

Black History and the Class Struggle No. 6



TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE AND THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION

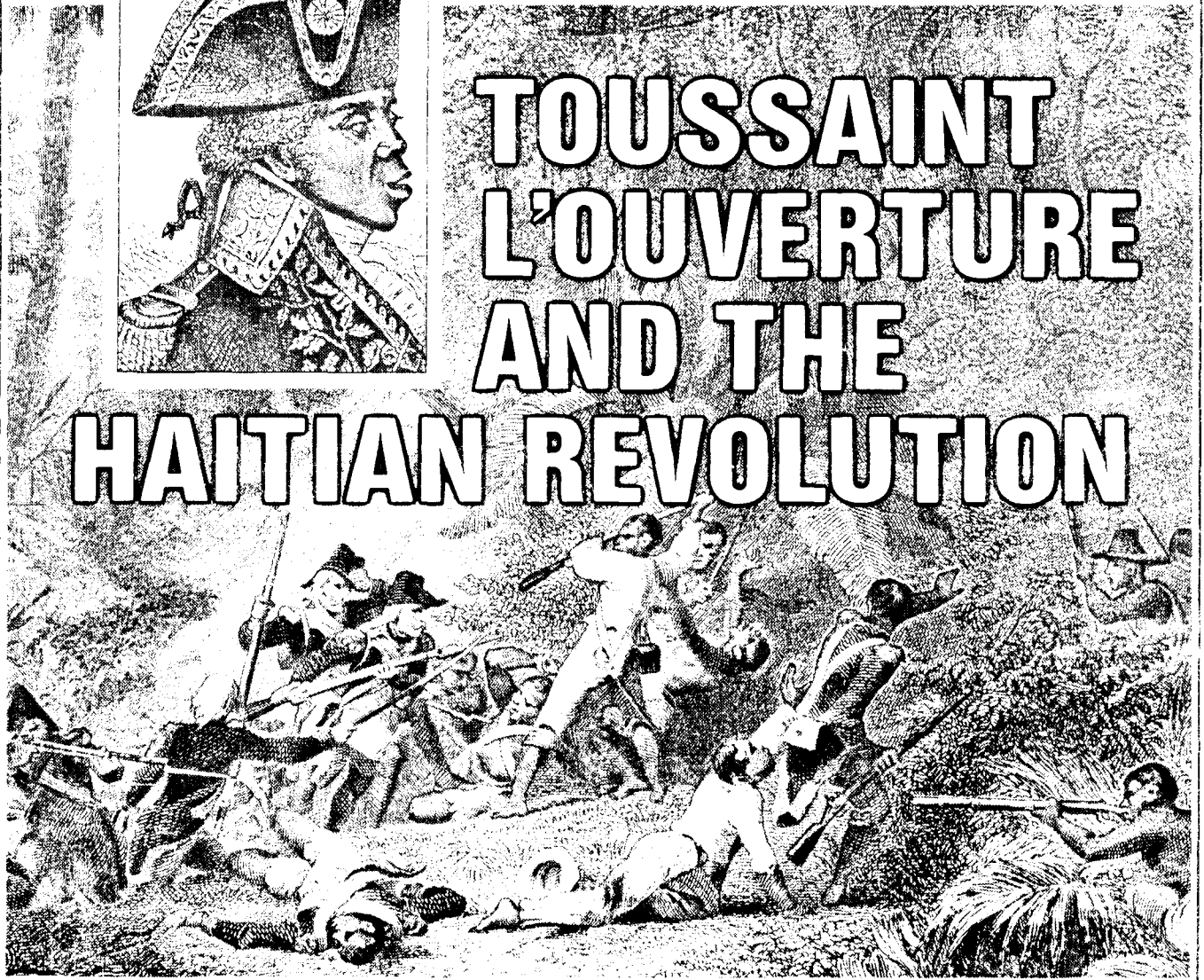


Table of Contents

Introduction 2

—Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
Nos. 446 and 447, 12 February and
26 February 1988

Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution 4

Atlanta: 3,000 Turn Out Against KKK 14

—Adapted from *Class-Struggle Defense*
Notes No. 9, November 1988

Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Stop the KKK 15

"Partisan on the Side of the Working Class" 19

Fight for a Workers' America! 21

Message to the
November 5 Mobilization

Mumia Abu-Jamal Speaks from Death Row 22

Excerpt from
The Autobiography of Malcolm X
Nightmare of KKK Terror.. 24

—Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
No. 464, 4 November 1988

Black Self-Defense in
Lancaster County

Battle of Christiana—A Blow Against Slavery 25

—Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
No. 463, 21 October 1988

Democrats, Republicans Wage
War on the Poor

Genocide U.S.A. 28

Introduction

In honor of Black History Month 1989, we are pleased to introduce Number 6 of the *Black History and the Class Struggle* pamphlet series published by the Spartacist League. Our featured historical presentation is "Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution." In the wake of the French Revolution for "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" two centuries ago, and under the leadership of the "black Jacobin," Toussaint L'Ouverture, the black slaves of Saint-Domingue through revolutionary struggle wrested their freedom from a vacillating French bourgeoisie. The victorious Haitian Revolution was a beacon in the fight against slavery and for national independence throughout the nineteenth century. An inspiration to the oppressed, its example was feared by the possessing classes worldwide; indeed it was not until the midst of the American Civil War fifty years later that the U.S. government finally recognized Haiti, the first black republic.

The great American abolitionist, Frederick Douglass, underlined the international significance of the Haitian Revolution:

"When they struck for freedom, they builded better than they knew. Their swords were not drawn and could not be drawn simply for themselves alone. They were linked and interlinked with their race, and striking for their freedom, they struck for the freedom of every black man in the world."

* * *

Much of the other material in this pamphlet concerns an urgent question facing us today: the ominous resurgence of Ku Klux Klan terror as a spearhead of racist violence and many-sided social reaction. The Klan's roots lie deep in the history of this country, in the refusal of the defeated Confederacy after the Civil War to accept black rights supposedly established by the smashing of the Southern slavocracy by the then-progressive Northern bourgeoisie.

The Civil War was a *revolutionary* struggle, whose victory opened a road to the freedom and dignity of all labor. Crucial to winning the war were the 200,000 black soldiers and sailors who fought for the Union. But the ex-slaves, free blacks and white abolitionists who fought in the war were far from the only people who consciously embraced the war's revolutionary character. For example, very large numbers of German-speaking immigrants from the Midwest enlisted on the Union side—

many of them were radicals who had participated in the 1848 Revolution in Germany and had left there after its defeat. Among this layer were some of this country's first Marxists.

The brief period of postwar Reconstruction was the most democratic this country has ever seen, as political rights formerly monopolized in the South by the land-based ruling class were exercised by blacks and poor whites. But as the federal government of the triumphant Northern capitalists increasingly turned its back on the ex-slaves, the inadequate Union occupation forces in the South (black units were demobilized immediately, and the last federal troops were withdrawn as the result of the "Compromise of 1877") and the self-defense efforts of such organizations as the Union Leagues could not withstand the onslaught of terrorist bands who lynched black leaders, terrorized polling stations, burned schoolhouses and drove black families from their homes. These first Klansmen were often unregenerate Confederate units, with or without sheets, still doing the bidding of their officers, the planters' sons, to uphold "white supremacy" by drowning Reconstruction in blood.

The KKK, reborn in Georgia in 1915, came North to terrorize immigrant Catholics as well as blacks and the trade-union movement. The 1920s—a period marked by the triumph of a virulent "red scare," a hardening of the lines of Jim Crow segregation and some heavy defeats for labor struggles—was the Klan's heyday: 40,000 robed and hooded Klansmen paraded in the nation's capital in 1925. This period also witnessed the greatest success for the despairing program of *black separatism*, represented at that time by Marcus Garvey's "Back to Africa" movement, which like other movements of its kind achieved its greatest influence as a comforting illusion of "independence" in times when integrated social struggle seemed impossible. These moods have quickly dissipated whenever prospects opened up for successful class struggle across racial lines.

Today the Klan and Nazis and their rapidly growing "youth movement" of violence-crazed skinhead gangs are again growing bold. They have fed off the overt reactionary climate of the "Reagan years," spurred by social decay and racial fear, emboldened by the passivity of the "leaders" of labor and blacks in the face of union givebacks and civil rights rollbacks. But in major

cities across the country, their efforts to march for genocide have been spiked by militant labor/black mobilizations based on union power and supported by advanced layers of all the intended victims of fascism.

These exemplary victories against the Klan have been organized *against* the opposition of the Democratic Party establishment in each city. And they have dealt a powerful blow to the sectoralist idea (derived from the old New Left and still despairingly accepted by most "radicals") that each oppressed group must win its liberation on its own. On January 21 the fascists' announced target in Atlanta was Martin Luther King Day; in 1980 they targeted Jews with a "celebration of Hitler's birthday" in San Francisco; in 1982 they picked homosexuals at Chicago's Gay Pride Day, while later that year in Washington Spanish-speaking immigrants were their victim of choice. All these provocations were beaten back by powerful united protest initiated by revolutionary leadership based on a Marxist understanding that the multiracial labor movement of this country has the vital interest and the power to stop Klan terror in its tracks.

In the hope that this experience will be of wide interest, pages 15-23 of this pamphlet deal with the labor/black mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee which stopped the Klan from rallying in Philadelphia last November 5. These materials include an introductory article adapted from the PDC's journal *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, along with the speeches at the event by PDC and Spartacist spokesmen. We are pleased to republish also a message to the anti-Klan rally from Mumia Abu-Jamal, the acclaimed black journalist and former Black Panther; now a prisoner of the racist capitalist state, Mumia's voice is raised even from death row in defense of the working people and oppressed. In building the Philadelphia campaign through the pages of the SL's *Workers Vanguard*, we drew on sources from black history; we reprint here an excerpt from Malcolm X's autobiography as well as a historical article from *WV* about the pre-Civil War anti-slavery struggle in Pennsylvania, the once-famous "Battle of Christiana."

* * *

The Philadelphia mobilization was part of a continuing struggle to stop fascist provocations in their tracks. This is underlined by the anti-Klan demonstration just held in Atlanta on January 21, initiated by the PDC. Powerful unions including city workers—along

with groups representing tenants, students, homeless, women's rights, etc.—brought out 3,000 workers and youth against a Klan march through downtown Atlanta: the handful of Klansmen could not even be seen behind the phalanxes of riot cops that escorted them past the defiant mobilization of their intended victims. As we go to press, the capitalist media are on a drive to take back this victory from the working people by portraying as a "riot" what was in fact an indiscriminate *police rampage* when individual blacks spotted in the area after the demonstration were randomly beaten and arrested.

Both Philadelphia, where the mayor along with cops and feds bombed a black neighborhood killing eleven people, and Atlanta, where an invasion by up to 2,000 police escorted seven Klansmen through a city which is two-thirds black, show yet again that those "black faces in high places" can be nothing but pawns and servants of a racist *system* of class oppression. The increased boldness of the fascist "fringe" goes hand in hand with the official racist policies of the state and its bloody crimes like the massacre of Philly MOVE.

Today as black establishment spokesmen celebrate Martin Luther King, what is very clear is how cruelly the hopes of his followers for "Freedom Now" have been betrayed. Under the hegemony of the preachers who counseled appeals to the morality of the racist rulers and subordination to the Democratic Party, the civil rights movement which brought out *millions* of people in struggle did succeed in winning federal acquiescence to their courageous actions against official Jim Crow segregation in the South. But with its liberal reform perspective, that movement could do nothing to confront institutionalized racial oppression in the North: the "last hired, first fired" job market, the slumlords, police brutality, etc. In the South, the liberal "New South" veneer remains skin-deep; the persistence of the Klan as an undercurrent of Southern life and the low-wage, anti-union "open shops" are interlinked phenomena which continue to define this region today.

Today, the desperate condition of much of black America cruelly refutes those who once preached that liberation would be won by reliance on the help of so-called "friends" in some section of the government: federal troops vs. local, Democrats vs. Republicans, the Supreme Court as a permanent bastion of liberalism, etc. Today, in order to feed the military budget, cutbacks in social services have slashed

through every useful "war on poverty" social program (school lunches, "Head Start") and vital services like hospitals are disappearing from minority areas; busing was smashed by mobs in the streets of Boston. The black middle class, however conspicuous their consumption, do not constitute "black capitalists"; these "talented tenth" successes have, however, moved away from the inner cities, leaving the ghettos more impoverished than before. "Genocide U.S.A.," which appears as the last article in this pamphlet, centering on the so-called "workfare" program which aims at cutting the last lifeline of black single mothers and their kids, takes a hard look at the conditions presently confronting much of black America.

If the present situation utterly refutes the liberal-reformist lie that permanent gains for the workers and oppressed can be secured by "working within the system," the recent anti-Klan victories discussed in this pamphlet point toward a road forward for the black freedom struggle. The power to defend the ghetto masses lies with the *black proletarians*—a vanguard layer of the multiracial labor movement. The working people built the wealth of this country and it is their labor that keeps it running: Southern black port workers, Northern black transit and sanitation workers—along with their fellow workers and fellow union members who are Italian, Hispanic, Jewish, Irish, Asian, white—have the power to deal decisive blows against the fascists and the capitalist decay which breeds them. Under revolutionary leadership, the working class must wield its power on its own behalf, to smash the fetters of capitalist slavery and build a workers' America, a socialist society where all our children can truly be free at last.

—26 January 1989

Spartacist League Public Offices

— MARXIST LITERATURE —

Bay Area

Thurs.: 5:30-8:00 p.m., Sat.: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor (near 17th Street)
Oakland, California Phone: (415) 839-0851

Chicago

Tues.: 5:00-9:00 p.m., Sat.: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
161 W. Harrison St., 10th Floor
Chicago, Illinois Phone: (312) 663-0715

New York City

Tues.: 6:00-9:00 p.m., Sat.: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
41 Warren St. (one block below
Chambers St. near Church St.)
New York, N.Y. Phone: (212) 267-1025

Birth of the First Black Republic: 1791-1804

Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution



Mary Evans Picture Library

Above: Freed slaves battle French army. Toussaint's army fighting for their freedom and independence defeated the best troops Napoleon and the British could muster.

Haiti today is a desperately poor country beset by neocolonial exploitation and despotism. The Duvaliers, father and son, and their hand-picked successors are only the latest in a line of dictators propped up and frequently installed by Washington. Before that came 20 years of direct occupation by the United States Marines. Yet two centuries ago this land was the richest colony in the world. And in a dozen years of brutal struggle, a black slave revolt won Haiti's freedom in battle against the most powerful colonial empires of the era. The Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804 touched off a wave of slave revolts in the Caribbean and inspired blacks in the American South. Today, as the Haitian masses cry out for revolution to break the chains of imperialist domination and the most literal wage slavery, they will look back to the father of the first black republic, Toussaint L'Ouverture, the man known as *Black Spartacus*.

Toussaint forged an army of black slaves who won freedom for Haiti by defeating the best troops the British and



NY Public Library

Toussaint L'Ouverture

French colonial empires could muster. His regime restored the island's wealth and prosperity after the devastation of war. Toussaint was able to accomplish these remarkable achievements because he brought together the hurricane-like power of slave rebellion with the pro-

gram and ideals of the great bourgeois revolutions. Even if Haiti's independence would ultimately be won only in bitter battle against both the French Republic of Robespierre and the Empire of Napoleon, the French and American Revolutions were the detonators of the Haitian Revolution—from the military experience of mulatto commanders who fought in the French expeditionary force during the American Revolutionary War, to the adoption of the American revolutionary slogan "Live Free or Die," to the driving force of the watchwords "*Liberté, Fraternité, Egalité*."

