

## In Wake of Oklahoma Atrocity:

# Government Launches Assault on Your Rights



The death toll is climbing toward 200 in the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City. The blast, which reportedly came from several thousand pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer mixed with fuel oil and a detonator, tore away a huge swath in all nine floors of the steel-reinforced concrete structure. The building housed a broad spectrum of government agencies, from the Social Security Administration and the Department of Agriculture to the Secret Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF). Overwhelmingly, the victims of this act of indiscriminate terror were ordinary government workers, black and white, who staff the offices in the building. Most wrenching were the pictures of dead and dying children being carried from the rubble of the day-care center.

Immediately, the news media began whipping up an anti-Arab hysteria saying the suspects were "men of Middle Eastern origin," running shots of the 1993 NYC World Trade Center bombing, comparing the blast to the 1983 bombing of U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut. Every paper featured stories about "foreign terrorists" striking at the "heartland of America." Arabs throughout the U.S. felt under siege. But the next day the government revealed that the suspects were two white American men. Moreover, it turns out that captured bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh is an Army veteran associated with the right-wing paramilitary "militia movement."

From the "war on international terrorism," the government's line suddenly shifted to a war on "extremism." Behind this "anti-extremist" crusade is an accelerated drive by both capitalist parties to ram through a whole panoply of repressive measures. The Clinton administration immediately seized on this horrendous atrocity to place on the "fast track" an ominous "Omnibus Counterterrorism Act," as well as draconian new FBI "guidelines," Clinton's "package" is chock-full of provis-



Government seizes on bombing of Oklahoma City federal building for "anti-terrorist" crackdown on civil liberties. Above: FBI SWAT team during 1994 World Cup soccer games.

ions attacking civil liberties which the White House has been trying to get through Congress for a couple of years. Among them are: secret trials for "suspected terrorists," using the military for domestic police enforcement, unlimited harassment and surveillance of dissident organizations, blanket authorization for wiretaps, and escalating the ongoing campaign against the constitutional right to bear arms.

Such police-state measures have long been used against leftists, blacks and anyone else the government puts on its "enemies list." But the bipartisan embrace of this repressive arsenal, which is cynically being sold over the dead bodies in Oklahoma City, is intended to legitimate its extension to the population as a whole. In the name of combating "terrorism," the government wants to give a legal

cover to a wholesale abrogation of everyone's rights—authorizing them to open your mail, listen in on your phone calls, keep tabs on who you associate with, and assert a state monopoly of armed force. They're not really after the fascists, who at bottom are the creatures of this racist ruling class, but the labor movement, blacks and other minorities—those the capitalist rulers consider "the enemy within."

In justifying his "anti-terrorist" crackdown, Clinton pointed a finger at "hate" speech, later adding, "whether it comes from the right or the left." But the kind of bloodthirsty mass murder seen in the Oklahoma bombing is the hallmark of the fascists, whose view of their perceived enemies is "the only good one is a dead one." The 1980 fascist bombing of the Bologna train station in Italy,

which killed 84 people, as part of a strategy of provoking chaos, is typical of their M.O. Extreme nationalists, who see whole peoples as their scourge, also engage in such criminal slaughter of random people, as in the ethnic-national butchery racking the former Yugoslavia. So do the imperialists, who have regularly slaughtered whole populations in the name of freedom and democracy.

The Oklahoma bombing may well have been modeled after a strikingly similar scenario described in *The Turner Diaries*, a 1978 novel by West Virginia white-supremacist William Pierce. (In this book, which is a bible for American fascists, a fertilizer bomb destroys FBI headquarters at 9:15 a.m.) Former Green Beret colonel Bo Gritz, who in 1988 ran for president on the ticket of the racist Populist Party and is now the fuhrer of a "militia" group in Idaho, praised the blast as "a Rembrandt—a masterpiece of science and art put together." Tom Metzger, leader of the fascist "White Aryan Resistance," tipped his hat to the Oklahoma carnage, saying, "Evidently, these people...saw the Federal building as a strategic military target, and these are the kind of things that happen at war" (*New York Times*, 23 April).

These fascist killers grow from the fertile soil of racist U.S. imperialism. During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the Pentagon reveled in raining bombs on Iraq's cities, killing thousands of civilians, destroying hospitals and water-works. In that "Desert Slaughter," the arrested suspect in the Oklahoma bombing case, Timothy McVeigh, "served with the Big Red One's 2nd Battalion of the 16th Infantry, which performed one of the most grisly operations of the ground war—the burial [of] many Iraqi soldiers, some still alive, by armored vehicles equipped with plows" (*New York Newsday*, 25 April). It's not surprising that out of such barbarism can come a twisted, Nazi-like mentality.

This government is in fact the highest terrorist and mass murderer of them all. Don't forget the A-bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, as well as the firebombing of Dresden and Tokyo! The 1985 bombing of the Philly MOVE commune was the Reagan government's message to black America that anyone who steps out of line would face the full hunt of

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**Why "Labor Party Advocates" Doesn't Advocate a Labor Party**

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13 May 1985—Ten Years Later

# MOVE Massacre—We Will Never Forget

This May marks ten years since the Mother's Day 1985 siege of Osage Avenue in Philadelphia, when eleven black people, including five children, were killed and hundreds were burned out of their homes in the police/FBI bombing of the MOVE commune. The racist slaughter, ordered by Democratic mayor Wilson Goode and orchestrated by the feds, was a signature of the Reagan years. The Philadelphia body count was exceeded on 19 April 1993, as Democratic president Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno ordered the BATF/FBI assault which resulted in the deaths of 86 men, women and children in the compound of the racially integrated Branch Davidian religious group outside Waco, Texas.

Today, a decade after the MOVE massacre, wholesale attacks on the black population are accelerating. Assaults on welfare spell genocide for a layer of ghetto blacks, and black men languish

in prison hellholes—virtually the only "growth industry" in America. The racist vendetta against MOVE and those who dared defend them continues in ominous moves by the Philly cops to silence the voice of Mumia Abu-Jamal and force his execution. The black journalist and former Black Panther had long been in the cops' gunights; he was framed up and sentenced to death in the wake of his courageous defense of MOVE prisoners arrested in the 1978 murderous police assault on their Powelton Village home.

In a recent column from death row titled "Judicial Approval of Mass Murder," Jamal exposes the whitewash amnesty given this March to the police and government murderers in the MOVE bombing: "The U.S. Court of Appeals in Philadelphia recently decided that the politicians, firemen and police responsible for the bombing of MOVE on May 13, 1985, are not, in fact, responsible."

Jamal quotes Ramona Africa, who spent seven years in prison for the "crime" of being the sole adult survivor of the massacre:

"To blame MOVE for that massacre is like an armed robber blaming the murder of his victim on the victim by saying he shouldn't have resisted, he should've given in to the robber and he wouldn't have gotten killed.... The bottom line is that this government came to kill MOVE on May 13, not to arrest us."

The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee fought for Ramona Africa's freedom until her release in 1992, and continues to aid and demand freedom for the nine MOVE members still in jail as a result of the 1978 Powelton Village raid.

Immediately after the 1985 MOVE massacre, stressing that a communist party must serve as a tribune of all the oppressed, we vowed to "sear the memory of this heinous act into the consciousness of the American workers movement." *Workers Vanguard* (No. 379, 17 May 1985) headlined, "Reagan Bombs Black Babies—Bitburg Hits Philly," denouncing the government's "Vietnam-style overkill" and the "brutal, conscious racism of the bombing."

In the following issue, our front-page article headlined: "Philly Inferno: Racist Murder! Reagan, Cops, Black Mayor—They're the Terrorists" (WV No. 380, 31 May 1985). We reprint below selections from this article.

"Attention, MOVE. This is America." With this ultimatum, delivered over a cop bullhorn at 5:40 a.m. on May 13, there began the hideous siege and mass murder by firebombing of a black neighborhood in West Philadelphia. At least four black children, seven black men and women burned alive and entire city blocks destroyed in a deliberate firestorm. "Now as the details of the sinister operation emerge, it is utterly clear that this

heinous crime was approved right at the top. Philadelphia police met with the FBI and reviewed strategy and tactics two days before the operation against MOVE began... From Reagan's top cop this was no surprise. The people who salute SS graves in Germany brought Bitburg back to Philly with a bang. This was no 'fire-fight,' it was a firestorm. Dresden in America...

"This was a willful racist massacre of people with no name (they called themselves 'Africa') who had committed no crime..."

"We communists say black Democrat Wilson Goode is as guilty as Republican Ronald Reagan and the racist cops for the murder of eleven blacks, women and children alike. The liberals now apologize for this calculated obliteration of a black neighborhood—to do otherwise requires a break from the whole myth of the 'new black power' at the voting booth, organized through the Democratic Party of George Wallace and Jesse Jackson..."

"The Osage Avenue massacre was supposed to be a message to anybody who gets 'out of line' in Reagan's America—blacks will get the Philly treatment, labor will get the PATCO treatment, and everyone, not least the Marxists, will get the 'terrorist' treatment. But you can fight the terrorists in City Hall and the White House and win. Black people do have social power: they are concentrated in some of the key sections of the American proletariat, constituting its most militant layer. But to unlock this power means breaking the capitalist two-party stranglehold, fighting for a workers party to mobilize labor and oppressed blacks in revolutionary struggle against this racist, capitalist system. Avenger the Philly inferno—For black freedom through socialist revolution!" ■

Barger/WCAU-TV



DPI

Firebombing of Philadelphia MOVE commune, with explosives supplied by FBI, killed eleven people and burned down entire black neighborhood.



TROTSKY

## The Soviet Union in Battle Against Nazi Germany

May 8 marks the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. The smashing of the Nazi regime was carried out fundamentally by the Soviet Red Army. While the workers had no side in the interimperialist conflict between the Allied "democracies" and the Axis powers led by Nazi Germany, the Trotskyist Fourth International called on the world proletariat to unconditionally defend the Soviet degenerated workers state



LENIN

Several months after the German Wehrmacht invaded the USSR, Polish Marxist Isaac Deutscher noted that the heroic resistance of the Soviet workers showed that the revolutionary gains of October 1917 still persisted, despite Stalin's criminal undermining and betrayals. Decades later in the absence of proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy, and of workers revolutions in the West, the Soviet Union succumbed to capitalist counterrevolution.

Eight months have passed since the fateful date of 22 June 1941 when Hitler began his march on Russia. From that day the two most powerful armies in the world have been locked in epic combat from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Although the German Panzer divisions have in this time conquered a territory no smaller than that of Germany itself, nothing foreshadows the breakdown of the superhuman heroism with which the Russian revolution fights for its life and for its banner. Bleeding profusely it finds its greatness anew. The destiny of the world now hangs in the balance across the vast spaces of the USSR...

One fundamental truth about the German-Soviet war has to be understood: the heroic resistance of the Russian workers and peasants is proof of the vitality of revolutionary society. Soviet workers and peasants are defending everything which, in spite of various deformations, has remained of the revolution: an economy without capitalists and landlords. They defend what they see as their socialist fatherland—and here the accent is on the adjective no less than on the noun. They defend it not because, but in spite of the privileges which the new bureaucracy has usurped for itself; not because, but in spite of the totalitarian regime with its GPU, concentration camps, cult of the leader, and the terrible purges. Whoever has had an opportunity to observe Soviet reality even for a short time knows that the totalitarian regime had not strengthened but weakened the Soviet state. The huge quantity of modern weapons which the Red Army wields in battle could have been produced on a far greater scale and in better quality without the whip that lashes the backs of the Soviet workers. The sword of the revolution would be sharper today if it had been honed by a true democracy among the working masses. Solidarity with Russia does not in any way demand that this truth be concealed.

—Isaac Deutscher, "22 June 1941" (February 1942)

## WORKERS VANGUARD



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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS George Foster

EDITOR Jan Norden

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES, Carla Wilson

PRODUCTION MANAGER Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER Shauna Blythe

EDITORIAL BOARD Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Liz Gordon, Frank Hunter, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour, Alison Spencer, Marjorie Stenberg

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# Why "Labor Party Advocates" Doesn't Advocate a Labor Party

The twin parties of American capitalism, Democrats and Republicans, have never been as discredited as they are today. It is an increasingly accepted commonplace that the "Republicans" are simply two wings of the same Property Party. Clinton's "new" Democrats compete with Newt Gingrich's right-wing Republicans in tearing down social services, targeting black welfare mothers, bashing immigrants and trampling the unions. Meanwhile, millions of working people can barely eke out a living, even when there are two wage-earners in the family. Black people find themselves under siege on every front, from the attacks on affirmative action to the deadly "war on drugs" which is filling the prisons and decimating the ghettos. And while many women looked to the Clintons in '92, women's rights today are under savage assault by "right to life" terrorists.

