them from carrying out their provocation!” This was a victory for all decent people of Chicago, he said. More than 3,000 demonstrators had rejected the appeal by liberals and the official Gay Pride Parade Committee to ignore the Nazis. Instead, representatives of the labor movement, gays, blacks, Catholics, Jews, Arabs and others came out to block the fascists’ attempt to victimize homosexuals. Someone had to stop these would-be killers, said Andrews, “so the Spartacist League did this simple decent thing, mobilizing labor and all the sections of the oppressed to defend the rights of gays, blacks and Jews in this city.”

The thousands who showed up at Lincoln Park Sunday came in response to the organizing efforts of the June 27 Committee Against the Nazis. More than 75 individuals representing large sectors of the Chicago community endorsed the Committee’s call to action. More than 250,000 Committee leaflets for the protest had been distributed in the area over the previous two weeks. At

the demonstration members of dozens of local unions were present. Speakers included Norm Roth (former president, United Auto Workers Local 6), Cliff “Cowboy” Mezo (vice president, Steelworkers Local 1010), Willie Harris and Joe Lamm (secretary-treasurer and vice president respectively of Service Employees International Local 372). A B’nai B’rith concentration camp survivors chapter mobilized for the demonstration, and a Palestinian support committee turned out as well. Some feminists and gay groups, the Red Rose Collective and various self-proclaimed socialists also showed up.

Black participation in the demonstration was key. To come up from the South Side to Lincoln Park on a Sunday ‘morning took not only commitment but guts. Black people have been stoned by racist mobs when they marched for integration. Terrorist nightriders have firebombed their homes when they moved into the “wrong” neighborhood. They remember the cop murder of Black Panther leader Fred Hampton as he lay in his bed. They remember the Nazis’ “white power” rallies in Marquette Park. Jackie Brooks, a young black militant who worked with the June 27 Committee, recalled that “even a dog that belonged to a black person wouldn’t cross the railroad tracks there.” But blacks also know that they are No. 1 on the Klan/Nazis’ death lists, and you’ve got to do something.

But not everyone sought to mobilize mass opposition to the Nazis’ death threats. The mainstream gay organizations chose to “ignore” the Nazis, making sure that their march didn’t arrive at Lincoln Park until after the storm troopers were gone. And while labor officials endorsed the socialist-initiated demonstration, many “leftists” did their best to defeat it. The Communist Party (CP) got out of the way of this rally, although various of its supporters such as Roth, a leader of the CP’s “Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy” group, came and spoke. Progressive Labor and its International Committee Against Racism (PL/InCAR) worked against the demonstration. First InCAR honcho Finley Campbell claimed disingenuously that it was a “trap” by Mayor Byrne (who endorsed the Gay Pride march), later admitting that PL’s real position was Moral Majority bigotry (“The SL is stopping the Nazis for a bunch of ‘fags’ who are part of the Nazi movement”). Meanwhile, the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL), which postures as macho Nazi fighters, retreated for cover into the gay milieu. The RSL formed a Stonewall Committee which soon crumbled as its defeatist policy was swamped by the organizing of the SL-led June 27 Committee.

First They Came for the Gays

The Chicago outfit which calls itself the American Nazi Party announced that it would hit the Gay Pride march in Lincoln Park. For years this little band of swastika-brandishing thugs was led by a two-bit *Führer*, Frank Collin, until he was arrested in 1980 as a “child molester” and “exposed” as half-Jewish. The Chicago Nazis were then “cleaned out” by the North Carolina fascists of Greensboro infamy. The Nazis’ planned provocation followed an increasingly familiar and ominous pattern. Working the fringes of Reagan’s anti-Soviet

war drive and appealing to reactionary Christian fundamentalists of the Moral Majority, the fascists proclaimed: “Smash the Communist-Queer Alliance.” Their “Dial-a-Nazi” hate message said to “turn to your bibles. . . to find out why god says the queers and their supporters must be put to death.” As the June 27 Committee’s campaign picked up steam we began getting hate-calls from crazies calling themselves the “Committee to Put Jews in Ovens,” who cackled about Auschwitz. Just rhetoric? What about the Jewish couple in Evanston whose home was ransacked and covered with swastikas?

The main recruiting pitch of the fascist terrorists has been “White Power,” and their focus has been the neighborhood of Marquette Park, a racist pocket of East European “Captive Nations” émigrés on Chicago’s South Side. This has given these little Hitlers a degree of credibility they lack elsewhere. Meanwhile, the homosexual population is an isolated minority here in the heart of “Middle America.” The June 27 Committee leaflet, “Who Are These Nazis? What Do They Want to Destroy? Who Do They Want to Kill?” pointed out: “The Nazis have targeted Gay Pride Day, because they know that homosexuals are the weakest link in their chain of terror. But in the factories, union halls and neighborhoods, Chicagoans know that this attack on gays is only a **beginning**. . . . The Nazis have their guns loaded and pointed directly at **you!**” We cited the famous statement by German Protestant theologian and World War I U-Boat commander Martin Niemöller, which begins, “First they came for the communists, but since I was not a communist I did not protest. . . .”

We said, “Chicago is a union town, a black town. . . . a city of ethnic minorities.” In particular, the Spartacist League leaflet warned of the Nazi/KKK threat to blacks:

“For blacks—the central and immediate target of Nazi/Klan race-terrorists—a Nazi rally in Chicago is an especially ominous provocation. The Nazi program for blacks makes the apartheid butchers of South Africa look like benevolent liberals. The racist rulers of South Africa think blacks should be forcibly segregated and viciously exploited: the Nazis think they should be exterminated and canned for dogfood. Black Chicagoans had better turn out in the thousands to stop these organizers for racist genocide!”

The Spartacist League campaign touched a responsive chord in the city, particularly in the labor movement and black community. Early on support came from the International Harvester plant in Melrose Park (UAW Local 6), where in 1975 the union had organized a civil rights defense guard to protect a black union brother’s house from nightriding racists. The executive board of UAW Local 551 (Ford Sterling Heights stamping plant) sent the Committee a letter announcing their “decision in favor of giving their support to the demonstration to stop the Nazis.”

A number of officials and union militants at the Inland Steel plant in East Chicago (USWA Local 1010) also supported the demonstration. Inland has been

the site of an important picket-line defense case around class-struggle militant Keith Anwar. The largely black and Latino bus drivers were among the most enthusiastic backers of the anti-Nazi protest. They took piles of leaflets, making sure they were placed on every seat. One drove around the block so that a Committee activist could take up a collection before getting off. Phone company workers formed a small contingent that made their banner in a bar.

Understanding that labor could be next on the fascists' hit list, the unionists were not afraid to defend homosexuals. And they were not the only ones. A declaration by the Greek-American Union, printed in the national Greek-language daily *Proini* (24 June), stated: "The Greek people have suffered as few others have from the brutality and blind violence of the Nazis. . . . Our dead call for the full participation of the Greeks of Chicago at the anti-Nazi demonstration in Lincoln Park." A chapter of B'nai B'rith named for Warsaw Ghetto uprising hero Janusz Korczak sent out a notice "calling on you to be present in Lincoln Park. . . . We as Holocaust Survivors have a moral obligation to protest any Nazi rally." In Evanston, where the Nazis were driven out of Lovelace Park in 1980, people applauded Committee leafletters and more than \$100 was collected at a community art fair. At the moment of Zionist terrorist Begin's monstrous crimes in Lebanon, the question of opposing Nazi murderers at home sharply split Chicago-area Jews.

Especially among Chicago blacks we received an enthusiastic response. An early endorser was Wallace Davis, Jr., who was shot in the back by Chicago police in 1977, successfully sued the city and now heads a black organization against police brutality. While the major TV stations and daily newspapers maintained a conspiracy of silence about the anti-Nazi demonstration being planned, every black radio station in the city picked up the news and broadcast it across Chicago (see WVON interview with SL spokesman Don Andrews, page 11). Around 63rd and Halsted every liquor store in the neighborhood took at least 100 flyers. And people would come up to the Committee sound car at stoplights and ask for stacks of leaflets to hand around. At the rally, while many left after the Nazis drove off, a lot of blacks stayed to the end. Black people know that in this racist country every rotten thing is going to hit them hardest. And the Nazi/Klan killer psycho scum are the worst. That's what brought them out.

For homosexuals the Nazi provocation posed an unavoidable political choice. Although the Gay Pride Parade Committee sought to ignore the fascists, hundreds of Chicago gays turned out to confront the fascists. Hardly a bar in New Town did not have a stack of leaflets, and the widely read weekly *GayLife* reported fully on the press conference by the June 27 Committee Against the Nazis. On Sunday as the Gay Pride parade entered Lincoln Park, marchers cheered our bullhorn announcements that thousands had stopped the Nazis. As a dozen gays stood around a Committee leafletter, one argued that you should ignore the Nazis; the rest vigorously objected, "That's crazy. . . these people did the right thing."

The victory party held after the anti-Nazi rally at a nearby bar was attended

by 350-400 people, a third of them black. Many were interested in talking with members of the Spartacist League, which had initiated the mass protest against fascist terror, and learning about Trotskyism. People applauded as a new member joined the Spartacus Youth League and a *chervonetz* gold medallion was awarded to a supporter for meritorious service at the March 27 El Salvador march in Washington, D.C. The *Internationale* was sung at the conclusion.

Big Liars Caught Red-Handed

But the day thousands streamed into Lincoln Park to stop the Nazis was a day of infamy for the motley crew which makes up the Anti-Spartacist League. Through petty sabotage—Stonewall leaflets pasted over Committee posters, trying to rip up leaflets—the Revolutionary Socialist League in particular tried to undercut the anti-Nazi protest on June 27. First of all, their maneuver in the gay milieu blew up in their face, with full accounts of the fiasco published in the local gay weekly. Then after the RSL's Stonewall Committee collapsed, they were unable to organize anyone at all. Worse yet, the supposedly "sectarian" Spartacists managed to bring out more than 3,000. The SL-initiated June 27 Committee Against the Nazis got numerous endorsements **and participation** from the labor movement—which isn't supposed to move for anything but dollars and cents, says the RSL. But there they all were occupying the site where the fascists planned to strut.

Faced with the SL's strategy of labor/black mobilization translated into reality, the RSLers resorted to downright provocation, trying, again unsuccessfully, to turn the protest into a confrontation with the cops. Their usual M.O. is to dress up in football helmets and heave rocks, resulting in a bash with the police in which the fascists get off scot-free. This time, in a demonstration that was confronted by mounted police and shot through with more than a hundred clearly marked plainclothes-men traveling in groups of up to a dozen, their scheme was to get young militants to start throwing things. When security squads of the Committee Against the Nazis warned them that we wouldn't tolerate any stunts to get people beaten and arrested, the RSLers let fly with a stream of cop-baiting. They also directly provoked arrests. In one case, when marshals were restraining a demonstrator, an RSLer came up yelling "let him do what he wants"; the fellow threw an egg and ten seconds later was arrested by the cops, while the RSL provocateur started screaming about SL "fingermen"!

On June 27, it was not just 3,000 anti-Nazis against two dozen fascist punks. Directly confronting the crowd was the Chicago Police. And those stupid adventurists who simply identify the state power with these tiny gangs are capable of **criminal** provocations. In the 1930s, Leon Trotsky wrote of an incident in Paris where the Stalinists provoked a confrontation with police protecting a fascist meeting.

"In this period it is very important to distinguish between the fascists and the state. The state is not yet ready to subordinate itself to the

fascists; it wants to 'arbitrate'... Politically it is part of the nature of a pre-Bonapartist, 'arbiter' state that the police hesitate, hold back, and on the whole are far from identifying with the fascist gangs. Our strategic task is to increase these hesitations and apprehensions on the part of the 'arbiter,' its army and its police. How? By showing that we are stronger than the fascists, that is by giving them a good beating in full view of this arbiter without, as long as we are not absolutely forced to, directly taking on the state itself. That is the whole point."

—letter to the French Communist League, 2 March 1934 in *Writings of Leon Trotsky, Supplement [1934-40]*

June 27 was an important show of force to stop the Nazis; it was built in political struggle against liberals and others who would "ignore" the fascist threat. True, there should have been tens of thousands to run off the Hitlerite creeps, and this time the cops stood in the way. But we showed it can be done.

In the context of Reagan reaction and a bipartisan anti-Soviet war drive, there has been a sharp political shift to the right in this country, including by the bulk of the so-called "left." As the Spartacist League increasingly stands out as the clear communist pole, various pseudo-socialists have resorted to slander and provocation against us. In order to keep El Salvador protests "ready for Teddy" Kennedy, they call on 'the capitalist cops to exclude the SL because of our call for military victory to leftist insurgents and for defense of Cuba and the USSR. As we have successfully mobilized labor and blacks to stop the fascists from penetrating northern urban centers—Detroit, November 1979; San Francisco, April 1980; Ann Arbor last March 20 and Chicago on June 27—these fake-revolutionaries resort to ever more absurd lies to cover their own capitulation to the liberals. And these Big Lies by little centrist clots are then picked up and circulated by the far larger reformists to smear the reds.

In Chicago, the RSL claims we fingered anti-fascist militants to the cops and condemns the SL as anti-gay! Their sidekick, Peter Sollenberger, guru of the tiny Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), claimed the "Sparks" didn't bring people out, the Nazis did. This is not the first time they have stooped to slanders.- The RWL labeled Detroit, November 1979 a "fraud." saying black demonstrators were "passers-by" who had been "duped." In Ann Arbor, where 2,000 responded to the SL campaign and ran the Nazis out of town, the RSL/RWL claim we attacked our own demonstration, because we blocked **their** attempt to take it over with their own sound system. And in Chicago, June 27 their ludicrous line is that we brought out thousands, distributed a quarter million leaflets in little over two weeks, put up 5,000 posters in three days—all calling to "Stop the Nazis"—just so that when masses came out we could prevent them from doing just that! As Stalin said, paper will take anything written on it. But who will believe them after Chicago?!

The RSL's adventurism is based on its lack of faith in the capacity and will of

the working class to fight for the oppressed. Its defeatist sectoralism—telling each sector of the oppressed to go it alone—and reliance on the liberals have the same roots. On March 20 in Ann Arbor, the RSL/RWL sought to conciliate the “ignore the Nazis” Democrats. Later they denounced the Spartacist League for “trade union fetishism,” simply asserting a supposed “failure of the trade-union movement to mobilize seriously against the Klan and Nazis.” Yet it was precisely labor support that turned Ann Arbor into a mass protest. In Chicago they tried to tail after “ignore the Nazis” Gay Priders, while the SL mobilized labor, blacks, Jews and gays to stop the fascists. Those who walk in the middle of the road are bound to be run over. And by the end of the day on June 27 you could almost see the tire tracks where the Anti-Spartacist League had been run over by 3,000 anti-Nazi fighters. With their sectoralism, the RSL/RWL didn’t defend gays; with our political opposition to sectoralism, **we did**.

Smash the Fascists—For Workers Revolution!