The Haitian Revolution was a beacon in the fight against slavery and for national independence throughout the 19th century. But by abolishing slavery through a social revolution surging up from the very bottom of society, it

struck fear into the slavemasters and men of property. When the slaves rose up in Saint-Domingue, the French part of the island of Hispaniola, in August 1791, the United States hastened to send arms to put down the uprising. George Washington wrote, "How regrettable to see such a spirit of revolt among the Negroes." In the U.S., the Haitian Revolution inspired slave revolts from Denmark Vesey and Gabriel Prosser to Nat Turner. As the abolitionist fighter Frederick Douglass said, "When they struck for freedom, they builded better than they knew. Their swords were not drawn and could not be drawn simply for themselves alone. They were linked and interlinked with their race, and striking for their freedom, they struck for the freedom of every black man in the world."

The Richest Sugar Colony

At the end of the 18th century, Saint-Domingue was described by the English economist Adam Smith as "the most important of the sugar colonies of the Caribbean." By 1783, trade with Saint-Domingue was more than a third of all French foreign commerce and more than double the value of Britain's trade with all its colonies taken together. Largely due to trade with the newly independent United States, production in Saint-Domingue nearly doubled between 1783 and 1789. By the start of the revolution two years later there were almost 800 sugar plantations, more than 2,000 coffee plantations and 3,000 of indigo. While sugar production in the British West Indies was declining, Saint-Domingue was at the height of its productivity and prosperity. Seeking to defend Britain's mercantile domination

of the Caribbean, William Pitt began to agitate for an end to the slave trade (though not slavery itself) in order to cut off the vital supply of labor to the burgeoning French colony.

In Saint-Domingue, the class and caste divisions of prerevolutionary France overlapped the race/color question. In 1789, this was perhaps the most race-conscious society in the world, legally recognizing 128 "degrees" of blackness (that is, counting all ancestors back seven generations). Broadly, society was divided into three essential strata. At the top were the white planters, economically dependent on the merchants of Bordeaux and Marseille, but, dominating a slave society, ideologically attached to privileges equivalent to those of a feudal aristocracy. At the bottom were the black slaves. In the middle were the mulattos, many of whom were freedmen, small businessmen and tradesmen; a significant number themselves owned slaves and were increasingly wealthy. By 1789 the mulattos owned nearly one-third of the property in Saint-Domingue.

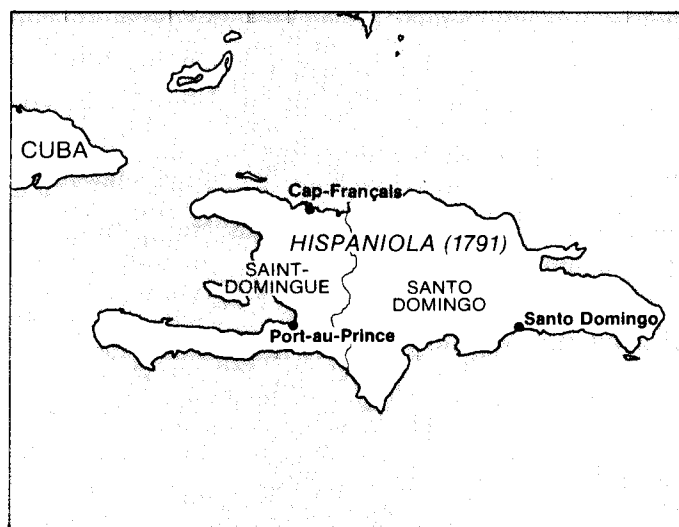
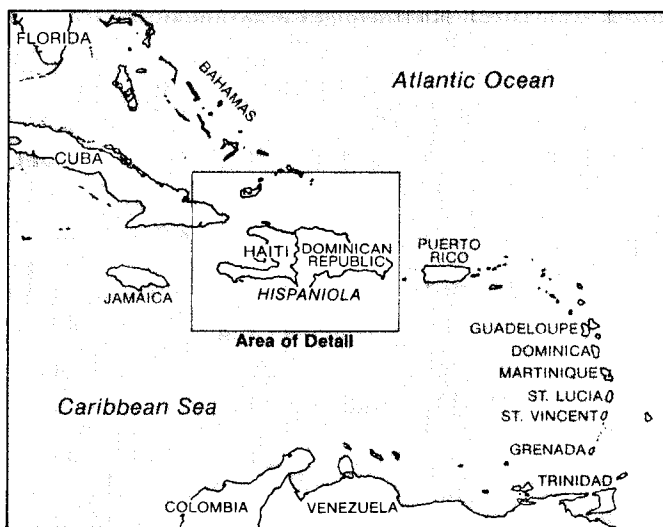
Like the classic petty bourgeoisie, the mulattos played a pivotal role, switching allegiances rapidly depending on the situation. At the outset of the French Revolution, these *gens de couleur* (men of color) were motivated by grievances against the aristocratic plantocracy. According to the *Code Noir* (Black Code) decreed by Louis XIV in 1685, the freedman was to enjoy "the same rights, privileges and immunities of persons born free." But a century later, these rights had been eroded so that "free" mulattos were forbidden to be on the streets after 9 p.m., to sit with whites in a public place, to bear a European name,

or even to wear clothes of European material and fashion. Mulatto women could wear petticoats of cotton but not silk, and petticoat inspectors stood at church doors requiring them to raise their skirts as they entered! The 40,000 whites in Saint-Domingue resorted to such grotesque discrimination to shore up their caste privileges against an almost equal number of mulattos, many of whom were educated in Europe and far wealthier than the poor whites.

When the French Revolution refused to grant them political rights and threatened existing rights because of their color, the mulattos allied with the black slaves. But when the French bourgeoisie sought an alliance with them based on private property (i.e., slavery), they turned and fought the slaves. Thus in Saint-Domingue the questions of color and class were directly related, and the mulattos' changes in position were an immediate reflection of this inter-section. Originally a reflection of the distinction between property owners (mulattos) and slaves, the color hostility took on a life of its own in the course of the war against the French and the civil war which followed independence, laying the basis for much of Haitian politics even up to the present.

But the central preoccupation of French colonial society was to keep down the more than half a million black slaves. And for this purpose they employed extreme violence with barbarous ferocity. Vastey, a former slave who was secretary to the future black "king" Henri Christophe, raged against the crimes perpetrated against the slaves of Saint-Domingue:

"Have they not hung up men with heads downward, drowned them in sacks,



Workers Vanguard Maps

The Caribbean was divided among France, Britain and Spain. Slave revolts occurred nearly everywhere, but were successful only in French Saint-Domingue, renamed Haiti when it won independence in 1804.



Flammarion

Painting by Delacroix (detail): "Liberty leading the masses." French Revolution sparked revolt by mulattos and blacks for freedom and abolition of slavery in the French colonies.

crucified them on planks, buried them alive...lashed them with the lash...lashed them to stakes in the swamp to be devoured by mosquitoes...thrown them into boiling caldrons of cane syrup... put men and women inside barrels studded with spikes and rolled them down mountainsides into the abyss... consigned these miserable blacks to man-eating dogs until the latter, sated by human flesh, left the mangled victims to be finished off with bayonet and [dagger]?"

—cited in Robert and Nancy Heintz, *Written in Blood: The Story of the Haitian People, 1492-1971* (1978)

The French masters were even more brutal than their British counterparts of the time as they were "breaking in" slaves imported from Africa in the murderous work of clearing new lands.

In barely 100 years of slavery in the French colony such extreme repression produced a succession of slave revolts, beginning as early as 1679 with the uprising of Padrejean and recurring throughout the 18th century—in 1724, 1730, 1734, 1740 and the legendary conspiracy of Macandal, who organized slaves in the North to poison their masters and was burned alive at the stake in 1758. In addition, there were bands of escaped slaves, the *marrons*, in the hills. In the last years before the Revolution (1785-1789), as a result of the explosive

economic growth, 150,000 slaves were imported into Saint-Domingue. Unlike in the American South in the 1800s, where most slaves were born in captivity in the U.S., fully 60 percent of all slaves in Saint-Domingue were born in Africa. The Marquis du Rouvray wrote in 1783: "This colony of slaves is like a city under the imminence of attack; we are treading on loaded barrels of gunpowder."

Beginnings of the Haitian Revolution

The French Revolution of 1789 overthrew the monarchy and landed aristocracy and brought the mercantile bourgeoisie to power. It proclaimed the watchwords of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Yet the bourgeois revolutionaries in Paris dragged their feet on equality for freedmen and looked with horror on abolishing slavery in the colonies. This seeming paradox is explained by the fact that the wealth of the leading capitalists of the epoch—the shipbuilders, merchants and slave traders of Bordeaux, Nantes and Marseille—was dependent above all on the enormous profits flowing out of the sugar islands of the Antilles. The Girondins, who took power following

the execution of Louis XVI and the proclamation of the French Republic in 1792, were named after the region around Bordeaux, the Gironde. Even as the Revolution radicalized, it was not until the end of the Jacobin reign in 1794 that they reluctantly abolished slavery, and then only in the face of black revolt and to ward off an English attack on France's most lucrative colony.

The successive stages of the French Revolution were directly reflected in the developing revolution in Saint-Domingue, but through the prism of race/color/class divisions of the plantation society. The first phase of the Haitian Revolution resulted from the debate in the French Constituent Assembly on the question of who should have voting rights. The *Amis des Noirs* (Friends of the Blacks), which opposed the immediate emancipation of the slaves, asked only for the rights of freedmen under Louis XIV's Black Code. But despite their modest demands, the Assembly's resolution of 28 March 1790 did not resolve the rights of mulattos. It decreed that "any adult male person" with certain property qualifications could vote, without specifying that freedmen were "persons." (Slaves were considered "property.") And implementation of the decree was put in the hands of the colonial assembly, which refused to promulgate it. Both the mulattos and the planters were infuriated. The balance of forces would decide.

The freedmen's response came from Vincent Ogé, a mulatto intellectual who had been active in Paris among the *Amis des Noirs*. Disappointed with the decree of March 28, he returned to Saint-Domingue via the United States where he obtained guns and ammunition. He was joined by Jean-Baptiste Chavannes, a professional soldier who had fought with the French in the American war. The mulatto revolt at Cap-Français in October 1790 was quickly crushed; the leaders fled to the Spanish side of the island, but were captured and turned over to the French colonists. Even though they appealed to the common interests of whites and mulattos as slaveowners, Ogé and Chavannes were brutally tortured and executed on the wheel—at the opposite end of the square to that reserved for the execution of whites.

Blood was flowing in the colonies, and the division among the slaveowners threatened to provide an opening for the blacks to rise up. Raymond, leader of the *Amis des Noirs*, pleaded for equality for the mulattos, arguing that

"if nevertheless the blacks want to revolt, they will not be able to, because the persons of color, interested in keeping them in slavery, will unite with the whites and will then constitute a single class." On 15 May 1791 the Constituent Assembly granted the mulattos some political rights, while constitutionally "protecting" slavery. These concessions were the cement that held together the French-mulatto alliance for the next several years. They were aimed at maintaining property rights and the vital economy of Saint-Domingue, all the more urgent in the face of the rising of the Paris masses and attacks on the French Revolution by the European monarchies. But it was already too late. While the Revolution was marking time in the metropole, the blacks were rising in Saint-Domingue.

Planters in the North were in revolt against the decrees of the Paris Assembly. They had arrested a mulatto leader, André Rigaud, a large landowner who had also fought along with the 800 Saint-Domingue "colored" volunteers at the siege of Savannah in the American Revolutionary War. French troops freed Rigaud, and the mulattos prepared to form a federation in the South. But before they could move, a black slave insurrection broke out. The leader was Boukman, a work-gang leader in Limbé, the same place where Macandal had launched his conspiracy. On the night of 14 August 1791, Boukman held the famous ceremony at Bois Cayman where the slaves vowed to revolt. A week later the insurrection was general in the northern plain—the richest and most prosperous area of the country. Some 200 sugar plantations and 600 coffee estates were laid waste and hundreds of whites killed. At this point, it was more an inchoate *jacquerie* (peasant revolt) than a revolution. When they attacked Cap-Français, they were defeated and Boukman killed.

The Rise of Toussaint L'Ouverture

Yet the battle had been joined. It was at this time that Toussaint L'Ouverture threw in his lot with the rebels. Toussaint was, as his best biographer, C.L.R. James, has written, undoubtedly one of the political and military geniuses of the late 18th century. In ten years of warfare, he forged groups of illiterate slaves into a disciplined army which evoked the astonishment of European commanders and defeated both a British expeditionary force and the best troops Napoleon could muster at the height of his power. A British military historian,

Fortescue, has put total British losses at 100,000, including 40,000 dead—more than the total losses of Wellington's army from all causes in the Spanish Peninsular campaign. The French lost over 55,000 soldiers in Saint-Domingue, including veteran troops of Napoleonic victories.

After Boukman's death, Toussaint rose rapidly. A small, frail man with an iron will, Toussaint had led a relatively privileged life under an enlightened master. He was literate and had read widely, including the 1780 treatise on the politics and economics of the Indies by Abbé Raynal, who declared of the fugitive slaves: "Those lightnings announce the thunder. A courageous chief

to be dealt with as such. In order to give himself time and establish a safe retreat, Toussaint formed a temporary alliance with the Spanish, retaining his freedom of movement and command, and the organizational integrity of his forces. Nevertheless, Toussaint was on the verge of failure when Louis XVI was executed in January 1793. The British, seeing an opportunity both to defeat the hated Revolution and regain a monopoly of trade in cotton, indigo, coffee—and slaves!—declared war on France and prepared to seize the French colonies in the Antilles. The threat of invasion of France and the Paris masses' demands to halt the spiraling price of food brought the Jacobins to power.

Leaders of the Haitian Revolution. Boukman led an initial slave revolt in 1791; Chavannes and Ogé were brutally tortured and murdered by the French. Rigaud fought in the American Revolution and was a commander under Toussaint. Dessalines completed the struggle for independence but was assassinated by his own army in 1806, after which Christophe ruled the black north and Rigaud the mulatto south.



Macmillan Company

only is wanted." From Caesar's *Commentaries* he derived valuable military knowledge. He had already gained organizational experience, having risen to the position of steward of livestock, in charge of hundreds of slaves and foremen. With this background, at the age of 45, "Old Toussaint" joined the slave revolt. But with the Constituent Assembly under Girondins in alliance with the mulattos, the former slaves faced the combined forces of the mulattos and the French.

The blacks were considered outlaws,

Still the Revolution refused to come to grips with the question of slavery. But the all-sided civil war in Saint-Domingue forced the issue.

As the Republic was in its birth pangs, Paris had dispatched three commissioners led by the right-wing Jacobin Sonthonax. By the summer of 1793, he had pacified the South by placing the mulatto leader Rigaud in command, and defeated a royalist uprising in the North by forming black regiments with the promise of freedom to all those who fought against their former masters. On



Culver Pictures

Nat Turner's rebellion in 1831, one of many slave revolts that looked to the Haitian Revolution for inspiration.

August 29, faced with a British fleet at sea, a Spanish invasion on land and Cap-Français in ruins, he took the fateful step, abolishing slavery with the proclamation: "The slave-drivers and cannibals are no more. . . . The Republic desires liberty and equality among all men regardless of color; kings are content only amid slaves." Sonthonax acted of his own accord. As late as November 1793, Robespierre attacked the Girondins for wanting to undermine France by plotting "to immediately free and arm all blacks to destroy our colonies."

By happenstance, the very day Sonthonax decreed the liberation of the slaves, Toussaint issued his famous proclamation, declaring:

"Brothers and Friends,
"I am Toussaint L'Ouverture, my name has perhaps become known to you. I have undertaken vengeance. I wish Liberty and Equality to reign over Saint-Domingue. I strive to make them happen. Join with us, brothers, and fight with us in the common cause."