Through a dozen years of Reagan/Bush, labor and black misleaders told their constituencies to take it on the chin and work to put a Democrat back in the White House. But yuppie racist Bill Clinton wasted no time in making it clear that blacks and labor would have no say in his Democratic Party, as he spit on Jesse Jackson and shoved NAFTA through Congress despite vociferous opposition from organized labor. Falling voter participation at all levels undoubtedly reflects widespread disenchantment with both major parties. The right-wing Gingrich "sweep" in the '94 elections was based on the votes of less than a fifth of the electorate. It's not surprising, then, that over the last few years, all kinds of calls for a third party have been sprouting up—a "New" party, a "21st Century" party, a "rainbow" party, and even a "labor" party.

Throughout our existence, the Spartacist League has fought for labor to break with the Democratic Party and form a workers party to fight for a workers government. Only a party which opposes the capitalist profit system down the line, which acts as an organizing center for workers in struggle everywhere, which fights to uproot every manifestation of racial and sexual oppression, can truly claim independence from the parties of Wall Street. And only such a party can lead the struggles of the workers and oppressed to victory.

Ever since the days of FDR's "New Deal," the union bureaucracy has been a key prop of the Democratic Party, shoveling pro-business "friends of labor" down the workers' throats every time an election rolls around. Recently, however, talk of a "labor party" has become downright respectable among these lifelong Democratic Party stalwarts. At the AFL-CIO's annual extravaganza in Bal Harbour in February, even "Lame" Kirkland's cronies on the executive board, such as IUE chief William Bywater, were muttering about a labor party. And get this: Gus Hall's Communist Party U.S.A., which after decades of denouncing calls for a labor party as a "Trotskyite" ploy to disrupt the unity of Democratic Party "progressives," now proclaims: "It's Time for a Labor Party!"

Labor party talk has become positively trendy. This trend has been reflected in increased interest in an outfit called Labor Party Advocates (LPA), headed by longtime Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) International official Tony Mazzocchi. Two or three years ago, LPA meetings were little more



Labor Party Advocates head Tony Mazzocchi (left) seeks to refurbish "friends of labor" image of capitalist Democratic Party. At January 14 Hayward, California LPA meeting, former Democratic governor Jerry Brown (far right) was a featured speaker.

than playpens for handfuls of left reformists like Socialist Action and Socialist Organizer. But it has now garnered the support of three international unions ("Rail Union Endorses Labor Party Advocates," *Labor Notes*, September 1994). And since the November '94 elections, LPA has attracted a broader hearing. An LPA meeting in Hayward, California on January 14 drew some 400-500 people, mostly union members. A meeting in Toledo a month earlier also drew several hundred.

Mazzocchi's "socialist" cheerleaders yearn to be in on the ground floor of something on the model of the British Labour Party—or more to the point, the insipid, barely social-democratic Canadian New Democratic Party. They regularly churn out press releases describing Labor Party Advocates as "inspiring," "historic," even "labor's Declaration of Independence." But LPA spurns the most basic element of working-class independence—a clean break with the bosses' political parties. Indeed, these "labor party advocates" don't even advocate forming a labor party. They just want to talk about it, in order to pressure the Democrats.

An LPA handout concludes with a money-back guarantee that Mazzocchi & Co. would not dream of besmirching the

AFL-CIO's solidly pro-capitalist credentials, least of all the COPE political action machine that disburses millions in union members' contributions to Democratic Party candidates: "Labor Party Advocates is neither running nor endorsing candidates for political office and therefore is not interfering in on-going COPE work or other political activity." If that isn't clear enough, the same brochure quoted from Jan Pierce, vice president of the Communications Workers (CWA), to dot the i's and cross the t's: "We can continue to work within the Democratic Party."

And this is at the heart of Labor Party Advocates. At LPA's founding in 1991, Mazzocchi laid down the condition that the organization would not run its own candidates, enabling LPA members to be "free to work for the candidates of any of the major parties." LPA doesn't reject the Democratic Party, only its most recent drift to the right:

"The Democratic Party has changed. Once it was a real grass-roots organization. Organizing Labor Party Advocates is not going to retard the re-birth of the Democrats. On the contrary, it will encourage it."

—Labor Party Advocate (August 1991)

At the outset, Mazzocchi peremptorily dismissed pleas by his "socialist" water-

boys even to hold discussions about a program for the labor party they were supposedly working toward. Recently, LPA has staged a number of "program hearings," including the meeting in Hayward, and is even talking about holding a national convention—maybe, sometime—before the next presidential election in 1996. But the game's the same: pressuring the Dems for a better deal. Far from rejecting the politics of lesser-evilism, *Labor Party Advocates* simply wants to put the "lesser" back in the Democratic Party evil.

## A "Labor Party" Fit for Ross Perot?

To put it bluntly, the increasing posturing about a "labor party" by elements of the labor bureaucracy is an effort to rope working people and minorities back into the Democratic Party fold, and that's what the LPA is all about. To believe the reformists of *Socialist Action* (May 1991), Tony Mazzocchi is "a long-time progressive and even radical militant." Actually, Mazzocchi is a pro-capitalist union bureaucrat to whom the methods of class struggle are alien. He spent 12 years working inside the Democratic Party as OCAW's legislative director. For Mazzocchi, calling for a "labor party" and supporting Democratic politicians have always gone hand in hand: he backed Democrat Jesse Jackson in 1988 and spoke as a featured guest at Jackson's Rainbow Coalition only last fall—three-and-a-half years after founding Labor Party Advocates.

Mazzocchi explicitly hails Roosevelt's New Deal for its "worker-oriented economic policy." But it was this alliance with the Roosevelt and Truman administrations—a bloc of labor, Northern liberals and racist Southern Dixiecrats—that made the unions dependent on the government's NLRB "labor court," paved the way for the Taft-Hartley union-husting law and sacrificed labor's postwar drive to organize the South on the twin altars of racism and anti-Communism.

Resurrecting the New Deal coalition is also what animates the CP's newfound support for a labor party. The *People's Weekly World* (21 January) emphasized "the urgent need to combat the Republican's Contract with America, not only by defending existing programs but by fighting for expanded programs to meet the people's needs." A month earlier *People's Weekly World* (17 December 1994) ran a major speech by Gus Hall

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NYC transit workers demonstrate against layoffs. To fight for its interests, labor must break with the Democrats and forge a class-struggle workers party.



# Labor Party Advocates...

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under the headline, "We Need a New New Deal."

A measure of the kind of labor party the LPA has in mind was revealed by Mazzocchi's failed bid for OCAW president in 1981, when he simultaneously called for a labor party while arguing that strikes were ineffective! LPA's "socialist" enthusiasts to the contrary, a party of the working class will not be built simply on the basis of disaffection with the Democrats, but will arise in the course of sharp, tumultuous class struggles. And in these struggles the mass of the working class will find itself directly pitted against the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy. Can anyone even imagine the current crop of labor bureaucrats, who cut their teeth purging reds from the unions on behalf of J. Edgar Hoover, organizing a party to take on the bosses and their state? Any party that these labor cops for capital would build would be aimed at heading off any struggle that challenged the capitalist system.

As James P. Cannon, a leader of the syndicalist IWW and the early American Communist Party and a founder of the Trotskyist movement in the U.S., remarked: "The achievement of political class consciousness by a proletariat is necessarily a convulsive and historically monumental act." In this deeply race-divided society, key to such a development will be the struggle to mobilize the power of labor against racism in all its ugly forms, because a workers party that's going to lead anything in this country must be a beacon for the fighters of all oppressed groups, *in it will not be*. Yet Mazzocchi insists, "We aren't organizing around a 'progressive' agenda.



AFL-CIO top Lane Kirkland (second from left) presides over destruction of unions while begging Democrats. Here looking on as Clinton signs toothless "striker replacement" executive order.

America," with its demagogic appeals to the "angry white male" vote of anti-black racism and immigrant hashing. The overriding reason why the U.S. has no workers party is because the deep racial divisions in the working class, fostered by the bourgeoisie in a thousand ways, are a bar to successful, unified class struggle. Class consciousness is precluded by race prejudice.

Black oppression is the bedrock of racist American capitalism. At the same time, black workers occupy key positions in the industrial and urban working class. And through their ties to the ghettos and barrios, black and Hispanic workers are linked to those who have the most to gain from revolutionary struggle to bring down the profit system. That is precisely why the labor lieutenants of capital will oppose any move toward a truly class-struggle, multiracial workers party every step of the way, and

tax and value-added tax scheme that would have *jacked up* tax rates for the poor while easing up on the rich (see "Tax the Rich' Fakers Back 'Flat Tax' Jerry Brown," WJ No 549, 17 April 1992). Yet Brown spoke to the LPA gathering as a champion of the poor, receiving a standing ovation. Henning exclaimed, "We want Jerry in the labor party!"

This unity fest with a capitalist demagogue left many of LPA's lake-left press agents nursing a serious political hangover. "Nothing good can come from LPA's invitation to this life-long capitalist politician," moaned *Socialist Action* (February 1995). The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* (BIDOM, March 1995) warned that capitalist politicians like Brown "want to control the steering wheel" of the labor party movement: "We can't let that happen!" But none of these "critics" waged a fight to get capitalist politician Brown thrown out of the Carpenters hall—that would destroy any hope of being allowed to remain as house "oppositonists" in Mazzocchi's sandbox.

## Workers Party—Reformist or Revolutionary?

From the time of the 1848 *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels called for the "organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party." In his 1887 preface to the American edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, written in the wake of American labor's strike movement for the eight-hour day in the 1880s, Engels raised the need for the working class in the U.S. to form "a distinct political party, independent of, and opposed to, all the old political parties formed by the various sections of the ruling classes." Engels stressed that such a party must "proclaim, as the ultimate end, the conquest of political supremacy by the working class, in order to effect the direct appropriation of all means of production—land, railways, mines, machinery, etc.—by society at large, to be worked in common by all for the account and benefit of all."

This is what Trotskyists fight for today, codified in our call for a *workers party to fight for a workers government* through socialist revolution to expropriate the capitalist class and sweep away its state apparatus of repression. In contrast, a number of groups which occasionally—and falsely—claim to be Trotskyist call for the formation of a *reformist* labor party, i.e., a party aiming to patch up the profit system rather than eliminate it altogether. These groups look to Labor Party Advocates in the hope that it will create an American version of the pro-imperialist British Labour Party or the Canadian New Democratic Party, which is ramming amnesia down the throat of the working class in the three provinces where the NDP is in office.

Of the coterie of "left" groupies hov-

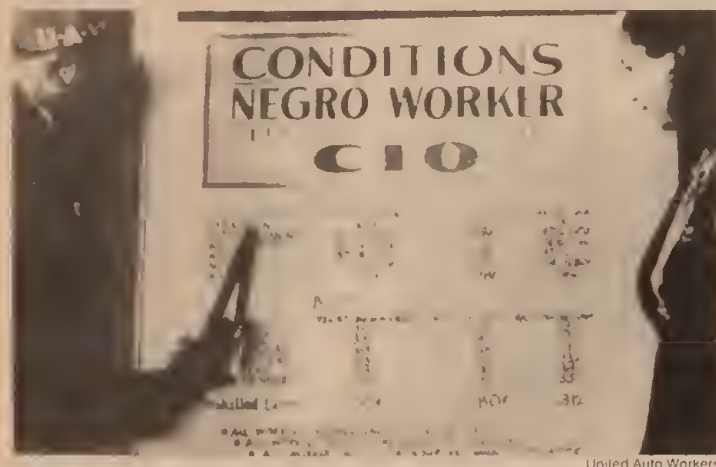
ering around the LPA, perhaps the most single-minded "labor party" party is the Socialist Organizer group, centered in San Francisco. They appeal for a "democratic Labor Party" and complain about undemocratic maneuvering by Mazzocchi & Co. An S.O. leaflet titled "What Kind of a Labor Party Do We Need and What Should Its Program Look Like?" lays out a series of minimalist reforms—shift money from "building weapons of war" to "human needs," public works, etc.—nothing that wouldn't fit in a Democratic "new New Deal." BIDOM, now a journal without an organization, acts as a press agent for LPA, uncritically reprinting speeches by various union bureaucrats, not even bothering to offer its own "program" for a labor party. It's striking that none of these outfits even come close to calling for the equivalent of the British Labour Party's (now scrapped) "Clause IV"—nationalization of the "commanding heights" of the (capitalist) economy.

