

Racist Death Penalty Hysteria

Stop Legal Lynching!

The courts and prisons are jammed with young black and Hispanic men. In the name of a "war on drugs," cops sweep through the ghettos and barrios. "Anti-gang" dragnets in Los Angeles. TNT (Tactical Narcotics Teams) squads kicking in doors in New York City. South Africa-style passes for housing projects in Chicago. In the D.C. area, a wave of "drug-related" evictions, massively relocating residents from the projects to the jails. The answer of Bush and the Democratic-controlled Congress to the hellish conditions of America's inner cities is to "heel up" police power. Now the drive is on to unleash the ultimate weapon of the government's arsenal, the racist death penalty, legacy of the brutal slavocracy of the Old South.

"Up South" in New York State, the legislature is on the brink of overriding Democratic governor Mario Cuomo's veto of the death penalty. (Cuomo, who has vetoed capital punishment legislation seven times in seven years, favors the slow torture of "civil death," or life imprisonment without parole.) Death penalty pushers in Albany are only one vote short of the 100 needed to reconnect the electric chair. And if legal lynching is restored in New York, the 12 other states holding out will be under tremendous pressure to follow suit. It is in this supercharged atmosphere that a horrible gang rape of a white woman by black and Hispanic youth took place in Central Park.



WV Photo

At about 10 p.m. on April 19, the 28-year-old woman investment banker and Upper East Side resident jogging at the north end of Central Park was brutally beaten with a pipe, stabbed, repeatedly raped and left for dead. The attackers

were the hard core of a larger bunch of marauders who earlier in the evening had numbered over 30. They attacked nine others, including mugging two Hispanics and harassing a black man. As the woman lay in a coma, the media



Laffont/Gamma

Militant contingent at Chicago protest against death penalty, April 8, fights to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, black political prisoner on death row in Pennsylvania.

went into a frenzy. The front page of the *Daily News* howled that the alleged rapists were a "wolf pack." The press all talked of "wilding," supposedly part of the street speech of the rap generation,

continued on page 8

Eyewitness Kabul

Afghan Women Fight for Their Lives



Afghan women, determined to defend their social emancipation, volunteered for women's militia organized by Kabul government.

Interview with Val Moghadam

The eyes of the world are today focused on the provincial city of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan. The imperialist rulers and their cutthroat *mujahedin* ("holy warriors") have failed so far to take this city after nine weeks of bitter siege and murderous bombardment. For Washington this is a humiliating setback to their plans to rout the Soviet-backed People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and reimpose a regime of mullahs, tribal chiefs and landlords on the long-suffering peoples of this country. For the working people internationally, the heroic defense of Jalalabad is part of the struggle for elementary rights and social progress.

At stake in this war is nothing less than the rights of women to read and write, to work, to receive medical care, indeed to live. Throughout modern history, the degree of emancipation for women has been a measuring rod of social progress. Should the CIA and its *mujahedin* win, it would mean not only a raging

continued on page 3

The Massacre of MOVE



13 May 1985

May 13 marks the fourth anniversary of the police bombing of the radical MOVE commune in West Philadelphia. Eleven black people, including five children, were devoured in the fiery inferno, and a black neighborhood turned to ash. Democratic mayor Wilson Goode gave the order, the FBI supplied the C-4 explosives, Philly cops dropped the bomb on the house, then opened up with 10,000 rounds of machine-gun and rifle fire to drive back into the flames those who sought to escape. Reagan's top cop Ed Meese cited this state terrorism as a "good example" for other police to follow.

The Mother's Day 1985 siege of Osage Avenue began as a cop bullhorn delivered the message: "Attention MOVE. This is America." Racist capitalist America, where mass murder of black people is officially sanctioned. Today, the criminals who carried out this state murder are free while Ramona Africa remains behind bars for the "crime" of surviving the massacre, as do more than a dozen other members of the Africa family jailed earlier. Free the MOVE prisoners! The American workers revolution will avenge the MOVE martyrs!



TROTSKY

Revolutionary Awakening of the Women of the East

The CIA's "holy warriors" in Afghanistan aim at the re-enslavement of women, their seclusion behind the walls of the home and the veil, symbol of their degradation in traditional Islamic society. Speaking at Moscow's Communist University of the Toilers of the East in 1924, Trotsky recognized that the liberation of women was both a powerful force for and historic task of social revolution in Asia.



LENIN

Leninism meets with a passionate response among workingwomen who are the most oppressed section of society. When I read about the success of one of your female students in Kazan among the illiterate Tatar women, I was reminded of my recent short visit to Baku where I heard for the first time a Turkomen Communist woman, and had an opportunity to observe in the hall the enthusiasm of hundreds of such women, who having heard our message of liberation had awakened to a new life. I realized then for the first time that women will play a more important role in the liberation movement of the East than in Europe and here in Russia [applause]. This will be the case for the simple reason that Eastern women are even more oppressed and entangled in age-long prejudices than men....

Eastern women, who under present conditions are enslaved and thwarted in all their desires and ambitions, will, with the removal of the veil, see themselves deprived of all spiritual support because of the newly arisen economic conditions. They will thirst for new ideas and a new consciousness capable of allotting them their proper place in society. Believe me, there will be no better comrade in the East and no better champion of the ideas of revolution and communism than the awakened workingwoman [applause].

—Leon Trotsky, "Prospects and Tasks in the East" (April 1924)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS Liz Gordon

EDITOR Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER Jorge Ramirez

CIRCULATION MANAGER Jon Lawrence

EDITORIAL BOARD George Foster, Liz Gordon, Frank Hunter, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, Jan Norden, Jorge Ramirez, James Robertson, Reuben Samuels, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer, Marjorie Stenberg, Noah Wilner

Workers Vanguard (USPS 098-770) published biweekly, except 2nd issue August and with 3-week interval December by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 41 Warren Street, New York, NY 10007 Telephone 732-7862 (Editorial), 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116 Domestic subscriptions \$7.00/24 issues. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers Vanguard Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint

No. 477

12 May 1989

Tribute to the May 13th Martyrs

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

A police-constructed bomb floats down, from the whipping blades of a state cop helicopter, to erupt into a fireball, to explode into a firestorm of black death.

By dawn, smoldering rocks remain.

By daybreak, scattered skeletons sit amidst oceans of ashes.

May 13th, 1985 remembered—the state bombing of men, women and babies of the MOVE organization in Philadelphia.

Several years later, this day of infamy is marked by silence, not the silent moment of tribute, but the silence of stealth, the silence of the state, the silence of death.

Today, we break that silence, with a celebration of memory to the May 13th martyrs—good, strong rebels all who stood tall in resistance to the evils of this hypocritical system.

Radical 'Rad, bright-eyed, coffee-colored, whose rapid-fire rap could inspire, or agitate, depending on his intent;

Dimpled, freckled-face Tree, full of infectious laughter, whose giggle could trigger a landslide of fun;

Shy Rhon, who spoke softly, but with an underlying firmness that would bend steel;

Visionary Vinnie, whose deep voice could rise to a whistling cackle, in a matter of minutes;

Greybeard Ray, quiet, steady, dependable;

Little baby-boy Tomasso, who loved the simple, childish joy of running, the wind whipping thru his thick, straight, brown hair;

Naturalist Minister, Nick, committed, serious, soft-spoken Teacher;

They, and more, tried to escape the Oven of Osage, and were forced back, back, back into a certain fiery death, by police marksmen. A foul cloud still rises over Osage—the stench of a state set-up, and cover-up, at all levels of government.

The state's mission—to liquidate MOVE, using FBI-supplied high explosives; ATF-provided high-calibre weapons; and state police-manned & governor-approved air support, by helicopter.

MOVE's mission—to expose the naked injustice inherent in this system; to show the utter barbarity of this baby-killing, bloodthirsty system; and to bring attention to unjustly imprisoned MOVE men and women, some serving up to 100 years.

Both the system and MOVE can claim successes and losses.

The system showed it could plan, and execute premeditated mass murder of MOVE rebels; MOVE could point to this and other state atrocities to show its description of the deeply unjust nature of the system was quite true. Only in a MOVE case could U.S. and District Attorneys claim inability to define a crime as clear as this premeditated case of gov't terrorism.

Just as this system of injustice could not avenge these crimes committed by the system, people cannot expect the system to portray them as the worthy martyrs they are. This, only the people can do.

For my part, I offer this poem: "May 13th Remembered":

*Red tongues of flame lick angry night skies;
Politicians play blind and deaf to the cries—
Skin blisters, hair ablaze,
Smoking babies stumble, in a daze;
Firemen watch, as flames go higher,
Cops shoot, adding human fuel to the fire;
"No One Must Escape!" they bellow in rage,
Sending Africas back into burning Osage;
And what did state/federal judges decide?
"Mass murder is no crime, no one will be tried!"
So the Bombing remains, without resolution.
Clear to all—U.S. "justice" is an illusion.*

From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.



Bodies of eleven members of MOVE commune, including five children, incinerated in police assault, are pulled from burned-out building.

Eyewitness Kabul...

(continued from page 1)

hloodhath against women and all modernizing forces in Afghanistan. It would point a dagger at the greatest victory history has seen for the working class and all oppressed—the 1917 Russian Revolution which wrested one-sixth of the world out of the hands of the capitalist class. Nowhere is the treachery of the Kremlin's striving to appease imperialist reaction more clearly revealed today than in Gorbachev's pullout of Soviet troops from its southern neighbor.

Workers Vanguard is pleased to present the following interview with Val Moghadam, a Middle East sociologist who has written and lectured extensively on Iran and Afghanistan. She recently returned from a two-week visit to Kabul as part of a research project on the condition of women in Afghanistan. In a letter to the *New York Times* (18 April) following her return, she denounced continuing American and Pakistani support for the murderous war on Afghan women, and observed, "Party members I spoke with, including teen-age girls, are armed and ready to fight to defend the country from a mujahedeen takeover."

Moghadam explained to *WV*: "My political background was one that was anti-imperialist, anti-dictatorial, and also sympathetic to the Soviet Union." Shortly after her birth, her parents left Iran as a result of the 1953 coup engineered by the CIA against the left-nationalist Mossadeq regime, which installed the bloody shah Reza Pahlavi. The family returned in 1963, and Val lived there for the next dozen years. In the years preceding the overthrow of the shah's dictatorship by Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution" in early 1979, she worked within the Iranian exile left, particularly that wing of the Iranian Students Association of the U.S. which supported the Organization of Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerrillas.