In the aftermath, the demonstration of several thousands in Lincoln Park against the fascists was the object of a violence-baiting media campaign. While TV news accounts said “close to 3,000” were present at the anti-Nazi protest, the wire services and daily papers said 1,000. “13 Foes of Nazis Arrested During Lincoln Park Rally” was the *Sun-Times* headline. The Associated Press wrote: “The Chicago gay parade, its 13th annual, was marred by protesters who hurled rocks, eggs and smoke bombs. It was not immediately clear which of the three groups was responsible for the violence and which the arrested demonstrators represented.” Yet in interviewing a spokesman for the June 27 Committee, AP Chicago correspondent T. Lee Hughes had asked: “Were you surprised that there wasn’t any violence?” Of course, the real source of violence is the fascists, and the capitalist society that breeds such terrorists. But the capitalist press, which treated the Greensboro massacre as a “shootout” between “extremists” (equating the leftist victims with their Nazi/Klan murderers), wasn’t interested in **that** story.

June 27 was not merely a gathering of several thousand people who oppose the Nazis. It gave a taste, but only a taste, of the social power of a labor and black militant mobilization which can sweep away the unspeakable Hitler punks and defend embattled minorities. A full-scale mobilization of the workers movement and minorities would send these mad-dog elements of the enraged middle class packing.

As several speakers emphasized, the fascists feed off the present depression conditions. They are the fringe products of the anti-Soviet war drive backed by both Democrats and Republicans, a renewed Cold War that seeks to “roll back” not only Communism abroad but every gain won by the union movement and minorities at home. The fascists’ appeal is to increasingly desperate and backward working-class and lower middle-class white layers who are persuaded not by rational arguments but by force. The Nazis and Klan understand this well: their “propaganda” consists of lynchings, cross burnings and swastika painting.

As it was in Germany, the question is: who will win, who will die? Will the Red Guards or the storm troopers prevail?

The fascists' ultimate function is as capitalism's shock troops to destroy the unions, to whip up genocidal racism against minorities. Today they are small gangs waiting in the wings to be used on a grand scale tomorrow. But in Reagan's America they have demonstrated their appeal, occasionally winning tens of thousands of votes in white racist pockets—North Carolina, Detroit suburbs, southern California's Orange County. They must be crushed in the egg! The means are not small-group confrontations with the cops, or suicidal and idiot appeals to the capitalist state which systematically protects them, but militant class struggle leading to the conquest of power by the working class. This latter is the strategy of the Spartacist League.

This is the program for the emancipation of black people enslaved by the chains of racist American capitalism. Blacks know the Nazis and KKK are an immediate, lethal threat. Recent history in Marquette Park was written in black blood and white terror. But they also remember that it was in the Chicago suburb of Cicero that Martin Luther King, Jr. was stoned by white racist mobs when he tried to bring the liberal-led civil rights movement north. That movement ran head-on into the capitalist economic basis of black oppression. And ever since then the token gains for black rights have been steadily eroded: busing dead, CETA terminal and overt racism in the saddle from the White House to the courthouse. In Reagan's America, more than **two-thirds** of all black youth are unemployed. Black parents, many jobless and despairing, can't keep their kids off the street and their grandmothers on welfare.

It has become a commonplace to say that decaying capitalism underlies racist oppression in the U.S. Most of the "last hired and first fired" haven't had a steady job since the 1974-75 recession. But many have become demoralized by unrelieved oppression. Black misleaders say that salvation can be found in the "lesser evil" Democratic Party of Jimmy Carter. After the demonstrated bankruptcy of civil rights liberalism and radical pseudo-nationalism, many black militants are open to a class-struggle road to black emancipation. The Spartacist League alone raises that program, fighting to finish the Civil War at last. On the streets of Chicago and Detroit, the SL organizes to crush the race terrorists, to harness the power of labor to the struggle for equality, building a communist vanguard party that fights for revolutionary integrationism and socialism.

It is desperately necessary to fight! Failure to do so means descent into race war and destruction. But the key to victorious labor/black struggle is the forging of black leadership in a communist vanguard party. With only a few hundreds and a growing black component, the Spartacist League was able to bring out thousands to stop the Nazis in Chicago on June 27. With a few thousand militants gained in massive black recruitment, the SL can lead the way to black liberation through socialist revolution. In this race-divided country, the Spartacist League is America's last, best hope.

Blacks Under the Gun

Spartacist Don Andrews Speaks on Chicago Black Radio

—reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 309, 9 July 1982

We print below excerpts from a radio interview with Don Andrews of the Spartacist League and June 27 Committee Against the Nazis broadcast live on WVON, Chicago’s leading black radio station, on June 26.

Richard Steele: Why have you formed the Committee Against the Nazis?

Don Andrews: Well, the June 27 Committee Against the Nazis was initiated by the Spartacist League in response to the Nazis and the Klan [threat] to march on Gay Pride Day. Certainly the gays are on their hit list, but they have other targets in this city. Especially they want to go after blacks, and Jews. I understand that not so long ago they demolished the home of a Jewish family in Evanston. And they would like to preach their “White Power” madness in the city of Chicago.

Steele: Why not have a demonstration at another day, at another time, as opposed to that time and that place on Sunday?

Andrews: The underlying assumption that’s behind that is that if you ignore the Nazis and the Klan, they will ignore us. You see, the Klan and Nazis are a deadly threat right now. Under Reagan’s war against black people, against labor, against women and all minorities, and gays, in this country, the Klan and Nazis feel that they can come into a powerful industrial center like Chicago and carry out attacks on one of the most vulnerable sections of the oppressed, the gays, and then from there to launch a drive for genocide against black people, and the Jews. Since Reagan has come to power they have grown enormously: they number 10,000, they have 100,00 supporters.

Steele: Also psychologically they have gained probably a lot of strength based on what is the perceived attitude of the current administration.

Andrews: Yes. Bill Wilkinson of the Klan, shortly after Reagan was elected, made the statement that his platform could have been written by a Klansman. And that is not far from the truth. The Reagan government certainly has protected these fascists. They see the possibility of unleashing them, particularly in the context of a resurgent, fighting labor movement that champions the right of labor and blacks and all of the oppressed. They may need these shock troops to drown in blood the workers movement, the struggle for black equality in the future.

Steele: I haven’t seen too much in the major media about the event on Sunday.

Andrews: Well, they certainly didn’t mind playing up Greensboro as a “shootout” between two “extremist” organizations, and of course white-washed

the Klan/Nazi killers. Where was the liberal outcry when the anti-racist militants were gunned down in broad daylight in Greensboro? One of our purposes, since the major media have maintained a conspiracy of silence on this issue, has been to make this an issue among blacks and Jews and working people in this city, and other ethnic minorities, and the response we are getting is very, very positive. There are a lot of angry people who do not want to see the Nazi/Klan filth raise their heads in this city, to get a recruiting station in order to recruit to genocide. They dream of their death camps; they dream of making Chicago a vast cemetery of Jewish, black and labor corpses. We have to do everything in our power through a labor-led fight to organize black people, Jewish people and all of the oppressed to stop the Nazis and the Klan from raising their heads in the city.

Steele: Let me ask you, what is the Spartacist League?

Andrews: We're a labor-socialist organization and, very simply put, our struggle is to build a racially integrated workers party in this country that can fight for the rule of the working class. Talking about combatting Nazi/Klan terror in the industrial centers throughout this country: I'm from Detroit, and one of the things the Spartacist League did along with militant auto workers right in the aftermath of the Greensboro killings was we were able to mobilize blacks, many of whom were auto workers, socialists and black youths, to stop the Klan from riding in downtown Detroit. This was in the face of determined opposition on the part of [Mayor] Coleman Young and the Democratic Party administration, who threatened to arrest anti-Klan militants who showed up. Also in San Francisco in April '80, labor, minorities and gays stopped the Nazis from celebrating Hitler's birthday. Our strategy is one of mobilizing the power of the labor movement, alongside its allies, to prevent such race-hate organizations from gaining a foothold.

Steele: What's the City's attitude at this point?

Andrews: Well, they would like people to stay home. They would basically like to give the Nazis and the Klan a platform on Sunday under the guise of their "right to Constitutionally protected free speech," which is another way of saying the "right" to organize lynch mobs against blacks and others. From the very beginning we have been very determined to make one thing absolutely clear: our strategy is to avoid confrontation with the police. We are out there to demonstrate our outrage against the Nazis and the Klan.

Steele: There may be people who are not affiliated with any organization, and you have no control over them.

Andrews: The truth of the matter is, where does the violence come from? Who has been maiming and murdering and bombing black people's homes and other minorities' homes from coast to coast in this country? The violence comes from these race-hate terrorist organizations. I can spell that out very graphically. For example, even in Detroit recently three Klansmen were convicted for blowing off the hand of a black woman. I have a friend who was a phone worker in California,

who was shot down off a pole by the Ku Klux Klan. And also Greensboro. These are not isolated incidents. This comes in a context of a decaying economy, a crumbling capitalist economy that cannot provide the smallest reforms. They are taking away every single gain that black people and working people have fought for in the past, and so these Nazi and Klan organizations feel that it's open season on blacks and working people and Jews and gays.

By the way, our organization, in terms of defending the democratic rights of homosexuals, we have done that even before there was a gay movement, because our party views itself, and we are in reality, the tribune of the people. We want to fight every single instance of oppression and tyranny that this capitalist government visits on people, because the only way we're going to get out of this situation is by stopping the Nazis and the Klan and laying the basis for an **integrated** fight for jobs for all. That's why on June 27 it's so important that we turn out masses of people who are the enemies of fascism. The Spartacist League is a socialist organization which has initiated this, but we can't do it by ourselves. We are a small socialist organization of black and white revolutionaries who have a vision of a better world, a world in which the working class can rule and black people can finally have their equality. That costs money, that means time and dedication, and that means bodies. We think a lot of people will see its importance by being there on the 27th.

Caller: I'd like to say I appreciate their cause, and I'm certainly going to be at the park. Another thing, they are also against Catholic people.

Steele: You're talking about the Nazis.

Caller: Yeah, and the Ku Klux Klan. I don't know how they could let them be there with a Nazi uniform. I believe what he is talking about tonight.

Steele: So you're going to be out in support, is that it?

Caller: I certainly am. I told my husband I'm going to be there. I just wanted to give credit for what they're doing.

Caller: I want to appreciate what they're doing too. Every black person should be there. All of those Jews out there in Evanston, when they [the Nazis] were supposed to march out there, they stopped them. And that's what we should do. Every black person, every Jew and everybody should be down there. I'll be there. I will. And I want to get the number where I can send some money to help them along. Where should I send the money to?

Steele: Let's get you a phone number, and then you can call. What is that number again?

Andrews: That's [312] 427-0003.

Steele: Let me ask you a question before you go. Doesn't it bother you about the prospect that there is always a possibility of some direct confrontation?

Caller: Sure it bothers me. But what are you going to do? If we don't stick together and be there, what're we going to do? Every word they said tonight is really true. It's getting worse and worse.

Steele: So basically, your feeling is the cause far outweighs the negative thought....

Caller: Just like the lady [said] who called just a while ago. Why would the government let them [the Nazis] demonstrate like that? Why? Anything a black person tries to do, they cut it down.

Caller: I would like to ask, do they foresee a possible reformation of the Black Panthers, or some other ethnic organization that will fight, maybe physically, against the Nazis?

Andrews: Well, I'd like to comment on that. First of all, black people today are absolutely leaderless. They're vulnerable, they're disorganized and they are full of despair. Because, for the most part, the black "leaders" in this country, what they're about particularly now is finding another racist Democrat to sell to us. People have their eyes on Teddy Kennedy. Do you know what Teddy Kennedy did when the racist mobs were menacing and attacking black schoolchildren in Boston during the fight for school integration? Absolutely nothing. He turned a blind eye.

On the question of the Black Panther Party and what happened to it, I'd like to comment first of all that the only way black people can attain their freedom is through joint struggle, united struggle with white workers. And we haven't seen that in years. The idea of blacks attempting to overturn racist American capitalism by themselves without being part of a socialist organization of workers of all races is the road to defeat. And the Black Panther Party, despite the heroic effort of many of its militants to fight against the racist status quo, had no strategy that could show the way out. Unfortunately they were a nationalist organization, which meant that they wrote off the working class, the white and black workers. And that's where the power is in this society—in the factories, where the black and white working people face their enemies.

Steele: Isn't that power right now being eroded by the fact that there are many people who are obviously out of work, people are scared about their jobs? I would think that people are so concerned and hesitant about speaking out in many situations because your first thinking is, "I want to keep my job."

Andrews: Well, first of all we have to understand about the demoralization and despair among working people, who's responsible for it? It's the fat cat labor sellouts who have given up every single gain imaginable. Look at Doug Fraser, who sits on the board of directors of the Chrysler Corporation—he gave away five

billion dollars and now is talking about giving up more to the greedy companies. The only way to respond to such a situation is for the workers to use their power through sit-down strikes, to occupy those plants and to appeal to other sections of the working class and the poor. The Spartacist League, especially in the current period, has fought for this perspective. Our supporters, for example in the Ford River Rouge plant in Detroit, recently energetically fought for a two-day sit-down strike throughout southeast Michigan, but especially centered on the powerful Ford River Rouge plant, to show the way out to the concessions/giveback fever.

What I'm pointing out is that the black workers who are at the point of production, like their white class brothers and sisters, in united struggle can turn this situation around by fighting for jobs for all. You've got a lot of impoverished blacks and other minorities who are trapped in the ghettos and the barrios in this country who would love to join a picket line that is to fight for jobs for all. And of course, the only way we're going to get that is to dump the labor fakers, the so-called leaders of these major industrial unions who see their role as defending the interests of the company.

The fight against the Nazis and the Klan is the fight against the rotting system that we live under. We say that the factories, the banks, the mills and the mines—we want to mobilize the working class to take these into their own hands, to fight for their own government. You'll be hearing from us because the fact of the matter is, we have the only program that can stem the tide of racist attacks, that can stop the layoffs when we fight for sit-down strikes in the plants, that actually has an answer to the two bankrupt capitalist parties. You know, if the Ronald Reagans of the world tell you to stay away from groups like the Spartacist League that fight on the basis of principles, then people better start checking it out.

The Spartacist League, as I indicated earlier, is a small socialist organization. We have been in existence since 1963, fighting for black rights and fighting for the interests of the working class. We also participate on our socialist program in elections. I ran for city council in 1981 in the city of Detroit on the program I'm talking about right now, for labor/black mobilizations against the Klan, for sit-down strikes against layoffs, and for fighting the anti-Soviet war drive, which is one of the important aspects of the political program of both capitalist parties.

Steele: And part of that is through what you are planning to do on Sunday, as it relates to the Nazis. . . .

Andrews: Yes, it's part of a whole struggle to change this system from top to bottom, so that we have a workers government, a planned economy in this country. The question of jobs for all, the question of decent housing, the question of decent education, the elimination of Klan/Nazi terror. People will see how barbaric this system is, that it can't even provide the slightest reforms, the smallest improvement in the people's conditions of life. We can't get our justice under this system, and that's why we have to build a racially integrated workers

party....

Caller: I am black and I think that I would have to take a neutral stance on this issue, because I'm not pro-gay nor am I pro-Klan. It just appears to me that 'when the economy is bad and everything seems to fall apart, blacks are always called upon to rally behind this group and that organization. I would just like to throw the question out, if it's not too demeaning to your two guests, as to whether they are gay.