The closest that any of these reformist left groups gets is Labor Militant, whose British couthunks spent *four decades* buried deeply inside the Labour Party there, even as it broke strikes, imposed degrading racist "virginity tests" on Asian women immigrants, deployed imperialist troops in Northern Ireland and governed in coalition with the openly capitalist Liberal Party. In the U.S., Labor Militant talks of "public ownership" of "500 multinationals," but it doesn't even hint at the need to replace the racist capitalist state. And even that is window-dressing for its real policy, which is for "the creation of a Labor Party on any program" (Labor Militant leaflet, "Build Labor Party Advocates!"). At bottom, all these outfits have a *stagist* concept, that the workers first must go through an obligatory reformist stage of consciousness.

The sort of labor party Militant Labor, Socialist Organizer, BIDOM and the like want is what Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin called a *bourgeois workers party*, one that while based on organizations of the working class is committed to maintaining the capitalist system. While in certain historical instances the formation of a labor party organized independently from openly capitalist parties—even on a reformist program—has represented a step forward for the working class, we fight for a party which is truly independent of the bourgeoisie, one based on a *revolutionary program*.

There is a rich history to the question of a labor party in the U.S. In the early '30s, the Trotskyists opposed the call for a labor party in the U.S. precisely because it would foster illusions in the conservative trade-union bureaucracy. In 1932 Trotsky called it "a very simple but absolutely irrevocable principle; that a Marxist, a proletarian revolutionist, cannot present himself before the working class with two banners. He cannot say at a workers' meeting: 'I have a ticket for a first-class party and another, cheaper ticket for the backward workers.' If I am a Communist, I must fight for the Communist Party" ("The Labor Party Question in the United States," May 1932). Latter-day falsifiers to the contrary, Trotsky never changed his view on this fundamental principle of fighting for a revolutionary party.

With the turbulent strike wave of the mid-late 1930s, which led to the growth of the mass industrial unions of the CIO, the Trotskyists adopted the call for a labor party to popularize the need for the *political independence* of the working class. This slogan was directly counterposed to the New Deal popular-front coalition with the Democrats, pursued by the "progressive" union bureaucrats and the Stalinist Communist Party in order to stem the proletariat's rising militancy and class consciousness and channel it into support for Roosevelt. The Trotskyists at no time called for a *reformist* party or one based on "any program," but rather fought for a party based on the revolutionary Transitional



CIO's appeals to black workers in auto were key to successful drive for mass industrial union in 1930s. A workers party must lead fight against racial oppression in struggle against capitalist system.

We're trying to organize the working class around their economic interests, and many of them are opposed to the 'progressive' agenda."

At the same time, Mazzocchi & Co. push poisonous economic protectionism which pits workers in the U.S. against their class brothers and sisters abroad. Mazzocchi says the "multi-national corporations have...scabbed our jobs abroad." California AFL-CIO chieftain John Henning, another LPA bigwig, raves, "American capital spits on the American flag." Such flag-waving chauvinism politically chains the proletariat to its "own" exploiters and paralyzes working-class struggle. A clear example of that is the ten-month-old rubber workers strike at Japanese-owned Bridgestone-Firestone, where instead of fighting for class solidarity with Japanese workers, the bureaucrats are killing the strike with anti-Japanese protectionism.

Any "third party" constructed around such policies would look dangerously like Ross Perot's "United We Stand

why such a party will only be built in bitter political combat against the entrenched bureaucratic misleadership of the unions

## Heere's...Jerry!

The Hayward LPA meeting in January, co-sponsored by several Northern California labor councils (including Alameda County, San Francisco and San Mateo), offered a snapshot of what the LPA stands for. Henning, one of the main speakers, pointed as a positive example to the San Francisco Union Labor Party, whose mayoral candidate captured City Hall in 1901. What Henning didn't mention is that that "Labor Party" administration was controlled by Republican Party hacks and that its program called for segregated schools for Asian Americans!

Introduced as a surprise speaker at the Hayward meeting was former California governor Jerry Brown, a Democrat who fishes for union support with the bait of populism. During his 1992 presidential run, Brown called for a flat-rate income



# Toronto: Canadian Police Grab Young Socialist Organizer

TORONTO—On April 20, using the excuse of the Oklahoma City bomb blast, four officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police National Security Unit staged a raid on the leftist Pathfinder Bookstore in Toronto. Police physically assaulted volunteer workers in the bookstore, including a candidate of the Communist League (associated with Jack Barnes' Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.) in the upcoming Ontario elections, in order to forcibly seize Nojan Emad, a 19-year-old leader of the Young Socialists. Emad, a Canadian citizen of Iranian origin, was dragged into a minivan which then drove off. Held against his will, he was interrogated and threatened.

An April 21 *Pathfinder* protest statement reports that the RCMP grilled

Emad about his political views and activities, his religion and his reasons for a recent trip to Cuba on an international youth brigade. The cops asked: "Have you ever been to Oklahoma?" "Do you know how to make a bomb?" "Do you promote terrorism?" When a lawyer managed to contact Emad by phone, the police instructed Emad to tell him they were discussing an "immigration" matter. After the lawyer pointed out that Emad is a citizen, the cops claimed it was a "national security" matter. The Young Socialists leader was finally released with a warning not to contact his lawyer and was told he could be picked up again at any time.

We print below a Partisan Defense Committee protest against this ominous

attack on democratic rights. Further protests should be sent to Solicitor General of Canada Herb Gray, 340 Laurier Ave. W., Ottawa ON, K1A 0P8, Canada, fax (613) 952-2240.

23 April 1995

Herb Gray  
Solicitor General of Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Sir:

We vigorously protest the illegal seizure, detention and interrogation of Nojan Emad, a leader of the Young Socialists in Toronto, by officers of the RCMP National Security Unit on April 20. We further protest the RCMP's invasion of the Pathfinder bookstore, and their assault on volunteer book-

Yours truly,  
Peter Stevens  
for the Partisan  
Defense Committee

Program, a series of demands aimed at connecting the immediate felt needs of the working class to the fight for a workers government.

In a discussion with his U.S. supporters on how to influence the development of the CIO's political formation, Labor's Non-Partisan League (LNPL), which was being tugged between supporting the Democrats and efforts at independent political action, Trotsky stressed:

"Are we in favor of the creation of a reformist labor party? No. Are we in favor of a policy which can give the trade unions the possibility to put its weight upon the balance of the forces? Yes. "It can become a reformist party—it depends upon the development. Here the question of program comes in."

Trotsky goes on to emphasize several key programmatic questions, including the need for workers militias to combat strikebreakers and fascist gangs, and for workers control of industry. He then sums up:

"We say, you cannot impose your will through a reformist party but only through a revolutionary party."  
—"How to Fight for a Labor Party in the U.S."  
(March 1938)

At the time, there were various "Labor party parties"—as the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) dubbed the Lovestonites and Norman Thomas Socialist Party—which "carry on an abstract, general, universal and perpetual campaign for a Labor party" (see "The Labor Party Question in America," *WV* No. 248, 25 January 1980). The reformist character of this campaign was expressed in the 1936 formation of the American Labor Party (ALP) in New York, which was set up as a vehicle to garner workers' votes for Roosevelt. While running its own candidates locally, the ALP endorsed Democrat FDR for president. From the ALP to the LPA, the reformists' policy then and now is for a "labor" auxiliary for the Democrats, *because they tail the pro-Democratic labor bureaucracy.*

The revolutionary approach to the labor party slogan was succinctly stated by SWP leader Cannon in 1948 at the time of the Henry Wallace Progressive Party campaign pushed by the CP:

"We must not forget that our labor party policy is a method of struggle against the trade union bureaucracy in all its sections, the so-called progressives as well as the reactionaries, the Stalinists as well as the red-baiters."

— "Election Policy in 1948"  
(April 1948)

## The Fight for Revolutionary Leadership

An ALP-type formation is the *best* that could come out of Labor Party Advocates. The history of the U.S. this century is riddled with the wreckage of third *bourgeois* parties, many of

them launched with substantial support from the labor bureaucracy and reformist leftists, none of them representing in any way a break toward independent working-class politics. The rail union bureaucrats were the principal backers of the "Progressive Party" candidacy of Republican Senator Robert La Follette in 1924, as was the Stalinist CP in the 1948 Wallace campaign. The historical norm is for popular disaffection with the Democrats to be derailed into precisely such a bourgeois electoral dead end.

Thus it is notable that nearly all of

counterrevolutionary war in Vietnam. North personality interviewed independent anti-Communist Steelworkers president I.W. Abel, who had uttered the words "labor party" in denouncing Democratic "peace" candidate George McGovern. North prefaced this *reactionary* thrust as a "developing break between the labor movement and the Democratic Party" (*Bulletin*, 24 July 1972).

The Workers League carefully tailored its own program for a "labor party" to suit the reactionary labor bureaucracy it tailed, not even mentioning opposition



**Demonstration by predominantly Latino L.A. janitors in 1990 defied racist cop mobilization. Labor must fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.**

the opportunist groups tailing LPA also immersed themselves in the 1992 presidential campaign of Ron Daniels, an "independent" Democrat who served as Jesse Jackson's campaign manager in 1988. Even the left wing of the fake-Trotskyist spectrum, the centrist Trotskyist League (TL) of Peter Sollenberger, called in 1992 for LPA to unite with capitalist "third party" campaigns like that of Ron Daniels and NOW's 21st Century Party (*International Revolution*, September 1992).

One pseudo-Trotskyist organization offering a revolutionary-sounding critique of Labor Party Advocates is the Workers League (WL) of the dubious David North. According to North's *International Workers Bulletin* (6 June 1994): "The Workers League has always advanced the labor party demand as a means of popularizing the need for a revolutionary political party of the working class to take power." What a crock! For years the WL heged the racist, pro-imperialist AFL-CIO bureaucracy to launch a labor party. Back in 1972, at the height of U.S. imperialism's

to the war in Vietnam or to black oppression. Today, the WL writes off the organized labor movement and the AFL-CIO as no longer working-class organizations at all, equating the unions with the pro-capitalist tops (see "Workers League vs. the Unions," *WV* No. 580, 16 July 1993). In contrast, the Spartacist League has consistently fought in the unions for a class-struggle program, including opposition to U.S. imperialist intervention abroad, defense of minorities against racist attack, and for a fighting workers party.

Today, a section of the labor bureaucracy is talking "labor party" because they have been marginalized by Clinton and his "New Democrats." In their view, the labor movement was NAFTAed, then they were stabbed in the back over the "striker replacement" bill—and in response, as a desperate pressure ploy, they want to threaten the Democrats with a split. But it is these same bureaucrats who have presided over the wholesale gutting of the union movement over the last two decades, and this latest gambit is just a continuation of their policy of

store workers including John Steele, a Communist League candidate in the Ontario elections.

The RCMP's harassment of and threats against a left-wing political activist are an outrage which reeks of McCarthyite anti-communism. To tar this leftist with any alleged connection to the April 19 Oklahoma City bomb blast—by all appearances an act of nativist right-wing terrorism—is as ludicrous as it is obscene. The targeting of Mr. Emad, a Canadian citizen of Iranian origin, is of a piece with the racist state persecution of people of Middle Eastern descent which erupted during the Persian Gulf War. Such hysteria has again been fomented in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City carnage.

The Partisan Defense Committee demands: Hands off Nojan Einad and Pathfinder Bookstore!

Yours truly,  
Peter Stevens  
for the Partisan  
Defense Committee

defeat. A class-struggle workers party will be forged through stormy struggle—not just union battles but also mobilizations of labor in alliance with black and Hispanic minorities against racist reaction. Indeed, key to building a workers party will be winning the support of immigrants, many from Latin America, who are among the most combative sectors of labor today. Labor must raise the call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

A concrete example of the kind of leadership needed is the series of labor/black mobilizations initiated by the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee to stop the KKK/Nazis in major cities around the country, from Washington, D.C. in 1982 to Springfield, Illinois in January 1994. These united-front actions were supported by numerous unions and union officials, were defended by union-based defense guards and drew significant numbers of minority workers and youth. This is the kind of approach to mobilizing labor/minority power that is key to building a workers party that will fight capitalist exploitation and oppression.