Val Moghadam's firsthand account of the situation in Kabul highlights the determination of Afghan women and supporters of social progress to fight to the death against the *mujahedin* reactionaries. She describes in graphic detail how attempts by the modernizing left nationalists of the PDPA to institute what for Afghanistan were far-reaching reforms, centered on liberating women from centuries-old enslavement, ran head on into entrenched feudal/tribal reaction on the eve of the December 1979 Soviet intervention. The backwardness of Afghan society—where a tiny urban proletariat was vastly outnumbered by the mullahs, khans and landlords—meant the domestic social base for elementary reforms was limited in the extreme.

Precisely for this reason and because military defense of the Soviet workers state was posed, the international Spartacist tendency said at the time of the intervention: Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Soviet troops prevented a massacre of all those who want to bring



Women learn to read and write in literacy campaign by left-nationalist Kabul government. CIA-backed reactionaries rose up against women's rights: *mujahedin* cutthroat shoots schoolteacher (right).

Afghanistan into the 20th century. But the Stalinist bureaucracy refused to commit itself to a decisive military victory over the *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. Where Washington poured a half million troops into Indochina in a bloody attempt to prevent social revolution in a country halfway around the globe, Moscow temporized with the possibility of promoting social revolution right on its border. They committed only 100,000 troops and held back the pace and scale of reforms.

Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan was not belated, as Val Moghadam and elements of the PDPA she cites have concluded, but far too premature. We pointed out early on that a prolonged Soviet army occupation would bring with it "the possibility of its transformation along the lines of Soviet Central Asia or Mongolia" (*Spartacist* No. 29, Summer 1980). In what is today Soviet Central Asia, a region which in the early 1920s was just as backward as Afghanistan, it took the armed power of the Red Army to break the opposition of the *mujahedin*'s predecessors, the murderous *hasmachi*, and pave the way to revolutionary social transformation.

Third World nationalists would have it that both Vietnam and Afghanistan were "national liberation" struggles. However, in Afghanistan the banner of "national liberation"—directed against the liberating Soviet forces—was seized early on by the imperialist-backed reactionaries. The anti-Soviet left was more than happy to tail along in their wake. But the struggle for social revolution is necessarily internationalist and, in the particular circumstances of Afghanistan, one requiring international assistance for a successful conclusion.

Kabul is today a haven for thousands of exiled leftists from Pakistan and Iran. It is particularly incumbent on socialists in those countries—where significant proletarian forces do exist—to oppose the imperialist and Islamic fundamentalist war on Afghanistan and fight for workers revolution against their own bourgeoisies. Our support for military victory against CIA-backed reactionaries in Afghanistan and our campaign for material aid to the victims of the *mujahedin* siege are part and parcel of the struggle for world socialist revolution, and for proletarian political

revolution against the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, to return the Soviet Union to the internationalist road of Lenin and Trotsky.

WV: The *chador*, or head-to-toe veil, is worn by women in Iran and Afghanistan. We've noted in our paper that it's a symbol of the enslavement of women in the Near East. Do you have any reminiscences or observations about it, either in Iran or Afghanistan?

Moghadam: When I was growing up in Iran, which was the 1960s and 1970s, the women of the social group that I

The insistence that women don the *chador*, etc. in the Afghan context is not only a negation of female sexuality and personality, rendering them anonymous as such, but it really is to render them silent. The veil in that context means you do not speak, you do not participate, you do not do anything. And women in Afghanistan are aware of this. The women in Kabul that I spoke to were very much aware of a) what had happened to their Iranian sisters after the Islamic revolution there, and b) what was happening to their own sisters in the refugee camps in Peshawar.

WV: Can you tell us what you saw during your trip?

Moghadam: What I saw in Afghanistan, in Kabul, when I was there for, unfortunately, a brief two-week period, confirmed some of my hypotheses and ideas that I've held, and also refuted some of the conventional wisdom. For example, there is a widely held view that the Najibullah government is actually a puppet regime, and has no support whatsoever. This is patently untrue. The Najibullah government is maybe the most popular government of the past at least ten years. It has a wider social base than previous governments. The party also has a much larger membership than it ever had before.

Another misconception is that the *mujahedin* are very popular, and that they're all over the place. There's one view, and this is something that the *mujahedin* have spread themselves, that there are 30,000 *mujahedin* in and around Kabul, and they have been there simply waiting for the Soviet troops to leave, so that they can make their move and just take over. Well, they haven't made their move, except for several terrorist actions, which they've been doing over the years anyway. If there are *mujahedin* supporters in Kabul—there are, by the way, and I met some—they are certainly not in a strong enough position to take over the city.

In Kabul itself I came across a wide range of perspectives vis-à-vis the government and the party. People that I spoke with on the streets and in the bazaar, in shops, held views that ranged from deeply sympathetic to the *mujahedin* and hostile to the governing party, to exactly the opposite. The men tended to be more sympathetic, or at least to express their sympathies for the *mujahedin*. The women I spoke with also had various perspectives, that is to say, they were very sympathetic to the government, or they were critical of the government and they tended to support [the former king] Zahir Shah. But not a single woman actually said to me that she would prefer the *mujahedin* to run the country.

That, I thought, was very interesting, and I think it also underscores again the centrality of the women's question in the Afghan case, because the revolution and the counterrevolution have been in a sense enacted on a field of gender. The women's question assumed paramount importance to the revolutionaries because they have wanted, obviously, to

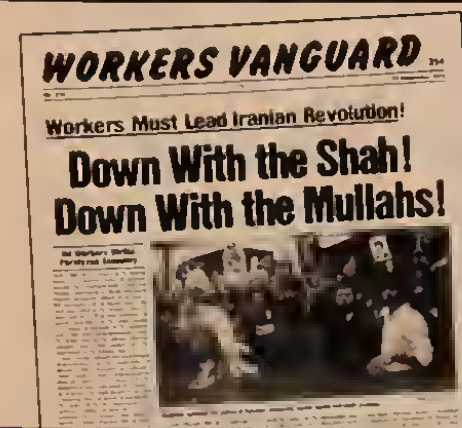
continued on page 4



Courtesy Val Moghadam
Val Moghadam in Kabul.

was a member of did not wear the *chador*. The *chador* in Teheran itself was worn principally by working-class or lower-middle-class, traditional petty-bourgeois, or urban poor women. Now what happened during the revolution, as you know, was that a lot of women oppositionists who hitherto had not been wearing the *chador* donned the *chador* as a symbol of opposition. I thought at the time and I think now that it was a poor choice of symbol. And what happened, of course, was that this symbol became imposed. It became part of the new political and moral restructuring of society by the new Islamic regime.

If the question of the *chador* and the veil was actually very important in Iran—it was a big mistake that certainly Iranian leftists and progressives, and of course international ones too, did not make a bigger issue of it at the time than they did—then it's that much more important to raise this as an issue in the Afghan case. Precisely because it's going to be that much worse for women in the Afghanistan case. And that's because the Islamicists in Afghanistan, or the *mujahedin*, whether they're based in Pakistan or Iran, are very much opposed to any kind of female participation in politics.



Swimming against the stream: 17 November 1978 *WV* called for workers revolution in Iran, opposing the bloody shah and Khomeini's Islamic reaction; 11 January 1980 *WV* supported Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the face of imperialist hysteria.

Eyewitness Kabul...

(continued from page 3)

enhance women's status and increase their rights. But the women's question was also paramount to the counterrevolutionaries, precisely because they were against this, and they wanted women to return to a socially inferior position.

WV: Can you give us some examples of the measures toward women's emancipation that have been taken since 1978? There have been reports that the Afghan government has been pulling back from these progressive steps in the interests of "national reconciliation." On the other hand, on February 5, it was announced that a women's militia was being formed.

Moghadam: The government of Noor Mohammed Taraki in 1978 instituted a number of reforms which, in the Afghan context, were very radical; there were measures that sought to increase women's rights and to enhance their status. The measures were mostly related to the dangerous—in the context of Islamic law—area of family law, such things as marriage, polygamy, divorce, child custody.

In Afghanistan, there is also the issue of the bride price. Now, what the government tried to do in 1978 was to discourage the practice of bride price, because in many parts of Afghanistan this had been translated into the selling of girls by their fathers, and the buying of girls by prospective grooms. The government sought to discourage this, not by banning it outright, but by placing a ceiling on the amount that could be used for the bride price. This turned out to have been very unpopular, certainly unpopular with the men. And apparently also unpopular with some women who felt, curiously, that they were being devalued. Customs and traditions are very difficult to deal with. As we know from other contexts, oppressed peoples and groups, including women, tend to internalize their oppression.

Another area in which the government sought to institute some wide-ranging reforms was the area of polygamy, where they sought to ban it. There was also an outcry over that, mainly again from the men. At the same time, the government fought to encourage the education and employment of women. Education was very important, given that 99 percent of Afghan women were illiterate at the time. So what the



Women carry portrait of Khomeini in anti-shah demonstration, 1978. Fake-leftists claimed the veil was a "symbol of resistance," yet chador perpetuates oppression and social isolation of women.

government decided to do was to institute a fairly aggressive literacy campaign, directed in the first instance at girls. Henceforth, there was going to be compulsory literacy and education. Well, this too resulted in a great deal of resistance, again on the part of the men. Literacy workers, including women employees of the Afghan women's organization, were killed, as well as teachers, etc. This was happening as early as summer 1978.

Now, as a result of the backlash and reaction to these reforms in the areas of women's rights in particular, the government retreated somewhat. I think that the government leaders were somewhat taken aback, you see, at this type of reaction. In other parts of the world, peasants, villagers, revolt for these sorts of things. They revolt precisely for the sort of land reform that the Afghan government also tried to implement, which also was not successful and met with resistance on the part of villagers and peasants.

The authorities were taken aback by this, and there was a great deal of internal tension and dissension over what to do and the way forward. They lifted the ban on polygamy, so now it is allowed for the general population. But party members are prohibited from taking a second wife—thank goodness for small things. In fact, when I was there in February, I was speaking with a party member who was on the Politburo, and he explained to me that two weeks prior to this conversation, the central committee had met and decided to expel a long-standing party member, someone

who had been a member since the early days, in the mid-'60s, because he had decided to take on a second wife. I was actually very surprised by the fact that this man had been a party member for 20 years and still had not learned the most elementary things about male-female relations and the question of equality, but there you go.