Since Sonthonax' decree had not been ratified by the Convention, Toussaint did not trust it and continued to fight against the mulatto armies under Rigaud and Beauvais. Faced with the British invasion and Toussaint's progress, in February 1794 the Convention finally ratified the abolition of slavery in the colonies. When news of ratification reached Saint-Domingue weeks later, the British were on the verge of successfully occupying the entire island.

Toussaint immediately broke with the Spanish and rallied to the forces of the Republic against the slaveholding British. In a series of lightning campaigns, winning seven victories in as many days, Toussaint's army rapidly reversed the situation, and drove the British onto the defensive.

The Reign of Toussaint

Toussaint L'Ouverture soon became master of the island. The governor was General Laveaux, who after being saved by Toussaint from mulatto rebels at Cap-Français acclaimed his rescuer "that black Spartacus foreseen by Raynal, whose destiny is to avenge the outrages on his race." In France, in the meantime, the Jacobins had been overthrown in the coup of 9 Thermidor (24 July 1794) and the Directory was in power. Encouraged by Thermidor and by appeals from the colonists, the British hung on in isolated outposts for two more years before finally evacuating. The Directory formally approved Toussaint's victories and increasing power. He was made Lieutenant Governor of the colony in April 1796 and commander in chief of the French forces in March 1797. At the same time, the Directory rightly realized that the logical extension of Toussaint's course was independence and, unwilling to accept something akin to a commonwealth status, which Toussaint desired, they began plotting his overthrow.

In 1797 Paris sent a new emissary as Sole Agent to the colony, Hédouville. Hédouville had secret orders to do everything in his power to curb Toussaint's powers and eventually to eliminate him. Hédouville succeeded in poisoning relations between Toussaint and the mulatto leader Rigaud, so that the loose bloc between them became a de facto separation of Saint-Domingue into two entities: Toussaint in the rich plantations of the overwhelmingly black North, and Rigaud in the South, the historical center of mulatto power. When Toussaint defeated the British, he refused to allow Hédouville to accept General Maitland's surrender, accepting it personally instead. His triumphal entry into Port-au-Prince, renamed Port Républicain, as French representatives looked on, signaled his triumph. Yet Hédouville continued his intrigues, attempting to pit Toussaint's nephew, Moïse, against him.

Finally Toussaint reacted, dismissing Hédouville, who fled back to France. His last act was to promote Rigaud to equal rank with Toussaint and to declare him the independent commander in the South. In his official report, Hédouville called on the Directory to "embitter the hate which exists between the Mulattoes and the blacks and to oppose Rigaud to Toussaint." The mulattos were to be the beachhead for the return of French power and, eventually, the restoration of slavery. Toussaint obviously could not tolerate this situation and had to subdue the South. The bloody civil war, pitting blacks against mulattos, lasted about a year and cemented the distrust and even hatred between the mulattos and blacks. When Toussaint sent his lieutenant Dessalines to restore order in the rebellious army, Dessalines unleashed a bloodbath against mulatto officers. In response Toussaint is reported to have said: "I said to prune the tree, not uproot it."

With the South integrated, Toussaint marched on the slaveholding Spanish half of the island (directly contravening the instructions of the French) and took it over in a lightning campaign. On 7 February 1801, he proclaimed in Santo Domingo the liberation of the slaves (Juan Bosch, *De Cristóbal Colón a Fidel Castro: El Caribe, frontera imperial* [1969]). In contrast to Dessalines' later invasion and Solouque's bloody debacle in 1844, Toussaint carefully avoided aggravating racial tensions, appointing a mulatto governor. Ruler of a unified and rich island, Toussaint now faced problems more intractable than those posed by foreign troops. Twelve

years of warfare and civil war had devastated the island's economy. Two-thirds of the whites had left or been killed (though three-quarters of the mulattos remained) and perhaps a third of the black population had perished. Ever since Sonthonax, blacks had said, "*Moin pas esclave, moin pas travaye*" (I'm not a slave, I won't work).

The plantations were in ruin: Toussaint urgently had to salvage them. To restore productivity, he was forced to militarize the entire economy, placing planters and laborers under what amounted to martial law, eventually confining workers to the plantations. Anyone without employment was to be conscripted into the army. Instead of breaking up the large plantations into subsistence plots, he maintained them as the most efficient form of production. At the same time, he banished the whip, that symbol of slavery, and decreed that laborers receive one-quarter of the produce. Realizing that he needed the skills that only the whites and mulattos possessed, Toussaint left them in charge of the plantations. But he made them directly answerable to the black army,

and purchased 30,000 guns from America. He would wave a rifle at public gatherings, shouting to the black laborers: "Here is your freedom!" His general staff was composed almost totally of whites, but his army was led by black generals.

Not unlike Trotsky, who following the Russian October Revolution used tsarist officers in building the Red Army, Toussaint made use of the most talented and capable people he could find. And it worked: in the two years of his administration, Toussaint was well on his way to restoring the economy to its former wealth. There was a noted drop in black-mulatto hostility and a thriving trade with the United States, from which Saint-Domingue imported foodstuffs and arms. But he was faced with an intractable problem: the Haitian economy was based on large-scale plantation cultivation of coffee, sugar, cacao. At that point in history, before the industrial revolution mechanized farm production, the only possible way this production could succeed was with a degree of labor discipline at least roughly equivalent to what had existed

under slavery, whether voluntary or not. Nevertheless, freedom was decisive for the black ex-slaves. As C.L.R. James put it:

"The black labourers were free, and though there might be dissatisfaction with the new régime, as in the Paris of 1800, there was no regret for the old. Where formerly the labourers had worked from dawn until far into the night, now work began at five and ended at five. No employer dared to beat them. Dessalines whipped blacks in his province, and Toussaint threatened to take away his command at the least complaint."

—C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (1963)

Toussaint's use of whites and mulattos in positions of privilege caused wide-scale resentment among the blacks, in particular in the Northern province, governed by Toussaint's nephew Moïse. In September 1801 revolt broke out, in some places under the slogan "Long Live Moïse." Moïse refused to take a clear position, and the revolt was defeated by Toussaint, Christophe and Dessalines. Toussaint had Moïse shot.

Slave Revolts in the Americas

"Do they think that men who have been able to enjoy the blessing of liberty will calmly see it snatched away?... But no, the same hand which has broken our chains will not enslave us anew. France will not revoke her principles....

"But if, to re-establish slavery in Saint-Domingue, this was done, then I declare to you it would be to attempt the impossible: we have known how to face dangers to obtain our liberty, we shall know how to brave death to maintain it."

—Toussaint L'Ouverture,
"Letter to the Directory"
(1796)

In January 1802, a French armada anchored in Samaná Bay on the east coast of Hispaniola. With 20,000 veteran troops and officers, the invasion force was the largest expedition that had ever sailed from France. It was sent, said Napoleon Bonaparte to his foreign minister Talleyrand, "to annihilate the government of the blacks in Saint-Domingue" (Haiti). From the heights overlooking the harbor watched Toussaint L'Ouverture, the ex-slave who led the revolution that broke the chains of slavery, who defeated the British, unified the island and restored its prosper-



Black slaves battle white colonial masters in 1791.

Bibliothèque d'Histoire Coloniale

ity after a devastating war. All that had been won through colossal struggle was now at risk.

Toussaint knew that Napoleon's war fleet had come to re-enslave the blacks,

just as surely as Napoleon could see that Toussaint's policy led inexorably to independence. French admiral Leclerc brought with him a letter promising to respect black freedom... and secret

instructions to restore slavery as soon as Toussaint was eliminated. "Rid us of these gilded Africans," cried out Napoleon, whose wife Josephine was a plantation owner from the Antilles. But the racist ravings of the First Consul of France, and his crack troops could not defeat the revolutionary black army fighting, literally, for "Liberty or Death."

Toussaint L'Ouverture was a man of the French Revolution. While he did not trust Napoleon, at the same time Toussaint could not bring himself to deny his political origins and break sharply from France. Toussaint presided over what was de facto an independent country. He signed treaties with the British and Americans. In May 1801 he promulgated a constitution proclaiming Saint-Domingue an "independent colony of France" and himself governor-general for life. But he did not come to grips with the fact that Thermidor had partially reversed the conquests of the Revolution. So at a crucial moment, he was politically paralyzed.

Napoleon's campaign lasted from February to June 1802. During this time Toussaint's forces bested the French militarily, but his failure to rouse the blacks to all-out resistance, to warn that French victory would bring back the slavemaster's whip, politically disarmed his followers. As his key generals—Christophe, Maurepas and the mulattos Rigaud and Pétion—defected to the French, Toussaint concluded a truce. Shortly afterwards, he walked into an obvious trap and was kidnapped by the French. He was deported to a cold damp mountain cell in the Jura, 6,000 miles away, mistreated and deprived of medical care until he died in April 1803 at the age of 55.

Toussaint: Black Spartacus and Black Jacobin

All historians have asked the same question: given Toussaint's brilliance, his awareness of what Napoleon's expedition had to mean, why did he give up when he could have defeated the French and declared independence? Aimé Césaire, the literary champion of *négritude* and obedient satrap of the French colony of Martinique, speculates that Toussaint's surrender was a "sacrifice," that he would "leave in order to unite" blacks and mulattos against the colonial power. Nevertheless: "The truth is that the defeat of Toussaint was not military in nature but political.... There is a magic word that Toussaint always refused to say: the word *independence*" (Aimé Césaire, *Toussaint Louverture* [1961]).

C.L.R. James writes that Toussaint's "allegiance to the French Revolution and all it opened out for mankind in general and the people of San Domingo in particular... had made him what he was. But this in the end ruined him" (*Black Jacobins* [1938]). James, who was then a Trotskyist but later became a Pan-Africanist, contends that Toussaint alienated the black masses, refusing to take racial feelings sufficiently into account, and that this led to his downfall. He writes: "These anti-white feelings of the blacks were no infringement of liberty and equality, but were in reality the soundest revolutionary policy." What Toussaint rejected was the mass slaughter of whites, carried out later by Dessalines following independence,



Haiti-Progress

Dessalines brought Thermidor to Haitian Revolution while winning final war of independence. Crowned himself Emperor Jacques I in 1804.

which far from being "sound revolutionary policy" led instead to economic devastation.

Both James and Césaire assume that the logical outcome of the Haitian Revolution could only be independence as it ultimately occurred. They project 20th century national liberation struggles back to the dawn of the 19th century, and equate the Haitian black struggle with the North American and Latin American wars of independence. This misses what was fundamental to Toussaint: the connection with the French Revolution, the vanguard of social progress of the epoch, the only capitalist country which (however reluctantly) had decreed the abolition of slavery. The Liberator of Saint-Domingue was

on the cutting edge of the transatlantic bourgeois-democratic social revolution.

There is a direct connection here to Toussaint's attitude toward the former plantation owners. He was motivated not by love toward the Saint-Domingue whites, whose bestial crimes against the slaves produced the black masses' thirst for vengeance. Rather, as James writes, "he was convinced that San Domingo would decay without the benefits of the French connection." While criticizing Toussaint's supposed "unrealistic attitude to the former masters," James is right in recognizing that this sprang "from a recognition that they alone had what San Domingo society needed." Similarly, with the French connection the white officers who made up Toussaint's staff were in the forefront of revolutionary struggle; without it they became at best mercenaries, at worst fifth columnists.

For Toussaint, independence was not a "magic word" but required collaboration with the most socially and economically advanced countries. He recognized intuitively that an isolated Haiti was condemned to sink to a poverty-stricken subsistence level. As Leon Trotsky wrote in "Three Concepts of the Russian Revolution" (1939) referring to peasant revolutions in ancient China, "So long as the revolution maintained its purely peasant character, society did not emerge from these hopeless rotations." In Europe, in contrast, "a peasant uprising proved victorious only to the extent that it managed to establish the position of the city population's revolutionary sector." Haiti without a connection to the vanguard of the bourgeois revolution—France—was a peasant revolt without the city.

The key to understanding Toussaint, as C.L.R. James's title accurately puts it, is that Toussaint was above all a *black Jacobin*:

"What revolutionary France signified was perpetually on his lips, in public statements, in his correspondence, in the spontaneous intimacy of private conversation. It was the highest stage of social existence that he could imagine.... No one else was so conscious of its practical necessity in the social backwardness and primitive conditions of life around him."

Toussaint desperately tried up to the end to influence the course of the French Revolution, linking up with the most advanced elements embodied by the Jacobins. But following the overthrow of the Jacobins on 9 Thermidor (27 July 1794), a political counterrevolution set in which ultimately meant the re-establishment of slavery in the colonies.



John Stockdale, London

Leonard Parkinson (above), leader in 1795 Jamaica Maroon revolt (right), aided by Jacobin commissioners.



J. Bourgoin

The defeat of Toussaint in Saint-Domingue was not due to some "unrealistic attitude" toward whites, but was the direct consequence of the defeat of Robespierre and Saint-Just in Paris.

The triumph of Thermidorean reaction with the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte cut short the international spread of the revolutionary-democratic wave. For blacks in Hispaniola it meant that without an alliance with an advanced country where the industrial revolution was taking hold, like France, an isolated national independence was the only alternative to the reimposition of slavery, as the "party of property" decapitated the Jacobin revolutionaries, white and black.

Dessalines and Thermidor

Following Toussaint's death, Dessalines broke with the French, ripped the white stripe out of the Tricolor and began the struggle for independence. When news of the restoration of slavery in Guadeloupe reached Saint-Domingue in July 1803, the revolt became general. In six months, it was all over. The French withdrew in December, independence was declared on 1 January 1804, and the new state was named Haiti (*Ayiti* is an Arawak Indian word meaning mountains). The annihilation of the Napoleonic armies led immediately to Napoleon's decision to abandon further expansion into the Americas and thus opened the door to the Louisiana Purchase of 1804.

Dessalines fought and won the final

battle for independence. Today the Haitian left uncritically accepts the Duvalierist glorification of Dessalines as "founder of the nation." *But Dessalines succeeded where Toussaint failed precisely because he brought Thermidor to Saint-Domingue.*

While Dessalines' Declaration of Independence speaks eloquently of Freedom, it does not mention Equality or Fraternity. In symbolic imitation of Napoleon, he had himself crowned Emperor Jacques the First in October 1804. As a result of Dessalines' large-scale slaughter of whites (although it pales in comparison with the standard treatment those same whites had routinely inflicted on black slaves) he destroyed the trained cadres crucial to economic progress. For the masses of blacks, he reintroduced whipping in barely disguised form with the *liane* (a lash made up of vines), as a means of ensuring labor discipline.

To his advisers who protested that the masses should be provided with moral education in the spirit of the French Revolution, Dessalines replied: "you are wrong: the laborers can be controlled only by fear of punishment and even death; I shall lead them only by these means; my 'morale' shall be the bayonet."

Within two years, there was a widespread revolt. Dessalines was assassinated by his own army in October 1806 and his body stoned by the crowd as it was dragged through Port-au-Prince. The country split. After 1806 the black

north was ruled by Christophe and the mulatto south first by Rigaud and then Pétion. Christophe instituted an autocratic regime in the north, while in the mulatto south the forms of a republic were maintained. But there the plantations were broken up into small plots and the economy rapidly declined toward bare subsistence level, with the new mulatto bourgeoisie firmly in the saddle. It was not until 1820 that Haiti was reunited under the mulatto Boyer following Christophe's death.

Haiti and Caribbean Slave Revolts

But as the ex-slaves of Saint-Domingue were defeating the colonial armies of Britain and France, they were not alone. The Haitian Revolution sparked slave revolts throughout the Caribbean; more than that, it linked them to international bourgeois-democratic revolution.