A party of the working class will not be built overnight. Where there is real movement in the direction of forming a workers party, even on a local or partial basis (such as union candidates), so long as it presents a clear class break from the capitalist parties and stands for defense of workers and the oppressed—e.g., support to strikes, opposition to racist terror—Marxists would seek to intervene. While this can involve a range of tactics, including critical or conditional support in elections, we always fight on the basis of the revolutionary program. And we emphasize that it will not be in accord with the "labor lieutenants of capital" but in the struggle to oust them that a workers party to sweep away the profit system will be forged. ■

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—MARXIST LITERATURE—

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# A Reply to Some South African Leftists

## Tailing the ANC's Neo-Apartheid Nationalism

During the 1980s, the explosion of mass black struggle in South Africa, leading to the development of a powerful and combative trade-union movement, shook the apartheid state to its foundations. Decisive sections of the white ruling class and their senior partners in Washington and London became convinced of the need to co-opt the leadership of the African National Congress and the closely allied South African Communist Party (SACP) in an attempt to restore social order. At the same time, the collapse of the Soviet bloc, as the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy disintegrated under Gorbachev, deprived the ANC of its main international sponsor. Consequently, Mandela & Co. came to terms with the Randlords and Western imperialists in the form of a "power sharing" deal with the National Party, the ruling party of the apartheid state. This led to last spring's elections, whose predetermined outcome was a coalition "Government of National Unity."

While opposing the "power sharing" deal with the National Party, most self-styled leftist groups in South Africa and internationally supported the ANC in the April 1994 elections because not to do so was *unpopular*. An important exception in South Africa was the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), whose most prominent leader is Neville Alexander. On the eve of the elections, WOSA formed the Workers List Party (WLP) as a vehicle to run against the ANC. Although the WLP program did not go beyond the bounds of left reformism, we gave it critical support on the grounds that "the WLP does draw a crude class line and a vote for it will be seen in South Africa as a vote for a workers party rather than the ANC" (WV No. 599, 29 April 1994). The centrist British Workers Power group also equivocally called for a vote to the WLP, "to the extent that it has support amongst sections of the most advanced and determined workers" (Workers Power, April 1994). But if the Workers List turned out to be not so popular, Workers Power had an out.

We did not support another small group that ran in the 1994 elections, the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International, which is linked to the British-based tendency led by Cliff Slaughter, noting the virulent Stalinophobia of its election manifesto which

"essentially accuses the ANC of bringing Stalinist gulags to the veld" (WV No. 602, 10 June 1994).

### Nationalist Demagogy and Confusionism

Since coming to office, the ANC-led Government of National Unity has broken black workers' strikes and driven off squatters while wooing foreign investors and seeking the blessings of the International Monetary Fund. Those left groups which backed the ANC now find themselves in an awkward position. One

directly and through COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and the SACP (which the CWG polemic curiously never mentions). Using the double-talk that is required by a policy of tailism, the CWG argues that the ANC "has a mass proletarian following," and so due to their "tactical orientation to the masses inside the ANC" they called for a vote to this political vehicle of the fledgling black bourgeoisie! The ANC/COSATU/SACP "tripartite alliance" is a *nationalist popular front*, in which the black proletarian and plebeian masses of South

ensconced in the Labourite left as Workers Power, routinely calling for votes for the Labour Party.

In fact, the CWG's support for the ANC is the transposition to South Africa of the same *opportunistic methodology* which leads their British comrades to invariably vote Labour: fear of going against the sentiment of the masses. In its original statement of critical support for the ANC, the CWG argues that this "is the correct tactic for small organisations of militants to get a hearing from the masses" (Qina Msebenzi, April 1994). Thus it opposed



### Why we voted for the ANC

Why we called for the hostels to be flattened - A reply to the Spartacist League and Workers' Power

Late in 1994 some CWG members had a brief meeting with members of the US based Spartacist League (SL) who were visiting SA. Just before the April election we also met members of the British Workers Power who were on a political tour of South Africa. In a recent issue of the Spartacist League publication, *Black History and the Class Struggle* No 11, there are in our opinion, a number of fundamental mistakes.

First, CWG is accused of "twisting grain" by abandoning the workers party just before the election in April 1994. We are also accused of "being sceptical about the election results" (*Black History and the Class Struggle* No 12, p 4). Second we are criticised for calling for the hostels to be "removed". Third, we are attacked by the pages of the Spartacist League for calling on ordinary ANC members to fight inside the ANC against the degeneration of their organisation, the lack of accountability and the capitalist orientation of top ANC leaders.

Leadership in one respect deny that the ANC has a membership which is increasingly critical of what the leadership is doing. The Spartacist deny that the ANC does have important internal struggles within it. Many ANC workers were dismayed when they saw the election list which had many people they disagreed with. It seems an elementary point to state: surely any serious revolutionary cannot be oblivious to the internal life of mass organisations. The ANC is quite obviously an organisation which has a massive proletarian following.

As a tactical orientation to the masses inside the ANC, CWG called on the ANC comrades to put demands on their leaders. An example of a struggle demand was "scrap the sunset clauses and expel openly bourgeois elements". CWG is not a sectarian organisation. We believe we must find a way to the masses, we must be able to speak to the masses of ANC supporters in a way that they will want to hear us out. We have no doubt that helping critical ANC members to see through the treachery of their leadership is a crucial part of building a revolutionary party in SA. So when you say "whoever and whatever" you merely show your utter contempt for the real struggle of ordinary youth and proletarians as they battle to make sense of the political developments... (continued on p6).

"Comrades for a Workers Government" voted for Mandela's ANC, which joined in "Government of National Unity" with apartheid leader De Klerk.

such group, caught in a particularly compromising posture, was the South African Comrades for a Workers Government (CWG). For months, the CWG had worked together with WOSA in its campaign for a "mass workers party," but on the eve of the April '94 vote it suddenly came out for support to the bourgeois nationalist ANC!

In the first issue of its paper since the elections, the CWG has now come out with a pained and defensive polemic: "Why We Voted for the ANC—Why We Called for the [Zulu] Hostels To Be Flattened: A Reply to the Spartacist League and Workers' Power" (Qina Msebenzi, March/April 1995). The CWG was simply chasing after the workers and township youth who are tied to the ANC, both

Africa are tied to their exploiters.

It is precisely the popular-front character of the "tripartite alliance" that the CWG—which avows a formal Trotskyist orthodoxy—refuses to acknowledge. Does the CWG think it is an accident that Mandela put former COSATU head Jay Naidoo in charge of the Reconstruction and Development Program, made South Africa's grand old man of Communism Joe Slovo housing minister and appointed erstwhile SACP guerrilla chief Ronnie Kasrils as deputy minister of defense? The ANC is using the ex-COSATU and SACP ministers to disorient, demobilize and disarm the organized black working class. In voting for the ANC, the CWG declared itself to be the loyal left critic of this nationalist popular front.

Basically, the CWG polemic consists of variations on the theme of South African nationalism. A major theme is to compare the ANC favorably to the British Labour Party:

"The ANC-Cosatu alliance may not have the same historical pattern as that of the Labour Party in Britain. But the British Labour Party, despite clause 4, is no more radical or socialist than the ANC pretends to be. If anything the LP has [a] much longer tradition of class compromise and has spearheaded attacks on the working class."

"Workers Power routinely votes for the thoroughly imperialist British Labour Party. Similarly Workers Power also calls for electoral support for other social democratic imperialist parties in Western Europe."

The CWG's "anti-imperialist" posture of hostility to British Labourism and West European social democracy is sheer hypocrisy. This small South African group is part of an international tendency led by the British Workers International League (WIL). And the WIL is just as

the formation of the Workers List Party because of "the peril of cutting ties with the masses" who still support the ANC. The CWG's current polemic emphasizes that the "WLP received a derisory 4,000 votes in an election of over 20 million people." The logic of their argument is that a small left-wing propaganda group should *never* run in an election at all. Rather, they should act as pressure groups on the dominant reformist, nationalist and bourgeois liberal parties. Why not vote for the Democratic Party in the United States, then, or the Peronists in Argentina?

While the subjective motivation for centrists tailing the Labour Party in Britain and the ANC in South Africa is the same—tailing after what's popular—there is a *class* line between these different types of political formations. The British Labour Party is a reformist (bourgeois) workers party, based on the organized workers movement but led by a pro-capitalist *bureaucracy*. British workers see Labour as their class party opposed to the bourgeois Conservative (Tory) Party. Therefore it is *sometimes* a correct tactic for revolutionaries to extend critical electoral support to Labour or other reformist workers parties in order to set the proletarian base against the bureaucratic tops. But what for revolutionaries is an occasionally effective tactic is for centrists like the WIL and Workers Power the excuse to be a "Trotskyist" appendage of Labour.

The African National Congress, however, is *not* a reformist workers party. It was a petty-bourgeois nationalist movement claiming to represent all classes of the nonwhite oppressed. When such movements (e.g., the Algerian National Liberation Front) acquire political power,



ANC-led government called out racist police against striking workers last year at Pick 'n Pay supermarket chain, whose owner was a major contributor to the ANC.



they can use their control of the government apparatus to engage in the capitalist exploitation of their own people while remaining subordinate to world imperialism. Thus cadre from the ANC are now being recruited en masse into the upper echelons of South African corporate management. It has become commonplace for black workers to complain that their former leaders have all jumped onto the "grave train." In their own way, the black masses grasp that the ANC has become a bourgeois party.

And what of the CWG? Simply reading their polemic against our tendency and Workers Power, one would assume they believe the ANC to be a reformist workers party. Actually, in the April 1994 issue of *Qina Msebenzi* they present totally contradictory positions on the class nature of the ANC. In a polemic against the "Militant Workers Tendency," which advocates turning the ANC into a working-class-based socialist party, the CWG states that "the ANC has evolved beyond being a revolutionary petty-bourgeois nationalist movement into becoming (or very close to becoming) a bourgeois nationalist party." But another piece in that issue ("CWG Statement on the Workers List Party") argues that it is correct to "temporarily support the electoral victory of a reformist organisation, like the ANC." A third article calls for "the expulsion of the open bourgeois elements in the ANC." So presumably they want the ANC to be a bourgeois nationalist party with only *disguised*, but not open, bourgeois elements.

What is going on here? Is the CWG schizophrenic? Are there internal differences reflecting themselves in counterposed lines in their press? Quite possibly, given their flip-flops over the "mass workers party." Or is this deliberate confusionism. It is certainly notable that when the CWG polemicalizes against groups to their right—the Communist Party and Militant Tendency—they emphasize the bourgeois-nationalist character of the ANC. But when they face groups to their left—WOSA (last year) or ourselves—they present the ANC as if it were a reformist workers party.

The CWG contends that "Lenin advocated critical support for national liberation movements as well as a critical vote for the Labour Party (LP) in Britain." Not at all. Lenin gave *military, not political*, support to national liberation movements fighting imperialist armed forces, such as his support for the Irish Easter Rebellion of 1916. Similarly, we defended the ANC guerrillas against the South African army, although the ANC's military actions were largely symbolic in their effect. The Bolsheviks never gave electoral support to the petty-bourgeois nationalist parties in the Russian empire (e.g., Piłsudski's Polish Socialist Party, Armenian Dashnaki) in elections to the tsarist duma or the soviets of 1917. Nor did the Bolsheviks give electoral support to the Russian petty-bourgeois radicals of the Social Revolutionary Party.

In another variation of their capitulation to nationalism, the CWG maintains:

"Another example of the strange method of debate we find among the SL journalists is that they conflate electoral support with liquidationism and entryism. What does the Chinese Communist Party liquidation into the Kuomintang have in common with the tactic of a critical vote."

One would assume, reading this, that the CWG is opposed in principle to entering the ANC. Not so. A pamphlet by the fore-runners of this group states: "At the same time as penetrating the proletarian base of the ANC-SACP alliance in its township structures—and this does not exclude the tactic of entry—we must concentrate forces inside the unions" (*South Africa at the Crossroads* (1991)). Here the confusionism is quite dishonest—not the only example of this in the CWG's polemic.