Compulsory education was also abrogated, and it is now again a voluntary issue. The bride price was also put aside or ignored after a while. So the rhetoric is certainly not as radical as it was in 1978-79. It's a very difficult issue though, because especially in this period of national reconciliation they have to court certain non-left-wing, non-socialist political and social forces. So a year and a half ago when they were writing up the new constitution, the party members were sitting around a table with non-Marxist and non-Communist armed social groups who had decided to form, to join, this program for national reconciliation, and join also a coalition government. And the party members wanted the new constitution to have a clause that stated expressly and very directly that men and women are equal in our society. Well, this was voted down.

But there was a compromise that, all right, there won't be a separate clause stating that men and women are equal, but that elsewhere in the constitution, in the context of the rights and duties and obligations and privileges, there will be a clause that says "men and women."

WV: In the midst of this call for national reconciliation, it appears that there's a

widespread awareness that this is a fight to the death. Can you give us your impression of the mood in Kabul?

Moghadam: I had gone there expecting to encounter an anxious and depressed population. Far from that, I encountered a very upbeat mood, a confident air about all the party and government people I met. While they are very, very much aware of the danger posed by the *mujahedin* and in particular by continued arms flow to the *mujahedin* by the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, etc., and they would not trivialize that danger whatsoever, they are also very confident of their own ability to stand firm and to fight. People other than government and party people that I talked with in Kabul also generally went about their business as usual. Their lives were not going to be interrupted by the war, and at any rate, the war really hadn't reached Kabul by that time. Now after I left, the problems of food shortages and such actually did get worse.

I think that this confidence and optimism are also related to the fact that the party really is in a better situation than it was several years ago, and certainly ten years ago, that it does have a larger base, and more supporters, and that the party is stronger. This growth, paradoxically, has been going on during this eight- or nine-year period of Soviet presence. Over the past eight years, the PDPA has been building institutional supports. They've been building certain social organizations, such as expanding the women's organization, which is formally called the Women's Council, as well as trade unions, associations of teachers, journalists, etc. and the youth organization, which is one of the strongest and most militant of the social organizations.

WV: A few years ago a German women's group, Amnesty for Women, had set up clinics in the refugee camps in Pakistan. They had been pro-*mujahedin* and came face to face with the *mujahedin's* treatment of women in those camps, but they never were able to transcend their support to the *mujahedin*, lining up behind their government's support for the U.S.-backed side. Can you give us some examples that you had heard about in your trip about *mujahedin* atrocities, and any observations about this group or the women's movement in general, and their attitude toward Afghanistan.

Moghadam: Unfortunately, there's been a concerted effort, I think, internationally, to make the *mujahedin* look good, and to make the government and the party look bad. In actual fact, the

Aid to Victims of CIA's Afghan Cutthroats

"The Defense of Jalalabad Is Crucial"

The following statement in support of the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund launched by the Partisan Defense Committee was received from Val Moghadam.

Your campaign in support of Jalalabad is quite impressive, especially for the help you are extending to the civilians. The defense of Jalalabad is crucial. The confidence and optimism that I encountered in Kabul in January-February would dissipate in a minute if Jalalabad fell. The *mujahedin's* inability to take the city has raised questions about their strength and their popularity. For years the *mujahedin* and their Western supporters have been saying that the minute the Soviet troops left, the "puppet regime" would fall and the people of Afghanistan would rise and welcome the *mujahedin* with open arms.

Well, why hasn't that happened yet? Why hasn't that happened in Jalalabad? This also suggests that the Government and the Army are in a much better position than casual observers and *mujahedin* supporters would like to believe. It confirms that the Government really does have staying power, and that the Army does have the ability to fight.

Nonetheless, the *mujahedin* are pressing on. Strategically and symbolically, Jalalabad is important, which is why they haven't let go. Americans ought to know about the human suffering entailed, and of their government's involvement in prolonging war and suffering in Afghanistan. Now that the press has documented that U.S. advisers were actually involved in the planning of the attack on Jalalabad, Americans should demonstrate their moral outrage over such conduct.

In this regard, I am most impressed and encouraged by what the PDC has been doing: exposing the U.S.-Pakistan-*mujahedin* collaboration in the war against the Afghan people, extending financial assistance to

the civilians of Jalalabad, and supporting Afghan women's rights. What you are doing is very important, and uniquely good.

Val Moghadam

Call for aid to Afghan civilian victims

The Partisan Defence Committee (PDC) has

ASIAN TIMES
28 April 1989

heavy fighting for some weeks

Mujahedin make a desperate attempt to capture hold a major order to try and up their sinking city. Launching their the PDC state, it would happen the 'holy war' financed and the 'holy war' officials condemned. We call urgently on all defenders of women's

by Thatcher — won the war over Afghanistan? Women enslaved to the veil. School teachers shot, 'Adulterers' stoned, 'Blasphemers' executed. Foreign political refugees murdered. Minor government officials condemned. We call urgently on all defenders of women's

social progress to materially aid the victims of Washington's bloody crusade. Your contribution will send a message of international solidarity to those who are prepared to fight to the death against the CIA's cutthroats. The Partisan Defence

currently centred on Jalalabad, a "strategic city whose fall would open the road to Kabul." They highlight the atrocities being inflicted on civilians by rebels armed to the teeth by the USA and backed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and other countries.

Britain's foremost English-language Asian weekly ran front-page story on PDC campaign for Jalalabad.

mujahedin have been astonishingly brutal. There are certain human rights organizations, for example, which have made huge cases about the violation of human rights by the government and by the Soviets. But they have ignored the extremely brutal and really astonishingly horrific way that the *mujahedin* have dealt with their own prisoners: they have treated Soviet prisoners with mind-hogging cruelty, all sorts of things like skinning alive, and cutting tongues, and keeping them in cages, and making them act like animals.

They have treated the population of certain cities or certain towns which have not gone over to their side with a great deal of brutality. They attacked the city of Kunduz twice last fall and they actually killed quite a number of the townspeople there. They also blew up an orphanage in that town, because the orphanage held children who were "orphans of martyrs," martyrs in this case being pro-government people in particular. And several years before that they had sent an assassination team to kill a very famous Afghan singer and dancer, whose name escapes me right now, but she's very popular, and her earlier performances are still shown on television. She was warned by the *mujahedin* to stop singing and dancing because this was unbecoming of a woman, and she ignored that. For this they killed her.

So a lot of women that I talked with in Kabul were aware of these stories, because of course they're highly publicized within Afghanistan. So people are aware of this in certainly the major cities of Afghanistan as well as in towns and villages. Which is precisely why many villagers have organized what are called self-defense brigades: sometimes they are pro-government and pro-party, sometimes they're not, but they're definitely against the *mujahedin*. So they defend themselves and they defend those areas and those regions against any kind of *mujahedin* incursion.

Understandably, women are particularly alarmed by these types of stories and terrorist actions, which is why the party women have responded to the call for military training and the appeal that party members arm themselves. It was actually voluntary for the women, but my sources tell me that all the party women decided to attend the military training classes; they learned how to use the weapons, and now keep weapons at home. I met teenage girls, party members and members of the democratic youth organizations, who told me that they too had undergone the classes and were armed.

WV: In a recent article in *Against the Current*, you took the left to task for supporting the CIA's holy warriors. The international Spartacist tendency has opposed this from the beginning. I was wondering what you thought of our slogan posed back in 1980, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan"?

Moghadam: I wouldn't have put it quite that way. But when I was in Kabul in February, party people that I spoke with all seemed to concur that the intervention on the part of the Red Army was necessary at that time. There was no alternative but for the Soviet troops to enter to prevent the situation from deteriorating any further and from collapsing, and to prevent the power shift in favor of the *mujahedin* and their international supporters. However, most party people also agreed that the fact that the troops stayed on for so long was not particularly helpful. The

But I also see some unintended positive consequences of all of this. Under the auspices of the Soviet military, the party has been able to expand its base and to engage in certain types of activities and organization which they weren't doing or weren't able to do in the earlier years. They have, for example, strengthened the state itself. And that in and of itself is very important, because there has never been a strong state in Afghanistan. This was always a problem when governments tried to implement any kind of reforms.

WV: We saw the Soviet intervention as necessary, as part of our defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism, that it was necessary to stabilize its ally on its southern flank. And that it posed the possibility of extending certain social gains to the peoples of Afghanistan. That in Afghanistan there wasn't a proletariat or a social base to carry out the



Stewart-Smith/Reflex

Mujahedin loot body of government soldier outside Jalalabad, where their siege has been stymied for nine weeks.

mujahedin were able to use this as a way to claim that the struggle was a national liberation struggle, as opposed to what it really was, which was a civil war between the forces for social change and progress vs. the reactionary forces for tradition, patriarchy and the status quo.

So it seems to me that the intervention was necessary at the time, given the domestic situation and given all the external intervention and machinations on the part of the Islamic regime in Iran, the Pakistanis, the Chinese, the Americans, the Saudi Arabians. But I also think that the presence of the Soviet Army should not have been prolonged the way it was, that the party people are correct in saying that there were these unintended negative consequences.

reforms we mentioned earlier. The left's response in prettifying and glorifying the *mujahedin*, we feel, is based on anti-Soviet prejudices. What do you think about this?

Moghadam: The left's support for the *mujahedin*, especially European left-wing support which, I understand, has been greater than American left support, has certainly to do with anti-Sovietism. A lot of the European left has become increasingly anti-Soviet over the past few years, and some of them have also become increasingly anti-communist. So, for example, you have a newspaper like *Libération* of Paris which is very radical, which considers itself very left, and also has a real third-worldist slant—in fact, I met one of their

reporters in Kabul—but would clearly define itself as anti-communist and anti-Soviet. So their editorial line is pro-*mujahedin*.

In the United States, it seems to me, there hasn't been enough attention given to the question of Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the presence of the Soviet troops there clouded the central issue, and therefore made a lot of progressives and leftists and potential supporters very confused. Some of them apparently decided that, well, the *mujahedin* have a right to defend themselves; others decided not to take a position. I think that if people analyze the situation a bit more they would realize that what is at stake in Afghanistan really is whether or not this country is going to join the 20th century, and whether or not rights can be extended to women.

So that's what the real issue is about. It's about change vs. reaction, meaningful social transformation vs. ossified patriarchal structures. So I think that it's misguided and mistaken for American leftists not to take a position on that. It's also misguided because it's actually more important than they think. It certainly has been very important to the CIA. CIA funding of the *mujahedin* has actually exceeded their funding of the Nicaraguan contras.