Andrews: We have gays in our organization who are socialists. We are socialists and we have all types of people in our organization. You hear Reagan and everybody talking about getting the government off our back. Well we're for the government getting out of the bedrooms. People should be able to be what they want to be. And as far as we're concerned, we don't surrender to that anti-gay bigotry. We fight it tooth and nail. The crucial issue is the gays are on the Nazis' and the Klan's hit list. They want to go after them because they're isolated, and we want to prove just the opposite: that there are intelligent, thoughtful working people, decent people in this city who will rally to the cause of defending the democratic rights of the oppressed, gays and everybody else.

Caller: But the gay professionals, the gay businesses are just as much anti-black as the Klan. That's why I take a neutral point of view. And I hate to see any group pull in blacks, to use blacks.

Andrews: Well, is it in the interests of black people along with other oppressed sections of this society to stop the Nazis when they try to come to a city like Chicago?

Caller: I think that any group which is cancerous, which is backstepping, which is an oppressive group should not have certain rights. And I just think it's a very bad atrocity to have people use downtrodden people.

Andrews: The Democratic Party does that.

Caller: That's right.

Andrews: So we're against the Democratic Party.

Caller: Well what party are you in favor of?

Andrews: I'm in the Spartacist League. We're in favor of building a workers party in this country, and our work on behalf of black people, on behalf of the working man and working woman and on behalf of defending the democratic rights of gays, is part of our struggle to change this whole society. In Boston we were the only ones calling on the labor movement to stand by those black schoolchildren in the face of those racist mobs out in the streets. The fact is that our perspective of the way to achieve black freedom is to base yourself on the power of the labor movement. It sounds like you've given up on the fight. But there are others who see the necessity of building a racially integrated workers

party. Black workers have potentially the power to lead the kind of fight we are talking about.

“We Have the World to Win!”

Speech at Chicago Anti-Nazi Rally, June 27—Myra Owens, Spartacus Youth League

—reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 309, 9 July 1982

The Nazis are using the gay demonstration as a scapegoat. The real focal point is the black community. But we are here today to stop them again, and we will if they show their faces! It is only the Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth League who raise the fight to stop the Nazis and the Klan. There is not one black organization, like Rev. Daughtry’s Black United Front or Ben Chavis’ National Black Independent Political Party or Jesse Jackson’s Operation PUSH, that even raises a finger to stop Reagan’s Cold War drive or even to fight against the Nazis and the Klan. Their main concern is building a future in the Democratic Party. But there’s no future for you in the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. They’re both equally dedicated to the anti-Soviet war drive that fuels the growth of the Nazis and the destruction of humanity.

So we need our own party, **you** need your own party, which is a workers party, a party that will fight in your interests. And that party is the Spartacist League and its youth group, the Spartacus Youth League. With the growth of the Nazis and the Klan, there are candidates of the Nazis and Klan in **both** ruling parties. Remember Tom Metzger, the grand dragon of the Ku Klux Klan who got the Democratic nomination in San Diego? Neither party has anything to offer black youth in this country. But the Spartacus Youth League does, and we want you to join us. Just like we said on El Salvador, it applies to blacks: Take a side! It is revolution or death for black people in this country!

It is blacks who will be in the forefront of fighting against the Nazis and the Klan. If the cops don’t get blacks, the Nazis will. Remember the Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton, murdered here in Chicago? Remember Ron Settles, murdered by the Signal Hill police in Long Beach, California? Recently two black GIs were killed in Germany by a Nazi-lover, and one of them was a sergeant in the Army. And just last week a black transit worker in New York was murdered by a racist gang.

It’s great that you’re all out here to fight the Nazis. But the fight is not over today. We must continue to fight and we must **win** that fight. The Spartacus Youth League has a future for blacks. Come and join the organization that initiated this demonstration. Have a shot at something else besides being the burnt-out ash of history. There are some of you out there who want to fight and give a shot at socialism. So come and join the Spartacus Youth League. Join us today, because tomorrow might be too late. We have the world to win!

Labor/Black Struggle in Regan's America

Black NYC Transit Worker Speaks in Europe

Oust the Labor Fakers—Break with the Democrats! For a Class-Struggle Worker's Party!

—reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 310, 23 July 1982

As part of a campaign of protest against Ronald Reagan's European tour last month to beat the anti-Soviet war drums, the international Spartacist tendency organized public meetings in six European cities on the theme "The Main Enemy Is at Home!" We print below edited excerpts of the speech by guest speaker Ed Kartsen, a black American trade unionist, to the Paris meeting.

So, Reagan is here in Europe to realign and harden up his anti-Soviet alliance. He's instructing them that despite the pressure from members of various peace movements composed, I assume, of great numbers of people who don't exactly like the idea of glowing, that they'd better get in line with the leader of international counterrevolution, that is, with U.S. imperialism's war drive. They had better get in line with the nuclear destruction of the USSR.

What I want to talk about is what Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive means for the American working class. I am a member of Transport Workers Union Local 100 in New York City. This is a union which organizes transit workers, those who run the trains and buses. This union keeps New York City, the center of international finance, running. My union went out on strike in 1966, a successful strike that set a precedent for unions throughout the United States. Its leader, a president by the name of Mike Quill, found out that he was dying and he decided to marry his mistress and call a strike, a strike that he had been threatening for some time. He closed down the city, the courts threw him in jail because it is illegal for the transit unions to strike, and he told the judge that he could drop dead in his black robes, that he would stay out on strike until it was successful, until it won.

Mike Quill died just after He got out of jail. The strike was solid and the result was that the Transport Workers Union won the settlement that broke the record as far as wage increases and other demands, far ahead of any union throughout the United States at the time. It put the union in a very powerful position and left the workers with the feeling that they have the ability to fight around their interests using their own organizations and could win.

But today this situation is no longer the case. Gains which the workers have won as a result of that strike have now been almost entirely hacked away. An example of this is what occurred with a black motorman by the name of Jesse Cole. This was a motorman who was killed as a result of management incompetence. He was instructed by the management of the transport system to ignore the signal safety on the rail. As a result, his train crashed into another train that was

sitting just ahead. Jesse Cole's cab was crushed and he was seriously injured. The head of the Metropolitan Transit Authority immediately went on television to explain to everyone why it was this motorman's fault that this accident had occurred. Instead of organizing an emergency rescue squad, he spent the money of the transport system on organizing this campaign against Jesse Cole. He had the power to turn off the third rail power to the transport system, which was necessary to allow the rescue squad to go onto the tracks. The power was left on for over an hour after it was known that the accident had occurred. So Jesse Cole did not die for any other reason than the management allowed him to bleed to death in the cab. Or to put it in simple language, he was killed by the Transit Authority.

I and a handful of other militants decided to do something about this. It was our intention to close down the entire transit system for Jesse Cole's funeral. And we were also determined to organize the entire union to get out that day in respect for Jesse Cole. This was important because we didn't want any individual militants to be victimized if they acted on their own. But our union leadership went on another kind of campaign; they went on a counter-campaign to get everybody to work that day. About 200 of us showed up to the funeral, and the system continued to run. This is because of the leadership of our union, not because of the many hundreds of militant workers who felt a deep sense of outrage at what happened. Our leadership plays the role of a middleman, as typically union bureaucrats do, between management and the workforce. They are the voice of management inside the workers movement.

Fight for Power!

I ran on a campaign for president of my local because this kind of leadership can never defend the most basic interests of the American working class, nor the basic interests of workers anywhere in the world. I ran primarily on the right to strike, on the right of labor to use its organization and the only weapon it has to defend its interests. I also linked my campaign to the fight against the racist policies of the city administration, since most of the most critical elements of the workforce are black.

The union today is typically portrayed as lazy and stupid and that this is primarily the reason for the run-down New York City transit system. There is a case which I raised in my campaign over the closing of a hospital [Sydenham] which primarily serves poor black people. It was closed because the New York City mayor claimed that there wasn't enough money to keep the emergency ward open. By doing this he condemned thousands of blacks to no medical treatment whatsoever for injuries, since this is the facility that they normally use. So this issue, along with the issue of Reagan's campaign against labor, as well as his anti-labor movement against the USSR were issues I raised as part of my campaign for Local 100 president.

I raised the issue that the working class in America must fight politically for

power if it is to defend its interests against the capitalist attacks. Not only the issue of striking, but also the issue of a workers party to fight for a workers government as critical issues for the victory of the working class. Now, John Lawe won in the elections because he successfully demoralized broad sections of the Transport Workers Union. He did this by allowing a strike to be lost about a year and a half ago. After about a week of striking, the governor of New York and the city mayor were about to give in. But just before the city and the state capitulated, which was to happen within 24 hours, as we found out later on, our leader John Lawe agreed to go back under a much lower wage agreement and under penalties from the Taylor Law, which is an anti-strike law. The consequence was that Lawe successfully impressed on the workforce that if you strike, you will lose. One of the major reasons why he got away with this whole campaign has a lot to do with Ronald Reagan.

When the air controllers union went out on strike last year, Ronald Reagan smashed that union. And leaders like John Lawe instructed the transit workers that what happened to the air controllers will happen to you. So he forced us to accept in our last contract binding arbitration by the government. The result of this binding arbitration was that some major gains of the Transport Workers Union were taken away by the government. And this has widely angered many transit workers.

While John Lawe advocates the binding of the workers to the government with respect to the contract it is also the binding of the working class politically to the ruling class through the Democratic Party. He's on a campaign to force union members to pay a contribution to various Democratic Party politicians as the way to get rid of the anti-strike laws. And most of the American fake-left support this same strategy of reliance on the left wing of the Democratic Party. As I said, I was the only one to fight both for the perspective of a workers party as well as for the right to strike in the last election. The Communist Party supported a candidate running for the presidency of Local 100 who ran on a program against going out on strike. The Communist Party-supported candidate, as a matter of fact, voted an endorsement of John Lawe's giving up of our policy in the union of "No contract, no work." Only afterwards, when the elections were over and after the negotiations were over they came out against binding arbitration.

Labor/Black Mobilization to Smash Klan/Nazi Terror

I want to now talk about the situation with respect to blacks in the United States. Reagan is on a campaign against labor and he's also on a campaign against the few remaining gains of the civil rights movement. This is resulting in increased activity on the part of fascists. The program of the Ku Klux Klan, which is the home-grown American fascist organization, is to drive blacks back into slave labor. Reagan is carrying out their program from the White House in terms of destruction of the gains of the civil rights movement. The difference the Klan has with him is that he's not creating mass death camps and organizing slave labor on a massive scale. Of late the most notorious case of Klan terror

was what occurred in Greensboro, North. Carolina, and I want to briefly go into the implications of this Greensboro, massacre for American workers and blacks.

What happened there was the massacre of leftists, trade-union organizers, civil rights workers and a black woman, with the knowledge and collaboration of the American government. It is a documented fact that there were federal agents in the car from which the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazis emerged. I think the results are generally known, that the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis opened fire on this demonstration and murdered in broad daylight five people, shooting them in the chest and head. The Ku Klux Klan got off scot-free when the trial came up. In fact the whole incident was videotaped and this was presented at the trial, but it did not stop the racist terrorists from getting off scot-free. And the message behind all owing the Ku Klux Klan to get off for carrying out this vicious act of terror in broad daylight is that it's OK to kill blacks, reds, trade-union organizers, that the government gives sanction to this kind of activity.

The reason for this is that there is an enormous amount of unemployment taking place in the United States today. In particular, in the Midwest, places like Detroit, where there is a massive black working-class population being thrown onto the streets, auto factories being closed down. Because of attacks against social services by the Reagan administration many of these blacks face no means to survive, that is, no welfare. These masses of blacks are becoming more and more the targets of groups like the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis in a very real way. Ku Klux Klan and Nazi acts of terror have increased more than 425 percent according to the Justice Department over the last few years.

It is fortunate that the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan have met some resistance of late in the United States to their terror activity. When the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan wanted to demonstrate in downtown Detroit in celebration of the Greensboro massacre, there was a mobilization of blacks, workers and leftists on the same spot in order to stop them. The important lesson to learn is that the same liberals who request the government to defend the citizens against the fascists, these liberals had a voice in the form of the local mayor by the name of Coleman Young, a black mayor. He threatened the blacks, trade-union workers, the leftists all with arrest if they showed up the day that the fascists were to come. But that didn't stop efforts to mobilize the black community, the trade-union force. Five hundred militants, many from an auto plant called River Rouge, showed up fully prepared to deal with any fascists that might come and, as well, fully prepared to go to jail. They were the most militant workers throughout Detroit, the potential leadership of the entire black and white workers of Detroit. The handful of fascist punks understood that there would be no possibility for a fascist demonstration on that spot that day and if they did the consequences would be dire to their health.

This was a workers victory. The lesson was that only the working class under a militant leadership can successfully stop the fascists. I'm proud to say that I chaired that rally and it was also to the credit of the Spartacists of the United States who initiated it. Nothing was clearer that day than that the mobilized

force of the working class was the force that could smash fascism.

This year there was a mobilization in Ann Arbor, just outside Detroit. There a group called the SS Action Group, another fascist organization, wanted to demonstrate around the slogans of “Kill Commies” and endorsement of Ronald Reagan’s policy in El Salvador. There were two mobilizations, one initiated again by the American section of the international Spartacist tendency and another by the liberals, the latter to demonstrate to “ignore” the Nazis. The results in Ann Arbor were that UAW locals around that region, transport workers around that region, as well as AFSCME workers, endorsed the campaign to mobilize on the spot where the Nazis said they were going to come. So that day, a crowd of 2,000 students, trade unionists and leftists appeared on the spot where the Nazis said they were going to come. When the Nazis drove by in a car they looked at this kind of mobilization, and went over to the site of the “ignore the Nazis” demonstration.

Sections of the “Stop the Nazis” demonstration heard about this and about 1,500 of these demonstrators gathered around these few Nazis and expressed their outrage at their [the Nazis’] provocation. Many projectiles were thrown in their direction. It’s unfortunate that they were able to even walk out of town, although there were some injuries to these Nazis. The police rushed in to defend them and help them escape. The state played the role of protecting the fascists, because they have a perspective to use those fascists as a weapon against labor, against blacks, the poor and minorities.

Capitalism Means Black Oppression

There is a political tendency in the United States expressed again by the Communist Party which calls for “banning the Klan,” that is, laws by the bourgeois government to make organizations like the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan illegal. In the context of Reagan’s America this strategy is viewed widely as lunatic, particularly since Reagan is carrying out aspects of the Ku Klux Klan’s program himself, and [because of] the way anti-“extremist” laws have been used in the past, that is, primarily against militants and leftists. As was demonstrated in the 1950s in the McCarthy period, things like the Smith Act were used against the then-revolutionary Socialist Workers Party, and against the Communist Party, which supported the creation of this law.

Now I want to raise just one more example. During the civil rights movement in the United States Martin Luther King and the Democratic Party pushed this idea that black people have to use the same kind of non-violent resistance as Gandhi used. The objective of this pacifism was to embarrass your enemy with your blood, in other words, if you are beaten on the streets you shouldn’t raise your hands in defense or strike back in any way, but allow the racists to beat you. This is the liberal tradition which is endorsed by the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party and all those parties which can be termed social-democratic in the United States. This policy also has the expression of calling for the federal

government to intervene in cases of racist violence in order to protect blacks.