From the beginning of the plantation system, slaves had risen up to throw off their chains of servitude. The first black slave uprising in the New World was recorded in 1522, on the island of Hispaniola, when West African Wolofs fled from the sugar estate of Admiral Diego Colón. From then on, slave risings occurred almost yearly during the 16th and 17th centuries on one or another Caribbean island.

The slave uprisings were everywhere viciously repressed. Those who escaped fled into the interior to set up colonies of maroons (*marrons* in French, *cimarro-*

nes in Spanish). Maroons frequently sought to come to terms with the slaveholders, tracking down runaways and aiding in suppressing slave revolts, yet the planters turned on them, finding the existence of communities of free blacks intolerable. However, in the maroon revolts, slaves at most sought to escape the master's whip, never to overthrow the system of slavery.

The Haitian Revolution changed all that, shifting the goal from restoration of primitive communal African social relations to the spread of social revolution. And this was made possible precisely by the combination of the greatest slave revolt of all with the bourgeois revolution in France. As Eugene Genovese has written, "the French Revolution provided the conditions in which a massive revolt in Saint-Domingue could become a revolution in its own right":

"By the end of the eighteenth century, the historical content of the slave revolts shifted decisively from attempts to secure freedom from slavery to attempts to overthrow slavery as a social system. The great black revolution in Saint-Domingue marked the turning point."

—Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the New World* (1979)

Saint-Domingue was no backwater but the world's most lucrative colony, linked to the most dynamic sector of French capitalists. The ex-slaves of Hispaniola did not seek to erect an "oversized maroon colony" but joined with Parisian *sans-culottes* in the vanguard of the bourgeois-democratic rev-

olution. As Genovese notes: "The Haitian Revolution, in contradistinction to one more rising of slaves, would have been unthinkable without the French Revolution." And their fates were necessarily linked.

But before the (failed) Napoleonic invasion of Saint-Domingue, in the heyday of Jacobinism, the struggle for liberty, equality, fraternity and the destruction of slavery spread throughout the Caribbean, irrespective of the colonial master. An American historian has noted:

"... British slaves in most colonies were agitated by the potential of revolutionary unrest elsewhere and in Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Grenada took an important part in actual uprisings, which included radical whites as well as free coloreds, Caribs and maroons."

—Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (1982)

Much of this story turns around the activities of Victor Hugues, a mulatto Jacobin leader dispatched as a Republican commissioner to carry the revolution to the Windward Islands. Hugues came with only 1,500 men, a guillotine to impose revolutionary terror, and above all a printing press to publish the revolutionary decree of 16 Pluviôse of Year II (4 February 1794) abolishing slavery in the colonies. Landing in Guadeloupe, he raised an army of ex-slaves who quickly drove out the British invaders. Soon Hugues was dispatching emissaries throughout the Antilles.

In 1795 revolts broke out in Gre-

nada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica and Jamaica. As a result, the British had to weaken their expeditionary force in Saint-Domingue. The first big rebellion was that led by the mulatto French planter Julien Fédon in Grenada. The mulattos, chafing under British colonial discrimination, sent delegates to Hugues in Guadeloupe who supplied them with arms and ammunition. They gathered an army of several thousand slaves which defeated successive British reinforcements. By the beginning of 1796, Grenada was effectively a black republic with the British hanging on only in the capital of St. George's.

Simultaneously Black Caribs in St. Vincent rose up together with French-speaking mulattos and likewise had bottled the British up in that island's capital. Meanwhile, the largest British Caribbean possession, Jamaica, was racked by the last of several maroon wars. As a result of the revolt in Trelawney Town in July 1795, the British were forced to withdraw to Jamaica troops just dispatched to bolster the expeditionary force in Saint-Domingue being pounded by Toussaint's black army. Even then, it took eight months to force the surrender of the last of the several hundred Jamaican insurgents led by Leonard Parkinson.

The Jacobin commissioners in Guadeloupe had also attempted to spark an uprising in June 1795 in Dominica, but the rebellion was discovered and crushed. Meanwhile, in the colony of Demarara (now Guyana) on the South American coast, slaves and maroons had revolted in 1795, the last year of

Subscribe!



Workers Vanguard

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League (includes English-language *Spartacist*)

- \$7 for 24 issues
- \$2 for 10 introductory issues
- International rates: \$25 airmail/\$7 seamail

Women and Revolution

Journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League

- \$3 for 3 issues
- International rates: \$6 airmail/\$4 seamail

Spartacist (edición en español)

Organo de marxismo revolucionario

- \$2 for 4 issues
- International rates: \$4 airmail/\$2 seamail

Name _____ BH6

Address _____

Apt. # _____ Phone () _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable/mail to:

Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116



Dutch rule. They were put down with difficulty as whites were divided between pro-British conservatives and partisans of the short-lived pro-French Dutch Batavian Republic. The unrest in the Windward Islands was crushed after the arrival in March 1796 of a British expeditionary force of 17,000 men.

The Haitian Revolution and Black Emancipation

Most importantly, as we have seen, the Haitian Revolution transformed struggles for black freedom from isolated, backward-looking slave revolts and linked them with the revolutionary-democratic tide throughout the Americas. Britain's abolition of the slave trade in 1807, while reflecting the commercial interests of the English bourgeoisie whose Caribbean colonies were in decline, was strongly influenced by fear of contagion spreading from Hispaniola. The young black republic was seen as a beacon for independence struggles worldwide: in the 1820s, the Greeks struggling for independence from Turkey appealed to Haiti for aid. Haiti responded by sending the only thing it could: coffee.

The Haitian Revolution also had an impact on the Latin American wars for independence. After Simón Bolívar had suffered a string of defeats in Venezuela, in 1815-16 Haiti twice gave him refuge and provided him with money and arms to return to the mainland to fight. At Haiti's request, the Liberator proclaimed the abolition of slavery in Spanish America. But Bolívar, scion of a landowning family, repaid the aid of the black former slaves by never recognizing Haitian independence and refusing to have Haiti invited to his projected Congress of American States in Panama.

News of the black revolution in Saint-Domingue also spread to the American South. In the wake of the slave insurrection, large numbers of French planters fled to North America, primarily to New Orleans and Charleston, bringing their slaves with them. Toussaint took care to spread the news, publishing official notice in the *Charleston City Gazette* of the decrees issued by his regime after its consolidation.

From the early 1790s on, real or suspected slave revolts were ascribed to the pernicious influence of the French Revolution. Thus a 1793 report in Portsmouth, Virginia notes: "Our town swarms with strange negroes, foreign and domestic. . . . The Household family negroes are trusty and well disposed, but many others did belong to the insurrection in Hispaniola." In 1796 a series of



Library of Congress

During American Civil War, Union soldier reads Emancipation Proclamation to blacks in South.

recurrent fires in Charleston were ascribed to arson by "French negroes" who "certainly intended to make a St. Domingo business of it."

The leaders of American slave conspiracies and revolts all looked to Haiti as an example. The undeclared war between the U.S. and France led Gabriel Prosser to expect French assistance for his aborted revolt in 1800. In Philadelphia in 1804, embattled blacks rallied against a racist mob attack under the shout of "show them a San Domingo." And in the slave revolt in southern Louisiana in 1811, the largest in American history, one leader, Charles Deslondes, was a free mulatto from Saint-Domingue.

In many parts of the American South, free blacks refused to celebrate July 4th, celebrating instead Haitian Independence Day. In 1822, Denmark Vesey, who had visited Haiti, twice wrote to the Haitian president seeking aid for his revolt. His plan was eventually to escape to Haiti after seizing Charleston. Indeed, he originally symbolically scheduled the revolt to begin on Bastille Day in honor of the French Revolution. Following Vesey's revolt, South Carolina outlawed the entry of blacks from the Caribbean and the disembarkation of any black crewman coming from the region.

In 1825, Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri declared, "We receive no mulatto consuls or black ambassadors from [Haiti]. And why? Because the peace of eleven states will not permit the fruits of a successful Negro insurrection to be exhibited among

them" (Nicholas Halasz, *The Rattling Chains* [1966]). The next year, slaves hijacked a ship and attempted to force it to sail to Haiti. Nat Turner, who rose up in southeastern Virginia in 1831, was also inspired by the French Revolution's Declaration of the Rights of Man.

Despite all the corruption and shortcomings, Haiti stood as a beacon to the oppressed of all countries. And its impact was above all to join the fight for black freedom to a broader revolutionary-democratic struggle. The prime example was the American Civil War, with the Emancipation Proclamation which finally declared the abolition of slavery, and the enrollment of 200,000 black troops under the Union banners. Haiti was the only former British or French colony which backed the North in the war, and it was only in the course of this second American revolution that the U.S. finally recognized the black republic.

Frederick Douglass, the great black abolitionist, summed up the impact of the Haitian Revolution in 1893 after spending several years in Port-au-Prince as the U.S. consul:

"We should not forget that the freedom you and I enjoy to-day; that the freedom that eight hundred thousand colored people enjoy in the British West Indies; the freedom that has come to the colored race the world over, is largely due to the brave stand taken by the black sons of Haiti ninety years ago."

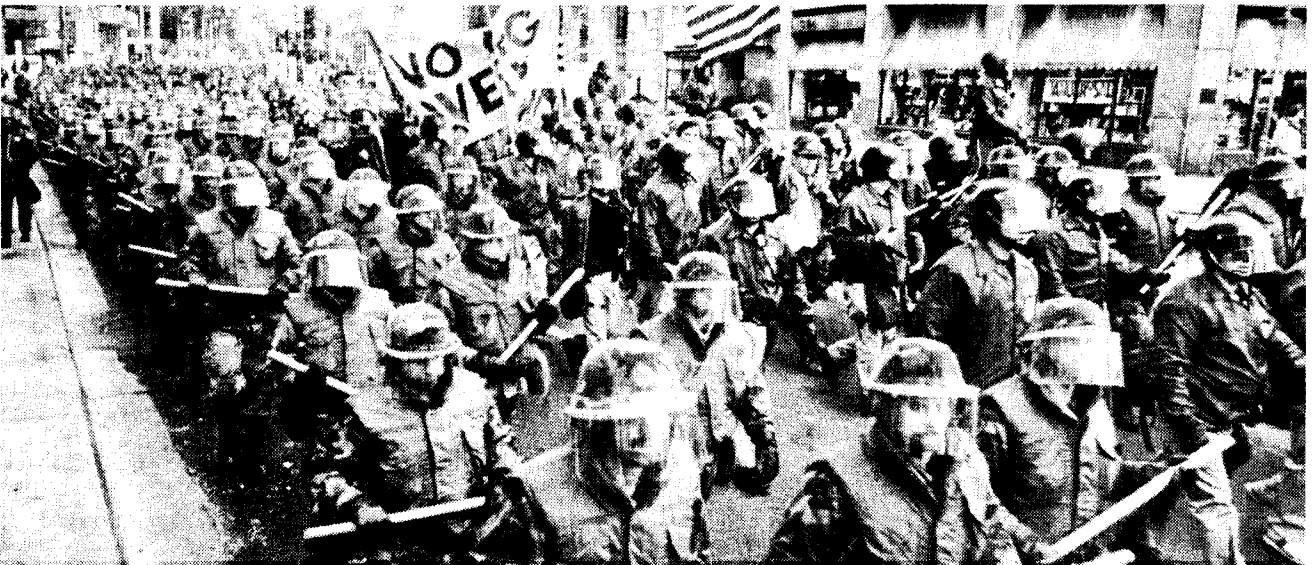
Haiti has "taught the world the danger of slavery and the value of liberty," he went on, and "striking for their freedom, they struck for the freedom of every black man in the world." ■

Atlanta: 3,000 Turn Out Against KKK



Workers Vanguard Photos

Central City Park, Atlanta, January 21—Over 3,000 demonstrators rallied in response to the call by the Partisan Defense Committee for a militant and orderly display of labor/black power against Klan terror; 2,000 cops and troops shielded 7 Klansmen, turning downtown streets into an armed camp.





Greensboro Daily News



Workers Vanguard

Greensboro, North Carolina, November 1979: Nelson Johnson with comrade murdered by KKK/Nazis (left). In Detroit one week later, 500 anti-Klan militants including many black auto workers prevented a Klan "celebration" of the Greensboro Massacre.

AFSCME Local 2586 called on their membership: let the KKK know "how strong we are and we don't want them here."

From the Greensboro Massacre to the Philly Mobilization

The PDC's own direct experience in anti-fascist struggle was much enhanced by the 27 November 1982 anti-Klan demonstration in Washington, D.C. But the earlier initiatives by the Spartacist League against fascists had also involved legal work. It began in Detroit nine years ago in the wake of the Greensboro Massacre: the broad daylight murder of five anti-Klan demonstrators in Greensboro, North Carolina on 3 November 1979 by KKK/Nazi gunmen. The Greensboro martyrs' blood was scarcely dry when the Klan said they were going to "celebrate" the massacre in Detroit. The SL and some militant auto workers said: Detroit is a labor/black city—the Klan must not ride here! The black mayor, Coleman Young, said: the anti-Klan demonstration, like the Klan demonstration, is illegal and all participants may be arrested. We vigorously defended the right of anti-fascists to assemble and brought out 500 militants; the KKK stayed home.

The legal work of the Washington demonstration in 1982—organized in four days and bringing out over 5,000 people, who militantly stopped the KKK in its tracks—was more extensive. Ultimately it involved the preparation and filing of a defamation suit

against the *Washington Times*—we secured a retraction of their false charges of provoking violence against police.

In Philadelphia we found that the anti-fascists were not the only people who had learned a lot from Washington. Every medium-ranking cop official that we dealt with in Philadelphia over four weeks seemed to know all about the events of six years before in Washington. And the Klan and the federal government were a lot cagier this time. When they targeted Washington in 1982, the KKK got itself a permit for a march up Constitution Avenue, and the newspapers were filled with editorials and government statements saying the Klan had a "right" to march, would march, and opposition would not be permitted. The situation was suggestive of deliberate provocation by the Reagan government—ram the Klan down black citizens' throats and let things take their expected course: unorganized, undirected indignation ending in cop rampages and a lot of black kids in jail. Feeding right into such an outcome was a liberal lash-up called the All-Peoples Congress which had issued a leaflet for a counterdemonstration whose thrust was entirely unclear—and, having issued it, the APC appeared to be doing nothing. It was in defense of the working people and ghetto masses of Washington against a potential disaster that the SL along with area unionists initiated the call for a *labor-based* mobilization of anti-Klan power. The PDC is proud to have worked alongside the SL in seeing

that call through to victory on 27 November 1982.

In Philadelphia last November, the KKK with their skinhead buddies in tow and the government as represented especially by the Parks Department seemed again to be working up to a major racist provocation, three days before the presidential election. But from the outset they were also leaving open lines of retreat. KKK Philly führer John Weiss had boasted on radio that fascists from 40 or 50 states were going to converge on Philadelphia. But they stalled on applying for a permit. The feds obligingly kept Independence Mall "reserved" for KKK/Nazi/skinhead terrorists, in case they should apply... and they all waited, hoping for a limp response from the Klan's enemies. But when sections of the combative, integrated Philly union movement embraced the perspective of *stopping the Klan by labor action*, the authorities and fascists had to put the KKK provocation "on hold."

Early on, we said: "We don't care about any promises the Klan makes that they won't show up or they will. They never let a permit stand in the way of a lynch rope" (press release, 24 October 1988). The Klan withdrew its threat to rally for genocide only after it was clear that the momentum for the November 5 Mobilization would not be stopped by anything else. The barrage of violence-baiting of the anti-racist organizers by the mayor and press had some effect on area college campuses but unionists—having more experience with how politicians and press respond to strikes by

hauling the peace-loving qualities of bloodthirsty scabs and cops—were not too impressed. Only slightly more effective was the Central Labor Council's quite illogical charge that the Mobilization would be "bad for Dukakis," which evidently prompted some endorsers to decline to speak at the rally.