I think that part of the Reagan administration's conceptualization of regional politics was that Pakistan and Zia ul-Haq, while he was there and while he was alive, was going to do something similar to what Nixon had wanted the shah to do, which was play regional gendarme, play bullyboy for the American government. And that's what Pakistan continues to do, even under this new, apparently more benign administration of Benazir Bhutto. By all accounts her policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan is not going to change. So Americans should also try to get their government out of the regional politics in South Asia, and in particular discourage Pakistan from being interventionist and expansionist.

WV: Well, for the American government, the interest is that Afghanistan is on the Soviet border, and they've never given up their dreams of overturning the gains of the October Revolution. They've poured billions into supporting the Afghan rebels because they take great joy in spilling Russian blood without committing any troops. And that's why we feel it's incumbent upon workers and leftists around the world to defend the gains of October against U.S. imperialism, against Western imperialism. ■

Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund

We list here the contributions from April 9 to May 5 to the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund (JCVAF), launched by the Partisan Defense Committee and joined by fraternal legal and social defense organizations in Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Italy and West Germany. A separate account has been established in each country for the fund drive. All funds collected are securely forwarded to the "Victims of Jalalabad" account established by the Afghan Embassy in Paris as donations clear the accounts. All administrative costs and any costs for publicity connected with the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund campaign are being paid by the respective legal and social defense organizations in each country. Contributors receive numbered receipts, and the financial records of the fund drive are open to inspection by any bona fide workers organization. Listed are the amounts transmitted to the Afghan Embassy account, the amounts deposited in JCVAF accounts but not yet cleared, and the sum of these amounts which equals the total collected in each country. This is reported in each country's currency and in U.S. dollars, shown in brackets, at the exchange rate in effect on 5 May 1989.

	Donations Transmitted	+	Donations Deposited (Not yet cleared)	=	Total Collected
Australia					
Partisan Defence Committee	A \$1,789.13		A \$223.39		A \$2,012.52
Receipts Nos. 1-13	[\$1,431.30]		[\$178.71]		[\$1,610.01]
Britain					
Partisan Defence Committee	£ 2,196.63		£ 509.91		£ 2,706.54
Receipts Nos. 1-100 & 2/1-2/22	[\$3,674.96]		[\$853.08]		[\$4,528.04]
Canada					
Partisan Defence Committee	C \$2,276.84		C \$854.49		C \$3,131.33
Receipts Nos. 95401-95460	[\$1,924.39]		[\$722.21]		[\$2,646.60]
France					
Comité de défense sociale	FF 16,550.80		FF 7,074.30		FF 23,625.10
Receipts Nos. 1/1-1/50 & 2/1-2/5	[\$2,586.89]		[\$1,105.71]		[\$3,692.60]
Italy					
Comitato di difesa sociale e proletaria	L. 1,723,565		L. 0		L. 1,723,565
Receipts Nos. 1-78	[\$1,244.41]				[\$1,244.41]
United States					
Partisan Defense Committee	US \$6,784.86		US \$2,174.13		US \$8,958.99
Receipts Nos. 5001-5087					
West Germany					
Komitee für soziale Verteidigung	DM 5,657.75		DM 0.00		DM 5,657.75
Receipts Nos. 1-55	[\$2,981.07]				[\$2,981.07]
International Totals (in US dollars)	\$20,627.88		\$5,033.84		\$25,661.72

Young Spartacus

CUNY Students Take the Streets

Continued from page 12

their approval and marched over 80 blocks, stopping traffic from the Brooklyn Bridge to midtown Manhattan. Throughout the day they appealed to the city's powerful unions to join them, noting the budget cuts were directed against all working people. Later came hard work's reward—half an hour before the midnight deadline Cuomo vetoed the tuition hike.

For 12 days students had held their ground with open-mike rallies and issued daily strike update bulletins, occupying more than a dozen CUNY administration buildings in the face of NYC mayor Koch's threat to mount a cop attack on the protests. Recognizing that with his veto Cuomo simply tossed the hot potato back to the state legislature with instructions to gut the budget for public education in other ways, student leaders insisted on action on their other demands such as childcare, no layoffs of faculty and staff, no cutbacks in programs, and rescinding the tuition hike for foreign students (who already pay double the fees of American citizens). And rather than folding up the occupations, the students held out until they won amnesty for all protesters.

For many students this was their first political protest, and it was a hard-fought battle for their future and present survival. Though the strategy was that of pressure politics directed at the liberal Cuomo, who claimed to share their opposition to education cuts, the students saw their struggle as a fight for the working class and minorities against a system that was screwing them. The May Day strike bulletin decried:

"...the rampant homelessness... on all the CUNY campuses. There are thousands of CUNY students who, through a single stroke of ill fortune, are living in their student lounges or club rooms while taking showers in the gym locker rooms. The conservative estimate is 4,500 homeless college students on CUNY campuses. Also of concern in our takeovers is the \$110 million in grants and endowments to private universities made by the State, while



Hunter College students participate in largest, most integrated student protests in decades.

cutting the budget of its public trust institutions (CUNY) by \$54 million. Where is the fairness and wisdom in this?"

Another leaflet stated, "For almost 130 years, tuition at City College was free. ... Many students have pointed out that when the campus was predominantly white, there was no tuition. Now that the students are predominantly Black, Latino and Asian, they are required to pay ever increasing tuition."

New York Spartacus Youth Club members jumped in from day one, addressed rallies to mobilize support for the building occupations and class boycotts, and issued a leaflet which we reprint below.

"Knowledge unfits a child to be a slave. I instinctively assented to the proposition, and from that moment I understood the direct pathway from slavery to freedom." So spoke the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass who felt the lash of his master's whip for daring to learn how to read and write.

Today's whip is the budget ax, wielded against black, working-class and foreign-born youth who face huge tuition hikes at lousy schools. Militant protests including building occupations and boycotts of classes have spread like brush fires throughout the CUNY system. And while the students are angry, the bankers are smiling. They rewarded Cuomo for the state's killer cuts by giving New York its highest bond ratings in years.

It's a deliberate, deeply racist program. First they went for the foreign students, doubling tuition for the many Haitians, Dominicans and other youth whose families fled U.S.-sponsored dictatorships and starvation austerity imposed by the International Monetary Fund. Now they're after everybody, levying a \$200 tuition increase. Nearly half of all CUNY students come from families with incomes under \$12,000 a year and many support families of their own. Making it into a city college is the last, fake chance they have for a better life. It's a cruel hoax because many of those who make it through school often can't find jobs and are trapped in a life of desperate poverty and unemployment.

The message is clear: black youth are expendable. Greedy corporate bosses have run American industry into the ground while lining their own pockets. There's no jobs so they don't need or want educated youth. The walking racist outrage, Ed Koch, vowed he wants more prisons, not schools. Black and Hispanic youth are the scapegoats for everything in the rotten apple, trapped in ghettos that have become lifetime holding pens terrorized by the racist police. Across the country, blacks are fast becoming missing persons on college campuses. Black enrollment is plummeting even at a time when the number of black high school graduates is rising. To open up education to working-class and minority youth, the Spartacus Youth Club fights for open admissions, no tuition and a living stipend for all students. The private bastions of race and class privilege, like Columbia, ought to be nationalized. Against illusions in the university administration, we fight for student/

teacher/workers control of the universities. Abolish the Board of Trustees!

This country used to have a relatively democratic public education system—a product of the Civil War and struggles by the ethnically diverse working class for social reform. Virtually every advance in education was wrested through hard class struggle. Universal education began in earnest in this country after a fight by the union movement against the wretched conditions of child labor. The last gesture by the capitalist rulers to improve education came after the Russians launched the Sputnik satellite in 1957. Then the anti-Soviet war drive dictated, among other things, teaching some math and science in school. The nuclear nuts running the country today recall the Spanish fascist slogan: "Down with Intelligence, Long Live Death!" On the "home front" they loot social services and hurt unions to fill their war chests and aim to turn a generation of youth into ignorant, obedient cannon fodder. Abroad, their victims include schoolteachers, women and young girls in Afghanistan who are murdered by the CIA's mullah cutthroats for the "crime" of learning how to read.

Reliance on so-called friends in the Democratic Party will not alleviate the bleak conditions faced by working-class and minority youth. Today, liberal Democrats are united with right-wing



Students chanted, "Cuomo went to CUNY for free—Now he wants to raise our fee!"

Republicans in gutting the last minimal measures of social welfare in this country. Even a basic thing like the right to an education requires a revolutionary fight. To win, students must ally with the integrated labor movement because labor has social power. The working people built the wealth of this country and it is their labor that keeps it running. What we need is a class-struggle 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 can begin to build a planned, socialist, egalitarian society on an international scale. Winning students and youth to this struggle is what the Trotskyist Spartacus Youth Club is all about. Join us! ■



Spartacus Youth Club contingent at May 2 protest.

Young Spartacus

Minuteman Thugs Thwarted, Student Struggle Escalates

UMass Amherst

AMHERST, May 6—False charges of assault were dropped last week in Northampton District Court against three supporters of the Spartacus Youth Club who helped to repel a violent right-wing assault on an anti-Klan meeting held on campus in early February. The right-wingers, affiliated with the racist, anti-gay and anti-communist *Minuteman* newspaper, disrupted the meeting and assaulted participants during a discussion of the November 5 anti-Klan mobilization in Philadelphia. After their attempt to terrorize this anti-racist meeting failed, the attackers called the cops, who shut the meeting down. Then the "Minutemen" brazenly tried to press bogus assault charges in court against their intended victims (see "Defend the Anti-Klan 3!" *IVV* No. 472, 3 March).

The right-wing thugs—who proclaim, "Come join the *Minuteman* and

take a shot at a communist"—thought they could attack socialists with impunity at this overwhelmingly white school, made notorious by a racist riot against black students after the 1986 World Series. Already they had attacked a public meeting sponsored by the Young Communist League and targeted a prominent gay activist for death threats. But the campaign to defend the Anti-Klan 3 successfully mobilized broad, organized opposition to the right-wing thugs, including a speak-out on March 13 which drew some 200 students, puncturing the seal of fear and intimidation the right-wingers had created.

The Spartacus Youth Club's vigilant defense of its rights was a victory for everybody in the cross hairs of the would-be campus contras. As part of the settlement, charges filed by the Anti-Klan 3 against their attackers were also dropped, but separate charges against four "Minutemen" stemming from a March 6 attack on two campus activists are still pending. Ted Chambers and

Robb Smith were attacked by a gang of right-wingers as they were distributing copies of a publication they had helped produce, the *Liberator*, which exposed Klan and neo-Nazi connections to *Minuteman*.