In 1965 in Selma, Alabama Martin Luther King had a march for voting rights where he relied on the federal troops, state troops and the local police to defend the march against Klan terror. The result was that a black woman was shot to death by the Ku Klux Klan with the full knowledge, there again, of an FBI agent. The FBI agent wrote, in fact, a book talking about his entire experience inside the Ku Klux Klan and every time he reported that the Klan was about to carry out an act of racist terror, he says that his own bosses told him just to go along and observe. This was in contrast to the FBI's infiltration of groups like the Black 'Panthers, where they set up the execution of Black Panther leaders, like Fred Hampton in Chicago, who was murdered in his sleep.

The attacks on black people, the attacks on civil rights are proof that the liberal lie of reforming the capitalist government for black liberation is nothing more than an illusion. The oppression of black people is as fundamental to American capitalism as is the exploitation of labor, imperialist war and their anti-Soviet war drive. Black liberation is tied up [with] the liberation of the entire American working class from capitalist oppression.

Black people in the United States constitute a race-color caste. That is, blacks are concentrated in the industrial working class, the semi-employed and the army of the unemployed. This has been the position of blacks ever since Reconstruction was put into flames by the Ku Klux Klan. The Civil War in the United States, which was supposed to free the slaves, what this war actually meant for the rulers of America was a war to keep the Union together, keep the South from seceding. There was no original intent to free the slaves necessarily but it became an important political issue during the war which was instrumental in the winning of the North. The winning of the war was the only primary objective of the Northern capitalists.

After the war, the Ku Klux Klan was allowed to carry out a campaign which instituted segregation. This campaign of racist oppression which was instituted at that time remains in effect to this very day. The civil rights movement was supposed to get rid of this institutionalized oppression of black people and partially did in the South. But today, black people find themselves in a worse economic situation than before the civil rights movement. So nothing can be more apparent than that without the overturn of American capitalism which perpetuates racism in America, black people will continue to be oppressed.

Defend Blacks, Defend the Soviet Union!

So today we find that black people are supposed to go along with Reagan's campaign in America for "freedom" for workers in Poland from oppression. Reagan, who is carrying out a campaign against civil rights, who is encouraging the mobilization of fascist terror, is supposed to be the leader of the "freedom" of masses of workers. But black people in general never cried for Solidarność, despite the fact that the entire liberal left, the Democratic Party, the Republicans

all the way to the fascists, all shed many tears for Solidarność. It was too vivid in their minds that there is massive unemployment and impoverishment in the black community; they observed Haitians being herded into concentration camps.

Masses of American workers didn't go for this pro-Solidarność campaign either because Reagan is supposed to be the fighter for workers "freedom" after he smashed an American trade union. There were only a handful of trade-union bureaucrats who came out to demonstrate against the government crackdown in Poland—and this in contrast to **half a million** workers who came out on September 19 last year to protest against Reagan. Reagan doesn't want freedom for anybody either in Poland or in Russia, he is not against the repression against the masses there. Reagan has something in store for the workers in Russia and Poland similar to what he has executed on the American working class: goodies like unemployment, fascism and racism are widely understood to be the intent behind his calls for "freedom, liberty and justice."

September 19 was not only the largest working-class demonstration in American history, it was one of the most integrated in history. It was so big that it scared the bureaucrats themselves—they weren't expecting a half a million. Many workers came to that demonstration not with the intent of a token show of force, but willing to close down that city and to offer concrete acts of labor action to bring Reagan down. Many were asking why their unions hadn't gone out in support of PATCO, why the airplanes were still getting fueled, why they were still getting repaired, because they wanted that strike to win and they knew from the power that was demonstrated that day that they had the ability to win. The demonstration in Washington was critical because in America the only force that can bring Reagan down is the force of labor. It's the only force, under a leadership that is determined to overthrow capitalism, that can stop World War III.

The Stalinists, whose international policy of détente, which reflects their policy of "ban the Klan" in the States, will never bring peace. Because it was under previous administrations that détente was used as a cover for building up American nuclear power. So Reagan is here going around Europe claiming to be the biggest peacemaker, and not only is he a big peacemaker, but he's much more peaceful than Brezhnev, and because Brezhnev is not as peaceful as him, Brezhnev must be blown up.

It's only through the active defense of the gains of the USSR by the American working class and by working classes around the world that it is possible for the imperialist policy of a Third World War to be stopped. And this means that there must be socialist revolution in the United States. And there must be political revolution in the USSR in order to defend the gains of the Russian Revolution. It is the same issue as the defense of the gains of my union: as I have to fight to get rid of my bureaucracy so too the Russian workers must fight to overthrow their bureaucracy. So, all workers around the world have a stake in the unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialism.

Blacks, Labor—Rely on Your Own Strength!

Discussion period

Questioner asks about the role of Martin Luther King in the 1960s civil rights movement.

It was not Martin Luther King that won those gains. It was the masses of blacks who were taking to the streets to fight for those gains that won them. What Martin Luther King did was to step into that struggle, disarm it and sell a few reforms as the price for his disarming it. For example there were laws which were supposed to result in integration of schools, integration of housing, integration of higher education which were the selling points of the civil rights movement. Once the groups of agricultural black workers in the South and industrial black workers were demobilized, when they were no longer out in the streets arming and organizing, these rights were taken away.

For example in Boston in 1972, the [school] busing program was being attacked by mobs of racists on the streets, by the beating up of black children and the destruction of buses. Now this right of busing was supposed to be a right already won by Martin Luther King. But the racists on the streets were fighting to take it back. The only possible force to defend that right was effective, organized workers and blacks of that city. As a matter of fact I went to Boston myself into a demonstration to demand the defense of the black children that were under attack in the city. But the liberals in that city had a countermobilization there too. They called for reliance on the police and for federal troops, just like in the civil rights movement.

The result is that today there is no more busing program—the racists succeeded in terrorizing enough blacks and burning enough buses that the courts have rescinded further busing programs. Throughout the United States, the whole program of integration of schools has been rolled back and Reagan is pushing it back toward total annihilation. So the ruling class **gave** the masses of blacks absolutely nothing—they fought for it by reliance on their own force and the only way it can be defended is by reliance on their own force. And that's why the liberation of black people must be a central part of the liberation of the American working class through socialist revolution.

For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Questioner asks about the call for a workers party in the United States.

First, on the workers party. As some of the comrades here have expressed, the American working class has no party at all. The two major political parties are both bourgeois parties. The leadership of the American trade-union movement is in tight collaboration with the Democratic Party. When the American working class explodes in respect to labor actions, the opportunity will exist to go beyond the labor bureaucrats. The workers will no longer want to listen to them any more. And the opportunity exists for working-class militants to form a party

that will fight in a revolutionary way for a workers government. That is, a party based not on reform, not on social democracy (unlike the workers parties that have been formed here in France and in Britain), that is, a party that is pro-strike, pro-working-class, a party that is for the overturn of capitalism and the establishment of a workers government.

This is the type of workers party that we talk about, and we raise this concretely around issues like the smashing of anti-strike laws, establishing strike committees—every opportunity, in other words, to raise a strategy of workers revolution, which emerges concretely in every sharp working-class struggle.

Briefly, one more example. In order for the Transport Workers Union to win in New York City, we have to strike directly against a Municipal Assistance Corporation which is made up of some of the most powerful banks and trusts in the world. In order to win such a strike, the most effective strategy is to demand the expropriation of these banks, for free subways that are clean, decent and nice to ride on—an issue which in New York City would mobilize many millions of workers. In other words, it is necessary to carry out a **political** fight that would galvanize the workforce of the city. And that fight must end in the workers either attaining a sense of power through winning the strike, and a sense for a need for a political organization to express that power, or it will end in the defeat of workers because of being sold out or isolated by the political power of the bourgeois state.

For Revolutionary Integrationism

Summary

This is a very interesting discussion. The question on how black people became integrated into the industrial proletariat is the first one I wanted to deal with. Blacks from the rural American South provided the industrial North with cheap labor. In fact, the fact that blacks are a source of cheap labor is one of the motivating forces for maintaining black oppression. The first mass migration occurred during the labor shortage of the First World War when large numbers of workers from the North were sent here to Europe to fight the imperialist war. The second mass migration occurred during the Second World War where labor shortages again opened up a need for large numbers of industrial workers.

But blacks are also, as I have stated before, used as a political weapon, as a scapegoat to be blamed for the capitalist crisis. When many of the soldiers returned from Europe by 1919 there was massive rioting over jobs in the streets of cities like East St. Louis and Chicago. During these riots, black workers were attacked on the streets of these cities and intimidated to the point where it was evident that if there was any resistance to their unemployment and their poverty, they were to be the victims of racist terror. A similar event occurred in 1943 in the streets of Detroit against black workers of that city.

So this all goes to show that black people are placed in a strategic position

in the American working class and have a deep interest in revolution in the United States. And black workers have a lot less illusions in the “democratic” character of the American government, in any kind of egalitarian character to bourgeois society, and are much more open to a revolutionary strategy. But this of course doesn’t mean that under conditions of despair that blacks will not turn to reactionary politics. During the period of the 1919 riots, the Ku Klux Klan marched through the city of Washington numbering near the millions. Under these conditions there was a massive “back to Africa” movement, which became popular amongst American blacks. But because black nationalism accepts the racist status quo, blacks can’t fight for their liberation under the politics of nationalism. As a matter of fact, the head of the “back to Africa” movement invited the Ku Klux Klan to speak to one of their conferences.

The same causes for the “back to Africa” movement during the 1920s were the cause for the growth of black nationalism after the civil rights movement. It was frustration with the limitations and the apparent impotence of Martin Luther King’s strategy and the policy of passive resistance that won masses of black people over to black separatism. The thing that rang the toll of the end of the civil rights movement was a number of black riots which occurred in the mid-1960s. That is, blacks in the mass would no longer accept limitations of passive resistance and continually being the victims of racist terror. But all of these riots were viciously suppressed—tanks in one case were rolled down the streets of Detroit—and 50 blacks were killed. The fact of massive disenchantment with the civil rights movement led to the growth of black nationalist organizations.

There were two tendencies amongst the black nationalists: one was for what’s called black capitalism, and the other, represented by the Panthers, was called revolutionary nationalism. Those who were for black capitalism proved so blatantly reactionary that their organizations quickly became ineffective and prominent leaders of this movement found themselves in the Democratic Party. The Black Panthers on the other hand attempted to carry out a revolution based on the unemployed of the ghetto. They armed themselves and they began to march with arms and advocate going up against the state. The consequence was that virtually every Black Panther leader was either jailed, killed or if he managed to survive through the whole procedure of bourgeois repression wound up either an evangelist or a member of the Democratic Party. The best expression of the black nationalists was those nationalists who attempted to win over the workers in Detroit. But here, although they won tremendous authority from both the black and white workers, their commitment to black nationalism led them to betray the fight for a militant revolutionary workers party. And instead there was a fight in their own organizations which resulted in sections abandoning the working class and seeking to split off black workers from white workers in order to make community work the most important struggle. This flows from the conception that the main division of society for them was race and not class. So, in America, only a strategy of revolutionary integration which unites the black and white working class against all forms of class and race oppression can lead to a workers revolution.

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution

Just one other point to conclude. This point intersects both black nationalism as well as the history of the American Communist Party. A Pan-Africanist by the name of Padmore uses a proof that communist organizations are racist by going back to the Communist Party's activities during the war [WWII] in America. Why they say it's racist is because the Communist Party in the United States under the instructions of Stalin liquidated their exemplary work to fight against racist oppression and fight against the imperialist war, and instead subordinated themselves to the imperialist war and in support of the racist policies in the military and in American society. In fact when a demonstration was called for Washington against racist practices in the army and in American society during the war, the Communist Party campaigned against it.

So it was widely believed among black Communist Party members that the Communist Party had become dominated and controlled by racism. Of course it was *Stalinism* and Stalinist policy that made blacks feel [betrayed by] the Communist Party. And many workers who were told not to strike by the Communist Party felt the same way. For those who point to the American working class as anti-communist, one of the reasons is the activities of the Stalinist Communist Party. It was possible for the McCarthy period right-wingers to throw Communist Party members out of the unions because they mobilized militants who had authority amongst their fellow workers who would say, "Where the hell were you, Communist Party, when we needed you, when we had to go out on strike—you told us not to." And many of the blacks who had experienced the Communist Party's betrayal in the 1930s became Pan-Africanists and anti-communists.

Now what sets the conditions for the class struggle in America right now, as some of the comrades have mentioned, is that American society is no longer the great economic power that it used to be. If there are steak lines in Poland it cannot compare to the cheese lines in America, where hundreds upon hundreds of poor people last winter stood out in the cold for hours to get a chunk of stale cheese. And this is more and more the situation with the masses in America, which still has the image to the rest of the world as rolling in gold. It's no longer the case; the American economy is on a sharp decline and the American government is going towards war.

So it is that the obligation on the part of the American working class must be to stop the United States from going to war, which means to stop the anti-Soviet war drive and to defend the gains of the October Revolution. It is widely understood that this most powerful economy in the world is now going the road of Great Britain. And so too will France and Germany, and so too will Japan, unless the crisis of capitalism is resolved in either of two ways. It will be resolved either in barbarism through nuclear war or it will be resolved by socialism, that is, with the international seizure of power in all countries by the workers of all countries.

Huck Finn in Racist America

Finishing the Civil War

—reprinted from *Young Spartacus* No. 101, Summer 1982

“I was late for class one day. And I walked into a classroom on the second floor of a junior high school building, where there were already three desks thrown out the window, four kids with bloody noses and two with teeth missing. And it was because one of the kids used that word...”

“That word” was “nigger,” [a word printed in *Young Spartacus* not without pain] the single word which encapsulates race relations in America, where tens of thousands of desperately oppressed blacks and Latins face a future of poverty, degradation and hopelessness under capitalism. This story of classroom violence was recounted by a teacher comrade to a meeting of the New York Spartacist League as part of a discussion on the current controversy around Mark Twain’s classic novel, *Huckleberry Finn*.

The discussion was prompted by a series of four articles by liberal columnist Nat Hentoff (*Village Voice*, beginning 4 May). A civil libertarian known for his crusading against censorship, Hentoff has come out in favor of the teaching of *Huckleberry Finn* and against the efforts of black parents and school administrators in several communities to have the book, which uses the word “nigger” some 160 times, removed from junior high school compulsory reading lists.

As Hentoff observes, Twain’s 1884 masterpiece has often been the target of right-wing and religious-fundamentalist censorship for its race-mixing and its indictment of the values of official society. Though granting that the black parents’ objections flow from a different direction, Hentoff believes that the educational value of this anti-racist novel is the paramount concern.

It speaks volumes about capitalist America that this book, a powerful anti-slavery tract, can be turned around and used against black people. Twain, a consistent radical democrat, would surely be appalled to find that a hundred years after *Huckleberry Finn* was published racism in this country remains so pervasive and violent that the book can set off, as it apparently did in Warrington, Pennsylvania, “verbal and physical harassment” of a black eighth-grader by white classmates.