We are pleased to reprint the speech to the rally by Charles Brover, PDC co-chairman. Charlie's remarks, which introduce the basic principles on which the PDC stands, focused on the theme that labor and minorities have the power to stop the Klan and to reshape society. Only the advocates of racist murder and genocide, and possibly George Bush, had an interest in seeing the Klan invade Philly. But on another level the Mobilization was "bad for Dukakis" and "bad for Bush"—in giving labor and blacks a taste of their independent strength and underlining that, as comrade Brover stressed, social struggle, unlike the bourgeois electoral shell game, is what's real.

While the Mobilization was centrally based on the power of organized labor, the organizers worked to get the broadest possible support from others willing to work together to stop the Klan. Not all our efforts were successful. Black groups and, especially, gay groups responded—virtually every gay paper we got in touch with agreed readily to publish an announcement for the demonstration, while the black weeklies sympathetically covered the anti-Klan rally. Several elected officials endorsed; those from Philadelphia were invited to speak at the rally but declined, as did Jesse Jackson. Spokesmen for the organized Jewish community expressed more hostility to the Mobilization than to the Klan and told people to stay home, although the New Jewish Agenda did distribute a statement at the rally. On October 13 the PDC's Rachel Wolkstein sent a letter to Communist Party chairman Gus Hall urging the CP to support the united front, but this effort was unavailing, as was a letter to the Socialist Workers Party. The All-Peoples Congress held its own sectarian event on the fringes of the November 5 Mobilization.

Learning from History

The fascists are a violent spearhead of social reaction; in "normal" times the ruling class keeps these terrorists in reserve, but will savagely unleash them against the working people if it feels its system of class rule threatened. Even when the fascists are small, they are poison to integrated struggle. If the power-

ful German workers movement had heeded Leon Trotsky's calls for workers defense guards to smash the fascists before it was too late, there never would have been a Holocaust. We don't aim to repeat that suicidal mistake.

The PDC's role in initiating the demonstration to stop the Klan flows directly from the lessons of history. The PDC traces our heritage directly to the traditions of class-struggle defense embodied in the early years of the International Labor Defense, American affiliate of the International Red Aid during the early years of the Communist International. It is the PDC's aim to recover the basic tradition of non-sectarian defense of the working people, the tradition of "an injury to one is an injury to all," a tradition aban-

doned and besmirched by the Stalinist and social-democratic traitors who still today seek to ally labor to its class enemies at the expense of working-class unity against the rulers. We are based as well on Lenin's understanding that the revolutionary workers vanguard must be a "tribune of the people," active in defense of the rights of national minorities, women and all those oppressed by capitalism. Lenin's Bolsheviks organized defense of Jewish villages from Black Hundred pogroms in tsarist Russia, and the Red Aid carried this tradition forward, for example in its work to raise material support for Polish victims of White terror in the 1920s.

These traditions had to be unearched from under mountains of abuse. Even the idea of a united front—where par-



Smith/Daily News



Workers Vanguard

Philadelphia police forces show their colors. Top left: National Park Service's H. Cawood praises KKK leader John Weiss (in dark glasses) at joint press conference, October 27. At November 5 rally, Mayor Goode's mounted cossacks patrol anti-Klan demonstrators (top right) while cops attempt to escort Nazi skinheads into rally site (below).



Workers Vanguard



Workers Vanguard

Washington, D.C., 27 November 1982: Chanting "We stopped the Klan!" thousands charge up Capitol Hill where Klan march was supposed to begin.

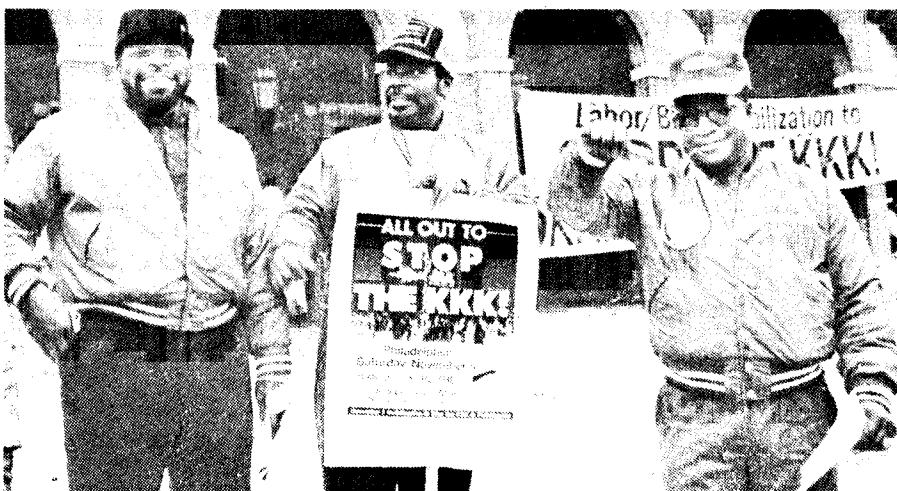
ticipants join in urgent action without becoming responsible for one another's particular views—was corrupted by years of manipulations. In the heyday of Stalinist influence, people would join a committee espousing relief work for Spanish Civil War veterans and find "their" organization campaigning for Henry Wallace or passing resolutions against "Trotskyite wreckers" in the unions. More recently a different perversion, less upsetting to liberals, has become standard: ostensible leftists organize events by issuing appeals which "everybody" supposedly can agree to. An obvious recipe for saying as little as possible as unclearly as possible, it's equally a way opportunists avoid criticizing Democrats or chal-

lenging the liberal line that Klan terror (or the Vietnam War or South African apartheid) is a lamentable error of an otherwise decent and democratic American society.

In contrast, the November 5 campaign was a real united front, in which all supporters of "All Out to Stop the Klan" retained freedom of criticism and the ability to mobilize under their own slogans. Speakers included the SL's Ed Kartsen and spokesmen of several other socialist tendencies; union leaders including Ray Martinez of the PSSU who was wearing a big Dukakis button; a representative of the New Alliance Party who urged support for their candidate Lenora Fulani; Beverly Africa on behalf of MOVE; speakers from gay and

black groups. Nelson Johnson spoke powerfully of the Greensboro Massacre where he was wounded, and of spending that night in a prison cell grieving for his slain comrades. Excerpts from many of the speeches are featured in a special supplement to the Spartacist League's biweekly newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*, which is available on request from the SL or PDC. Brother Johnson and several other speakers, from different points of view, stressed the relationship between the official policies of racism and injustice in American society and the extralegal terror of the KKK and Nazis.

November 5 was a victory against the Klan, but it was only one battle in a war between irreconcilable enemies: the fascists, openly and covertly promoted by the capitalist state, on one side, the workers movement on the other. So long as this rotten racist capitalist system exists, the need will exist for class-struggle defense—for mass anti-fascist actions like November 5 and for non-sectarian solidarity with those victimized for their resistance to oppression: picket-line militants, black activists, etc. We hope that many of those in Philly and elsewhere who embraced the perspective of mobilizing labor/minority power to stop the Klan will come to support the PDC as the vitally necessary defense organization of the working people, on the road to smashing the rule of capital and building a regime of workers power where fascism and racist violence can be ended once and for all. ■



Workers Vanguard

Marshals drawn from endorsing unions ensured the militant, orderly character of the demonstration in Philadelphia.

"Partisan on the Side of the Working Class"

The following are edited excerpts from the speech by Charles Brover, co-chairman of the Partisan Defense Committee, at the November 5 Mobilization to Stop the KKK in Philadelphia.

We had a lot of rain out there today. But we had no white sheets. You may know that the original Klan wore those white sheets because they wanted to claim that they were the ghosts of the Confederate soldiers. Indeed, they wanted to reverse the verdict of the Civil War on slavery. And they're still trying to do it today. They are the ghost of the Confederacy. And you know what we are? We're KKK ghostbusters.

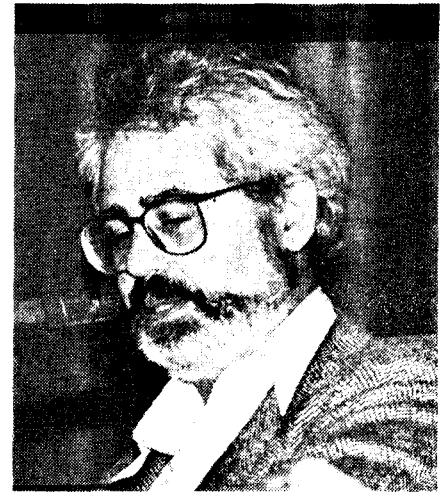
It was said all morning, and it was said in the rain, but it bears repeating: this was a victory. A small one, perhaps. But a real one. And that's what was building up on the streets, in union halls, on the campuses. They saw unions, like AFSCME District 33, and others, and now over 100 locals and officials have endorsed this demonstration nationwide.

So they called it off. And they hoped you wouldn't come. But you came. Coming here today for this demonstration is an act of political importance. You know what a permit means to the KKK. The Klan didn't bother with a permit for race-terror. They didn't apply

for a permit at Greensboro, although the government might have given them one if they had, the way it looked. They merely unloaded their automatic weapons and blasted the lives out of five anti-fascist activists. In Chattanooga, they marched, then took out shotguns and shot four women.

Because you are here, the Klan does not ride in Philadelphia today. We are here because we know that the battle between the fascists and their intended victims means we must be mobilized on the streets. And we are here also to honor the working people who built this country, to honor them in the best way, by taking a real political act in the interest of all working people and minorities.

I keep using the word, "real." It's because I'm so fed up with the phony election politics. This truly is the silliest season of American politics. In only three days, a dwindling number of Americans will trudge out and vote, amid all the talk of bitterness and negativity. And then the following day, you know what happens? They get together, the candidates, smiling, shaking hands; the party leaders, joking in their country clubs, ready to do business as usual, squabbling over the fine points of how best to exploit and oppress working people and minorities



Workers Vanguard

Charlie Brover

at home and abroad. This is politics the way they like it. After the election, neither party feels vanquished, because there hasn't been anything crucial at stake, because both are parties of property.

Now most Americans look at this, and they look at the racist ads, and the so-called great debates. And the majority figures it doesn't much matter. They hear someone say that Michael Dukakis is a flaming red radical, outside the mainstream! (What kind of fish are in that mainstream, anyway?) They hear that Bush wants a kinder, gentler America as he sticks it to black people with a thousand points of pain.

So you can't blame Americans if they think that none of this makes much sense. In fact, many Americans think it isn't real. And they're right. It isn't real. Because what passes for American politics neither influences nor reflects the social reality, the deep and abiding division of classes in this country.

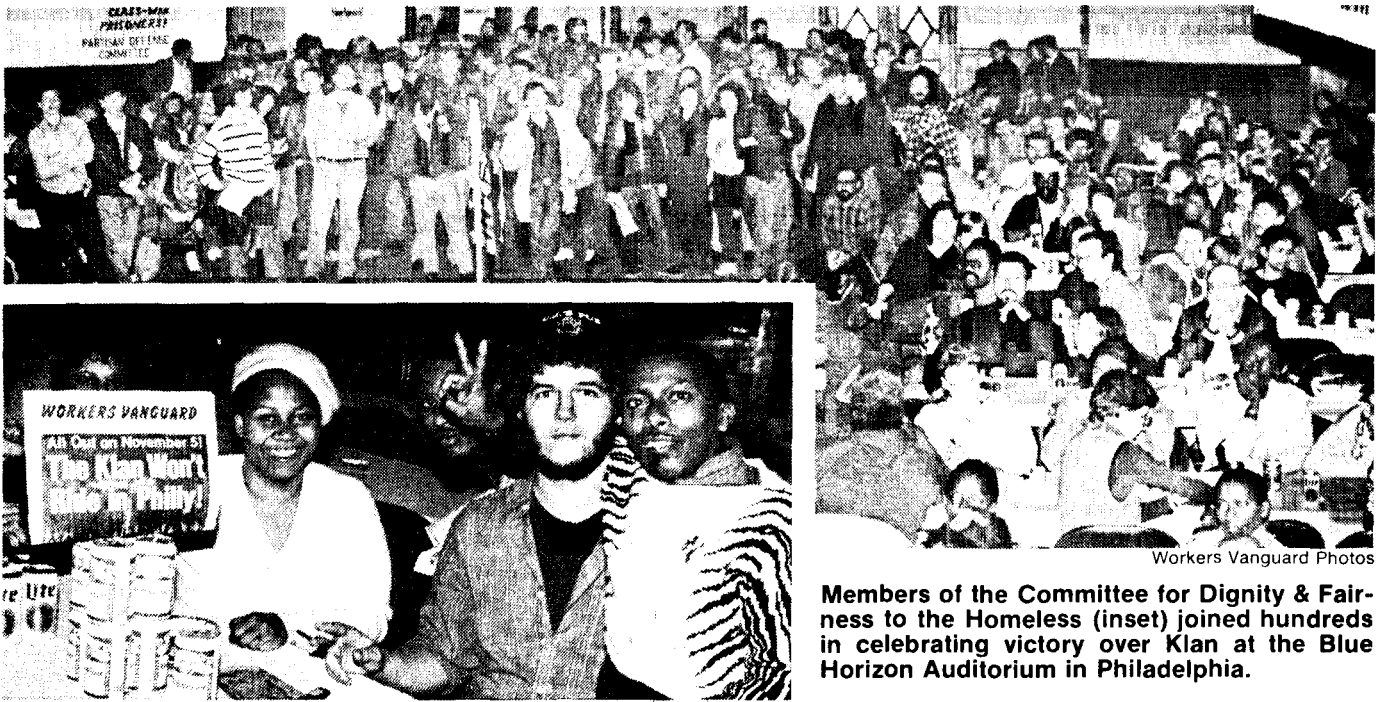
What passes for politics in this country on the evening news and the daily paper has about as much to do with American social reality as the Cosby show has to do with the daily struggle for survival in the ghetto. And that is the way the ruling class wants it. That's the way they want the game played. Things go smoothly for them that way; in fact, they want a ceremonial president, and Reagan's well on his way to providing that.

One advertising agency wins and another one loses. So when a desperate



Workers Vanguard

Workers defense guard in front of speakers platform protects tribune of protest against fascist and state terror at November 5 rally.



Workers Vanguard Photos

Members of the Committee for Dignity & Fairness to the Homeless (inset) joined hundreds in celebrating victory over Klan at the Blue Horizon Auditorium in Philadelphia.

loser Dukakis tried his last appeal to his Democratic constituency with a little talk about rich folks and working people, George Bush cried foul. He waved his arms, and sounding for all the world like Jimmy Stewart in a Frank Capra movie, says, "Hold on there, bub. This sounds like classes and things you're talking about. Like they have over there in Europe. We don't do the class thing here in America."

The social class conflict is the real stuff of America. What we get here today is real politics. Because it grows out of the actual fabric of American political life. The danger of the Klan and Nazis is real—even in small numbers they are deadly. And we *really* stopped them today by mobilizing a fraction of labor's power independently on behalf of its own interest and the interest of all the oppressed.

For some of you, this may be your first demonstration. I hope it isn't your last. But now you can say, I've seen real politics and it works. And it had better work. Because the fascists are not TV politicians.

The Partisan Defense Committee initiated this mobilization because of the real danger of the KKK and the skinheads. And because every mobilization of labor and minorities strengthens our capacity to fight.

The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle non-sectarian legal defense organization in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. The presidential candidates try to outdo one another as to who's more

traditional, who's more conservative than the other. But what are their traditions? War. Economic depression. Racism. Well, we have traditions too. But they're the traditions of the working class, its history, its experience in struggle.