The CWG is well aware that Lenin not only proposed that the relatively small British Communist Party give critical electoral support to the Labour Party



Farrell/AP



Frankenfeld/NY Times

While neo-apartheid regime sends troops to quell conflict between Inkatha-led Zulu hostel dwellers (above) and ANC-derived "Self Defence Units" (left), we call for ethnically integrated union-based workers militias to suppress right-wing terrorism and communalist violence.

but also suggested the Communists do a tactical entry into it. When the Stalinists cited this as a "precedent" to justify the Chinese CP's entry into the Kuomintang, Trotsky responded:

"The analogy of the British Communist Party's entry into the Labour Party falls apart under its own weight. The British Labour Party is proletarian in composition and political differentiation is proceeding slowly by comparison. The Kuomintang is a 'party' of different classes, and political differentiation among them is proceeding with extreme rapidity because of the revolution."

—"The Communist Party and Kuomintang" (May 1927)

In the course of building the Fourth International Trotsky *never* advocated a vote for, much less entry into, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties, even when these exercised political hegemony over the trade-union movement (e.g., Gandhi's Indian National Congress, Lázaro Cárdenas' Party of the Mexican Revolution).

Unlike reformist workers parties, which are organizationally based on the proletariat, bourgeois nationalist parties can turn on and *destroy* the workers movement which had previously helped them gain and maintain power. Thus the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) regime in Mexico ruthlessly crushes any attempt to form trade unions independent of state control. And we are beginning to see signs of the same thing in South Africa under the Government of National Unity. Witness the red-baiting campaign against the Turning Wheel Workers Union, a militant breakaway from the pro-ANC truckers union. And now a draconian new Labour Relations Bill will outlaw strikes over sackings, in "essential services" and "maintenance services" as well as the public sector, crack down on other strikes with "a conciliation, mediation and arbitration commission," and allow employers to lock out workers.

#### CWG Support for Anti-Zulu Pogroms

The CWG not only supported the ANC against the Workers List Party in the elections but also called on the ANC to undertake *bonapartist* measures in the name of fighting the right and Zulu tribalism. The original statement of critical support in *Qina Msebenzi* demanded that the ANC take "decisive action against Buthelezi" (leader of the Zulu tribalist Inkatha movement sponsored by the apartheid regime, who is now a minister in the Government

of National Unity) and called for "banning right-wing reactionaries." Who exactly will take such "decisive action," who will carry out a "ban"? The CWG is calling here on the racist South African army and police to do their bidding. This creates dangerous illusions. Moreover, any laws allowing the ANC to ban political parties and suppress its opponents will be used first and foremost *against the left and the trade-union movement*.

The Zulu question is a focal point of the CWG's South African nationalism. And here they more than once falsify our positions. Thus the current *Qina Msebenzi* polemic claims: "The SL line up politically with Bantustan policies; with secession for Natal—presently the main demand of Inkatha." This is a flat-out lie. In Part Four of our series, "South Africa Powder Keg" (WV No. 606, 16 September 1994, reprinted in *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 12, February 1995), we stated with utmost clarity: "Our support for the right of regional autonomy in a future South African workers state in no way implies support for reactionary Zulu separatism in Natal today. In the present context, we would oppose a move to secession by Inkatha, which would undoubtedly be allied with

a revolt of right-wing whites to form a bitter-end apartheid *volkstaat*. But things can change, and quickly" (emphasis in original).

The CWG's tendency to support ANC bonapartism is even clearer in their call to demolish the Zulu hostels. In a typical example of imperialist-hating and falsification, *Qina Msebenzi* claims that our line on the ANC/Inkatha conflict "has echoes of the hoary CIA stereotyping of the ANC as a tribal Xhosa organisation." In fact, the CWG's line on the ANC is *far more compatible* with that of the CIA than ours. The American imperialist government and bourgeois media hailed in ecstatic terms Mandela's election as a triumph of "democracy" and "moderation" in the Third World.

We have always characterized the ANC as a petty-bourgeois nationalist, not a Xhosa tribalist, movement. What we did say is: "While the ANC currently draws support from all sections of the nonwhite population as well as liberal and leftist whites, its strongest base of support is among the Xhosas" ("Powder Keg," Part Three). And it is precisely this Xhosa tribalist component of the ANC's social base which came to the fore during the course of fighting between the ANC-linked "Self Defence Units" (SDUs) and Inkatha thugs, armed by the apartheid regime and based in the Zulu hostels, which ravaged the black townships on the Witwatersrand. What began as self-defense against Inkatha terror squads often turned into indiscriminate attacks on all Zulu-speaking people.

The CWG contends:

"Any class conscious workers who may have lived in hostels moved out in the late 1980s. Since then criminals and hard-core Inkatha supporters and their families have lived in some of the hostels.... In this context the only response of the workers and youth was to try to isolate the hostels and to flatten those hostels which were identified as disguised SADF [South African Defence Forces] bases."

This piece of anti-Zulu demagoguery has been refuted even by ANC leaders on the spot. According to Louis Sibeke, general secretary of the civic association in Thokozza, the scene of some of the worst communalist bloodletting: "In other areas of the township and in Kaitleng, hundreds of Zulu-speaking residents were forced to flee their shacks and seek refuge in the hostel when youths threatened to burn the homes of people who had allowed Zulu-speakers to occupy shacks in their yards" (*Tribune* [Johannesburg], 15 April 1994). Here we have Zulu migrant workers who wanted to live in peace with their non-Zulu neighbors being driven into the hostels by the attacks of the Self Defence Units. Peter

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- L.A. Unionists Demand: Freedom for Geronimo!
- Port Chicago, 1944: U.S. Navy's Racist Frame-Up

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# Oklahoma...

(continued from page 1)

state terror. The fiery 19 April 1993 Waco holocaust, set off by the feds' siege and deadly assault on the Branch Davidian religious group, was the Clinton administration's declaration of a "New World Order" at home. Waco was state murder, killing 86 men, women and children in the name of "gun control"! Beginning the very day of the Waco massacre, the Spartacist League mounted emergency protests against Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno's bloody outrage, with signs denouncing "FBI Baby Killers!"

In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, the government is obscenely amnestying its own crime at Waco by seeking to smear all who oppose it as right-wing terrorists. The media got in on the act, typified by the *New York Times* (20 April) headline, "Branch Davidians' Legacy of Hate." The Branch Davidians simply wanted to be left alone to practice their religious beliefs, and exercised their right to have arms (like all their neighbors). Such a racially integrated commune would have been considered an abomination by the racist right wing, but since the government wiped it out, a variety of fascists brandish the Waco holocaust as a rallying cry for their own sinister cause.

A federal judge in Wichita justified holding an alleged associate of McVeigh's by saying, "I have guns, but I don't have any Waco material in my house, I don't have anti-Government material in my house, and I don't think that most of the people in the country have those things" (*New York Times*, 27 April). Behind this is a government agenda aimed at criminalizing all dissent against the powers that be. That agenda is being fleshed out daily as the Clinton administration and the Republican Congress compete in proposing ever more repressive legislation.

## Clinton/Reno's Creeping Police State

Although the principal bombing suspect turned out to be a white American Army vet, the Clinton administration didn't miss a step in escalating its long-standing drive for drastically enhanced powers to go after "international terrorism." Under the proposed Omnibus Counterterrorism Act, foreign tourists and all "aliens" could be subjected to star chamber proceedings (secret trials) as suspected terrorists. And anyone could be prosecuted for so much as donating to any organization deemed "terrorist" by the government of the day, like Mandela's ANC and Arafat's PLO were until recently. The government would be allowed to deport or indefinitely detain non-citizens based on secret "evidence" which would not be revealed to the accused.

How this could play out can be seen



Action Press



Haistead/Time

**Mass murderers Clinton and Reno ordered FBI/BATF assault on Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas, in which 86 people were killed, including 25 children.**



Isanadi/AP

in the case of the "L.A. Eight," seven Palestinians and a Kenyan woman who since 1987 have been facing deportation based on their alleged political sympathies for the radical-nationalist Palestinian PFLP. Under the new bill, the L.A. Eight would have been thrown on a plane eight years ago, without ever even knowing the charges against them. Additionally, the government would have been able to suppress the revelation that came out in their hearings that concentration camps already exist for the incarceration of Arab Americans (and many others) in the event of an "emergency."

The "counterterrorism bill" would create a new federal crime of "international terrorism." This catch-all category could be used against any "disruption," including for example civil disobedience and strike picket lines, since interfering with commerce could now be considered "terrorist" activity. If this seems far-fetched, just look at how the state has used the RICO "anti-racketeering" laws to go after unions. The new law would give the government a free hand to use "roving" wiretaps—bugging every public

phone in an area where a "suspect" might be. On top of that, even evidence admittedly obtained illegally could be used in court. Also permitted under the bill would be "preventive detention"—imprisonment without either a trial or charges being brought. One of the most dangerous parts of the proposed legislation would lift constraints on the use of the military in civilian law enforcement.

This comes on top of Clinton's 1994 "crime" bill, passed with bipartisan support, which extended the death penalty to some 60 new federal offenses, as well as sharply restricting the right to hear arms. At the same time, the Justice Department is renewing its attempt to be able to spy on all electronic communications, as well as snooping into your personal financial records. Taking its cue from Washington, the Los Angeles Police Commission has already granted "emergency powers" to the LAPD's "anti-terrorism division," allowing wider use of electronic surveillance and undercover operatives (*Los Angeles Times*, 21 April).

Clinton also wants to create a special domestic "counterterrorism center" within the FBI, and hire 1,000 new federal agents. Under proposed new FBI "guidelines," the feds would be allowed to "compile information on potentially menacing organizations...even when there is no evidence they are involved in criminal activity" (*New York Times*, 25 April). A bipartisan Congressional chorus is denouncing the "domestic security/terrorism" guidelines adopted in 1983 by the Reagan administration which supposedly "handcuff" the FBI. The 1983 order allowed unlimited investigation wherever there was "reasonable indication" that a violation of federal law might occur. These guidelines were themselves intended to loosen some of the restrictions included in Attorney General Edward Levi's 1976 guidelines, adopted in the wake of Richard Nixon's Watergate scandal and the exposure of the COINTELPRO program of spying and disruption against leftists and black militants.

The Spartacist League denounced Reagan's 1983 FBI guidelines as "McCarthy-

ism with a drawn gun." In a lawsuit filed that year, we contested this witchhunting decree which targeted the entire left, noting that groups previously labeled "politically subversive" were cast as "terrorist outlaws" in order to facilitate "prosecution of Marxist political organizations as criminal racketeering enterprises." The suit also demanded the FBI revise its characterization of the SL as a conspiratorial organization "not openly advocat[ing] the violent overthrow of the U.S. Government at this time." This "definition" was used to place the Spartacist League on the FBI's infamous "ADEX" hit list, a secret "subversives" list. A year later, the FBI conceded the central claim of our suit, that Marxist political principles and advocacy cannot be equated with violence, terrorism or a criminal enterprise (see "FBI Admits: Marxists Are Not Terrorists," *WV* No. 368, 7 December 1984).

The settlement was an important victory for those who fight to defend democratic rights. But we had no illusions that the secret police had stopped their harassment, infiltration and disruption of the government's perceived political opponents. Soon after the 1983 guidelines were established, it was revealed that the FBI was spying on the liberal CISPES solidarity group, which opposed U.S. aid to the Salvadoran death squad regime. Augmenting the secret police and providing a public relations cover for its dirty work are private groups like the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which was exposed in 1993 for running a massive spy operation in league with the FBI—as well as Israeli and South African secret services—against liberals and leftists. Now the ADL is pushing for more "anti-terrorism" laws—which, of course, these Zionists would never propose for Israel, where Uzi-toting fascist settlers terrorize Arabs in the Occupied Territories.

## From the "White Backlash" to the Oklahoma Bombing

The sharp rise of nativist fascist movements and right-wing militias across the country is fostered by anti-immigrant hysteria and a general rightward shift in bourgeois politics. The myriad fascist groupings share a racist and anti-Semitic demonology, which sees the federal government—often referred to as ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government)—as the creature of an "international Jewish conspiracy." To combat this, the more up-front fascists have been preparing to launch a "war" to save the "purity" of the "white race." For the last couple of decades, there has been a proliferation of paramilitary ultrarightist movements, under a host of names such as the Christian Identity Movement, "survivalists," Aryan Nations, The Order (also known as Bruder Schweigen), the Patriot Movement, etc. Most of these tend to be rural or suburban-based, while skinhead Nazi gangs reach into the cities.