Certainly the book is anti-racist in its central intent, a powerful indictment of a racist society. Liberal columnist Russell Baker (*New York Times*, 14 April) nicely summarized the world that Huck and the runaway slave Jim saw as they traveled the Mississippi on a raft, “a real American landscape swarming with native monsters”:

“The people they encounter are drunkards, murderers, bullies, swindlers, lynchers, thieves, liars, frauds, child abusers, numbskulls, hypocrites, windbags and traders in human flesh. All are white. The one man of honor in this phantasmagoria is black Jim, the runaway

slave. ‘Nigger Jim,’ as Twain called him to emphasize the irony of a society in which the only true gentleman was held beneath contempt.”

We publish elsewhere (see page 26) an extract from *Huckleberry Finn* where the boy Huck makes his decision to stand by the slave Jim, against everything he’s ever been taught. Conventional morality, religion, respect for private property are all allied in the service of human slavery. Huck’s honesty, compassion and loyalty lead him to go against the racist values he’s been taught and believes: “All right then, I’ll go to hell!” Twain himself was a real subversive in his time, who wrote for the masses: “I never cared what became of the cultured classes; they could go to the theater and the opera, they had no use for me and the melodeon.”

The problem with *Huckleberry Finn* is not the text, but what it’s being dropped into—the reality of racist America. To take a bunch of eighth-grade kids and throw in a fine, beautiful book loaded with the word “nigger”—it’s like pulling the pin of a hand grenade and tossing it into the all too common American classroom.

Black professor Allen Ballard, in a letter to the *New York Times* (9 May), recalled how he felt when his predominantly white junior high school class read *Huck Finn* aloud:

“I wanted to sink into my seat. Some of the whites snickered, others giggled. I can recall nothing of the literary merits of this work that you term ‘the greatest of all American novels.’ I only recall the sense of relief I felt when I would flip ahead a few pages and see that the word ‘nigger’ would not be read that hour.”

The word “nigger” is a **program**. It means not only racist terror and lynch mobs but that the victims “deserve it.” It’s fighting words and everyone in this country, black and white, knows it. And it’s not just, as Ballard put it, a “reminder of the degradation visited upon [our] ancestors during slavery,” but an encapsulation of what it means **today** to be black in racist America—the shame, the frustration, the rage, the fear. Learning what “nigger” means is a major event in the life of every black person.

That word has a lot to do with growing up black in a society in which blacks are a desperately oppressed minority and yet so closely integrated with the rest of society, at the bottom, that by and large blacks and whites share some of the same racist values. It’s the internalization that hurts most. Malcolm X in his autobiography says that when whites talked about “niggers” in front of him, “It used to just slip right off my back.” Then one day a teacher brought it all home with a comment about Malcolm’s ambitions: “A lawyer—that’s no realistic goal for a nigger.”

Richard Pryor’s “Sunset Strip” movie offers another insight. Pryor talks about his trip to Africa (he went looking for his “roots,” he says, but there wasn’t

a single Pryor in the phone book). Being someplace where everyone from the wino on the street to the president of the country was black really impressed him. He recalls a friend there asking him, “Hey, you see any niggers here?” and his response, “No. I haven’t seen any in three weeks.” From that point on, he resolved. “I’ll never call another black man nigger.”

What we have in the *Huckleberry Finn* controversy is potentially a question of conflicting democratic rights. On the one hand is the right to read whatever you want. On the other hand is the right not to be called “nigger.” In Warrington, Pennsylvania, in the aftermath of a violent attack on a black student by white classmates, the parents and school administrators arrived at a compromise: *Huckleberry Finn* would not be required reading at the junior high school level, but it would remain in the school libraries and could be taught in high school. This seems to us a reasonable compromise. But not to Mr. Hentoff. For him the racist incident in Warrington represents a professional challenge: “What happened in that eighth grade class is a boon to any reasonably awake teacher. Talk about a book coming alive!” But we don’t live in a controlled laboratory experiment like liberals imagine. The compulsory teaching of a book full of the word “nigger” in the racially charged atmosphere of the school system in a desperately oppressive (and exploitative) America can lead to some “educational” experiences which we intend to eradicate.

Hentoff makes an honest effort to understand why some black parents don’t want *Huckleberry Finn* taught in their children’s classes. The Warrington parents are under no misapprehension that the book is, in the words of one black school administrator in Virginia, “racist trash.” According to Hentoff:

“These parents agreed that Mr. Twain himself was not a racist. Why, *Huckleberry Finn*, they said, is strongly anti-slavery and anti-racist. But the book is too subtle, too difficult, for eighth-graders to understand in terms of Mr. Twain’s intentions. All that the kids, white and black, see is ‘nigger.’”

For Hentoff, the answer lies in learning to “see past” that word. It’s a question of enlightened pedagogy. Take a bunch of kids, a good book, a classroom and a teacher—the anti-racist views of the teacher being simply taken for granted—and what you get is education. Unfortunately, education takes place not in some kind of neutral vacuum, but in a violent, racist society.

We can share Mr. Hentoff’s conviction that failure to read *Huckleberry Finn* weakens a child’s education. And it’s logical for him to feel that even the danger of racial brawls in the schools must not be allowed to interfere with education, because for liberals education is in a fairly simple and linear way the road to progress. Liberals like to believe that knowledge is the way out of the degradation of the ghetto, not just for a “talented tenth” but by the millions. But it’s the hard fact that the illiterate black tenant farmers who migrated to the cities to take jobs in aircraft plants at the beginning of World War II probably got a better education in six months than most black kids do today in six years,

because today's moribund economy has no need for these kids as future skilled workers. Chronic unemployment, "education" in ghetto schools while social services undergo cutback after cutback, poverty and despair, lumpenization and crime—these are the prospects black youth face. Hentoff at bottom looks toward educational reform: he's afraid complacent educators will produce "yet another generation of adults who never learned in school how to think for themselves," as if white racism and black shame were mainly traceable to flaws in the educational process. By extension, then, enlightened teachers ought to produce proud blacks and anti-racist whites. What we need is not "educational reform" but proud, able black communists in the vanguard of smashing racist American capitalism and constructing a new social order of equality and freedom.

There are junior high school classrooms where integrated middle-class honor students can have positively uplifting experiences. These are Mr. Hentoff's model. There are also cop-occupied inner-city hellholes where students and teachers alike are grateful to get home in one piece. At the Spartacist League discussion in New York, comrades from a wide variety of backgrounds discussed their experiences in school. One speaker described a segregated white school in the deep South where the school song was Dixie and the school flag was the Confederate flag. "You didn't use that word in the South unless you wanted a fight." Another white comrade described a working-class high school in Los Angeles:

"I come from a family that's split. They're all from the South, some of them are Klansmen and some of them aren't. They come right out of the fundamentalist religion. . . . I was told before I can remember by my mother and my father that I would never use that word or I would be beaten. And what they are is first generation out of the South, they got jobs in the factories. They're not liberals at all; they supported Reagan. But they know what that word means, that this word is a program. . . . There's no such thing in this country as racial equality but there is a status quo. And one of the parts of this status quo is that you do not use that word. And for example when you're in a factory and somebody starts using that word you call them on it, because those are fighting words and they have to be fought out right there." Fifteen percent of my school went on to college, at the most. And it would be unheard of that the students in their majority would want to read a book. And they wouldn't read *Huck Finn*. They would see one word."

What was most striking in the discussion was that for so many comrades, the formative political experience of childhood was a turbulent encounter with racism, and generally centered on the word "nigger." The race question is not just one more democratic issue, but the key to the American socialist revolution.

"What we need," observed one speaker, "is Civil War part two." The American Civil War liquidated slavery, but a great powerful bourgeoisie, not the working people, were the victors. Therefore, in democratic terms, the victory that was won in that war is partial. One hundred years later, blacks are both socially

segregated and economically integrated into white society at the bottom. Only proletarian socialist revolution can bring real equality for black people (and simple decency suggests a bit **more** than that). Uncompromising struggle for the democratic rights of blacks and other minorities is key to the forging of an integrated revolutionary workers party whose victory will destroy the racism which is rooted in every capitalist institution, from the military and the courts to the schools.

Mr. Hentoff, for all his sensitivity, remains genuinely perplexed that black parents should be so touchy about the word “nigger.” Rhetorically he inquires, “Is this [black] child so fragile, so without intellectual and emotional resources, that a book can lay him low?” In other words, why are these black parents so defensive? Well, Mr. Hentoff, “nigger” isn’t just a question of a book. The potential for racial violence and murder lurks not very deep beneath the surface of this country. Malcolm X began his autobiography with this story:

“When my mother was pregnant with me, she told me later, a party of hooded Ku Klux Klan riders galloped up to our home in Omaha, Nebraska, one night. Surrounding the house, brandishing their shotguns and rifles, they shouted for my father to come out. My mother went to the front door...”

Defensive? Well, as Godfrey Cambridge once observed, paranoia is an occupational disease of black people.

And it isn’t just ancient history! This country is seething with race hate right now. Goaded by economic contraction, Reagan reaction is on the rise among whites and so is the fascistic “fringe” of that reactionary wave. Five red anti-racist activists were gunned down in broad daylight by the fascists in Greensboro, North Carolina, and in several states outside the South fascist candidates have polled hundreds of thousands of votes. In the heart of the industrial Midwest, labor mobilization to stop the race-terrorists has become a life-or-death question.

It’s an article of faith for liberals that the bad old days described by Malcolm X are gone and will never come back. But the civil rights veneer established under the pressure of liberal-led, mass-based struggles is skin-deep. Lenny Bruce captured the depth of bigotry in this country when he said that when Lyndon Johnson took over the presidency they wouldn’t let him talk for the first six months—it took him that long to learn how to say “Nee-Grow.” Jim Crow is not dead—look at what’s happened to busing over the past few years.

Education’s a good thing when you can get it, but racism isn’t just academic. *Huckleberry Finn* is a wonderful book. Well, “Night and Fog” is a powerful anti-Nazi documentary about the concentration camps. But only sadists would suggest making it compulsory for the children of Buchenwald survivors to see it.

No matter what “nigger” meant to Huck Finn, who certainly knew no other word for black people, today it means the speaker is not “just” a racist, but one of a hard core that will go down fighting rather than accept a socialist

revolution that will free black people. And Mr. Hentoff better not be fooled—there’s a lot of them out there just like that. The whites in this country, in their large majority, are pervasively, deeply racist. Their historically ingrained racist attitudes can be overcome, not by abstract pedagogy, but in action—in strike situations where black and white unity against the boss is visibly the only way to win; in revolutionary struggles to smash the bosses’ government. Black liberation through socialist revolution!

Mark Twain Against Slavery

from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

—reprinted from *Young Spartacus* No. 101, Summer 1982

I went to the raft, and set down in the wigwam to think. But I couldn’t come to nothing. I thought till I wore my head sore, but I couldn’t see no way out of the trouble. After all this long journey, and after all we’d done for them scoundrels, here was it all come to nothing, everything all busted up and ruined, because they could have the heart to serve Jim such a trick as that, and make him a slave again all his life, and amongst strangers, too, for forty dirty dollars.

Once I said to myself it would be a thousand times better for Jim to be a slave at home where his family was, as long as he’d **got** to be a slave, and so I’d better write a letter to Tom Sawyer, and tell him to tell Miss Watson where he was. But I soon give up that notion, for she’d be mad and disgusted at his rascality and ungratefulness for leaving her, and so she’d sell him straight down the river again: and if she didn’t, everybody naturally despises an ungrateful nigger, and they’d make Jim feel it all the time, and so he’d feel ornery and disgraced. And then think of **me**! It would get all around that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was to ever see anybody from that town again, I’d be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame. That’s just the way: a person does a low-down thing, and then he don’t want to take no consequences of it. Thinks as long as he can hide it, it ain’t no disgrace. That was my fix exactly. The more I studied about this, the more my conscience went to grinding me, and the more wicked and low-down and ornery I got to feeling. And at last, when it hit me all of a sudden that here was the plain hand of Providence slapping me in the face and letting me know my wickedness was being watched all the time from up there in heaven, whilst I was stealing a poor old woman’s nigger that hadn’t ever done me no harm, and now was showing me there’s One that’s always on the look-out, and ain’t agoing to allow no such miserable doings to go only just so fur and no further, I most dropped in my tracks I was so scared. Well, I tried the best I could to kinder soften it up somehow for myself, by saying I was brung up wicked, and so I warn’t so much to blame; but something inside of me kept saying, “There was the Sunday-school, you could a gone to it; and if you’d a done it they’d a learnt you, there, that people that acts as I’d been acting about that nigger goes to everlasting fire.”

It made me shiver. And I about made up my mind to pray; and see if I couldn't try to quit being the kind of a boy I was, and be better. So I kneeled down. But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and hide it from Him. Nor from **me**, neither. I knowed very well why they wouldn't come. It was because my heart warn't right; it was because I warn't square; it was because I was playing double. I was letting **on** to give up sin, but away inside of me I was holding on to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my mouth **say** I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to that nigger's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed it was a lie—and He knowed it. You can't pray a lie—I found that out.

So I was full of trouble, full as I could be: and didn't know what to do. At last I had an idea: and I says. I'll go and write the letter—and **then** see if I can pray. Why, it was astonishing, the way I felt as light as a feather, right straight off, and my troubles all gone. So I got a piece of paper and a pencil, all glad and excited. I and set down and wrote:

Miss Watson your runaway nigger Jim is down here two mile below
Pikesville and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for
the reward if you send.

HUCK FINN

I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking—thinking how good it was -all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me, all the time, in the day, and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a floating along, talking, and singing, and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping; and see him how glad he was when I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up there where the feud was; and such-like times; and would always call me honey, and pet me, and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we had small-pox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the **only** one he's got now; and then I happened to look around, and see that paper.

It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a trembling, because I'd got to decide, for ever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself:

“All right, then, I'll **go** to hell”—and tore it up.

Detroit is a Labor/Black Town—Fight Klan Terror!

The Klan said they're turning up in Kennedy Square to celebrate their Greensboro, North Carolina killings! We're going to Kennedy Square to oppose Klan terror and murder!

Mayor Coleman Young said we who oppose the Klan have no more rights than the KKK killers, that we should not show our faces on fear of arrest. We say no to Coleman Young . . . and Coleman Young better think about it. The Klan-Nazi race killers must be stopped while we still can.

Make Coleman Young back down. He wasn't elected by Georgia cracker Jimmy Carter but by black votes. This town is filled with hardworking, mainly black auto workers. Every decent person had better have an ironclad right to live here.

America is going down the tubes. Chrysler was bled dry by vampire bosses. Now with mass layoffs they want to set black and white at each others' throats. Whose town is this? Come out—it's us or them! Drive the race killers out of Detroit!

- Down with Klan Terror!
- For the Right of Southern Black Armed Self-Defense!
- For Factory Seizures Against Layoffs!
- Oust the Bosses' Tools in the Labor Movement!
- For Independent Black and Labor Candidates Against the Democratic Party!
- Build a Workers Party!