The Partisan Defense Committee's been around since 1974, when it was initiated by the Spartacist League. We're based on the heritage of the International Labor Defense (ILD), under its founder, first secretary James P. Cannon. And we stand on the principled defense work of the Spartacist League. We are partisan on the side of the working class. The class principles upon which we base our work are simple and straightforward. They were the common coin of a class that learned in strikes, in struggles, and often at the wrong end of a rifle butt.

It's just these obvious truths that have become lost and corrupted over a generation of too many defeats. The first lesson of common struggle is that an injury to one is an injury to all. That means we are non-sectarian. We defend cases irrespective of people's political views. That means that we defend people with whom we disagree, often, sometimes people who wouldn't defend us if the tables were turned. We rely on the independent power of the working class, and not at all on the courts. So we try to build mass protest actions like this one based on labor's power today.

It ought to be obvious that such protest means that people and organizations with different political views come

together for their mutual defense. This is what the great revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky argued for to stop the Nazis in Germany. This, too, is non-sectarian and partisan. We fight for democratic rights and favor all possible legal proceedings. But we have no faith whatsoever in the capitalist courts. The state is not neutral. It is the organization of class rule. That means we do not call upon the state to legislate against the Klan, to ban the Klan.

We know that it was the FBI that rode with the nightriders that shot Viola Liuzzo. We know that when the Klan says they're going to march into black neighborhoods and stage their provocation in communities of Jewish concentration camp survivors, the cops become suddenly very solicitous of their First Amendment rights. We know that any time there's legislation passed against those fascists, it will strike and wound the left. We remember the Smith Act, which was passed as an anti-Nazi bill, but became a weapon of choice for the McCarthy witchhunt of the 1950s.

The PDC joined the Spartacist League as the early and constant defenders of MOVE, firebombed 13 May 1985, killing eleven, including five children. Then the firebombers arrested the survivors. Now, this defense should have been a simple act of solidarity and decency. But the general silence after the MOVE massacre was shameful.

The PDC's class-struggle politics means we support strikes and defend the strikers. We are internationalist in our defense work, from the South African

Fight for a Workers' America!

The following are edited excerpts from the speech by Ed Kartsen of the Spartacist League at the November 5 Mobilization to Stop the KKK in Philadelphia.

The Klan are sadistic killers, whether they're wearing their white sheets or not. They are not a debating society. They are not just a bunch of kooks who have some backward notions and anti-scientific conceptions about human development. They are murderers. Their idea of freedom of expression is what the government did to MOVE—burning eleven people alive including five small children.

We remember Carole Robertson, Annie May Collins, Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley—these were children that were attending the 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963 in Birmingham, when 15 sticks of dynamite went off, killing all of them. That was the work of the Klan, according to Gary Rowe, who was an FBI informer who testified that he helped the Klan carry out this hideous act of terror. The Ku Klux Klan and skinheads are organized lynchers, bombers and murderers! We stand for mobilizing all the intended victims of these killers to stop them before they do to the human race what Hitler did.

The rulers of this country have gone flat out to build up a military capacity to destroy the Soviet Union in a nuclear first strike. Both the Democrats and the Republicans have turned their backs on the working people of this country, those who created the wealth of this country. They're depriving the working people of the wealth in order to build this anti-Soviet war machine. The skin-



Ed Kartsen

heads and the Klan are the shock troops of this policy. Everyone here knows that whether we have four more years of Bush or Dukakis, that this policy will continue, this policy to destroy the working and poor people of this country.

We must start to re-establish the fact that the wealth of this country must be placed in the hands of those who produced it. We need real job training programs, not this fake "workfare," which simply puts welfare mothers in a position of abandoning their children in favor of nonexistent jobs. Welfare mothers should be protected, rather than made scapegoats. Free quality day care should be provided for children, a living income, meaningful education, job skills training.

The courts and prisons are the dumping ground for those the ruling class of this country have turned their backs on.

anti-apartheid fighters like the Sharpeville Six to Vanunu in Israel to the British miners. We defend the right of working people to organize everywhere. At bottom it is very simple—the PDC understands that legal defense must be class-struggle defense.

The battle for reality is not new. I think of the great English political essayist George Orwell arriving in Morocco for the first time, in 1939. He wandered among the ragged inhabitants of Marrakesh, he walked over their unmarked graves where they dumped starved bodies. He observed as always the arrogance of colonial power. He writes that the colonialists could not see these people of color.

Then, through the dust and misery, Orwell saw a line of black Senegalese infantrymen marching with their French-trained officers, their khaki uniforms, and their rifles. And Orwell thought that every white European must have a thought somewhere stowed away, a question. The question was this: How long before they turn their guns in the opposite direction? That, for Orwell, was the great secret of empire. It's the secret of power. And that is also the big secret of our time and place.

Labor and blacks have the power—that is the big secret. And that is why gatherings like this one are so important. Because if you let that particular cat out of the bag, unlike the fantasy

world of capitalist electoral politics, here you begin to see. We see each other, first of all. We learn that we can talk and argue freely about our political differences and varied visions of future reality, even as we act together to defend ourselves in the interest of our class. We begin to see that militant determination can work. We begin to feel our own strength. We learn that this great power can and must be unleashed, that on a grand scale it could have stopped the Nazis in Germany and the Holocaust. That in struggle we gain confidence, leadership for the upcoming battles upon which our future reality and our children's future depends. Let this be a beginning. ■

Millions of potentially productive people are being jammed into the prisons. We think it's time to defend all victims of racist terror, all victims of capitalist justice, so-called justice. Free ex-Black Panther Geronimo Pratt! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row! Free the Kentucky miners sentenced to life imprisonment! Abolish the Jim Crow death penalty!

It's time to play hardball. We need to oust the sellout bureaucrats who'd rather see the unions destroyed than fight the bosses and their cops and courts. We need to break with the Democrats and Republicans, who are partners in racist American capitalism.

Workers of this country need a party, the kind of party that Lenin led in making the first successful workers revolution in history. The Black Hundreds were the version of the Ku Klux Klan and skinheads in Russia. These dangerous Russian reactionaries have re-emerged under the label of Pamyat. The Soviet revolution succeeded by smashing the Russian fascists. America's Red October can only go forward, a socialist America can only be possible by defeating the skinheads and the KKK.

A workers party can swing millions of workers into action—black, white, Hispanic and Asian—in opposition to the Ku Klux Klan, Nazis and skinheads. Blacks must be joined with Jews in opposition to Kahane and Farrakhan. The Spartacist League is the core of a workers party of the Bolshevik type. Join us in building a party that will bring about workers power. Join us in the fight to build a socialist future. Stop the skinheads! Stop the Klan! For workers power! For a workers government! ■

Message to the November 5 Mobilization

Mumia Abu-Jamal Speaks from Death Row

This taped message from Mumia Abu-Jamal, a political prisoner on death row in Huntingdon, Pa., was sent to the November 5 anti-Klan rally. As a Philadelphia black radio journalist, Jamal was well known as the voice of the voiceless and downtrodden. A former Black Panther, Jamal courageously defended MOVE from state repression, and himself became a target of the Philly cops' vendetta. Pennsylvania governor Casey refused the demand of the Partisan Defense Committee to release Jamal on parole to speak at the November 5 Mobilization. The PDC has launched a nationwide campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal from the racist death penalty.

Folk singer Richie Havens' frenetic strumming and his ragged rippling tenor immortalized the KKK in a moving, mournful dark ballad in which Havens intones: "He who rides with the Klan is a devil and not a man." But much as his music touches psychic chords, he is wrong. They are men. Men with an unholy objective: to pit white against black, Anglo against Hispanic, Christian against Jew, and indeed Protestant against Catholic in the ruling class interests. Despite the Klan's hooded image, blacks just hours out of slavery knew well that they were not demons from some sulfuric underworld, just vile, vicious men who hid their identities merely to mask and further the Southern states' political objective to strangle the babe of black political gains of Reconstruction. It would not have been fitting for the agents of the Southern

**Mumia
Abu-Jamal
and son,
Mazi Mustafa,
in 1982.**



no credit

white ruling class—the lawyer, the judge, or the sheriff, all supportive of the landed aristocracy—to raid black shacks, to lynch and assail black life in the light of day. Thus nightriders and hoods came into play: the origins of the KKK.

The Ku Klux Klan, founded in 1866 in Tennessee, was born hot on the heels of the Emancipation Proclamation. A century later hooded goons assemble at the Liberty Bell in the name of the KKK calling for white Christian men to join them in a crusade of hatred against "niggers, spics and kikes." How ironic that the ideological sons of slavers heap abuse on sons of Africa who alone among America's people were brought here enchained against their will. How cruel that the racists can attempt to slander the Spanish peoples as "un-American" when America was molded in large part by theft of ancestral lands that were once Mexico, and where Spanish and Indian languages were used for centuries. How silly that the KKK's hatred of Jews is "justified," so-called, by a faith founded by a Jew.

It's time folk de-hood the Klan and take a close look at what's beneath. In its

historical role, the Klan's vicious wave of violence against blacks was driven not so much by hatred as by fear. Fear that black numbers of freedmen in the Black Belt South would dominate political life via the vote. Also a target of Klan terror, the Southern populist movement, where black and white poor in the 1800s attempted to unite against the common foe: the nation's true minority, the ruling class. That is the Klan's primary role and function: to use racial hatred to divide the many peoples who make up this country so that the few, the ruling class, can more easily exploit the many.

No doubt, by now, you will have heard leading Philadelphia citizens proclaim that the Constitution protects all Americans, yea, even the Klan. Don't buy it! Where were these same leading citizens when other agents of the state rained fiery death on MOVE, May 13, 1985? What of the Constitutional protection for urban holocaust survivor Ramona Africa, who at this very hour sits in a cell at Muncy Women's Prison well past her minimum sentence only because she refuses to renounce her religion, the teachings of John Africa,

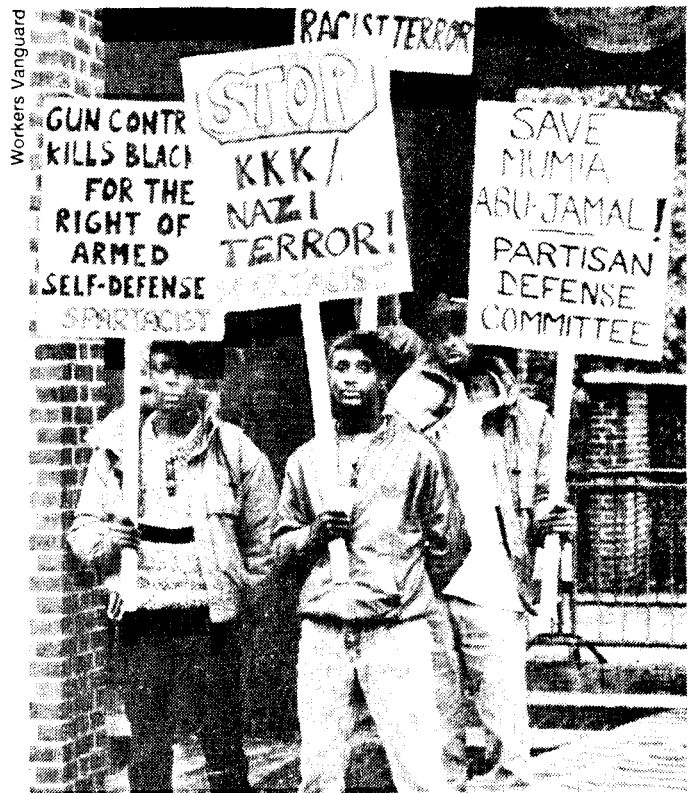
and refuses to abide by a draconian condition of parole that demands she pledge to stay away from her very family and not speak out on her family's behalf to media, nor attend any court session involving any Africa.

Around the Klan demonstration no doubt stand the squadron of cops whose sole assignment is to protect the Klan if they were to appear. It is fitting that one agency of the state, the cops, are assigned to protect another agent, the Klan. For make no mistake, the KKK serves the interests of the ruling class who must divide to rule. The Klan gets protection as they are a tool of the system. MOVE gets bombed by the system as they are against the system.

So, what weapon can best defeat this hooded menace? The answer lies in defeating their underhanded but clear objective. The answer is unity. Unity across the broadest possible base, not just against the Klan but unity against their master for whom they are fronting, the ruling class. The racist message drooling out of the mouth of the cone-heads of the Klan offers no solution to the state of crisis gripping America. It's but a shell game to buy time for a system enmired in ecological and social disaster.

If America could face tomorrow morning with no Africans, Jews, Spanish, Vietnamese and other so-called foreigners on the horizon, would the seas be free of toxic wastes? Would the ozone layer renew itself? Would the so-called greenhouse effect, which threatens to transform vast grain fields into shifting dust bowls, erase itself? In truth the Klan is but a diversion. For far more deadly racists sit in black robes, send blacks, Hispanics and poor into prisons where the state plays slavemaster. These

**Free all our class-war prisoners!
Demonstrators at November 5 rally in Philadelphia take up defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal.**



are the courts' solutions to the problems facing the people. John Africa teaches, "The courts are the tools of industrial plague granting big business privilege to poison our earth."

Meanwhile, millionaire politicians mutter inanities about saluting the flag while the poor rummage in garbage cans for a meal and sleep in the streets of the richest nation on earth. Downtown Philadelphia, its towers of green, glittering opulence are a stark contrast to the dispirited denizens who inhabit the streets by night—hungry, homeless, hopeless. City streets take on the gritty,

grimy sheen of a Calcutta while Bush rambles on about a thousand points of light.

The Klan can be stopped. The prisoners can be freed. The hungry can be fed and the homeless housed. But it will take the energies of the many; for the few, the rich ruling class, simply don't give a damn. Above all it takes unity, to confront and defeat the Klansmen—not just those at the Liberty Bell—but those in City Hall, those in Harrisburg and those in Washington, D.C. It takes committed people's unity to stop the Klansmen, not just those wearing white robes and hoods, but those in black robes, those in uniform, those with three-piece suits. It takes determination to acknowledge and resist the ruling class, the super-rich who back the Klan in its objective of division. It's high time folks looked around themselves—there at Independence Mall—and for once, forever, declare themselves truly independent of the system that steals their labor, steals their tomorrows, only to produce a legacy of a world choking in poison, in hatred, in division, in death.

Down with the Klan! And down with this rotten system! Freedom for MOVE! Freedom for Mona Africa! Freedom for Sue, Consuwella, Carlos and Moe Africa! Freedom for all political prisoners!

From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal. ■

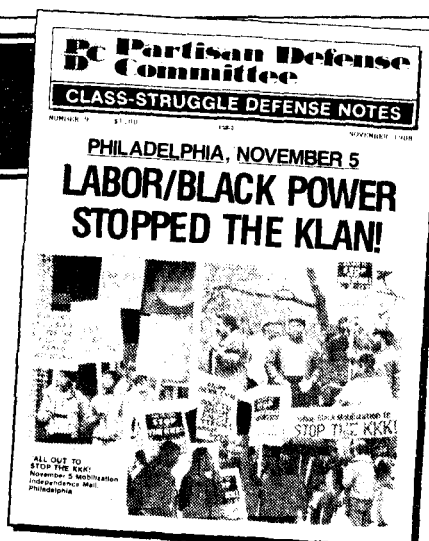
Get Your Copy of **CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES!**

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal defense organization in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

With your contribution of \$5 or more receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*.