The rise of the "militia movement" is a new development. According to an article in *CoverAction* (Spring 1995), there is "militia activity in at least 40 states, with a conservatively estimated hardcore membership of at least 10,000—and growing." A number of the larger ones, such as the Michigan Militia and Arizona Patriots, are more circumspect in espousing open racism, but they are all part of the nativist fascist network. The hard core were trained at places like the "Aryan Nations" compound in Hayden Lake, Idaho, which has regular KKK cross-burnings and Hitlerite rallies. Another group called "The Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord" recruited people like William Snell, a white-supremacist who murdered a businessman he thought was Jewish. In the weeks before Snell's execution—on April 19!—fascist newsletters such as the Montana-based *Taking Aim* had urged their readers to "ACT NOW!"

In our article, "The Anti-Abortion Terror Network" (*WV* No. 614, 13 January), we exposed the links between the militias and other fascists and "right to



Howe/NY Times

**Michigan Militia, part of growing fascist network of white-supremacists, anti-Semites, abortion clinic bombers.**



life" terrorists. Thus Milwaukee pastor Matthew Trehwella of the Missionaries to the Preborn, who has called for armed militias to attack abortion clinics and doctors, is a leader in the so-called U.S. Taxpayers Party—whose membership overlaps with the fascist Populist Party and Liberty Lobby—as is Randall Terry of Operation Rescue (*Front Lines Research*, August 1994). Many anti-abortion fanatics like Paul Hill, who killed Dr. John Britton and James Barrett in Pensacola, Florida in 1994, signed and circulated statements calling for "use of lethal force" against abortion providers, and distributed "wanted posters" of doctors such as Dr. David Gunn, assassinated (also in Pensacola) in 1993. Anti-abortion assassin John Salvi, who killed two clinic workers in Boston last December, was also tied into this fascist web.

There is also a large overlap between U.S. police and military forces and American fascist outfits, including the "militia" movements McVeigh has been associated with. Fascist elements are brazenly operating in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the Special Forces headquarters. *New York Newsday* (28 April) reports that a "clandestine" newsletter called *The Resister* is being distributed to Green Beret and other military bases as well as to right-wing paramilitary groups. Its first issue ranted that "the principles of democracy" have "flushed America down the sewer of altruism, leaving it to sink slowly into the rancid cesspool of liberalism, tribalism, internationalism, and socialism."

Why, then, do these fascist outfits see the (capitalist) federal government as their enemy? In the 1950s, Washington was still a white man's world, with FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover a permanent fixture, diehard racist Dixiecrats influential in Congress and Cold War anti-Communism dominating every sphere of public life. Then came the 1960s civil rights movement, the explosion of black anger in the Northern ghettos and the long, losing, counterrevolutionary war in Vietnam. Today, all elements of the right—Republican leader Gingrich, who is ideologically fascist, as well as Christian fundamentalists, Zionist "neo-conservatives" and the fascist militia movement—see the '60s as the turning point when things started to go bad for "their" America.

The limited gains for blacks and women which resulted from the social upheavals of the '60s fueled a white racist backlash which eventually took the form of opposition to "big government"—identified as forcing white children to go to school with blacks, giving tax money to black welfare mothers and poverty bureaucrats and giving jobs to blacks and women under "affirmative action." While most blacks were no better off, the government created a layer of black middle-class professionals, and college-educated daughters of middle-class families made it at least into the lower levels of the corporate world. Racist politicians began deliberately stoking white resentment. This boiled over into the "tax revolt" of the late 1970s—the so-called revenge of the suburbs—which propelled Reagan into the White House and began the ascendancy of the Republican right in U.S. national politics.

This is pure demagoguery, of course, as the vast bulk of federal taxes go to the military, Medicare and, increasingly, to pay interest on the national debt. Very little of it goes to the poor, black or white. The racist "anti-tax" movement was infused, especially in recent years, with anti-Semitism. The fascist right's ravings are promoted in more "respectable" terms by the likes of Newt Gingrich and Pat Robertson, the Christian fundamentalist guru who is a power broker in the Republican right. His recent book, *The New World Order*, is a rehash of hoary anti-Semitic tracts.

The fascist militia movement has its roots not only in the "white backlash" but also in the traumatic effects of the U.S. defeat in Vietnam. By the late 1970s, it was a universal myth in right-wing

circles—especially among veterans of elite military units like the Green Berets—that the U.S. had not been defeated on the battlefield by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants, but had been betrayed on the home front by liberal politicians, the press and yuppie peaceniks. Militia guru Bo Gritz made his name as a gung-ho Green Beret, staging raids to "rescue MIAs" after the war. Similarly, the core of Hitler's Nazi movement was recruited out of the Freikorps—a counterrevolutionary militia of embittered World War I junior officers who claimed Germany had been "stabbed in the back" by politicians of the left.

The "Rampos" of the militia movement have been running around this country for many years. So why are Metzger, Gritz et al. cheering now over the bombing of a federal office building? To them, Reagan and Bush at least had anti-Communist and "patriotic" creden-

tell them—STOP IT. THIS IS OUR GOVERNMENT."

Tell that to the Teamster strikers whose heads were bashed by riot cops last year, or to the thousands of Latino and black youth and workers in Los Angeles who were beaten and arrested by the National Guard and LAPD during the 1992 upheaval. Looking to this racist capitalist government to "ban the Klan" is a set-up for defeat. The fascists are the capitalists' attack dogs, to be unleashed when needed to smash the struggles of workers and minorities. In this case, they may have slipped the leash. But any move by the government to strengthen its repressive apparatus in order to "fight extremism" will immediately be turned against the labor movement, minorities and the left.

The most notorious example of this was the 1940 Smith Act, originally billed as a tool to fight Nazis on the eve of



U.S. government terrorism: rescue workers in Baghdad, Iraq pull victims from the rubble of a residential neighborhood after Clinton ordered bombing in June 1993.

tials, and openly played the race card. Reagan consorted with fascist outfits like General Singlaub's World Anti-Communist League and Christian fundamentalist anti-abortion bigots. In contrast, the White House under "draft dodger" Clinton is seen as pro-abortion, pro-gay and elected by black votes. No matter that Clinton's policies barely differ from those of his Republican predecessors.

The rise of right-wing populism is also fed by two decades of economic decline and deindustrialization. With the labor movement prostrate, the Democratic Party is no longer seen as offering anything to the mass of displaced and in many cases desperate white workers. Instead, discontent with the two major parties finds an expression in reactionary movements like Ross Perot's 1992 candidacy, whose right fringe intersects the fascist militias.

#### Fascists: Attack Dogs of Capital

There is now a clamor by liberals and reformists for stronger state measures to "ban" fascists. Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center calls for a federal ban on paramilitary training not authorized by state law (*New York Times*, 28 April). The reformist Communist Party raises its standard call to "Outlaw Hate Groups!" (*People's Weekly World*, 29 April). The social-democratic International Socialist Organization, in its usual coy way, asks in a Berkeley leaflet on the Oklahoma bombing: "Can we rely on the FBI to protect us?" (They give no answer.) Meanwhile, the pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucracy feeds into the witchhunting atmosphere: three unions including AFSCME (public workers) placed a full-page ad in the *New York Times* (27 April) with a screaming headline, "The Call Of Duty," suggesting that the "next time you hear someone viciously attack our government...

U.S. entry into World War II. It was first used against the left, in 1941, against 28 leaders of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party and the militant Minneapolis Teamsters. During the Cold War it was a centerpiece of McCarthyite repression against the CP. Even the *New York Times* (24 April) acknowledged that Clinton's new "anti-terrorist" legislation could bring back J. Edgar Hoover's notorious "Counter-Intelligence Programs." With unaccustomed candor, they noted that the FBI's measures were "modeled on the first Cointelpro program set up by Hoover in the 1930's, which was aimed at shattering the Communist Party."

Far from fighting the fascists, the FBI and other state agencies have a sordid history of employing "informers" responsible for some of the dirtiest deeds of KKK/Nazi terror. FBI agent Gary Rowe was implicated in both the 1964

bombing of a Birmingham, Alabama church that killed four black girls and the nightriding murder of civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo. In 1979, a BATF operative helped carry out the Klan/Nazi murder of five leftists in Greensboro, North Carolina. And several of those accused in the World Trade Center bombing were former *mujahedin* (holy warriors) who were armed, paid and trained by the CIA in the war against the Soviet-backed Afghan government.

A key aspect of the government's attempt to strengthen its repressive apparatus is the liberal appeal for gun control. This is the justification not only for the Waco massacre, but also for the led's 1992 siege in Idaho against white-supremacist Randy Weaver and his family. FBI/BATF sharpshooters murdered Weaver's wife and 13-year-old son. Weaver was later acquitted in a jury trial of the gun charges which led to the assault. We wrote at the time: "The government jealously seeks to enforce its would-be monopoly on armed violence, and even wants to keep its fascist dogs of war on a short leash" (*WV* No. 579, 2 July 1993). Gun control means that the cops, fascists and other enemies of the oppressed will have guns, while workers and blacks are disarmed.

In fact, any move to strengthen police powers would directly threaten the ability of workers and minorities to mobilize to stop the fascists. The impotent reformists who look to the state to take action against the fascists have let themselves be herded into police pens at recent anti-fascist protests, which ensure that the fascists can stage their provocations with impunity. In contrast, the Spartacist League looks to the power of the organized labor movement and minorities. From Washington, D.C. in 1982 to Springfield, Illinois last year, we have initiated powerful labor/black mobilizations against KKK/Nazi terror.

It is notable that on every front, we communists are the consistent defenders of democratic rights, while the bourgeois attacks them. In the *New World Disorder*, following on the destruction of the Soviet Union, America's rulers are intent on regimenting the population for future conflicts with their imperialist rivals. The Persian Gulf War, which was fundamentally aimed at controlling Germany and Japan's access to oil, was a forerunner of this. And Clinton's aggressive moves toward trade war with Japan point to an escalation of such rivalries, which will ultimately be settled by military power, if the capitalists are not first swept away through workers revolution.

The defense of the rights of the working people and minorities to struggle in their own interests, against both the fascists and their capitalist masters, is posed pointblank with the government's assault on civil liberties. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party, which will champion the cause of the oppressed, to lead the struggle to sweep away this decaying capitalist system which breeds fascism and war. ■

#### SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 • (212) 732-7860

##### Atlanta

Box 397  
Decatur, GA 30031  
(404) 521-9338

##### Boston

Box 390840, Central Sta  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 492-3928

##### Champaign-Urbana

Box 2644  
Champaign, IL 61825  
(217) 352-3359

##### 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

##### New York

Box 3381, Church St. Sta.  
New York, NY 10008  
(212) 267-1025

##### Oakland

Box 29497  
Oakland, CA 94604  
(510) 839-0851

##### San Francisco

Box 77494  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
(415) 777-9367

##### Washington, D.C.

Box 75073  
Washington, D.C. 20013  
(202) 872-8240

#### TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

##### Toronto

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

##### Montréal

C.P. Les Alnus  
B.P. 32066  
Montréal, QC H2L 4V5

##### Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2  
(604) 687-0353



# Jamal Book...

(continued from page 12)

PEN/Faulkner Prize, remarks in his introduction to *Live from Death Row*: "The power of his voice is rooted in his defiance of those determined to silence him." And it is that which makes this book such a powerful weapon in the fight against this abominable system of criminal injustice and, in particular, in the fight to save Mumia from its clutches. In his preface, quoted above, Jamal writes:

"I continue to fight against this unjust sentence and conviction. Perhaps we can shrug off and shred some of the dangerous myths laid on our minds like a second skin—such as the 'right' to a fair and impartial jury of our peers; the 'right' to represent oneself, the 'right' to a fair trial, even. They're not rights—they're privileges of the powerful and rich. For the powerless and the poor, they are chimera that vanish once one reaches out to claim them as something real or substantial. Don't expect the media networks to tell you, for they can't, because of the ineptness between the media and the government, and big business, which they both serve."

"I can."

"Even if I must do so from the valley of the shadow of death, I will."

Mumia concludes with his customary sign-off: "From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal."