Rally Be There! : Kennedy Square, Detroit Saturday, November 10, 1:00 pm

Initial List of Endorsers:

- Frank Hicks: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- Edith Fox: UAW Local 3
- Pete Camarata: Teamsters Local 299
- Maryin Martin: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- Charles Dubors: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- Jackie Jordan: Executive Board member CWA Local 4050
- Charles Parker: Teamsters Local 299
- Bill Hampton: brother of murdered Chicago Black Panther leader
- Kenneth Granguist: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- William Graham: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- Robert F Williams: author of *Negroes With Guns*, Association for Human Rights of Lake County
- Patrick Martin: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- Portia Maddox: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge
- Reverend Marjorie Lyda: Lyda/Hunt Institute
- Matt Prince: UAW Local 600, Ford Rouge

- Black Student Union, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Herb Boyd: Instructor at the Center for Creative Studies, Detroit
- Pat Quintan: Teamsters Local 247
- Reverend Tom Tinsley: St Paul United Methodist Church, Detroit
- Mary Anne Courtrey: co-founder. Women's Justice Center, Detroit
- Don Alexander Detroit Executive Committee, Spartacist League
- Topaz Dubois. National Committee, Spartacus Youth League
- Norman Kozinski UAW Local 235
- Malek Towgi: anti-shahm anti-Khomein fighter from Baluchistan. Teaching Assistant, Michigan State University

For More Information: 868-9095

1,200 Students Say: Oust *South End* Apologists for Klan/Nazi Terror!

—reprinted from Young Spartacus No. 97, December 1980—January 1981

We reprint below the preamble to a petition circulated at Wayne State University demanding the removal from their posts of those responsible for a *South End* editorial apologizing for the Greensboro Klan/Nazi killers. The accompanying article on page 30, *The South End vs. Wayne State Students*, "tells the story of the students' fight to regain control of their newspaper.

Remove the Apologists for Racist Murder From the *South End*!

An all-white jury acquitted five Klan/Nazi members who shot to death five anti-Klan protesters and supporters of the Communist Workers Party (CWP) in broad daylight, in front of television cameras and scores of spectators in Greensboro, North Carolina. Cold-blooded racist murderers have been given a license to hunt by the November 17 verdict. "It's a victory for white America," gloated Harold Covington, head of the Nazi Party.

For those of us who are the intended victims of Klan/Nazi terror—blacks, trade unionists, Jews, socialists, civil rights activists—the North Carolina acquittals are an outrage, a threat and a clear case of racist injustice.

The *South End* however, in its 25 November editorial by Mike Nuttle, "Leftists Hinder Justice at Greensboro Trial," apologizes for the acquittals and alibis for racist murder. This "journalistic" service to Jim Crow "justice" would be cause for widespread protest action on any campus unfortunate enough to have Nuttle and his ilk making editorial policy for its newspaper. It is particularly worthy of strong action at Wayne State—a school with a black and working-class student population in a predominantly black city.

In order to apologize for what is a racist and rigged verdict, Nuttle's editorial carefully suppresses many of the central facts of the trial. It fails to mention that the KKK/Nazi attack was televised and witnessed by millions of viewers. It omits the fact that the jury selection was by any criteria a sham, excluding black jurors on the grounds of "preconceived prejudices against the Klan" It omits the fact that the FBI gave the decisive testimony supporting defense allegations that the fascists shot in "self-defense." Nor does it report that a "former" FBI informer was in the lead vehicle of the KKK/Nazi caravan.

According to Nuttle, the "question was, merely, who shot first?" The anti-Klan rally took place in the black neighborhood of Morningside Heights. Having learned the precise location of the rally from the Greensboro police, KKK/Nazis drove as far as 100 miles to get there. They did not do this to shoot in "self-defense" The fascists calmly unloaded their semi-automatic rifles from their car trunks and opened fire on the demonstration, slaughtering five protesters. The cops were conspicuously absent. Some of the CWP supporters drew and ineffectually fired pistols, useless against the fascists' rifles. The KKK/Nazis left the scene unscratched. "Who shot first" is not the question. The question is: Why are five Klan/Nazi assassins alive and well and acquitted in North Carolina while five CWP supporters lie in their graves? The answer is racist "justice."

The Greensboro acquittals are hardly a unique instance of racist outrage in United States courts. There's the famous Scottsboro Boys case, nine black youths framed-up for rape in Alabama in 1931 The only known surviving "Scottsboro Boy" was pardoned in the **fall of 1976** after 45 years of unrelenting state persecution. Another landmark of racist "justice" is the "Kissing Case" in which a seven-year-old and a nine-year-old were given 14 and 12 years respectively for "attempted rape" in Monroe, North Carolina in 1959. Their "crime" was having been Kissed by a white playmate. In the 1960s, many Black Panthers never made it to court. The cops simply murdered them, as they did Fred Hampton.

Nuttle perversely accused the CWP of staging its own execution: "Perhaps they needed martyrs for an issue that would rekindle the flickering fire of racial animosity." "Flickering" The newspapers have recounted a few of the more grisly and recent examples of racist terror: the shooting death of a 15-year-old black girl in Youngstown by three white youths; six blacks murdered in Buffalo (two of them with their hearts cut out); four black women wounded by Klansmen in Chattanooga (resulting in the acquittal of two of three Klansmen standing trial). Recently in Detroit, two Klansmen pleaded guilty to plotting the murder of a black man, another to trying to burn down the home of a black couple in the predominantly white suburb of Romulus.

Just as those who deny or try to minimize the reality of the holocaust are rightly taken as Nazi sympathizers despite pious disavowals, so the *South End's* attempt to pass off racist terror as a little "racial animosity" only made worse by those who protested against it, indicts the *South End* as a gross apologist for Klan/Nazi murder.

The targets of Nuttle's editorial are those who protested at Wayne State against the Greensboro verdict and the surviving CWP members. Sounding like J. Edgar Hoover incarnate, Nuttle amalgamates CWP and Wayne State protesters who, he speculates, are engaged in "a cruelly manipulative game whose intentions are to possibly set the scenario for even greater attempts at mass manipulation." He sees no "manipulation" by the state in securing the acquittals of five known murderers. As Nuttle knows, but does not mention, the Wayne State students, faculty and workers who protested the Greensboro verdict were not, as it happens, CWPers. The Wayne professors, the Student-Faculty Council vice president, the former *South End* editor, the Spartacus Youth League, campus and city unionists who protested knew the CWP was shot down in cold blood not just because it was foolishly innocent in baiting the Klan. The CWPers were assassinated because they were active union organizers, avowed "reds" and militant supporters of black rights.—It could have been us—it could have been any anti-racist militant, any radical professor, any black auto worker.

The *South End* editorial might go over in some lily-white bible school in Mississippi, but it won't go over here! There are those who might even argue that apologists for white racism and Klan/Nazi murder have a place in the "academic community," exercising their freedom of speech. This moot point certainly applies to Nuttle & Co.—but they will have to find a platform other than making editorial policy for the official student newspaper at Wayne State.

Nuttle's editorial must not be passed off as an aberration, a horrible "mistake" which will never happen again. Since Nuttle and Burnett assumed their respective posts as editor-in-chief and managing editor, the *South End* has engaged in other racist apologia, heavily laced with red-baiting and slander.

- A Nuttle editorial entitled "Klansman, Nazi make Leftists See Red" appeared in the 30 June *South End*. Nuttle denounces as "violent and disruptive" a protest against the fascists attempt to get a City Council permit to march in Detroit. The editorial attempts to portray leftists as instigators of "race riots."
- A *South End* campaign in June 1980 aided an attempted frame-up of the Spartacus Youth League for an arson at the Student Center Building. A grossly inaccurate front page article and Nuttle's editorial of 23 June implicated the SYL in the arson; the editorial resorted to willful libel, labeling the SYL as "violent, deceptive hypocrites." The *South End* then arrogantly refused to publish a petition protesting this smear campaign signed by more than 80 WSU students, faculty, and other individuals.
- Marie Lazzari, who joined the *South End* editorial staff at the time Burnett and Nuttle took over and has subsequently left, authored a letter to the editor in October 1979 which defended the FBI against self-confessed and/or well documented charges that it engaged in large-scale disruption, infiltration and murder set-ups within the civil rights and black movements.

Once a paper which defended the rights of blacks and labor, the *South End* has

become a nest of apologists for racist murder. The 25 November editorial must be the last such reactionary filth to be inflicted on the Wayne State campus from the pages of our paper!

The South End vs. Wayne State Students

When an all-white jury in Greensboro, North Carolina acquitted five Klan/Nazi murderers November 17, student newspapers nationwide published outraged editorials, anti-Klan cartoons and reports of protests against the racist verdict. But, in the heart of black and working-class Detroit, the official Wayne State University newspaper, the *South End*, saluted the acquittals, apologized for the racist murder and placed the blame on the anti-Klan demonstrators for their own slaughter. Disgusted by this 25 November editorial entitled “Leftists Hinder Justice at Greensboro Trial” by Mike Nuttle, Wayne State students began a fight to regain control over their newspaper and to remove those responsible for the vile apology for Klan/Nazi murder. Many students were fed up with the *South End*’s consistently reactionary editorial policy as well as by the paper’s arrogant refusal to publish letters to the editor for some months.

The WSU Spartacus Youth League (SYL) joined other outraged students to form the Ad Hoc Committee to Oust *South End* Apologists for Klan/Nazi Murder and circulated the petition reprinted above. Over 450 students signed within the first two days of the petition campaign. Many helped circulate it among their friends and in their classes. Some students first read the Nuttle editorial at the Ad Hoc Committee literature table; so revolted were they by its current editorial policy that a section of the student population had simply ignored the paper.

1,200 Say “Oust Burnett/Nuttle”

But this gross apology for racist terror could be neither ignored nor tolerated! The Ad Hoc Committee announced its first public meeting for December 4. On December 3, the *South End* “responded” to the petition by printing “Shove It—SYL!” on its masthead. When a Committee spokesman brought a copy of the petition and an announcement of the public meeting to his office, editor John Burnett crumpled up the material and threw it in her face. The next day, 50 students crowded into the room where the Ad Hoc Committee held its meeting. Representatives of the black fraternity Phi Beta Sigma, the International Committee Against Racism, the SYL and many outraged individual students attended. So did a little pack of *South End* apologists who tried unsuccessfully to defend Nuttle’s editorial: “. . . the *South End* is not ‘pro-Klan’,” photographer Jerry Wildbahn stated, “It [the editorial] was simply an account of the judicial process. . . . The CWP brought it on themselves.” When this defense fell on deaf ears, the *South End* spokesmen tried to red-bait the Ad Hoc Committee as a sinister communist “front.” But the students were having none of it. Over 20 marched over to the *South End* office to again demand publication of the petition.

This time a frantic John Burnett not only threw the printed demand in the trash basket, but **called the cops** to remove the students! The Committee publicized this outrageous act of contempt for student opinion and the number of signatures on the petition swelled to 800 the next day. Even the do-nothing Student Council, which refused to take any action against the *South End* apologists for Klan/Nazi murder, was forced to go on record against Burnett's calling cops against Wayne State students.

The Student Newspaper Publications Board was, if anything, more protective than the Student Council of the Nuttle/ Burnett gang. By the time the Publications Board met, over 1,000 had signed the petition. Support from outside the campus had begun to grow as well. Over 50 signed the petition at a Greensboro conference held December 5-6 on "Government Repression of Human Rights and the Rise of the Klan" or of the Greensboro massacre Nelson Johnson. The largest United Auto Workers region in the country, UAW Region I-A, endorsed. The Detroit chapter of the NAACP endorsed, as well as prominent Detroit attorneys, other unionists and faculty and former *South End* editor Pat Byers. None of this impressed the Student Newspaper Publications Board. Chairman Marc Segal remarked that "If 1,000 students don't like the article, that's tough. If you wish to prove the facts are wrong, you're welcome to file a libel suit."

That night, the nearby University of Michigan's (at Ann Arbor) Student Assembly considered the Committee petition. While refusing to endorse as a body, eight MSA members signed the petition, including President Marc Breakstone. Asked by the Michigan Daily why he had signed, Breakstone, commented, "I know that the editorial policy of the newspaper has been consistently reactionary" and said that he opposed the editor's "policy of not allowing an open forum for the discussion of issues" (Michigan Daily, 11 December).

SE Response: Censor, Red-Bait, Race-Hate

Meanwhile, except for the provocative "Shove It—SYL!" masthead, the South End maintained a stony silence in the face of growing support for the Ad Hoc Committee petition. Burnett could not, however, escape a telephone interview by radio station WXYZ. His "let them eat cake" editorial arrogance was undisguisable:

WXYZ: Do you not have the responsibility of at least printing the letters to the editor?

Burnett: If they're coherent, certainly.

WXYZ: And that's determined by you, sir?

Burnett: Yes, it is. I don't print dogma and that's all they ever give me. And I'll never publish that kind of thing.

WXYZ: Since when do you have the right to censor what people want to have read in their paper?

Burnett: I don't censor. I'm the editor of the *South End*. I determine what goes in the paper. Again . . .

WXYZ: And you don't feel that's dictatorial?

Burnett: No, it's not dictatorial. It's an editorial policy.

We in the SYL have had occasion to fight this "policy" before. The *South End*, under Burnett and Nuttle, engaged in a vicious campaign to aid an attempted frame-up of the SYL for arson last June. Both the grossly inaccurate front page article "Firebug hits student center; Spartacists cry 'frame-up'" and Nuttle's libelous editorial tried to link us with fires set in the Student Center Building at Wayne State (see "Nasty Lies or Murder Set Up?" YSp No. 84, September 1980). The *South End* refused to print a petition signed by over 80 outraged WSU students, professors and workers as well as statements by another 20 protesting their outrageous smear campaign. Then, during the height of the petition campaign—over the December 5-7 weekend—several small fires were set on floors of the Student Center Building. It's a strange "coincidence" indeed that this occurred while the SYL was active in the Ad Hoc Committee to Oust *South End* Apologists for Klan/Nazi Murder!

While refusing to print so much as a word of the Ad Hoc Committee statement, the *South End* did see fit to print a "voluntary" retraction in its 8 December issue of black writer H. Sam Kemp's editorial against police brutality. The editorial, printed last October, is the object of a lawsuit by Detroit cops. Burnett & Co. were eager to make clear that they never tarnished the good name of the Detroit police.

In the last issue of the semester, December 10, the *South End* broke its silence on the campaign. Burnett's editorial was standard *South End* fare for these days—anti-communist rhetoric that J. Edgar Hoover might shrink from using publicly. It contained no mention whatsoever of the content of Nuttle's editorial, nor did it mention Burnett's using the cops against students outraged by the editorial. Burnett simply reiterated his "refusal to publish a peculiar petition demanding my own firing" and referred to the 1,200 signatories of the petition as "a disease [that] has been gestating here at WSU for the last several days." He goes on to raise the spectre of communist influence: "The group behind this Ad Hoc Committee has its own publication, in which they can spew out their dogma and rhetoric to their heart's content. Their stock-in-trade is lies, which they dispense extremely well." Any alleged "lies" dispensed by the Ad Hoc Committee statement are left to the imagination; Burnett answers not one charge against the paper's policy or the Nuttle editorial.

Another member of the Nuttle/Burnett school of gross racist apology published in this same issue an even more sinister and offensive piece. One Steve Gulvezan wrote a "mock" interview with a **white-hooded** "campus murder apologist" which reads in part:

"SE: I find you so disgusting that it turns my stomach just to be

sitting in the same room with you. If it wasn't in the best interests of responsible journalism I would spit in your fa pig face and walk right out. Now, what do you have to say for yourself, you capitalist abomination?