With the *Minuteman* crowd isolated on campus and student protests against militarism burgeoning, UMass Chancellor Joseph Duffey has unleashed campus and city police and state troopers against students demanding an end to military research at the university. A series of protests and sit-ins led by the Central America Solidarity Association and People for a Socially Responsible University has been met with brutal repression. So far 102 students have been arrested and charged with trespassing or "disorderly conduct." The *Boston Herald* (5 May) described the scene of cop violence May 4 as police carried out protesters sitting in at the Graduate Research Center:

"They were hand-carried to the bus, surrounded by more than 100 state, local and campus police officers in riot gear,

and about 200 cheering students. "When students attempted to prevent the bus from leaving, police formed a wedge, 10-deep in front of the bus, and pushed through the crowd. Most of the students quickly gave way. "But as police walked alongside the bus, the vehicle suddenly sped up and some officers began using clubs to hit students who apparently tried to block their progress. "At least three students were hit on the head by police officers holding clubs with their hands on each end."

Now Duffey wants the arrested student protesters to foot the bill for the extra "security" he hired to assault, club and arrest them!

While recognizing that the function of universities is to replenish the technical and ideological apparatus of capitalist class rule and that they are therefore tied by a thousand threads to the capitalist state, the Spartacus Youth Club opposes the direct use of the universities by the military and solidarizes with the protesters' demand for an end to military research. Military and cops off campus! Drop the charges against the anti-militarist protesters!

The SYC's fight to mobilize student opposition to the *Minuteman* gang has enhanced the possibilities for militant student struggle at UMass Amherst. We seek to win students to a fight against the whole system of racism, militarism and war defended by university administrations and glorified by the *Minuteman* cabal. Join us in the fight for socialism! ■

Pittston...

(continued from page 12)

Pittston's huge orders for metallurgical coal for Japan. The UMW must appeal to U.S. longshoremen and Japanese steel workers to "hot cargo" Pittston—seab coal is too hot to handle!

Pittston, the second-largest exporter of coal in the U.S., is out to break the union. Pittston chairman Paul Douglas was on the board of directors of Phelps Dodge when that company broke the strike of the Arizona copper miners in 1983-84. Pittston refuses to sign the industrywide contract, and is out to slash benefits and impose seven-day mining operations. When the UMW finally struck on April 5, after working 14 months without a contract, the company brought in an army of thugs and state troopers to try to run seab coal from its 30 mines and processing plants in the region.

Two days after the April 30 mass rally, the coal bosses and their hired strikebreakers struck back. As 600 pickets massed in the road to stop a convoy of seab coal trucks near the entrance to Pittston's Clinchfield Coal Moss No. 3 preparation plant in Russell County, a strikebreaking goon drove into the miners. He knocked them over "like bowling pins. Ain't no way it could have been an accident," said one picket who suffered three broken vertebrae. "He was out for blood." UMW spokesman Marty Hudson told the *Washington Post* (3 May) that the thug "drove forward into the crowd of miners, hurling one onto its roof, and then backed up, running off the road until it struck the three other pickets." Then the cops pulled shotguns on the strikers, arresting 140.

Any union leader worth his salt would have pulled out the entire UMW membership—which was what should have been done weeks ago. But not UMW president Richard Trumka. After the company gun thugs ran down the pickets, the UMW president proposed a seven-day cooling-off period with no picketing or other strike-related activities in exchange for a Pittston agreement not to produce or ship coal, an offer flatly rejected by company president Michael Odom. But Odom agreed to federal mediation of the strike and Trumka promptly accepted. By May 3 coal trucks were rolling in and out of



Don Petersen/Roanoke Times and World News

Class war in the coal fields: Pittston miners' mass picket stands up to state troopers called in by the bosses.

Moss No. 3 with no interference from pickets. And thanks to Trumka's restricting the strike to charges of "unfair labor practices" 500 UMW members are still working Pittston mines in Kentucky.

Throughout the U.S. labor movement, the United Mine Workers union is synonymous with hard class struggle against the bosses. John L. Lewis called the miners the "shock troops of American labor." But today Trumka & Co. spit on this tradition. As a sneering *Wall Street Journal* editorial (27 January) observed, "Until Mr. Trumka took over the UMW in 1982, the mine workers were barroom brawlers. Now, the Pittston campaign is being waged by numbers-crunching union leaders, more at home in suits than overalls and a miner's hat."

"Labor statesman" Trumka is sabotaging the strike, despite the courage and militancy of the miners. At the rally in Wise, Trumka and Democrat Jesse Jackson continually preached "non-violence," while company thugs and cops beat and arrest miners. Trumka intoned that "might does not make right." Well, "might" on the picket line is what has always won strikes in the coal fields. The UMW ranks are becoming increasingly impatient with pacifist, civil disobedience tactics of lying down in front of seab trucks to get arrested again and again. Miner Victor Gar-

wood, picketing Moss No. 3, told the press, "We're not a violent people, but when people come in and try to take your job you've got to stand up."

Trumka is sending miners out of the coal fields to plead with the banks in a "Corporate Campaign"-style consumer boycott. The "Corporate Campaign" has meant defeat for militant strikes from Hormel to International Paper. Now the UMW bureaucrats are appealing to Chase Manhattan Bank, owned by Rockefellerers who have generations of coal miners' blood on their hands, that "Bad Loans [to Pittston] Are Bad Business." But this year, after cutting off medical benefits to 1,500 retirees, widows and disabled miners, Pittston paid a blood dividend to its stockholders for the first time in six years.

The UMW ranks have paid a heavy price for their leaders' class collaboration. Half the union's jobs were wiped out during the Reagan years and tens of thousands were denied their black lung benefits. Today five Kentucky miners who were railroaded by the courts for defending their union's picket lines during the UMW's "selective strike" against A.T. Massey have been utterly abandoned by the union tops.

The stakes at Pittston are enormous. Union power is the difference between life and death in the mines. On May 2, at a non-union mine in Wise County, eight miners were badly injured when a rail

car crashed. The struggle against Pittston could open up a fight to bring unorganized mines into the union. What is lacking is a union leadership with the guts and a class-struggle program to match the ranks' willingness to fight. UMW militants must demand an industrywide strike and a standard union contract at every union pit. It was a five-day "memorial" strike by 120,000 UMW miners that won the long and bitter 1973 strike of the Brookside miners in Harlan, Kentucky. Pull out the entire UMW now! Defend the Kentucky miners! Victory to the Pittston strike! ■

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

Death Penalty...

(continued from page 1)

telegraphing the racist idea that black and Hispanic ghetto youth are sub-human, animals.

The bourgeois press and politicians are using a heinous criminal act to fuel the drive to restore capital punishment in much the same way Bush used the case of Willie Horton, a black man convicted of raping a white woman in Massachusetts, to paint Dukakis as soft on crime. A *New York Post* editorial headlined "Channel Your Outrage: Demand the Death Penalty." The *Daily News* kept it up with "Death for Teens: Pals," quoting New Hampshire Congressman Chuck Douglas who called for executing 16-year-olds accused of capital crimes, saying that youths like those accused of the Central Park rape are not the "children of folks like us." Currently, 91 percent of the inmates in New York City prisons are black and Hispanic.

The racist vitriol reached fever pitch when billionaire real estate speculator Donald Trump placed full-page ads in the four New York dailies May 1 demanding "Bring Back the Death Penalty. Bring Back Our Police!" It's a measure of Trump's fascist appeal that he tries to out-racist the racist pig Ed Koch, chiding him for being soft on crime:

"Mayor Koch has stated that hate and rancor should be removed from our hearts.... I want to hate these muggers and murderers. They should be forced to suffer and, when they kill, they should be executed for their crimes.... I want to hate these murderers.... CIVIL LIBERTIES END WHEN AN ATTACK ON OUR SAFETY BEGINS!"

This open call for race-hatred was a virtual advertisement for vigilantes and rent-a-racist politicians to "Dial T-R-U-M-P for Legal Murder." When former U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani praised Trump's ad, a couple of days later the casino king signed on as co-chairman of a \$500-a-plate Giuliani-for-mayor fund-raiser at the Waldorf-Astoria. The '89 NYC mayoralty race is shaping up to be a vote for death.

Working the other side of the race-hate street, in a radio interview black attorney Alton Maddox essentially called the Central Park rape a white "hoax." Maddox, who cynically pushed the Tawana Brawley rape hoax, was retained by FBI fink and dubious demagogue Al Sharpton to represent one of the accused. But many Harlem black residents expressed their disgust at the horrendous crime, holding a prayer vigil for the rape victim outside Metropolitan Hospital, even as they worried that the incident would bring down racist attacks against the community.

Contrary to what the *New York Times* claims, this case has everything to do with race and class—that's what makes it so explosive. Four of the eight youths arrested in the case are from the Schomburg Plaza high-rise at 110th Street on the northeast corner of Cen-



Partisan Defense Committee forum, April 29, New York City.

WV Photo

tral Park. This is where Harlem meets the Yupper East Side. Schomburg Plaza is a "middle income" (working-class) project surrounded by low-income projects and run-down tenements in an intensely impoverished area. Nowhere is the disparity between rich and poor, between white and black, so stark.

It is no surprise that such an area would produce grotesque social pathology, from the sprawling "crack" trade to depraved rampaging gangs. This reflects what has happened to ghettos across the U.S. in the last 15 years. No longer holding pens for the reserve army of unemployed, periodically brought into the labor market to keep wages down and the rate of exploitation up, today they have become dumping grounds for a permanently lumpenized layer written off by the capitalist ruling class. It will take a socialist revolution to break the vicious circle of oppression and violence.

The Central Park rape is one of those sensationalized crimes which crystallize widespread fears. Kitty Genovese, murdered while terrified neighbors heard her screams but did nothing. The Central Park strangling of Jennifer Levin by her preppie boyfriend who claimed she was sexually abusing him. And some of the most gruesome cases are by juveniles from the ranks of the poorest and most oppressed. After all, the world's armies are filled with young men geared up by society to kill. Life can seem very cheap to a 15-year-old, and nowhere is it cheaper than on the cop-terrorized streets of the ghettos.

It's a chilling comment on the quality of everyday life in the big city that ease-hardened New Yorkers were aghast at the naiveté of the young woman from the Pittsburgh suburbs who went jogging alone in the Park at 10 p.m. Anybody should be able to go anywhere. That applies to white women in Central Park and black men in Howard Beach.