## Resonating with Humanity

To those who have not yet encountered his writings, this book reveals Jamal, the perceptive observer of racist American society; Jamal, the uncompromising fighter against all forms of injustice; Jamal, the incisive and articulate writer. Divided into three parts—"Life on Death Row," "Crime and Punishment" and "Musings, Memories, and Prophecies"—the essays offer a searing indictment of this oppressive capitalist system and open a window into prison life, including the "prison inside a prison," as Wideman calls it, which is death row. The barbarism of the American "justice system," which comes through so powerfully in these pages, is itself an overwhelming argument for socialist revolution to sweep away the whole capitalist system of racist injustice and exploitation.

While focusing particularly on the death penalty, Mumia covers a wide range of topics with the penetrating succinctness of a five-minute radio com-



Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1969 when he was Minister of Information for Philadelphia Black Panther Party.

mentary, which was his specialty. "Rodney Wasn't the Only One"—dealing with the brutal police beating of black L.A. motorist Rodney King—and "Clinton Guillotines Ginner" examine the racism which is pervasive at all levels of American society. In essays like "Musings on Malcolm" and "Blues for Huey," he offers insightful sketches of Malcolm X and former Black Panther Party leader Huey Newton, and how these militant figures affected his own political development as a young man in Philadelphia.

The selections in this book are only a slice of Jamal's extensive and wide-ranging writings. Readers of *Workers Vanguard* will be familiar with many of them, and with others such as "A Big War for Big Oil" (on the U.S. slaughter in Iraq), "Ontrage in Rostock" (about the fascist anti-immigrant pogrom in Germany in 1992) and "U.S. Troops in Somalia: In Defense of Empire." Since 1989, Mumia's columns have appeared regularly in *WV*, as well as in dozens of black newspapers around the country and in publications as far away as Britain (*Caribbean Times*) and Germany. The Partisan Defense Committee, which has played a leading role in building the international defense effort for Jamal, is proud to have been able to help make this possible. Since 1989 the PDC has distributed to the press typewritten

scripts of Jamal's writings from prison.

No matter what topic he addresses, Jamal pierces the shroud of silence and venom which envelops the death row population like the black hood which is finally placed over the condemned man's head. In the very act of writing, he refutes the lie pushed by the bloodthirsty "law and order" lobby that every victim of the state's legal murder machine is a crazed, brutal mass killer or rapist who is begging to be executed. Mumia's depictions are not only eloquent, but they resonate with humanity and gentleness, even as he describes how "the state skillfully and intentionally denies those it condemns a fundamental element and expression of humanity."

In "The Visit," Mumia describes the first time his youngest daughter came to see him in prison: "She burst into the tiny visiting room, her brown eyes aglitter with happiness; stopped, stunned, staring at the glassy barrier between us; and burst into tears at this arrogant attempt at state separation." In "A Toxic Shock" (May 1989), Jamal's writing leaps over prison walls with a sense of shared humanity: "we the caged share air, water, and hope with you, the not-yet-caged." Describing how he and his fellow inmates at Huntingdon awoke one morning to find gasoline polluting the prison's water supply, and that of the entire surrounding community, he wonders:

"How many housewives in the surrounding township met sunrise this morning with sleep in their eyes, filled the pot with water for coffee, caught a whiff of gasoline rising from the cup, and gagged?"

"The earth is but one great ball. The borders, the barriers, the cages, the cells, the prisons of our lives, all originate in the false imagination of the minds of men."

## "Philly Daze": The Black Panthers and MOVE

Mumia Abu-Jamal was born Wesley Cook in Philadelphia on 24 April 1954. "Philly Daze: An Impressionistic Memoir" describes his own development as a fighter for black rights, beginning with his first political act, at the age of 14, when he and three friends went to protest an election campaign visit by Southern segregationist George Wallace in 1968:

"We strolled into the stadium, four lanky, dark string beans in a pot full of white, steaming limas. The band played 'Disco.' We shouted, 'Black power, Ungowa, black power!'"

The cops kicked them out, then a gang of racist thugs set upon the teenagers. Mumia relates,

"I looked up and saw the two-toned, gold-trimmed pant leg of a Philly cop. Without thinking, and reacting from years of brainwashing, I yelled, 'Help, police!' The cop saw me on the ground being beaten to a pulp, marched over briskly—and kicked me in the face. I have been thankful to that laceless cop ever since, for he kicked me straight into the Black Panther Party."

Mumia became the Minister of Infor-

mation of the Philadelphia Panthers. He survived the FBI's murderous CO-INTELPRO program—which left over 30 Panther members dead nationally and many more in jail, including Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), who has spent 24 years behind bars in California for a crime the government knows he did not commit. Even more devastating politically to the young radical militant was the bitter and bloody split between the Cleaver and Newton wings of the party: "Frustrated, angry, I drifted away from a party that had drifted away from its moorings in the people. Bitterly, I told myself that I would never join another organization." Jamal's disillusionment was not unique; many courageous revolutionary-minded black militants found themselves politically disoriented by the BPP's inability to transcend its combination of nationalism, reformism and adventurism, expressing its view of ghetto lumpen youth as the vanguard.

During the '70s, Jamal worked as a radio journalist, winning a Peabody award and becoming known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his talk show on WUHY-FM, as well as broadcasts on NPR, Mutual Black Network and the National Black Network. He first ran into the MOVE organization in the mid-1970s. Angered and intrigued by even the black media's refusal to give the controversial and integrated MOVE group impartial coverage as it battled an



Philadelphia Daily News

Racist Philly cops beat Delbert Africa after raid on MOVE's Powelton Village home in 1978.

ongoing police vendetta, Jamal began to follow MOVE more closely. He vehemently denounced the August 1978 raid on MOVE's Powelton Village house, the bloody climax of a year-long police siege. This got him fired from his broadcast job as news director at WHAF-AM, and earned him the enmity of the Philly cops. Arch-racist Philly mayor and former police chief Frank Rizzo specifically targeted the "new breed of journalism."

Three years later, on 9 December 1981, Jamal was arrested as he lay on the ground after being shot in the chest by a Philly cop. The frame-up accusation: killing that white police officer. In July 1982 he was sentenced to death after a farce of a trial; presided over by hanging judge Sabo—who has sent more people to death row than any other sitting judge in the country—with a nearly all-white jury, with no defense counsel to speak of, and with Jamal himself barred from the courtroom for most of the proceedings. The prosecution demanded the death penalty for Mumia by citing Black Panther/Maoist slogans to the jury.

## "Descent into Hell"

Trapped behind prison walls, Mumia Abu-Jamal has continued to be the "voice of the voiceless," depicting prison

## Prepare for Emergency Demos!

### THE CAMPAIGN IS AT A CRITICAL POINT—YOU CAN HELP!

At any moment, Pennsylvania's pro-death penalty governor, Tom Ridge, could sign Mumia Abu-Jamal's death warrant. Ridge has already signed warrants for five death row inmates, and the state's first execution in 30 years is set to take place this month. Jamal is in imminent danger—if a warrant is signed, emergency demonstrations will be held the next day in New York City, Oakland and elsewhere. Get on the Partisan Defense Committee phone tree and help organize to make these urgent demonstrations the loudest possible outcry against the racist death penalty!

**JOIN THE CAMPAIGN:** take petitions; ask your friends, neighbors and co-workers to sign and get involved. Organize a showing in your union, community group, church or school of the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*. Send letters and get Jamal's powerful columns into your local newspapers, school or union newsletters; raise motions in your union or at your school to send a letter to Governor Ridge demanding "Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!" Contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99,

Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, or call (212) 406-4252.

**SEND PROTEST LETTERS TO:** Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

**WRITE TO JAMAL** to express your solidarity: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA 15370-8090.

**SEND \$\$\$ FOR JAMAL LEGAL DEFENSE NOW!** Funds are urgently needed to wage the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal's life. All money being raised through these rallies and forums organized by the Partisan Defense Committee goes directly to Jamal's legal defense. Since February 9, nearly \$15,000 has been collected or pledged. More is needed now! Jamal's legal team initiated the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, co-chaired by actors Ossie Davis and Mike Farrell, to help raise funds. Make out your tax-deductible contribution for the defense to: Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense," and send it to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001.



# South Africa...

(continued from page 7)

Mokaha, then chairman of the ANC Youth League, admitted that some SDUs "victimize ordinary members of the community" (*New York Times*, 1 February 1994).

Moderate ANC leaders like Sibeko and Mokaba want to restore social peace in the townships and so preach "tolerance" between supporters of the contending parties. The CWG, however, is playing up to the "militant" plebeian youth who want to drive the Zulus out of the townships. This is the same layer that is appealed to by Winnie Mandela. Among the young "comrades" in the townships, there are certainly many who are angered by the ANC's conciliation of the former masters of apartheid. But there are also plenty of Xhosa chauvinists and lumpen-proletarian criminal elements that a proletarian vanguard would have to discipline and if necessary fight. (We dealt with this thorny question in our article, "Uproar Over Winnie Mandela Trial, ANC/SWAPO Prisoners," *WV* No. 532, 2 August 1991.) But the self-styled revolutionary socialists and "internationalists" of the CWG act as lawyers for those who threatened to burn down the homes of anyone giving shelter to Zulu workers.

Criticizing the potential for communal bloodletting of the CWG's call to "flatten the hostels," we called for union-based defense guards. Already at the outbreak of the "Reef War" between Inkatha and ANC supporters in the townships, we wrote:

"What is needed is the formation of union-based workers defense guards, linking the factory to the townships, and made up of class-conscious workers including Zulus, Xhosas and members of other tribal groupings, as well as coloured, Asian and anti-racist white workers, to suppress both right-wing terrorists and the fomenters of bloody communalist war."

—*WV* No. 515, 30 November 1990

The CWG links its anti-Zulu demagoguery to anti-"coloured" (mixed-race)

demagoguery with the really weird argument that we support or will support independence for the coloureds in the Western Cape: "The next logical step must be support for the racist 'coloured' Liberation Movement which is threatening 'armed resistance' if the Western Cape is not handed over to the 'coloureds'." Wrong. Unlike the Zulus, a pre-national people conquered and subjugated by British imperialism, the coloureds are not a nationality but a racially defined caste who have integrated into the South African political economy for centuries. A revolutionary party must seriously undertake to win a base among the coloureds, and to counter attempts by the white ruling class to use them as a battering ram against the black African majority.

The CWG lumps Zulus and coloureds together because they are the two largest nonwhite groups among which there is considerable distrust of the ANC's brand of South African nationalism. And not without reason. Last year, Tokyo Sexwale, the ANC premier of the Witwatersrand region, engaged in virulent anti-coloured demagoguery over the issue of writing off unpaid back rent in the coloured townships, as the government had already agreed to do in the black African townships, saying he wanted to "vomit" when "others try to use (our) legitimate grievances" (*Cape Times*, 19 September 1994). The CWG's anti-Zulu and anti-coloured demagoguery is but a "leftist" reflection of the ANC's South African nationalism.

The CWG seems to be haunted by the spectre of a breakup of the South African state. There is *nothing progressive* about maintaining the territorial integrity of the South African bourgeois state, which is, moreover, a regional imperialist power. Does the CWG believe British imperialism was progressive in its colonial wars against the Zulus and Boer (Afrikaner) republics, which led to the Union of South Africa in 1910? The ANC accepts the legitimacy of this imperialist creation, and indeed Nelson Mandela at his inauguration sternly lectured his followers to learn the words of the old national anthem "Die Stem van Suid

Afrika." Are the Comrades for a Workers Government learning to sing "Die Stem"?

Another aspect of the CWG's South African nationalism is manifested over the now-hot issue of immigration. As large numbers of impoverished black Africans from neighboring states have poured into South Africa, the ANC-led government is campaigning for tighter border controls and expelling "illegal immigrants." Inkatha leader Buthelezi, home secretary in the Government of National Unity, is leading the charge. An account of the SACP-dominated "Conference of the Left" last November in the current *Quina Msebenzi* reported that the International Socialists (ISSA) had proposed a demonstration against expelling "illegals" and "they proposed that everybody should be allowed into SA." The CWG's only response was to say that "neighbouring countries problems cannot be solved by removing restrictions alone." Nothing about defending immigrants under attack by the ANC regime, much less the necessary call for full citizenship rights for everyone in South Africa.