Swine: Well, I...

SE: Don't give me any of your wormlike apologist pseudo-nazi anti-workers excuses, you miserable excuse for a human being. Any true soldier of the revolution can see right through your pitiful disguise and expose a black-hearted enemy of the proletariat!

Swine: I think..."

Ad nauseum. This trash passes for a student newspaper of a largely black and working-class campus! The sort of pro-Klan "humor" in the guise of virulent anti-communism Gulvezan writes would not be found in even the most conservative bourgeois newspapers. Despite the contention by yet another *South End* luminary" that "the majority of Americans not only sympathize with, but actually support actions of these fascist fanatics," (South End, 10 December) the overwhelming majority of working people in this country do not believe that any crime—be it race-terror or union-busting—can be carried out under the banner of anti-communism. But to create the reactionary social climate in which fascist murder is condoned is precisely to what the official student newspaper of Wayne State, through Burnett/Nuttle's editorial policy, has dedicated itself.

Armed with more than 1,200 signatures and the support of prominent Detroit-area academic, black, union and community leaders, the Ad Hoc Committee appeared before the December 12 meeting of the WSU Board of Governors. The Board of Governors also received letters protesting the *South End* editorial policy and endorsing the Ad Hoc Committee from Robert Katz, Civil Rights Commission of the Detroit Bar Association; City Councilman Herbert F. McFadden; Shelton Tappes, former International Exec Board member, UAW; and a telegram from state senator Jackie Vaughn III. In addition to supporters of the Ad Hoc Committee, reporters from several radio stations, four television stations, the *Detroit Free Press* and *Detroit News*, the Student Council president and vice-president, Publications Board members and a delegation from the *South End* were on hand for the meeting.

Ad Hoc Committee spokesman Gloria Howse delivered the speech, reprinted on page 34, demanding the Board take immediate action to remove Nuttle, Burnett and all those responsible for the 25 November editorial. Howse also pointed out that real authority for the editorial policy of the *South End* rests with the Board of Governors. On behalf of the outraged students and community, she asked that the Board "not pass the buck."

But pass the buck they did. Board member Einheuser responded in a prepared statement:

"...this Board could never adopt a policy that it advocated the

control or the interference of the product of any of those journals or publications . . . What we are being asked to do here this morning is to exercise a broad authority, remove the editor of the *South End* because of disagreements among a group of students of an editorial policy. Taking that action I think would create a very dangerous precedent that could be used by future Boards to remove future editors with any disagreement of an editorial policy.

“We will not take the action that is requested this morning. We suggest that the Committee return to the Student Newspaper Publications Board and carry on their appeal that way. To do otherwise would simply set an incredibly bad precedent, would strike a blow at both freedom of the press and academic freedom by the exercise of this Board of political power. . . .”

As soon as Einheuser finished, the gavel came down and the meeting was immediately adjourned. Burnett and Nuttle vanished before the press could get to them.

The Board of Governor’s hypocritical invocation of “freedom of the press” and the sanctity of student control of the campus newspaper is simply a poor attempt at explaining away their refusal to take action against Nuttle, Burnett & Co. Neither freedom of the press nor any real student control of the *South End* has existed at Wayne State since 1969 when militant black editor John Watson was removed as editor and publication of the *South End* was suspended by the university president, it was a dirty business, too. During 1968-69, the FBI, as part of its COINTELPRO operation, “sent anonymous letters critical of the WSU newspaper, the *South End*, to officials of the school and state. The bureau reported to Washington later that the letters ‘played a major part in the reducing of the *South End* yearly allotted funds by \$10,000.’” (“FBI Plot: Stir Black Dissension,” *Detroit Free Press*, 29 June 1977).

Following the Watson affair, the Board set up as its “agent” the Student Newspaper Publications Board, which has no real authority. In 1973, the Board of Governors took it upon itself to purge radical editor Gene Cunningham. Approached by the Ad Hoc Committee to exercise its unquestionable authority against those who apologize for fascist terrorists, the Board became suddenly overwhelmed by a commitment to “hands off” the student newspaper. While it had no compunction about suspending publication of the *South End* when its masthead was decorated by black panthers and radical black nationalists controlled the editorial policy, today it waxes eloquent about nonexistent “student control” when racist reactionaries openly **dictate** the paper’s policy. The “precedent” Board member Einheuser was so loathe to set was set eleven years ago—and Nuttle/ Burnett are its result.

Today the *South End* as well as the powerless student bodies set up to oversee its publication are the creatures of the Board of Governors. The **real** precedent the Board was intent on avoiding was the ability of students, faculty and the Detroit

community to affect the editorial policy of the *South End*. The WSU students who have had , enough of bureaucratic red tape, lies and a newspaper which considers itself responsible to none of the student body are more of a threat to the Board of Governors' control than the apologists for fascist murder who currently run the *South End* as their personal property. Perhaps the Board will find it in its interest to quietly, behind closed doors, clean-up what it has created and even momentarily open the pages of the paper to the students, faculty and workers it is there to serve. What is clear, however, is that students must, with the aid of our allies in Detroit's labor movement and black community, regain control of the *South End* in order that it cease to be a mouthpiece for racist apologists, an offense and a threat to every defender of the rights of minorities, unionists and socialists.

Petition the *South End* Refused to Print

To: Student Newspaper Publications Board;
The Student Faculty Council (Publications Committee);
The Wayne State University Board of Governors:

We, the undersigned, demand the South End editor-in-chief John Burnett and managing editor Mike Nuttle as well as all those responsible for the vile apology for racist murder which appeared in the 25 November editorial "Leftists Hinder Justice at Greensboro Trial" be removed immediately. The present editorial policy of the South End as exemplified by Nuttle's deeply reactionary defense of Klan/Nazi murder is an affront to the student body as well as to the black and white working people who constitute the majority of the city of Detroit. That the students at Wayne State reassert control over what is nominally a forum for our diverse opinions and views is long overdue.

Over 1,200 students, faculty and campus workers of the Wayne State University community, as well as concerned activists across the country have endorsed the petition including:

- Region 1-A, UAW
- Detroit NAACP
- Honorable Claudia Morcom
- Senator Jackie Vaughn, III, Michigan Legislature
- Obie Matthews, Coalition of East Side Ministers
- Reverend James Wadsworth, Inter-denominational Ministerial Alliance
- Ron Aronson, Professor Wayne State University, member New American Movement
- Mildred Smith, Past Chairman, University City A Citizens District Council; President, Research Park Non-Profit Housing
- Dan Bremer, Board of Directors, Flint ACLU
- H. Samuel Kemp, Student Publications Board member, Wayne State University
- Reverend Edwin A. Rowe, Director, Wesley Foundation, Wayne State

University

- Effie Ambler, Professor, Wayne State University
- Reverend Dave Kidd, Central Methodist Church
- Kathy Callahan, President AFSCME Local 1640
- Spartacus Youth League
- Chris Alston, Founding member UAW
- Rouge Militant Caucus, UAW Local 600
- Robert Katz, Chairman, Civil Rights Committee, Detroit Bar Association
- Willie Jenkins, Laborers Local 334
- Brian Taylor, Former South End writer
- Nelson Johnson, Survivor of Greensboro massacre
- Chuck Green, Former Bargaining Committeeman, UAW Region 1-B
- James Lafferty, Attorney
- Nathan Head, WSU institute for Labor and Industrial Relations
- Rohlann Callender, Administrator, University City A District Council
- Ned Smokler, Attorney
- Sheldon Tappes, Former International Executive Board member, UAW
- Jimmie Terrell, District Committeeman, UAW Local 900
- Jack Splane, Urban Alliance
- Wayne State News and Letters
- Bob Fittrakis, Wayne State DSOC
- Harold Stack, WSU Weekend College
- Bev Scott, Attorney
- Hugh Davis, Attorney
- Dave Cohen, WSU Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
- Geri Hill, WSU Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
- George Corsetti, Attorney
- Eric Bockstael, WSU Weekend College
- Gary Benjamin, Attorney
- Mark Magidson, Attorney
- Gene Brooks, WSU Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
- Rudolph Jones, Student representative to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Governors

(Organizational affiliation listed for purposes of identification only)

***South End:* “Leftists hinder justice at Greensboro trial”**

From The *South End*:

"A jury Monday found four Ku Klux Klansmen and two Nazis innocent of murder and riot in the deaths of five communists at a ‘Death to The Klan’ rally last fall.

The protestors were killed during a confrontation at a march sponsored by the Communists Workers’ Party.

Protestors who survived the shooting labelled the trial a

sham and refused to testify for the prosecution."

This is a partial account of the outcome of the Greensboro trial by Associated Press and United Press International compiled and printed by the Detroit Free Press.

The following is another account of the trial's outcome, as it appeared in a leaflet distributed at a demonstration to "Protest Racist 'Justice' in Greensboro."

"Monday an all-white jury in Greensboro, North Carolina let six Nazi/Klan murderers go free! This amounts to KKK license to kill Blacks, other minorities, unionists and leftists. Meanwhile the victims of last November's Greensboro massacre are still up on charges for 'inciting to riot.' This is justice in Carter's/Reagan's racist America. Come to the demonstration to protest this racial outrage! All individuals who agree with the slogans are urged to participate, bringing their own slogans and banners. The time to act is now! All out!"

"Racist justice?"

How can this trial be labelled "Racist justice" when witnesses against the accused klansmen refused to testify for the prosecution? One can't protest "Racist justice" after hindering the execution of that justice.

One can't label a trial a 'sham' and then retort to the trial's outcome by accusing President Carter and President-Elect Reagan of fostering a "racist America."

One can't attack the judicial system as being unfair to minorities after failing to aid that same system in prosecuting those accused of committing atrocities against minorities.

It reeks of hypocrisy.

It is impossible to say whether or not testimony from members of the Communist Workers' Party would have convicted the klansmen. However, attorneys for the klansmen contended that the klansmen had killed the communists in self-defense because the communists fired first.

Apparently, there was not enough evidence to prove the klansmen wrong.

Also, one must remember that the ideologies of the Ku Klux Klan and the Communist Workers Party were not on trial. If they could be prosecuted for their beliefs they would have been incarcerated already. The question was merely who shot first?

Why would the CWP members refuse to testify and then make a big issue of “Racist Justice?”

One can only speculate.

Perhaps they needed martyrs for an issue that would rekindle the flickering fire of racial animosity.

Perhaps it was a manipulative tactic. Most people already hate the Ku Klux Klan and its racist philosophies. But this may have been a tactic to try to equate the klan with the courts, or at least imply that the courts favor the Klansmen and their racist beliefs. Hence, we arrive at “Carter’s/Reagan’s racist America” as the villains in the flyer distributed to announce the protest of “Racist justice.”

Perhaps it’s a cruelly manipulative game, whose intentions are to possibly set the scenario for even greater attempts at mass manipulation.

One can only speculate when motives are at question. However, one thing is undoubtedly true.

Five people are dead.

But who shot first? And why were they foolish enough to shoot in the first place?

—Mike Nuttle

Statement to the Board of Governors

I speak on behalf of over 1,200 signatories of the petition submitted to you, including the support of the local NAACP chapter and United Auto Workers Region 1-A and State Senator Jackie Vaughn. There is a new addition to our list of supporters which does not appear on that endorser list, Mr. Rudolph Jones, student rep to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Governors. We are compelled to demand that the Wayne State Board of Governors take immediate action to remove from their posts **South End** editor-in-chief John Burnett and managing editor Mike Nuttle and all those responsible for the 25 November editorial “Leftists Hinder Justice at Greensboro Trial.” The editorial authored by Nuttle, is a vile apology for racist murder. Joining the Klan and Nazis, the editorial embraces as “justice” the acquittals of the Klan/Nazi hitmen by an all-white jury. For this criminal terrorist act, the editorial seeks to blame the *victims*, the anti-fascist protesters, five of whom were slain last November 3.

Attempting to create a climate for racist terrorists to act with impunity, the editorial is an offense and a threat to the students and staff of Wayne State and the Detroit black and working-class population. Just as those who deny or try to minimize the reality of the Holocaust are rightly taken as Nazi sympathizers despite pious disavowals, so the *South End*’s attempt to pass off racist terror as

a little “racial animosity” inflamed by those who protest against it cannot be tolerated by defenders of the civil liberties of minorities, unionists or socialists.

The *South End* editorial is uniquely reactionary among campus newspapers. American students are in the main shocked and angered by the North Carolina acquittals and we have with us editorials from campus newspapers around the country which cry out against the racist injustice in Greensboro. As documented in the preamble to our petition, the Nuttle editorial is associated with a long-standing editorial policy of the *South End*. To call that policy insensitive to the rights and needs of black people would be a terrible understatement. In language even J. Edgar Hoover would shrink from using publicly, the *South End* consistently portrays blacks, socialists and unionists as conspirators to “rekindle racial animosity,” foment “racial tensions,” “manipulate” and “deceive.” To add insult to injury, the *South End* has, in an arbitrary and dictatorial fashion, suppressed the views of the student population. Letters from at least 100 groups and individuals protesting the gag rule on letters to the editor have poured into the *South End* in recent months; the students are tired of having our newspaper run as if it were the personal property of Burnett, Nuttle & Co. The recent example of their arrogant disregard for the students the *South End* ostensibly serves was its refusal to print this widely-supported petition. Instead, the *South End* saw fit to print “Shove it—SYL!” on the paper’s masthead, a provocative reference to a socialist youth group which was among the initiators of the petition drive. On December 4, Burnett threw the petitions in the faces of the delegation for the Ad Hoc Committee to Oust *South End* Apologists for Klan/Nazi Murder and called the police to remove the 20 students in that delegation from the *South End*’s offices. The *South End*’s response to us appeared in the last issue of the semester. It includes a “mock” interview with a white-hooded murderer which can only be described as partisan to the Klan in the guise of rabid anti-communism.

We have taken our petition to the relevant student bodies designated by the Board of Governors to oversee publication of the *South End*, the Student-Faculty Council and the Student Newspaper Publications Board. From these bodies, our spokesmen got nothing but bureaucratic and rude treatment. But the fact is that the Board of Governors has ultimate authority here and promulgated the rules for those student bodies, keeping them subordinate and devoid of real authority. We have appended to our statement the charter which spells this out. In 1969, the university president suspended publication of the *South End* and removed editor John Watson for explicitly political reasons. The power of the Board was proven when publication of the *South End* resumed only after the Board of Governors created the Student [Newspaper] Publications Board as its agent to publish the newspaper. It is entirely possible that a majority of the Board is appalled by the editorial end product of 11 years of undemocratic management of the *South End*, exemplified by the Nuttle editorial.

Hence, the petition to you, the Board of Governors, that you not pass the buck, that you remove from their positions of abusive authority the apologists for

racist murder currently running the paper. We petition you to take some step toward restoring the *South End* to the Wayne State students. As we state in our petition, “That the students of Wayne State reassert control over what is nominally a forum for our diverse opinions and views is long overdue.” I’m handing over petitions signed by over 1,200 students to the Board. I urge the Board of Governors to deal with this matter at this meeting and take action immediately. The Committee will be happy to answer any questions that Board members may have.

SL: No To Gun Gontrol!

Feinstein Bans Handguns in S.F.

—reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 309, 9 July 1982

SAN FRANCISCO—Mayor Dianne Feinstein has just signed into law her draconian ban on handgun ownership, demanding gun owners turn in their weapons in 90 days or face up to six months in jail and a \$500 fine. (Of course, the law exempts cops and a few select groups such as store owners and “gun collectors.”) The new law had been approved by the Board of Supervisors despite the protests of hundreds of people from a broad spectrum of the population—white conservatives, the National Rifle Association, the White Panther Party and a group called Gay Guns. So-called “progressive” labor leaders like Charles Lamb of Hotel, Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union Local 2 and the ILWU’s Jimmy Herman joined with the guardians of the bosses’ “law and order,” such as former SF sheriff Richard Hongisto (now an SF supervisor), in supporting the disarming of working people.

But in the first two days of its passage no one had turned in their guns; instead the Police Department reported receiving a lot of calls about qualifying for a permit, and the local DA held off enforcement pending a legal battle. Meanwhile, the ominous anti-gun offensive is spreading: Berkeley passed a similar ban, Oakland is talking about holding hearings, and a statewide November ballot initiative threatens to put a freeze on all handguns with a registration requirement.

Just as the gun control proponents try to appeal to anti-black racism over street crime, many of the anti-gun-control witnesses at a June 10 public hearing in SF tried to make use of racist arguments. All more or less openly agreed that cops should have guns. All except one, that is. Spartacist League spokesman Diana Coleman rejected controls as a threat to minorities in particular, pointing out that “if guns are banned, only the cops and the Klan will have guns.” (To their credit, the Gay Guns’ spokesman was the only other speaker to note that gun control hurts blacks, women and gays.)

While some conservatives and racists hissed and interrupted Coleman’s remarks, she was greeted with considerable applause as she finished. We reprint below her testimony:

My name is Diana Coleman, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Spartacist League. As socialists we oppose Feinstein's gun control measure and all of the other gun control measures being proposed here. If guns are banned, only the cops and the Klan will have guns. Police and fascist violence are on the rise in this country, and gun control would leave blacks and other minority people defenseless in the face of racist terror. Feinstein and the police chief talk about fighting violence, but the best-organized perpetrators of wanton handgun violence are the cops. Yet of course these thugs in blue are deliberately exempt from the liberals' gun control campaign. What about the kind of violence we saw last September at the anti-Duarte El Salvador demonstration when mounted police charged demonstrators in an example of unprovoked police brutality? And more generally, the wholesale murder of the Black Panther Party by cops and the FBI? And the everyday police violence that every black ghetto in this country, from Watts to Miami, has endured? [SF police chief] Murphy and Hongisto want gun control because they want the cops to have the monopoly on guns.

We were shown earlier in the hearings the gun that killed [city supervisor] Harvey Milk, and we were told that this is an argument for gun control. But it isn't. Because Feinstein's ordinance would allow selected individuals to keep their guns. And of course off-duty cops or ex-cops like [Milk's murderer] Dan White would never have trouble getting a permit. The gay Democratic clubs are for gun control—well, maybe if Harvey Milk had had a gun he wouldn't be dead now. And maybe if the old people at the International Hotel had exercised their constitutional right to bear arms, [then SF sheriff] Hongisto would have been a little less free in sledgehammering down their doors.

Then there's the rising tide of fascist violence in this country, and of course they're armed to the teeth. When the Nazis wanted to celebrate Hitler's birthday in San Francisco, the police gave them a permit, and Feinstein and the Board of Supervisors agreed—advising people to ignore this threat. It was only a united front of unions and minority organizations organized by the Spartacist League that stopped the Nazis from preaching and practicing racist terror in this city. Those who rely on the police to protect them from the fascists will soon find out that a goodly number of those who burn the crosses and wear the white hoods at night are wearing blue uniforms during the day. Labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists!

These days the liberal-authoritarian, "we know what's good for you" movement takes in everything from gun control to outlawing smoking and banning pornography. The smugness of the whole thing is repulsive to the average person who has to live in the grubby real world. So the liberals try to make gun control palatable by appealing to everyone's real fears of being mugged, raped or murdered. There's no solution to crime under capitalism, but self-defense is sure a whole lot easier when you've got a gun. Unlike the feminist alternative of karate lessons, the handgun is rightly seen as the Great Equalizer.

The hypocrisy of people like Feinstein is appalling. She's known to have carried a .38; she's got a bodyguard; she's got a private limousine and a chauffeur at taxpayers' expense. And she's telling those of us who have to ride the Muni bus that we shouldn't be allowed to have a gun—or for that matter, unions, decent working conditions or affordable housing. She's a representative of the ruling class of this country, who are determined to make the working class pay for capitalism's crisis. (Shouts of "Out of order!") So while restraints on the fascists are being relaxed, the push is on to disarm the working class, especially blacks, as part of a drive toward a bonapartist state aimed at keeping working people down. We better fight these anti-democratic measures while we can.

Gun control kills. It kills blacks in particular. It kills in the service of a desperate ruling class which long ago became a bar to human progress and will seek to maintain its position through naked state terror. It is this class and its thugs which must be disarmed, through victorious proletarian revolution. No to gun control! For the right of black armed self-defense against racist terror! For labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists! Thank you very much.

NYC Transit Militants Protest Lynch Mob Murder

—reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 312, 3 September 1982

Militants in the NYC Transport Workers Union (TWU) are calling on the union to defend its members after the lynch mob murder of black union brother William Turks in Brooklyn on June 21. The militants have been campaigning in the TWU for an effective union response to the racist assault which killed Turks and injured two other black TWUers. The workers were on their way home from the Coney Island shop when they were set upon by a mob of club-swinging racists on Avenue X in the racially polarized Gravesend area. Immediately following this outrage, black TWU Local 100 member Ed Kartsen and two other TWUers issued a leaflet dated 23 June demanding the union "organize an immediate rally and march of mourning and solidarity—starting right at the Coney Island shop entrance. Every union and black organization in the city should be mobilized."

The 23 June leaflet provoked broad interest among transit workers. TWU head John Lawe was flooded with phone calls from union members urging a TWU demonstration in Brooklyn. It also prompted Arnold Cherry, the TWU's leading black "dissident" and head of the Transit Workers Coalition of bureaucrats, to issue a leaflet of his own a few days later. The undated Cherry leaflet denounced "Extremist groups like the far left Spartacus [sic] League, which ran Karstan [sic] for President of Local 100 in the last election." Cherry claimed the militants were "using the death of a fellow transit worker for their own purposes."

Cherry's own "proposal" was to criticize Lawe for not asking TWU members to take time off work to attend Turks' funeral (which had already been held!)

and to push for attendance at a pro-Democratic Party lobbying “rally for jobs” in Albany called by the state AFL-CIO tops. Key to Cherry’s pitch was the attempt to paint Kartsen as some kind of wild man fanning the flames of racial violence. To do so he had to pass off the Turks murder as little different from garden-variety subway crime.

With Lawe and Cherry united in opposition to union action, it was left to anti-union black demagogues to seek to use the lynch mob killing for their own pro-Democratic ‘Party purposes. First Roy Innis, a black demagogue whose political career was capped by his apologetics for the South Africa/CIA-backed UNITA faction in Angola against the nationalist MPLA rebels, called a demonstration over the Turks killing. Then it was the turn of Rev. Herbert Daughtry, best known for systematically channeling black discontent into anti-Semitic scapegoating in Crown Heights. Both rallies attracted a couple of hundred black participants and a rather larger number of local racist youth who lined the sidewalks shouting racist slurs and threats.

Cherry kept his distance from these rallies, but they fit in with his basic perspective, which he shares with Lawe: to throttle the power of the unions, counseling the workers and oppressed to place their hopes in the election of Democrats. Cherry and Lawe may acquiesce to a few blacks occasionally blowing off steam in Innis/Daughtry-style rallies, but must oppose independent mass mobilization by the working people against the racist system, which could blow the lid off the Democrat/union bureaucrat alliance.

What is needed is a real show of force expressing the TWU’s determination to defend its members against the rising threat of racist and fascist-inspired violence. The TWU, as well as other city unions with a high proportion of minority workers, must take the lead in independently mobilizing the organized strength of the labor movement in defense of the elementary democratic rights of blacks.

The perspective of massive labor/black mobilization against race-terrorism was put forward by Kartsen in his union election platform last fall. Kartsen and TWU brother David Brewer campaigned on an anti-capitalist, anti-racist action program centering on defense of the right to strike (see WV No. 293, 20 November 1981). Earlier, Kartsen had fought for the TWU to shut down the “Train to the Plane” in solidarity with striking air traffic controllers, in hopes of galvanizing similar actions by unions like the Machinists, which stabbed the PATCO strikers in the back by continuing to service the airplanes. It is this kind of concrete action, he argued, which is needed to get the unions off their knees to defeat givebacks and union-busting. But this proposal was torpedoed by Lawe and Cherry, whose disastrous “leadership” of the 1980 transit strike has fostered widespread defeatism among the TWU ranks in the face of the city bosses’ present speed-up/union-busting offensive against the TWU.

We publish below the most recent leaflet issued by Kartsen demanding the TWU answer the Turks murder by a mobilization of integrated union power. The

leaflet signed by Kartsen and two other TWU militants is dated 20 August.

“Labor Has the Power to Stop Racist Terror!”

It’s been two months since the lynch mob murder of TWU brother Willie Turks. Our black union brothers, as well as the black people who live in the encircled projects in Gravesend, live under the threat of continuing racist and anti-labor violence. Brother Turks® murder was no isolated incident. A Jewish TWUer was hit with a baseball bat and blinded in one eye by the racist thugs. The *Amsterdam News* says that at least two of the racist killers are back on the streets. Despite a supposed crackdown by the cops, nothing has changed.

A couple of weeks ago on August 7 a six-year-old black girl had to flee for her life from a knife-wielding racist in Gravesend.

Our union has the power to put a stop to this crap. We could dispatch squads of flatbed trucks with thousands of TWU brothers and sisters prepared to defend our members and smash these updated versions of the Ku Klux Klan southern lynch mobs.

Right after the Turks murder I put out a call for union action to stop these racist attacks. This call has been met warmly by many individual transit workers who realize the deadly seriousness of this issue. One black TWU sister called us to tell us how her son has been followed and harassed on his way to work. The union hall was flooded with phone calls demanding union action.

But the Lawe leadership has done nothing but work to sabotage our call for a TWU mobilization in Gravesend. Martin Bellamy, VP of the motormen’s division, had the nerve to tell me that if I wanted something done about the Turks lynching I should write a letter to Koch. Koch—the one who loves to hate us! John Lawe went so far as to go on the air on a black radio station (WBLS) to promote his opposition to a mobilization of TWU power in Gravesend because it would “disturb our good relations with management.” Lawe starts by giving up the strike weapon “to achieve better relations with management” and now he wants us to surrender to the racist lynch mobs!

Arnold Cherry’s response to this call was to come out with a dirty red-baiting attack claiming that “extremists” are using the Turks murder for their own ends. In his leaflet titled “Turks’ Killing Not Just a Racial Issue” he repeats Lawe’s arguments: “All over the transit system, workers are traveling in fear of life and property”—as if lynch mob terror is no different than your average everyday mugging.

In response to our support to the right of armed self-defense, which is supposed to be guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, Cherry says: “Their call for the use of guns by transit workers must be denounced.” If brother Cherry is against the right of self-defense, what is he for? Answer: he’s for gun control and for more cops, the

corrupt racist brutal thugs whose job is to protect the property of the bosses, and never mind the lives of transit workers. Cherry's red-baiting attack against the mobilization of TWU power goes together with his support to Democratic Party politician [Frank] Barbaro. He has to be against the independent mobilization of labor's power so he can present his politician friends as the only alternative for workers fed up with Reaganism.

Cherry claims reds are trying to use transit workers—while he hustles TWU votes for the Democratic Party! The Democratic Party is in the business of cynically using workers and minorities to get into office. Once elected, they support the interests of the capitalist class against workers and minorities. Ed Koch, that TWU-hating racist, is a member of the same party Cherry wants us to vote for. Koch started off just like Barbaro—a liberal Democrat. He campaigned for workers' votes, and once elected went on a campaign to smash the workers' organizations (our unions) for the Big MAC bankers. Jimmy Carter's Democrats paved the way for Reagan by demoralizing and infuriating the working people. Under the Democrats, the government broke strikes and started the war build-up that Reagan continues. It was under the Democrats that even the most minimal democratic gains won by the mass civil rights movement were taken back in the streets.

The black Democrats under the leadership of people like [Black United Front leader Herbert] Daughtry and [CORE head Roy] Innis cynically used the blacks down in Gravesend to stage a march into the racist stronghold in a call for police protection. Those marches were a display of weakness and isolation which will provoke more racist violence. Then the Democrats went home and left the Gravesend blacks to face the inflamed racist thugs and the racist cops.

A mobilization of integrated union power in Gravesend would expose impotent Democratic Party tactics like those marches. It could show a way forward for the oppressed working masses all over the city—the unions, not the Democratic fakers, as the real champions of the working people and minorities. No wonder the political agents of the Democrats in our union like Lawe and Cherry oppose such a mobilization!

What reared its head in Gravesend was not simply ethnic street gangs but the potential recruits for fascism. The KKK has been reported leafleting in the area. The fascists grow in times of massive economic hardship and social chaos. Their program is union-busting and genocide. The working class must nip these racist killers in the bud!

And the labor movement has the power to do it. The Spartacist League, the group that Cherry attacks in his leaflet, organized a militant mobilization of 3,000 people in Chicago against a provocation by the Nazis. I supported and participated in that important demonstration, along with many other unionists, on June 27th. But think what 33,000 TWU members, taking the lead to mobilize the workers and minorities of this city, could do in Gravesend!

Supporters of the Communist Party call on the capitalist government to “ban”

the fascists. And the Socialist Workers Party thinks genocide is debatable. SWP supporter Mark Friedman, now a TWUer here, debated a Klansman on TV in San Diego! Anybody who thinks they can debate the fascists had better expect that while you're debating one, another one is putting a bomb in your car. The fascists are not interested in debating "ideas"—they are terrorists organized for murderous action against blacks and other minorities!

The fascist thugs are emboldened in Reagan's America. They have polled tens of thousands of votes in several communities, and they are growing. The labor movement better get itself in gear to protect ourselves against their racist terrorism.

A lot of working people are pretty demoralized by the no-struggle "strategy" of the American union "leaders." The will to fight back is there but it's held down by union "leaders" who want us to believe the Democrats are some kind of "answer." The biggest and most racially integrated labor demonstration in U.S. history took place last September 19 in Washington. Half a million unionists came out to show their opposition to Reagan. The size and militancy of that demonstration surprised and scared the AFL-CIO brass. They're scared to fight the givebacks and cutbacks, scared to fight Reagan; they tell us nothing can be done except wait for election day and vote Democratic. But we don't want Jimmy Carter back! We need to bring Reagan down in the fight for a class-struggle workers party fighting for a workers government. We need to mobilize our real strength as unionists and our real allies, the working people and all the oppressed, to smash racist terrorism. We don't need more petitions to Koch and more begging marches in Albany, we need a fighting labor movement with an anti-capitalist perspective.

—Ed Kartsen

Endorsers: David Brewer, Keith Anwar

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