Trotsky wrote in 1923 of "Civility and Politeness as a Necessary Lubricant in Daily Relations," linking the rudeness of the nascent Soviet bureaucracy to its origins in the Russian peasantry and the old aristocracy. The brutality of modern America is rooted in degrading poverty and racism. And it's not just in the urban centers: Loyal Garner Jr., a mild-mannered black worker, was killed by sheriff's deputies for the "crime" of crossing the state line between Louisiana and Texas.



Charles Brover, PDC co-chairman.

WV Photo

Marxists defend the right of armed self-defense, and it's too bad the Central Park jogger (or some other passer-by) didn't have a gun for protection when she was attacked. But in New York City gun laws are more restrictive than almost anywhere else, because the haughty rulers want to keep the population disarmed, especially blacks and Hispanics. And when the likes of Donald Trump calls to "bring back our police," he's calling for a reign of cop

terror that will soon target the homeless, workers and other "undesirables" he wouldn't let into his pink marble Trump Tower.

Already the cops are carrying out their own death sentences in the ghetto streets. And the death penalty pushers want to make sure the courts are marching in lockstep with the mounting police bonapartism. Particularly at risk are militant black activists, as shown by the FBI's war against the Black Panther Party. Today former Black Panther and Philadelphia radio journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal is on death row because of his political views. Other former Panthers are still in jail, such as Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt, who has spent the last 18 years behind bars in a COINTELPRO frame-up.

* * *

As part of its campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Partisan Defense Committee held a forum in New York City April 29 on the theme "Stop Racist Legal Lynching—Abolish the Death Penalty!" We reprint below the edited speech given there by Charles Brover, co-chairman of the PDC. Brover began his remarks quoting a scene in Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain's powerful indictment of a racist society.

Huck is lying again. This time to Aunt Sally about a hoat accident.

"We blowed out a cylinder-head," he said.
"Good gracious!" replies Aunt Sally.
"Anybody hurt?"
"No'm. Killed a nigger."
"Well, it's lucky," says Aunt Sally, "because sometimes people do get hurt."

Mark Twain had arguably the best, most sensitive and accurate ear of anyone who listened and recorded authentic American speech and gesture. He imitated, described, and through characters like Huck and Jim undermined the vocabulary of racial politics in America. The popular language heard by Twain was an everyday expression of the antebellum South. Black slaves were not persons, but property. It is in that tradition of racial politics that the death penalty in America takes place.

Today the code is somewhat different. But it is often as clear as the face of Willie Horton.

In this country it all begins with slavery. Slave codes officially made killing a slave a public offense, but in fact it was very rare that a white person was ever convicted, or tried, for killing a black slave. And the state criminal codes reflected this. Every Southern state, writes Kenneth Stampp in *The Peculiar Institution* (1956), defined a substantial number of felonies carrying capital punishment for slaves and lesser punishments for whites. And it was the spirit and sometimes the letter of the law of the slave codes that the KKK restored when it put the torch to Reconstruction after the Civil War.

At the heart of Jim Crow was lynch law terror. In the latter part of the 19th and into the 20th century a black person was more likely to be the victim of a lynching bee than the court's decree. Black journalist Ida B. Wells worked on a campaign against lynch law terror. She wrote about the people who lynched Henry Smith. How his body was dragged to Paris, Texas. How people put him on a trestle, put hot irons into his quivering flesh. The thing to understand is that her anti-lynching campaign was trying to get black people into court—never mind equal justice. There was no court proceeding for Henry Smith, there was no evidence. They just picked him up, dragged him off and lynched him.

But when blacks were able to be admitted into courts, the tradition continued: racist legal lynching. One thinks about Louisiana, in 1946, where they had a portable electric chair and they used to drag it around in a pickup truck.



AP

And they brought it to a place in St. Martinville, Louisiana and two white drunks get out of the pickup truck, they go in, they grab a 16-year-old kid named Willie Francis, they strap him into the chair, they turn on the juice from their portable generator. It doesn't work. Willie jerks in pain, the chair skitters across the floor. The drunks go back in, they say, aw, the chair doesn't work. Willie's flesh is smoking and they say, aw, we'll kill him with a rock.

Racism and Capital Punishment

Well, we don't have the portable electric chair today. But legal lynching continues. The death penalty is still largely a Southern institution. Southern death chambers have accounted for the vast majority of executions since 1977, when they started killing people again. Florida and Texas account for half of those. Although never more than 12 percent of the population, black people accounted for more than two-thirds of all U.S. executions between 1930 and 1967. Of the 455 executions for rape, nearly all in the South, an overwhelming 405 were black men.

These were some of the facts that the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund brought to the Supreme Court in 1972 in the famous Furman case. Even the Supreme Court decided, this death penalty is "capricious," "freakish" in its application. They encouraged the states to write laws that would be less freakish, so that they could continue the death penalty. In 1976 the Supreme Court okayed a formula for what it called "guided discretion." Since then 37 states have reinstituted the death penalty. And today some 2,100 prisoners wait on death row. What has changed? Nearly half of death row is black and Hispanic. Most of the blacks on death row were convicted of killing whites. Yet no white person has been executed for killing a black person, with one exception in 1944.

This was the clear pattern of racism that was at the heart of the McCleskey case, brought to the Supreme Court in 1987, the most significant of the recent death penalty challenges. It not only raised the point of racial bias, it proved it. Warren McCleskey was a black man convicted of shooting a white cop in a furniture store in Georgia in '72. The lawyers for McCleskey used the material of a University of Iowa law professor named David Baldus who, along with some first-rate statisticians, showed that there was overwhelming racial bias in the death sentence.

The raw figures showed that when the murder victim was white, the defendant was eleven times more likely to be sentenced to death than if the victim were black. The Baldus study controlled some 230 variables. They took out the condition of the crime, past record, what was done and so forth, and concluded that convicted killers of whites are still 4.3 times more likely to get the death penalty than killers of blacks.

What's interesting about the response of the Supreme Court was that they didn't deny the figures. But there's another way to handle statistics, which is to say they don't matter. And that's what the Supreme Court did. Writing for the majority, Justice Powell said, "At most the Baldus study indicates a discrepancy that appears to correlate with race. Apparent discrepancies in sentencing are an inevitable part of our criminal justice system." Clearly, what he thought was at stake in this case was that McCleskey's claim taken to its logical conclusion "throws into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system. If we accepted McCleskey's claim that racial bias has impermissibly tainted the capital sentencing decision, we would soon be faced with similar claims as to other types of penalty."

Racism is shot through the entire system. What the Supreme Court was saying was that it didn't matter. Didn't matter that had McCleskey shot someone

Mumia Abu-Jamal: Message from Death Row

"Pull the Hood Off the Hangman"

The death penalty in America is a symbol, a ritual, a relic of a time of total dominance, of one people, by another. Therein lies its attractiveness in the U.S., and in the apartheid regime in South Africa. That's why the system brandishes its electric chairs, its nooses, its gas chambers, and poison needles.

The state, shorn of the advantages of the lash and shackled slave, seeks new tools of racial and class dominance. That's why state and federal death rows are comprised of black and poor life, reflecting a consciousness that says, "This will keep the niggers in their place."

Simply put, it is a symbol of that consciousness, that reduces a living man or woman to their symbolic value, i.e., a sacrifice for the state.

Centuries ago, in pre-Columbian

Meso-America, Aztec priests performed similar rituals, as a grim reflection of the priest's power over life and death.


Today, in North America, modern-day "priests" of the secular state, politicians, ready sacrifices as symbols of their power over life and death.

Sacrifices come from the lower economic classes, the poor, the Hispanic, the black—those most expendable to the political system.

But, ritual is emptiness—symbolism for its own sake.

Your efforts today expose this modern-day sacrificial system for what it is—I, my wife, we all thank you for your active support in our fight to pull the hood off the hangman, and send this ritual to the dust.

From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal (29 April 1989).



Philadelphia Magazine
Mumia Abu-Jamal, 1980.

black instead of white he probably wouldn't be on death row. The court said, this is the way things work in America, what's the big deal?

And truly, we ought not to be surprised. Black life is held cheap in the USA. It is discounted when cops pull out their guns on kids in the streets. Cheap when it comes to forcing black mothers and kids to starve in the name of workfare. Worthless when it comes to diseases that presently wrack the inner



Library of Congress

Dred Scott: Supreme Court ruled in 1857 that blacks "had no rights which a white man was bound to respect." Placard issued by Boston abolitionists in 1851 warned blacks against slave-catchers.

cities and threaten to become a selective plague with AIDS. And those minds the TV ads say are terrible to waste, they're being ground down in schools that prepare them for an economic and social wasteland.

Death Penalty Abolitionists

Mark Twain heard it all. Anybody poor? "Naw, no'm, just some inner city kids." Anybody drop out? "Naw, just some black kids." Anybody get AIDS? "No, not any more, just some drug-using minorities." It's what Mumia Abu-Jamal was thinking about in an article he wrote recently. He says that when the Pennsylvania Supreme Court affirmed his conviction, he felt "stunned," and then he reconsidered. He writes, "I've often studied America's long history of legal lynchings of Africans. I remember a front page of the *Black Panther* newspaper, bearing the quote, 'A black man has no rights that a white man is bound to respect,' attributed to U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney, of the infamous *Dred Scott* case, where America's highest court held neither Africans, nor their 'free' descendants, are entitled to the rights of the Constitution."

It took a bloody civil war before black people were recognized in law as persons. It took 200,000 black Union soldiers in armed revolutionary struggle. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution stated that right for the first time. But Twain may have heard better. We can rely on his ear; he heard the language of the courts, the press, the government, the Ku Klux Klan. Post-Reconstruction America was to bring back the Dred

CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE

OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,

You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the

Watchmen and Police Officers

of Boston,

For since the recent ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN, they are empowered to act as

KIDNAPPERS

AND

Slave Catchers,

And they have already been actually employed in KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES. Therefore, if you value your LIBERTY, and the Welfare of the Fugitives among you, Show them in every possible manner, as so many HOUNDS on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

Keep a Sharp Look Out for KIDNAPPERS, and have TOP EYE open.

APRIL 24, 1851.

Scott "standard" from the graves of Fort Wagner and Fort Pillow, where black men gave their lives for a promise of freedom unfulfilled.