The CWG's South African nationalism also expresses itself in the baiting of our tendency, the International Communist League, because our largest section is in the United States and we do not presently have an organized group of supporters in South Africa. Scattered through their polemic are snotty lines like "Our 'revolutionary' commentators in New York only see South Africa in terms of 'powder kegs'." and "the New York sages say we must 'regroup' to form a revolutionary workers party (vanguard party)." This is a very old song and dance. In the latter part of the 19th century, opportunists in France, Germany and elsewhere denounced Marx and Engels for seeking to "dictate" the course of the European workers movement from London. Social Democrats castigated the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky as a tool of Moscow. And in the late 1930s, centrists around the world disparaged the Fourth International as a one-man show

run from Trotsky's exile in Coyoacan, Mexico.

Even the CWG's posture as being sons of the South African soil is in a sense a sham. As we've pointed out, they're part of a self-styled "democratic-centralist Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency," whose leading section is British. Perhaps in the future, the CWG will complain about dictates from London.

An authentic Trotskyist party in South Africa can only be built as part of the fight to reforge the Fourth International, as the ICL has undertaken. Genuine revolutionary socialists in South Africa should long to be part of an International with strong sections in the United States, West Europe and Japan as well as "Third World" countries. One of the central theses of Trotsky's perspective of permanent revolution, going straight back to Marx and Engels, is that it is not possible to build socialism—a classless society of abundance, requiring the highest level of productive forces—in one country, much less a relatively less developed capitalist state like South Africa. The indispensable need for international extension of workers revolution is all the more clear since the destruction of the Soviet Union. We have noted, as any serious South African communist must be vividly aware, that a workers revolution in South Africa would be crushed by the military and economic action of Western, centrally U.S., imperialism unless it sparked revolutionary struggles in the imperialist centers themselves.

A South African revolution centered on the black proletariat would have an especially powerful impact on the United States, with its large black population heavily represented in key sections of the working class. We're certainly aware of this, if nothing else from the heightened interest in *Workers Vanguard* among blacks, who are our main readership, every time we have an article about South Africa. In the struggle to overthrow world imperialism in its strongest state, the descendants of those black Africans who were enslaved and taken to the New World at the dawn of capitalism will play a decisive role. ■

life as it "oscillates between the banal and the bizarre." He writes of prisoners forthrightly subjected to volatile combinations of psychiatric drugs, to beatings, to long periods of torture in the hole. He tells of a young inmate who was incarcerated at age 15:

"He has never held a woman as a mate or lover; he has never held a newborn in his palm, his heart althump with new life; he hasn't seen the sun rise, nor the moon glow, in almost fifteen years—for a robbery, 'armed' with a pellet gun, at fifteen years old."

"When I hear easy, catchy, mindless slogans like 'three strikes, you're out,' I think of men like Rabbani who had one strike (if not one tooth) and are, for all intents and purposes, already outside of any game worth playing."

It is a telling indictment of this racist society that some of the finest works of black literature deal with life in prison. When Mumia speaks of this "warped rite of passage" for young black men, it brings to mind the writings of George Jackson, who remarked: "Blackmen born in the U.S. and fortunate enough to live past the age of eighteen are conditioned to accept the inevitability of prison." George Jackson wasn't formally sentenced to die; instead, prison police out to get this Black Panther militant gunned him down in San Quentin in 1971.

The quarter-century since then has been marked by a vast burgeoning of the population behind bars, reinstitution of the death penalty and, lately, a determination by the American ruling class to get rid of a whole layer of the ghetto black population: behind the death penalty lies an impulse to genocide. Jamal writes of the "black march to death row" and notes how "at the heart of this country's death penalty scheme is the crucible of race."



Partisan Defense Committee raises banner in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal at NYC hospital workers rally, March 1.

The racist character of the death penalty in this country is incontrovertible, and was proved by irrefutable statistics in the 1987 case of *McCleskey v. Kemp*. But in his lengthy and thoroughly researched piece titled "Teetering on the Brink Between Life and Death," which was published in the *Yale Law Review* (January 1991), Jamal wields his considerable eloquence and intellect to bring home the systematic racist injustice of the American legal system, at whose apex stands the barbaric death penalty: "States that have not slain in a generation now ready their machinery: generators whine, poison liquids are mixed, gases are measured and readied, silent

chambers await the order to smother life." Demolishing the demagogic arguments of racist politicians riding into office on the "war on crime," Jamal points out:

"No matter that of the ten states with the highest murder rate, eight lead the country in executions that supposedly deter; no matter that of the ten states with the lowest murder rate, only one (Utah) has executed anyone since 1976. No matter that the effectiveness of the death penalty is not really debated; no matter that the contention that the death penalty makes citizens safer is no longer seriously argued."

"*Habeas corpus*, fundamental to English law since the reign of King Charles and to the U.S. Constitution since its

inception, now faces evisceration under the hand of the chief justice of the Supreme Court, a possibility unthinkable just a few years ago. Many of the condemned, with constitutional error rate throughout their records, will soon be executed without meaningful review."

In the intervening four years, the rush toward that grim reality has escalated dramatically, particularly since the November 1994 elections. The wholesale assault on *habeas corpus* appeals is accompanied by a frenzied crusade to speed up the assembly line of death. Clinton's "crime" bill added over 60 more capital offenses to the nation's books; now he demands a one-year time limit on death row appeals. Ever more states join the march toward death, and in Texas some months ago, a man was executed after the courts acknowledged he was innocent of the crime for which he died.

The fight to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal is indeed a race against time. As Ossie Davis, co-chairman of the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, stressed at a speak-in New York in June 1994: "Mumia is somebody that we need desperately. At a time like this, we cannot afford to let them take such a voice from us without putting up a struggle of gigantic proportions." We encourage our readers to read *Live from Death Row* and pass it on to others. Use this powerful indictment of legal lynching as a weapon in the battle to save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Powerful forces don't want Mumia Abu-Jamal's voice to be heard. Look for *Live from Death Row* at your bookstore. If it's not there, get them to stock it. Jamal's book can be ordered by writing to: Addison-Wesley, Jacob Way, Reading, MA 01867. ■



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Mumia Abu-Jamal Book Published

# "Live from Death Row"

### A Review

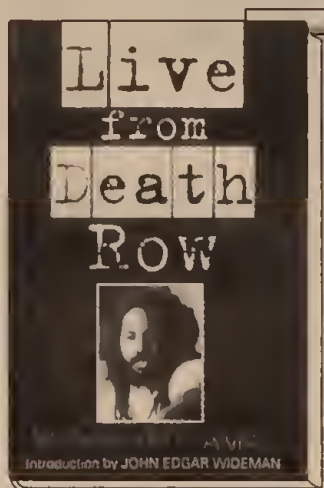
*Live from Death Row*  
by Mumia Abu-Jamal  
Addison-Wesley, 215pp, \$20.00

"Don't tell me about the valley of the shadow of death. I live there. In south-central Pennsylvania's Huntingdon County a one-hundred-year-old prison stands, its Gothic towers projecting an air of foreboding, evoking a gloomy mood of the Dark Ages. I and some seventy-eight other men spend about twenty-two hours a day in six- by ten-foot cells. The additional two hours may be spent outdoors, in a chain-link-fenced box, ringed by concertina razor wire, under the gaze of gun turrets.

"Welcome to Pennsylvania's death row."

With these words, Mumia Abu-Jamal welcomes the reader to his book, *Live from Death Row*, and to the world in which it was written, the torture chambers spread across the country in which over 2,900 men and women (and children!) "walk the razor's edge between half-life and certain death" at the hands of the state. For 13 years, this award-winning black radio and newspaper journalist, former Black Panther Party activist and supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE group has been imprisoned on Pennsylvania's death row. Framed as a "cop killer" by the racist cops and courts, he was sentenced to die for a crime he never committed, to "pay" for his outspoken political beliefs in defense of the downtrodden and oppressed.

Throughout these years, the authorities have waged a vendetta to keep Mumia from being heard in order to make it easier to kill him. They are particularly



Death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, with his son in 1982.



no credit

fearful of his resonant and articulate voice being heard. Last year, National Public Radio (NPR) caved in to police pressure and, in a blatant act of censorship, canceled a series of 12 broadcasts Jamal had been commissioned to air on the program *All Things Considered*.

Earlier this year, the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and its allies tried to prevent the book's publication through a campaign of intense intimidation. Simultaneously, prison officials vindictively abrogated Jamal's lawyer-client privileges, confiscating correspondence concerning his case and preventing visits by legal assistants just as Jamal's lawyers are in the process of preparing

a petition for a new trial. They have also peremptorily rejected all requests for press interviews with Jamal, including by CBS-TV's Connie Chung, *People* magazine and French and German television channels (see "Cops Escalate Vendetta Against Mumia Abu-Jamal," *WJ* No. 621, 21 April).

It is a very important victory, therefore, that this book exists at all. *Live from Death Row* is a compilation of 41 political and social commentaries, vignettes of prison life and autobiographical sketches, including the 12 essays banned by NPR and the first article by a death row prisoner ever published in the *Yale Law Review*. The words you will

read were painstakingly handwritten by Jamal, who for years was denied access even to a typewriter, as he wages a life-and-death battle against those who would silence this "voice of the voiceless" forever. Indeed, more than just a powerful literary work—and that it is—*Live from Death Row* is a vital weapon in that battle, which has been joined by thousands of death penalty abolitionists, anti-racist fighters, trade unionists and leftists around the world who have rallied to the call: *Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!*

Today the fight to save Mumia's life is more urgent than ever. As his chief legal counsel, Leonard Weinglass, points out in an afterword to the book, "Because of the November 1994 election of Republican governor Thomas Ridge who ran, in part, on expediting executions, there is danger that in early 1995 an execution date will be set. Mumia is near the top of the list of those awaiting the signing of a warrant, so we are in a race against time." Ridge has already signed five death warrants. And in January, Mumia was ominously transferred to the isolated "high-tech hell" of the Greene "supermax" facility in southwestern Pennsylvania.

The defense of this outspoken advocate for all the oppressed is becoming the focus of opposition to the racist and barbaric death penalty. The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is today's equivalent of the Scottsboro Boys in the 1930s, nine black youth who were ultimately saved from Southern lynch law by an international campaign of protest. What is distinctive here is that Mumia is himself the most articulate spokesman for his cause in the fight to eliminate the whole system of legal lynching. As John Edgar Wideman, author of *Homewood Diaries* and *Philadelphia Fire* and winner of the

*continued on page 10*

## Protest Pennsylvania Execution

### First in 32 Years

As we go to press, a 10 p.m. death sentence for May 2 hangs over Keith Zettlemoyer, likely to become Pennsylvania's first victim of judicial murder since Elmo Smith was electrocuted in 1962. Although Republican governor Tom Ridge has signed five warrants, Zettlemoyer's execution by lethal injection threatens to open the floodgates of death, placing all inmates of Pennsylvania's death row, the fourth-largest in the country, in danger.

Most prominent among those immediately threatened is political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, on death row since July 1982. To win the death sentence for Jamal, prosecutor Joseph McGill told the jury, "You are not asked to kill anybody. You are asked to follow the law, the same law that will provide for him appeal after appeal after appeal." Pointing out that 20 years had then elapsed since the state's

last execution, McGill convinced the jury that the sentence of death for Jamal would not be carried out. In previous cases, this blatant violation of legal procedure resulted in automatic reversal of the death sentence by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court—but not for Jamal. The Pennsylvania and U.S. Supreme Courts have turned down Jamal's appeals, and now with the Pennsylvania death machine churning once again, Jamal's life is in imminent danger.

We print below a protest sent by the PDC.

\* \* \*

1 May 1995

Governor Tom Ridge  
Harrisburg, PA

Governor Ridge:

The Partisan Defense Committee vehemently opposes the execution of Keith Zettlemoyer by the state of Pennsylvania, scheduled for 10 p.m. on May

2nd. Capital punishment, whether by electrocution, hanging or the now-preferred method of lethal injection, is an act of premeditated barbarity that underlines the already advanced brutalization of this class- and race-biased society.

The legal killing of Mr. Zettlemoyer, who will be the first inmate executed in Pennsylvania since 1962, places in immediate danger the over 180 men and women, largely black and Hispanic, who "live" on Pennsylvania's death row.

The murder victim's mother, Aldona DeVetsco, has petitioned the courts stating: "I am opposed to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania executing Keith Zettlemoyer for the killing of my son." Her statement only throws into relief the state's lust for vengeance not justice. It thirsts for the blood of Keith Zettlemoyer and countless future victims to lubricate the machinery of death.

We demand the execution of Mr. Zettlemoyer be stayed and his death sentence commuted.

Sincerely,  
Rena Herson  
for the Partisan Defense Committee