For a single copy send \$1 to:

Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99,
Canal Street Sta., New York, NY 10013



Nightmare of KKK Terror

Excerpt from The Autobiography of Malcolm X

“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 and opened it. Standing where they could see her pregnant condition, she told them that she was alone with her three small children, and that my father was away, preaching, in Milwaukee. The Klansmen shouted threats and warnings at her that we had better get out of town because “the good Christian white people” were not going to stand for my father’s “spreading trouble” among the “good” Negroes of Omaha with the “back to Africa” preachings of Marcus Garvey.

My father, the Reverend Earl Little, was a Baptist Minister, a dedicated organizer for Marcus Aurelius Garvey’s U.N.I.A. (Universal Negro Improvement Association). With the help of such disciples as my father, Garvey, from his headquarters in New York City’s Harlem, was raising the banner of black-race purity and exhorting the Negro masses to return to their ancestral African homeland—a cause which had made Garvey the most controversial black man on earth.

Still shouting threats, the Klansmen finally spurred their horses and galloped around the house, shattering every window pane with their gun butts. Then they rode off into the night, their torches flaring, as suddenly as they had come....

Among the reasons my father had decided to risk and dedicate his life to help disseminate this philosophy among his people was that he had seen four of his six brothers die by violence, three of them killed by white men, including one by lynching. What my father could not know then was that of the remaining three, including himself, only one, my Uncle Jim, would die in bed, of natural causes. Northern white police were later to shoot my Uncle Oscar. And my father was finally himself to die by the white man’s hand.

We went next, for some reason, to Lansing, Michigan.... This time, the get-out-of-town threats came from a local hate society called The Black Legion. They wore black robes instead of white. Soon, nearly everywhere my father went, Black Legionnaires were reviling him as an “uppity nigger” for wanting to own a store, for living outside the Lansing Negro district, for spreading unrest and dissension among “the good niggers.”



no credit

Malcolm X. His autobiography opens with chilling account of Klan terror.

I remember waking up to the sound of my mother’s screaming again. When I scrambled out, I saw the police in the living room; they were trying to calm her down. She had snatched on her clothes to go with them. And all of us children who were staring knew without anyone having to say it that something terrible had happened to our father.

My mother was taken by the police to the hospital, and to a room where a sheet was over my father in a bed, and she wouldn’t look, she was afraid to look. Probably it was wise that she didn’t. My father’s skull, on one side, was crushed in, I was told later. Negroes in Lansing have always whispered that he was attacked, and then laid across some tracks for a streetcar to run over him. His body was cut almost in half.

He lived two and a half hours in that condition. Negroes then were stronger than they are now, especially Georgia Negroes. Negroes born in Georgia had to be strong simply to survive.

It was morning when we children at home got the word that he was dead. I was six. I can remember a vague commotion, the house filled up with people crying, saying bitterly that the white Black Legion had finally gotten him.” ■



Library of Congress

Klan gathering in Illinois in the 1920s. Reborn in Georgia in 1915, the Klan came North to terrorize blacks, immigrants and unionists.

reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 464, 4 November 1988

Black Self-Defense in Lancaster County



New York Public Library

Christiana, Pennsylvania, 11 September 1851: Militant self-defense routed slave catchers, inspired generation of abolitionist fighters.

—Battle of Christiana— A Blow Against Slavery

Finish the Civil War!

Before dawn on the 11th of September 1851 a horn sounded from an old stone farmhouse near Christiana, Pennsylvania, a village between Philadelphia and Gettysburg. Upstairs seven black people—fugitive slaves—were watching for raiders. When they saw the posse of slave catchers, under the command of a United States marshal, ride into the yard, a black woman sounded the horn to call for defense. Armed black farmers filled the yard to do battle with axes, clubs, corn cutters, guns, anything at hand. In the clash a slaveowner was killed, his son seriously wounded. Taught a good lesson, the U.S. marshal fled.

The “Battle of Christiana” was an important victory for the anti-slavery

fighters in the grim decade before the Civil War, when chattel slavery seemed indestructible. As the first nationally publicized, armed struggle against the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, the Christiana resistance proved that blacks determined to defend themselves could win. Its importance was far greater than the few slaves who were able to gain their freedom. For the South, Christiana symbolized Yankee opposition to the slave system. A North Carolina newspaper editorial threatened disunion: “unless the Christiana rioters [sic] are hung... WE LEAVE YOU!... If you fail in this simple act of justice, THE BOND WILL BE DISSOLVED” (quoted in James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* [1987]).

But the government was not able to convict anyone for a crime at Christiana, because support for the resisters and hatred for the cruel injustice of the Fugitive Slave Law were so overwhelming. As the great radical abolitionist Frederick Douglass said in his *Life and Times*:

“...the thing which more than all else destroyed the fugitive slave law was the resistance made to it by the fugitives themselves.... This affair, at Christiana...inflicted fatal wounds on the fugitive slave bill. It became thereafter almost a dead letter, for slaveholders found that not only did it fail to put them in possession of their slaves, but that the attempt to enforce it brought odium upon themselves and weakened the slave system.”

Militant Self-Defense Points the Way

The leader of the Christiana battle was William Parker, who at 17 escaped

from bondage in Maryland in 1839. He made his way to Pennsylvania and settled near Christiana, just over the Susquehanna River, "the boundary of the slaveholding empire," beyond which slave-hunters feared to go. A community of black farmers had been established for some time in this area. Quaker farmers lived there, and although they were "nonresistant" (pacifists), they were anti-slavery and helped fugitives escape.

Here Parker married, raised a family and began farming. As he later wrote in his autobiography, *A Freedman's Story*: "I formed a resolution that I would assist in liberating everyone within my reach, at the risk of my own life, and that I would devise some plan for their entire liberation" (Jonathan Katz, *Resistance at Christiana* [1974]). In Lancaster County, just over the border from slaveholding Maryland, this was no idle resolution. A gang of pro-slavery hooligans, known as the "Gap Gang," regularly terrorized and kidnapped blacks to send into bondage. These racist thugs—the Ku Klux Klan of the day—were professional "man-stealers," and they operated with or without the open sanction of the state.

Soon Parker organized a small group of blacks for self-defense, who vowed to resist the kidnapers and make the area safe for their families. People called Parker "the preacher"; his house was a meeting place for anti-slavery people, white and black. His boldness and determination earned him the allegiance of the black people and the hatred of the racist kidnapers. A number of courageous rescues were carried out by Parker's group. One pro-slavery collaborator lost his barn to a fire. But in January 1851 the man-stealers forcibly abducted a young black man, breaking his skull and beating him so badly that his owner refused to pay them for their filthy work. Faced with the increased threat of the new Fugitive Slave Law, Parker and his comrades renewed their vow to risk death to stop the kidnapers.

The passage of the law in 1850 gave blatant federal support for the abduction of black people in any state, free or slave. Blacks were denied any legal recourse to prove their status as freemen, while the government could levy a \$1,000 fine on U.S. marshals and deputies who refused to cooperate with the slave catchers. The law imposed stiff penalties on anyone found to be harboring a fugitive. Most notoriously, federal commissioners who ruled in the slaveowners' favor got \$10 for their dirty

work, while those who ruled for the freedom of the slave got \$5—an open bribe!

Armed with this hideous law slaveowner Edward Gorsuch of Maryland went man-hunting in Pennsylvania. He had been tipped off that four ex-slaves, who had escaped from his plantation some two years previously, were living in the Christiana area. In Philadelphia the federal commissioner gave Gorsuch warrants and a federal marshal to lead a posse. But the man-stealers were being watched by the Vigilance Committee of the integrated Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society, and a messenger sped off to warn the black people of Christiana.

Armed and ready, William Parker, his family and friends and two of Gorsuch's fugitives waited in Christiana. When the posse crept up to the house in the dark of night the warning signal by Parker's wife aroused the neighborhood. The kidnapers launched a volley of bullets to cut her down. Safe behind the thick stone walls of the house, she went on blowing the horn. The posse was surrounded by some 15 to 25 armed blacks and a few whites. A Quaker miller advised Gorsuch to leave. But Gorsuch vowed, "I will have my property, or go to hell." He got his wish. When the smoke cleared, Gorsuch lay dead.

Pro-slavery president Millard Fillmore called out the Marines. Parker and two of his closest associates had fled to Canada, but the slave masters demanded revenge. Anti-slavery whites and black men, women and children

were harassed, arrested, thrown in jail. Parker's own mother-in-law—a woman over 50 years old—was seized and sent back to slavery. A grand jury indicted 36 blacks and five whites not merely for breaking the Fugitive Slave Law but for *treason*, "levying war" against the United States, a crime punishable by death. The government wanted to illegitimize abolitionism and smear as dangerous *criminals* those who were fighting for black freedom.

Grotesquely, the trial was held in Philadelphia's Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence had been proclaimed 75 years before. But the prosecution was unable to get a conviction. The federal marshal, already proven to be a coward, also proved a liar. The defense included Thaddeus Stevens, later a leader of the Radical Republicans, and made a laughing stock of the government's case. One defense lawyer ironically summed up the charges: "...three harmless non-resisting Quakers and eight-and-thirty wretched, miserable, penniless negroes, armed with corn cutters, clubs, and a few muskets, and headed by a miller, in a felt hat, without arms and mounted on a sorrel nag, levied war against the United States."

While pro-slavery bigots clamored for blood, nationwide meetings in support of the accused passed resolutions and collected money for their defense. Even the "nonresistant, moral suasion" Garrisonian abolitionists hailed the Christiana resisters as "fully justified in what they did by the Declaration of



Washington Post

Labor/Black Mobilization stopped the KKK, Washington, November 1982. After Civil War, bourgeoisie betrayed the promise of black freedom. For black liberation through emancipation of all working people from wage slavery!



Young Spartacus

Columbia University, March 1987: Spartacists honor heroes of anti-slavery struggle at demonstration against racist attacks on campus.

Independence." A jailer arranged the escape of two witnesses faced with re-enslavement. The judge, though notorious for his pro-slavery convictions, ruled that an individual act of resistance was not a treasonable conspiracy. After deliberating for 15 minutes the jury pronounced "not guilty."

The battle at Christiana was a great victory for the abolitionist cause. As the black abolitionist William Wells Brown put it, "a slaveholder will never come there again in pursuit of fugitive slaves." Frederick Douglass was more than a defender: he helped Parker and his comrades to escape. Through the Underground Railroad they came to Douglass' house in Rochester, New York and boarded a ship to Toronto. To Douglass "they were heroic defenders of the just rights of man against manstealers and murderers..." Douglass recognized the significance of the Christiana resistance in proving the possibility of victory against slavery. Comparing it to another, failed rescue attempt, when "nonresistant" abolitionists failed to stop armed thugs shooting at a fugitive, Douglass said:

"Had a few balls there whistled, as at Christiana, about the heads of the slave-catchers, it would have been the end of this slave-catching business there. There is no necessity of permitting it. The only way to make the Fugitive Slave Law a dead letter is to make a few dead slave-catchers. There is no need to kill them either—shoot them in the legs, and send them to the South living epistles of the free gospel preached here at the North."

—Frederick Douglass,
Life and Writings, Vol. 2

To Douglass, the battle at Christiana was an example of the "John Brown

way" to fight slavery. When John Brown challenged the slavocracy with arms at Harpers Ferry in 1859, he presented the only challenge which could win a revolutionary victory and overturn the entire social system of the plantation South. John Brown lost his battle, but he started the war. It took four bloody years of civil war to defeat slavery, over 600,000 deaths on the way to Appomattox Courthouse.

William Parker is little known today. Yet as a fighter he stood for the "John Brown way." The second American revolution, known as the Civil War, which defeated the slaveowners, was sparked by the William Parkers, the dedicated anti-slavery fighters, black and white. When the reluctant Lincoln finally issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, setting the slaves "forever free," the Civil War became what Douglass, Brown and Parker knew it would have to be: a war to end slavery. The recruitment of black soldiers into the Union Army helped to tip the military balance for Northern victory.

The Civil War wiped chattel slavery from the U.S. But the promise of black freedom in the Civil War was later betrayed by the Northern capitalists when they turned their backs on the newly liberated freedmen. Today, to complete the unfinished democratic tasks of the Civil War and to win the emancipation of all working people from *wage* slavery, we need a third American revolution. This proletarian revolution, led by a Trotskyist vanguard party with a strong black leadership component, will be inspired by John Brown, Frederick Douglass and William Parker, standard-bearers of the fight against slavery. And once again the horn of resistance will sound the battle cry of freedom. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office:

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

New York

Box 444, Canal St. Sta.
New York, NY 10013
(212) 267-1025

Atlanta

Box 4012
Atlanta, GA 30302

Detroit

Box 441794
Detroit, MI 48244

Norfolk

Box 1972, Main PO
Norfolk, VA 23501

Boston

Box 840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 492-3928

Ithaca

Box 6767
Ithaca, NY 14850

Oakland

Box 32552
Oakland, CA 94604
(415) 839-0851

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 663-0715

Los Angeles

Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239

San Francisco

Box 5712
San Francisco, CA 94101
(415) 863-6963

Cleveland

Box 91037
Cleveland, OH 44101
(216) 781-7500

Madison

Box 2074
Madison, WI 53701
(608) 255-8068

Washington, D.C.

Box 75073
Washington, D.C. 20013
(202) 636-3537

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA

Toronto

Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Democrats, Republicans Wage War on the Poor



Richards/Magnum

Genocide U.S.A.

For black people in racist America, the "land of the free" has always been a prison house of terror and degradation. Over the past couple of decades, the inner cities have become dumping grounds for millions of human beings thrown on the scrap heap by the racist rulers who have looted this country dry. Over three million people have been turned out of their homes, to huddle, starve and die in the streets. The black ghettos and Hispanic barrios are ravaged by AIDS, while hospitals there have been shut down. Abortion clinics are terrorized and bombed by "right to lifers," forcing black and Hispanic women to bear children they can't

afford to feed, or to be butchered in back-alley abortions. And, emboldened by Reagan reaction, the fascist nightriders of the Ku Klux Klan and skinhead Nazis murder and maim.

Now Congress has enacted a "welfare reform" which embodies like nothing else the wanton cruelty and cold-hearted viciousness of the Reagan years—written, engineered and pushed through by the Democrats. Crafted by New York Senator Daniel ("benign neglect") Moynihan and proudly paraded by Texas millionaire Lloyd Bentsen, the new "workfare" law was passed with the most overwhelming Democratic and Republican unity that has

been seen in years. The final act of the 100th Congress, it represents the consensus of the whole capitalist class, a supreme expression of how in America, to paraphrase Gore Vidal, there is only one party, the property party, with two right wings.

In the obscene "newspeak" of Reaganite reaction it's called the "Family Security Act." It has about the same relation to the security of black and Hispanic families as the sign *Arbeit Macht Frei* (Freedom Through Labor) posted over Hitler's concentration camps had to the freedom of the Jewish victims it taunted. The same day this "workfare" law was passed, the Senate shot down a

measly 40 cents an hour increase in the minimum wage. In this club of millionaires, the Republicans demanded that any increase be coupled with an even lower sub-minimum "training wage"! And to top it off, the Senate once more refused to ratify a 19-year-old international treaty outlawing genocide!

Genocide is what this new "workfare" is all about! Millions of single mothers on welfare who refuse to take a job—any job, anywhere, at any starvation wage—will be cut off without a cent, literally left to starve. Suspected fathers are supposed to be hounded down through genetic "paternity" tests to have their wages garnished or be forced into the same scheme if they can't cough up "child support." The children will either be left to wander the mean streets alone or be ripped away from their mothers through "protective payments" to unspecified "third parties." This is not welfare reform, it's a plan to turn the ghettos into vast cemeteries—because *there are no jobs to get*. The aim of this legislation is to see to it that layers of the minority population *die*, because this decrepit capitalist system no longer needs them.