We on this platform are death penalty abolitionists. It's one of those apparent accidents of language that we are identified with those abolitionists of the 19th century. The demand for the abo-

lition of the death penalty today is part of the tradition of struggle for black equality in America.

I want to make it clear that although racial politics define the character of the death penalty in America, the PDC would oppose it in any case on principle. As internationalists, we oppose it everywhere it exists. In Iran. In the Soviet Union—where the permanent introduction of the death penalty in 1923, as opposed to executions in civil war conditions, accompanied the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet workers state.

We do not accord to the state the right to say who will live and who will die. It is not only the arbitrary character of the application of the death penalty, but the penalty itself. Even the Supreme Court has said death is different. One of the most obvious differences is that it's final. This penalty has already produced the deadly irony that in one case there was an appeal to the Supreme Court. They had enough votes to sustain the appeal, but not to stay the execution. So you had the interesting proposition in which the appeal was alive, but they killed the defendant.

A couple of recent examples have startled even some of the death penalty advocates. The Randall Adams case, about which a strong documentary film called *The Thin Blue Line* was made. Adams was thrown in jail for a murder of a policeman. In the sentencing hearing they used a psychiatrist. He testified all over Texas and would always say the same thing: This person has to have the death penalty, because if you don't give him the death penalty, he will go out and kill again. This psychiatrist earned the name "Doctor Death."

Erroll Morris heard about Doctor Death, thought he'd make a film about

continued on page 10

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League

☐ \$7/24 issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)
 ☐ \$3/3 issues of *Women and Revolution*

☐ New ☐ Renewal
 ☐ \$2/10 introductory issues of *Workers Vanguard* (includes English-language *Spartacist*)

☐ International rates \$25/24 issues—Airmail \$7/24 issues—Seamail

☐ \$2/4 issues of *Spartacist* (edición en español)

Name _____

Address _____

Apt. # _____ Phone (____) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

477

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

Save the Life of Mumia Abu-Jamal!

We print below excerpts from the remarks of guest speakers at the New York PDC forum.

Wadiya Abu-Jamal

Wife of Mumia Abu-Jamal and a MOVE supporter

There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about Mumia the man, how he took and takes life, family and his work so seriously. I thought it again



WV Photo

Wadiya Abu-Jamal

when I heard the court's decision a few weeks ago.

Mumia wasn't allowed to defend himself in court. He wasn't allowed to cross-examine or make closing arguments to the jury, and in fact the jury was deceived when they were told that Mumia could make this up during his appeals. The jury already assumed that he was guilty. This jury was made up of mostly whites from the northeast section of Philadelphia, people who knew or cared nothing about Mumia, the man.

He was shot and brutally beaten and almost killed in Center City, in the hospital. I saw it for myself that very same morning—swollen, bruised, wounded by bullets, almost took his life. Still he was chained to the hospital bed, surrounded by both plainclothes and uniformed cops who even then tried to finish him off by stepping on his urine bag, making the waste of his body flow back up into his system in hopes that they could poison him with his own body waste. I bear witness to Philadelphia police, Philadelphia courts being amongst the most corrupt and racist in America.

I'm here to enlist your aid in Mumia's and our struggle against the system that continues to conspire to kill my husband. I urge, I plead to you all to read the opinion, to notice four so-called justices decided his appeal and three sat out not participating. I urge you to note

the exceptions they made in Mumia's case to uphold ungodly results. I urge you to read it with his words in mind, "There ain't no justice in this system." Most of all I urge, I plead with you to stand up and speak out, to organize in his defense. For surely Mumia's struggle is yours. People, brothers and sisters, you know and I know that true justice comes only from people. We can expect none from this system. Justice for Jamal means justice for us all. An injury to one is an injury to all.

Thank you again and Ona Move.

Lois Williamson

Executive Director of Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants

I'm one of the few people, John Q. Citizen, who has toured death row and two of the prisons in Pennsylvania. They are horrendous. No one should live under those conditions. I have been harried from jail because I speak out. Well that's not going to stop me. I had the privilege of meeting Mumia in 1984 when I was working as a volunteer for the National Coalition Against the Death Penalty. I'm the victim of a murder, twice. My husband was murdered in 1969 and my son-in-law in 1983. But that's not changed my attitude. Killing is wrong no matter who does it. State-sanctioned killing I feel is more premeditated, more controlled, than any other killing that could possibly be done.

I have been working with death row inmates for almost ten years. Just recently official visiting status was taken from me to go into the prisons just because I got on national TV and said it's wrong to kill, it's wrong to abuse. I went to a jail closest to Philadelphia, Graterford prison. The night I got there they told me I was no longer allowed on their property. Well, whose property? It's my property too. I pay taxes. I wrote a letter, sent it to three constitutional lawyers, got a letter back from the



WV Photo

Lois Williamson

warden there which says "OK, you can be on one inmate's visiting list."

In Title 37 of our penal code it says a death sentence inmate should be treated as any other inmate until the warrant is signed. This comes under the visiting rules. That's the law. And as Wadiya told you tonight: no, that isn't the law. It only applies when they want it to apply.

We visit with death row inmates in shackles, locked in a room, you on one side of the glass, they on the other. Inmates who are death sentenced are kept in lockup 22 hours a day. They are allowed into a dog kennel to exercise for an hour. Their food is pushed through a slot in the door. They don't even have access to legal material unless they can cite the case that they need. Is this not cruel and unusual punishment?

Had a rally at Harrisburg on Tuesday. I appealed to the governor not to carry out the executions that he has signed warrants for. My appeal to him was: *don't kill for me*. We had a lot of people there, who made a loud noise that they didn't want someone to kill for them. There were a hundred members of families who attended the rally, who asked for the abolition of the death penalty and parole eligibility for lifers.

We're going to keep up the fight. I will not be bound by the chains of submission and slavery, and hope you all won't.

Harold Jamison

Former member of the Philadelphia branch of the Black Panther Party, now a staff writer for the Amsterdam News

Power to the people and Mumia must not die!

In solitary confinement in prisons across the country young black men, black fathers, black sons and black husbands await the electric chair, the gas chamber. They're on death row. They are political prisoners. They face long prison terms or death today because yesterday they defied the racist, capitalist order.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal didn't begin on a cold morning in December in 1981. It began when, at age 14, then-Wesley Cook left Ben Franklin High School in Philadelphia after leading a prolonged demonstration to have the school's name changed to Malcolm X High. It continued after he undertook the duties of Minister of Information of the Philadelphia branch of the Black Panther Party. It gained momentum as he developed into one of Philadelphia's premier broadcast and print media journalists, serving as the president of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, an outspoken supporter of human rights.

Mumia's unwavering support for the MOVE organization added fuel to the fire that exploded in gunfire in 1981, leaving Mumia critically wounded, a police officer dead and a city scurrying to establish a case. The case against Mumia continued during his trial when he was denied counsel of his choice. It continued when the jury was compromised and then entreated to the paranoid rhetoric of the prosecutor quoting Mumia from a late 1960 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article saying that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

[In response to a question about the 31 August 1970 raid on Panther offices

launched by police chief Frank Rizzo, Jamison said:]

Everyone knew the police were coming. Rizzo's behavior was so predictable that everyone knew precisely what time, at 6:00. The Black Panther Party had prepared itself in advance by going out into the community and informing the people. At that time, we had five offices around the city, and a medical center. We asked that when the raids started, when they heard the shooting, to come out into the streets, so that when the police brought us out of these buildings they wouldn't be able to just shoot us down. The people did that, and it saved people's lives.

The only reason Panthers weren't shot was because of Geronimo Pratt. He



WV Photo

Harold Jamison

had been a fortification expert in Vietnam, and he taught the party how to stay alive.

After the police raided the building it was the order to strip everyone down, it wasn't random. The women weren't stripped, but they were beaten. One sister was dragged back into the building after police had brought everyone out of the office on Columbia Avenue. Fearing that we had booby-trapped the building, they threw her down the cellar steps. In the event there was an explosion, she would have been the one to blow up. When there wasn't they brought her back out to the car. She had collapsed in the building. Once everyone was taken to the police department, the police raided all of the buildings and took every single thing out—refrigerators, stoves, hooks—everything. They emptied the buildings and shuttered them up. The community was outraged.

Frank Rizzo was purely a military man, and it was a military move. They took the marksmen from the park police, from detectives, from every unit they could get the best shooters to show up. Our office was a three-story building. Directly across the street were two-story buildings. They had mounted a .30 calibre machine gun on the roof across the street and were firing into the building. Officers on the roof had .45 calibre Thompson submachine guns and they were shooting through the building, and the bullets were going all the way through to the basement. These were old buildings. A lot of fire, but no one got hit because sandbags saved everybody's life, due to Geronimo Pratt. ■

Death Penalty...

(continued from page 9)

him. So he goes down to Texas, finds out that Doctor Death did interview, for ten minutes, Randall Adams, and testified to the court that Adams showed no remorse, he should be killed. The problem is, it was hard for Randall Adams to show remorse—because he didn't do it. And that's what this filmmaker discovered. He made the film, exposed the fact that the killer was someone else, and Randall Adams, after 12 years, some of

it on death row, was released.

Just this week, they had to release a guy in Florida. James Richardson, a Florida agricultural worker, black, was in for 21 years for killing his children. First he lost seven children, then they put him in jail for 21 years. Sound familiar? Turns out, of course, he didn't do it. Someone else did it and confessed. So they let him out.

It's only accidental that these guys weren't killed. "Legal technicalities" kept them alive. In one case the sentence was commuted, in another case a federal court reversed an earlier decision. The most substantial study, by Bedau and Radelet, says that of the 343 cases of innocent people assigned to

death row, 23 have been executed this century. I just saw an Amnesty International leaflet that puts it at 85. The point is, we don't know how many.

Torture and the Death Penalty

But we are also against the death penalty for the guilty, because it is a cruel and unusual punishment. The death penalty is part of a tradition of torture. From the middle of the 12th century, torture remained a part of social and legal life until the end of the 18th century. By 1874 Victor Hugo was able to say, with both authority and good cause, torture had ceased to exist. Torture had become a focus for legal and

moral arguments against the old order. But these arguments reflected the bourgeois social and economic revolution.

In the language of Michel Foucault's fascinating book, *Discipline and Punish, the Birth of the Prison* (1979), the system of torture punished the body whereas the purpose of the new system was to gain social control. The creation of great warehouses and investments in commodities and machines on a greater scale than ever before in history demanded an armed repression of wider potential criminality. So you have the need for the ubiquitous police, a constant surveillance. And of course the key institution—the prison.

The criminal was to be removed from

society instead of made a feature attraction in the theater of cruelty. So we have the spectacle of modern contemporary executioners looking for a painless way to kill. They surround the victim with doctors, warders, chaplains, social workers, until the last minute. For a while they touted lethal injection, until they spent 45 minutes stabbing some guy, looking for a vein. With electrocutions the organs sear, the flesh burns, the eyes pop out. Modern death penalty advocates shudder at the prospect of making executions public: Oh no, kill them, but don't hurt them, and don't let the public see.

The modern death penalty thus combines residual elements of an older tradition of torture and personal vengeance with a campaign to increase coercion through official terror.

Now having said all that about the death penalty, the problem is, we abolitionists then look at polls in the newspaper. And it tells us that 85 percent of the American public's for it. It's hard to get 85 percent of the American public to be for anything. What's happening is that the population is responding to a wild rise in violent crime, rooted in the violent conditions of life. They don't feel safe, and they're not safe. They hide behind Fox locks and barred windows while a brutal criminality seems to rule their neighborhoods and housing projects. A young black male today faces a greater chance to die violently on the streets than a U.S. soldier did in the rice paddies of Vietnam.

Things have changed in the public debate on the death penalty. We used to win some of these debates saying that the death penalty doesn't deter. We used to point out that that evidence is very weak: Canada abolished the death penalty and their murder rate went down; Florida and Texas instituted the death penalty, the murder rate goes up. A number of psychologists have even advanced the theory that the death penalty actually encourages a particular psychopathic behavior in which a person seeks his own death and absolution in a kind of state-sponsored suicide.

But the question of deterrence is no longer at the heart of the public debate over the death penalty, as anyone knows who has had this debate recently at work or school. People say, "So what?—they've got to be killed, at least it will deter one killer." Arguments about the probability of making fatal errors are met with: "At least we'll get some of them." We used to be very successful by pointing out that the death penalty would only further brutalize society. Would you want to cut off the hand of a thief? Castrate a rapist? And when our opponents seemed to be eye-for-an-eye retributionists, we would ask, would you want the state to beat up the man convicted of assault? But now many people hear the rhetorical questions and give it thoughtful consideration: "Cut off his hand? Well, maybe."

Police, Prisons, Death Chambers

We need to understand that this response is more than an expression of a brutalized society, but includes some legitimate fear and outrage over truly terrible crimes. The problem is, the population on the one hand is desperate to stop crime, and we have a state and a media which is directing it in ways that are most dangerous.

Take the recent incident in Central Park. You have a rape—you don't have to pull any punches on the horrible character of that crime, or on the sociopathology of it, in order to see the racist handling of it, what it's being used for. There were 3,412 rapes last year. But this one fit a particular pattern they like. The people involved in this were portrayed as "wolf packs," animals outside the human community. The Howard Beach lynch mob, which went out, actually ran someone out on the street and got him killed, they were called "Howard Beach residents."

What happens when you have this

kind of crime is that the state says, "Give us more power. We need more police." That's what the politicians say, that's what the media wants. But with more police and more crime, they get a problem with what these days is called the "ecology of crime and punishment." More cops go out and make more arrests, but the system can't handle them all. Processing is a mess, prisons are overloaded. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world, with the exception of South Africa. Educators point out that, as it is, we spend more on



Manning/NY Times
U.S. has highest incarceration rate in world, except for South Africa; now they want to dump prisoners onto barges in NYC's East River.

prisons than we do on schools.

Having criminalized what the lowest strata of society does, the New York City criminal system is overloaded with drug arrests. Judges say there's no more room in prison for all the drug users and other criminals. Some judges are calling for an early release program. The judges don't even have room for themselves. They sit on top of file cabinets and in corridors, trying to get a little higher than the defendant to maintain the theatricality of the courtroom. Ed Koch wants prison barges. He wants to re-create the Ship of Fools for prisoners, perhaps plying the Hudson and East Rivers, trying to dock.

While there's no evidence that legal sanctions have any deterrent effect on crime, there's plenty of evidence that social and economic inequality has the most profound effect on crime—poverty in the midst of great wealth and the consequent unraveling of the social fabric. Anatole France is credited with the definition of the majesty of the law as the equal right of both the rich and the poor to sleep under bridges and beg for bread. One could add in the negative, in that spirit, it is to equally deny the right to steal that bread. Engels, writing on the condition of the working class in England, asks, "What inducement has the proletarian not to steal? It is all very pretty and very agreeable to the ear of the bourgeois to hear the 'sacredness of property' asserted; but for him who has none, the sacredness of property dies out of itself."

There are 2,100 on death row tonight. There are calls to make more and more crimes into capital crimes. Think about "drug-related" murder, how many people that's going to send to death row. Even at the present rate, there would have to be an execution every day for about ten years. And there is every indication that the road into death row is being widened. More blood, more mistakes. Enter Supreme Court Justice Rehnquist, "Judge Death." His solution? Cut the appeals, hex *habeas corpus*, let's get on with it. There's tremendous pressure on defense lawyers, who are increasingly characterized as legal polluters, clogging up the criminal justice machinery with the gunk of the rights of the accused and prisoners. On the street, it means that cops have even

quicker trigger fingers. No point in arresting them, they say, for "revolving door justice."

The danger here is the assumption, developed by the state, fostered by major institutions, that there is a layer of the population which is worthless and parasitical. There is no point in deterrence because they cannot be educated and corrected in any case. They are permanently outlaws. That is what is behind the apparent contradiction that Americans demand more prisons but refuse to spend any money on them.

er context of social struggle. Unlike Amnesty International, we consciously take a side in that struggle. Unlike the ACLU, instead of defending Nazis and KKK terrorists, you're going to find us on the streets protesting fascist provocations.

Tonight we are here as part of a campaign to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. In legal defense work there are often cases which focus the larger struggles. We believe that Mumia Abu-Jamal is a case which illuminates the politics of racism and the death penalty. At his hearing it was perfectly clear that he was sentenced because he was a Black Panther, because he was part of the best of a generation and COINTELPRO missed shooting him in his bed. I urge you to read the latest issue of *Class Struggle Defense Notes*. And I think that when you do, and you hear his voice, you will know why the state wants to silence that voice with electric current. The fight to save Mumia is the fight to abolish the death penalty.

Finally, let's remember the anti-slavery abolitionists in this context, and the greatest of them: Frederick Douglass. A voice that helped wake up a nation and galvanize a movement. Here was a system that said a slave could not be a man. And then there was Frederick Douglass. How could anyone have owned Frederick Douglass? How could he be bought and sold like a cow, or a horse? Listen to Mumia's voice. It is Mumia's humanity we hear in his voice, see in his resistance to the prison authorities, read in his autobiographical notes and anti-fascist statements.

Mumia's fight is ours. It is part of that larger struggle for an economic and social order that will develop a new anthropology, in which man at last becomes a creator and subject of society. Then surely those new men and women will look back at this archaic punishment system during the death agony of capitalism with something of the same horror with which we look back at the torture systems of the Middle Ages.

In defense of all of our rights, we ask you to join with us, to help in the name of justice for our class, our future, our humanity.

Death is the twisted logic of this cycle of crime and punishment, the official ritual of this impulse to genocide. We can almost hear the chanting of the Spanish Falangists, "Long live death!" It is always expressed most openly by the fascists. At the time of the last execution in California, in 1967, American Nazi Party führer George Lincoln Rockwell paraded in front of San Quentin with a placard which read simply: "Gas—The Only Cure for Black Crime."

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Before I leave you, I've got to say something about the Partisan Defense Committee. We're a defense organization with a difference. We're for the class struggle. And we have an emphasis on both words. We understand that what happens in the courtroom is not all there is. And these days we're calling ourselves a legal and social defense organization and working on civilian aid to people in Jalalabad. We worked for the British miners when they were on strike. We see defense work in the large-

Mumia needs your help. Write to the PDC for petitions to Pennsylvania Governor Casey demanding: Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die! The fight to save Mumia's life costs \$\$\$! Publicity, printing petitions and postage will cost plenty. Send your contributions to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.

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

WORKERS VANGUARD

Free Quality Higher Education for All!

CUNY Students Take the Streets



Young Spartacus

10,000 CUNY students march on Wall Street, May 2, declaring budget cuts are attack on working class, minorities.

It was the largest and most integrated student protest in decades. On Tuesday, May 2, up to 10,000 students surged through the streets of Manhattan in defiance of proposed tuition hikes that would throw poor, minority and working-class youth out of school. Well-organized contingents of predom-

inantly black and Hispanic students from 19 different campuses in the CUNY (City University of New York) system chanted against the New York governor, "Cuomo went to CUNY for free—Now he wants to raise our fee!" and "Education is a right—Fight! Fight! Fight!" Haitian students from CCNY

carried placards reading "Cuomo—Tonton Macoute of Education," likening the state's killer cuts to ex-dictator Duvalier's death squads.

As yuppies gaped from the windows of Wall Street, Mark Torres, a Dominican student and a leader of the protests at CCNY in Harlem, declared: "The

working class made this country.... We are aware that the attack on higher education is an attack on people of color and the working class." Students roared

*continued in Young Spartacus,
see page 6 inside*

Pull Out the Entire UMW, Now!

Pittston Coal War



Don Petersen/Roanoke Times and World News

Miners stop coal trucks from leaving Pittston plant in southeast Virginia.

More than 10,000 striking miners and their supporters from West Virginia to Alabama rallied at a fairground in Wise County, Virginia near the Kentucky line on April 30, as the bitter struggle between the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) and the Pittston Coal Company neared the one-month mark. Wearing the camouflage fatigues they've adopted as their unofficial strike uniform, the 1,700 striking union miners have used mass pickets to stop seaboard coal shipments and have successfully spread the strike to other companies who were filling orders for Pittston. Since the strike began, over 1,300 Pittston miners and their supporters have been arrested; more than 140 are charged with felonies.

This is more than just a strike—it's class war. The UMW can and must win this battle! In southwest Virginia, the struggle against Pittston is a crusade, drawing women and youth onto the barricades. A women's auxiliary, the "Daughters of Mother Jones," blocked Pittston's regional headquarters on April 18 and 19. Student protests have taken place at nine area high schools, including a blockade at a motel where state troopers were quartered, and a noisy rally at Westmoreland Coal, which was filling Pittston orders until it was shut down by UMW pickets. Australian miners have agreed not to fill

continued on page 7