As Andrew Hacker pointed out in an article titled "Getting Rough on the Poor" (*New York Review of Books*, 13 October), the overwhelming bipartisan consensus behind the new welfare law "derives from the fear that growing numbers of black and brown Americans are... producing children who may be a burden to society." This brings to mind nothing so much as Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal," a biting satirical attack on Britain's malign neglect of starving Irish children in the 18th century famine. To prevent "the children of poor people from being a burthen to their parents or country, and for making them beneficial to the public," Swift proposed that the wealthy buy and eat the babies of the poor, offering up various recipes.

At least then the poor and huddled masses of Europe could hope to emigrate to the "land of opportunity." But today, if the racist white rulers have their way, for America's black and Hispanic poor there will only be someplace to die. *We the working people produced the wealth of this country, it belongs to us, and it's going to take a socialist revolution to take it back.*

"Training" for... Death

The new welfare act is a horrifying maze of deadly Catch-22s which center around the elimination of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children

(AFDC) program, what has passed for a "safety net" for the downtrodden and dispossessed in this society. Underlining the explicit racism behind the new legislation, the Family Security Act tries to piece off the white poor by extending AFDC benefits to two-parent families on welfare—the overwhelming majority of which happen to be white—while demanding that one of the parents do 16 hours of unpaid "community service" every week. This provision is closer in concept to the old workhouses of Victorian England or to the chain gangs of convicts who broke rocks in quarries and built roads in the South.

Women with children over the age of three (which can be lowered to six months by individual states) will be compelled to enroll in job "retraining" programs. Yet the government has cut back funding for job training and employment programs by a whopping 68 percent over the past six years to help finance the trillion-dollar high-tech "Star Wars" Pentagon boondoggles. And for "child care" during the "retraining," the Family Security Act will dole out six bucks a day, which couldn't even get one of the more destitute people on the street to watch your kids.

Pimping off desperate poor people who *want* to be trained for jobs has become one of America's few growth industries. Hustlers stand outside welfare and unemployment offices hawking phony training programs which "offer little meaningful training or job placement. Instead they make money by taking students incapable of doing the required work, keeping them long enough to collect a share of government tuition payments and leaving the most naive ones responsible for pay-

ing back large Government-guaranteed loans" (*New York Times*, 6 August).

Even *Business Week* (2 November 1987) has admitted that: "Jobs that get mothers off AFDC are likely to pay low wages and exclude health benefits: a Faustian bargain at best, since many of these women would find themselves in the growing ranks of the working poor..." Moreover, what "low entry"—i.e., below poverty level—jobs there are are certainly not to be found in the impoverished inner-city hellholes where most of these women live. So, if you do manage to get one, you have to travel every day back and forth from Harlem to northern Westchester County to clean somebody's bathroom.

Look at the "workfare" program recently implemented in Koch's New York. Women called in for an interview are told that they have three weeks to enroll in a job training program. If they can't, they're forced to work for city agencies, like one woman whose "job" was checking toilet supplies in a Bronx welfare office: "To me, this system is set up to keep you down, not to help you get on your feet" (*New York Times*, 23 March 1987). Sadist Ed Koch, a Democrat of course, gloats over misery and even goes so far as to claim that New Yorkers who give a coin to the homeless and destitute are simply abetting criminals.

American Apartheid

For the past 15 years the conditions of life in America have steadily eroded. Twenty million go to bed every night hungry, close to another 14 million live in poverty, and more than two million of the American poor are full-time, year-



Reagan (with Democratic Congressional leaders Daniel Moynihan, left, and Dan Rostenkowski) after signing "workfare" bill into law, calling it "the lasting emancipation" for those on welfare.

Lopez/NY Times



Der Spiegel

Mass-produced by American capitalism: three million homeless and twenty million hungry.

round workers (*The State of Working America*, September 1988). The report notes that "since 1979, some 85% of the new jobs have been in the lowest paying industries—retail trade and personal, business and health services." And for a big chunk of America, the "Reagan recovery" has meant permanent unemployment. Last year less than a third of the jobless got any unemployment benefits.

During World War II millions of blacks migrated from the South to the booming war industries in the North and the West. In 1954, at the tail end of the Korean War boom, 75 percent of all black men were working. By the '60s increasing numbers were in unionized, relatively well-paying jobs in the auto plants and steel mills. But in the mid-late '70s millions were permanently thrown out of work in the deindustrialization of America which turned much of the Midwest into a rust bowl.

Today blacks are three times more likely than whites to be poor, over half of black families are headed by single mothers, and the poverty rate for black kids under the age of 18 is a shocking 67.1 percent. In 1986, only 40 percent of all black men had a full-time job. As black sociologist William Julius Wilson points out in his book *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987), as the number of employed black men plummeted, the number of black single welfare mothers skyrocketed. At the same time, whatever social infrastructure there had been in the ghettos completely crumbled.

The black middle class, largely white-collar workers, who were the beneficiaries of the "Great Society" programs of the 1960s had already moved out. Then the income of black industrialized work-

ers which had sustained the ghetto economy was cut off. Stores closed. And with the mid-'70s "fiscal crisis," schools, recreation centers, hospitals, firehouses were shut down. A *New York Times* (3 October) article captured the devastation of what was once Motor City:

"Since the 1950's, Detroit has seen the departure of dozens of factories, Stroh's brewery, the city's only department store and 850,000 people.

"And in rundown neighborhoods blighted by drug-dealing and crime, the churches, many of them architectural landmarks, are often havens for the elderly or the poor, offering food and comfort and the only sign of stability."

The Polish workers following Solidarność who want to "free" the economy, introducing "a little" unemployment, should see what's happened to their relatives who migrated to Hamtramck, now nothing more than an industrial wasteland, where there's no social services, no medical care, and the state sure as hell doesn't pay the rent.

At one time American capitalism had an "industrial reserve army" which could be mobilized at times of labor shortage. In "good times" black youth could hope for a job. But now the (relatively) "good times" are gone forever. Today ghetto youth are an expendable surplus population for the racist rulers of this country. The U.S. government has already let thousands die in the ghettos by simply allowing disease to run rampant. After 100 years of steady decline, rates of tuberculosis, a disease of poverty, are soaring; 62 percent of those afflicted are black. In 1985 only 40 percent of non-white kids were immunized against polio. Speaking about conditions of life in Central Harlem, even the New York City Health Commissioner admitted: "In these dilapidated buildings infants who survived the first weeks of life are dying of pneumonia, freezing to death, falling from windows."

Capitalism Destroys the Black Family

The report of the Senate Finance Committee headed by Democratic vice-presidential candidate Lloyd Bentsen declared that the new welfare law "builds upon a strong consensus, joined in by liberals and conservatives alike, that the nation's welfare system must stress family responsibility and community obligation, enforce the principle that child support must in the first instance come from parents" (*New York Times*, 13 June). What obscene hypocrisy! The rulers of this country destroyed any black family in the ghettos through the ravages of the economy of their decaying social system. They decimated whatever community structure there was in the ghettos and now preach "community obligation." Through a policy that at best can be called "malign

What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism

(Marxist Bulletin No. 5 Revised)

\$2.50 (64 pages)

Selected documents and articles on the black question in the U.S., 1955-1977.

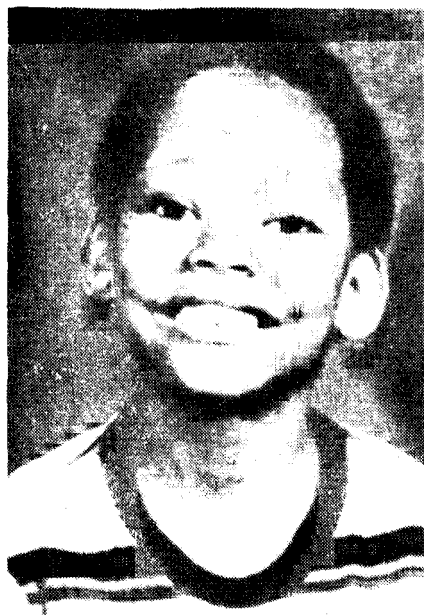
Contents

- Preface to Revised Edition
- Preface to First Edition
- For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question
- For Black Trotskyism
- The Negro Struggle and the Crisis of Leadership
- The Secret War Between Brother Klonsky and Stalin (and Who Won)
- Rise and Fall of the Panthers: End of the Black Power Era
- Soul Power or Workers Power? The Rise and Fall of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers
- Black Power and the Fascists
- Black Power—Class Power
- Behind the "Roots" Craze
- Quotes from Frederick Douglass and Malcolm X: Developing a Social Conscience
- Quotes from "Roots": Romanticizing an Individual Heritage

Order from/make checks payable to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116, USA

neglect" they let thousands of black babies die...and now they talk about "child support."

Democratic Senator Daniel Moynihan, the leading architect of the new workfare bill, has been blaming the "breakdown of the family" among blacks for causing ghetto poverty and degradation since he wrote *The Negro Family* in 1965. Back then he suggested that one solution to ghetto unrest among unemployed black youth was to draft them for the Vietnam War. The drill sergeant was put forward as the substitute for the missing father figure to instill discipline and "family values" among blacks. At the time Moynihan was advising Nixon on dismantling the Democrats' "Great Society/War on Poverty" programs whose purpose was



L.A. Times
Five-year-old Patrick Mason, shot and killed by racist cop while playing in his own home.

to keep the ghettos cool following the 1964 Harlem, 1965 Watts and 1967 Detroit ghetto upheavals. When the Vietnam War was escalating they wanted to ensure their supply of young blacks as cannon fodder. Now black youth are expendable even for that purpose.

"Family values" has been a rallying cry for social conservatism in the Reagan years. But for all the talk of a woman's place being at home with her children in the "sanctity" of the family, white and black women have massively joined the workforce to make up for falling real wages. And with the number of day care facilities utterly inadequate, the kids are left alone to be preyed upon by

the pimps and pushers and terrorized by the cops in the ghettos. Just remember what happened to five-year-old Patrick Mason, the black child playing alone in his own home when an Orange County, California cop burst into the apartment and shot him dead. To top it off, his mother was charged with "child abuse" because she was out working at the time.

Communism: America's Last, Best Hope

For over a decade, beginning under Jimmy Carter, the American ruling class has waged an escalating war on working people and minorities. Unions have been broken, millions of workers have had giveback contracts shoved down their throats, "two-tier" wages have become the norm in workplaces, keeping many full-time, unionized workers and their families below the poverty level. And the rights of all the most vulnerable sections of the population are mercilessly trampled on. As we wrote last year in the main document of the Eighth National Conference of the Spartacist League/U.S.:

"In sneering at hunger and homelessness, in taking aim gloatingly at those most helpless like ghetto children, AIDS victims, non-citizens, old-age pensioners and so forth, Reaganism as an ideology highlights the objective need for a fighting proletarian vanguard as a *tribune of the people*."

Why has there been so little struggle against the ravages of the Reagan years? In fact, isolated sections of the American working class have fought, and plenty hard. But they have been held back and defeated by the labor cops who let the leaders of the PATCO air controllers strike be led away in chains and have kept their own members shackled, bowing to the bosses' laws, capitulating to union-busting. And the union bureaucrats and black establishment politicians, spearheaded by Jesse Jackson, then try to channel the deep hatred for "Reaganism" into support to the Democratic Party. The result: Dukakis/Bentsen, who are running as "Reagan Democrats."

At the same time, the different sections of the exploited and oppressed remain divided and often pitted against one another. While selling out their members, the miserable AFL-CIO bureaucracy pushes Japan-bashing protectionism and whips up flag-waving anti-Communism. The black Democratic mayors who oversee the ghetto hellholes for the Reagan White House talk about "black empowerment" while rats ravage black and Hispanic chil-

dren. Meanwhile various reformist leftists push the divisive politics of sectoralism as a cover for supporting the Democrats.

Union-busting and "workfare" genocide, anti-abortion terrorism, the rise of KKK racist terror and the emergence of skinhead fascism have *the same root cause*: the decay of American capitalism. The *only time* American capitalism has ever achieved genuine full employment, including for the black poor, is during an all-out war, such as World Wars I and II. In 1941-42, they took millions of uneducated rural Southern black and white teenagers and in the space of six months trained them to become skilled welders—because they needed the workers for their war industries. But now job "retraining" is a cruel hoax and World War III won't create jobs, only nuclear holocaust.

For decades liberal Democrats preached "welfare state" reformism as the alternative to both cutthroat capitalism and socialist revolution. Today the liberal Democrats have united with right-wing Republicans to eliminate the last minimal measures of social welfare in this country. Even such a genuinely modest proposal as raising welfare payments and wages to the equivalent of the official poverty level (which wouldn't cost a tenth of what they are pouring into their military machine) requires sharp class struggle by the working people, under a revolutionary leadership that won't stop short of the fight for power. As we wrote after the stock market crash a year ago (*WV* No. 439, 30 October 1987):

"You can solve a lot of problems with 'domestic cash transfers'—make life livable for blacks, Hispanics, jobless, homeless, welfare mothers, drug users, etc. And we communists intend to do so. But you have to first smash the power of the bourgeoisie. For that you need to build a workers party, one that doesn't 'respect' the property values of the bourgeoisie, a party that says to the exploited and oppressed: we want more, we want all of it, it ought to be ours, *so take it*. And when we have the wealth of this country, we will begin to build a planned socialist economy on an international scale. Then we can right some historical crimes and pay off some debts left over by our rulers, like some tens of billions of dollars to the Vietnamese and others whose countries have been maimed under the passing treads of American tanks."

To say that "workfare" genocide is a program for barbarism is an insult to barbarism. The only answer is socialist revolution to take the productive wealth out of the hands of the murderous rulers of this country! ■

Black History and the Class Struggle

A Spartacist Pamphlet 25c

Black History and the Class Struggle



No. 1 \$.25 (16 pages)

Contents:

- John Brown and Frederick Douglass: Heroes of the Anti-Slavery Struggle
- Forward to a Workers State! Finish the Civil War!
- Sit-Downs Not Soup Lines! Fight or Starve!
- Washington, D.C., November 27: Stop the KKK!

A Spartacist Pamphlet 75c

Black History and the Class Struggle

On the Civil Rights Movement



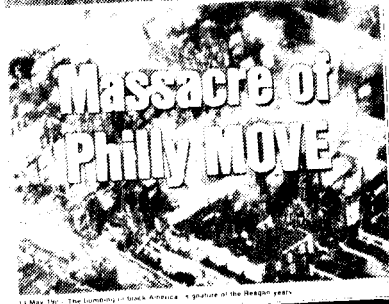
No. 2 \$.75 (32 pages)

Contents:

- Ten Years After Assassination: Bourgeoisie Celebrates King's Liberal Pacifism
- Malcolm X: Courageous Fighter for Black Liberation
- SNCC: "Black Power" and the Democrats

A Spartacist Pamphlet 75c

Black History and the Class Struggle



No. 3 \$.75 (32 pages)

Articles from Workers Vanguard detailing the grotesque racist bombing of Philly MOVE, signature of the Reagan years.

A Spartacist Pamphlet 75c

Black History and the Class Struggle

Black Soldiers in the Jim Crow Military



No. 4 \$.75 (32 pages)

Articles from the press of the Spartacist League dealing with the military question and black oppression.

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1.00

Black History and the Class Struggle



No. 5 \$1.00 (32 pages)

Articles from the press of the Spartacist League concerning the continuing struggle to finish the Civil War and fulfill the promise of freedom.

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$1.00

Black History and the Class Struggle



No. 6 \$1.00 (32 pages)

Contents:

- Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution
- Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Stop the KKK
- Mumia Abu-Jamal Speaks from Death Row
- Battle of Christiana—A Blow Against Slavery
- Malcolm X on Klan Terror
- Genocide U.S.A.

Make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 USA