

Death Warrant Signed, Protests Erupt



Jennifer Beach

Mumia Abu-Jamal Must Not Die!

The fight to save U.S. political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal has reached a critical hour. Late in the night of June 1, Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge signed four death warrants, including one for Jamal, who has been on death row since 1982, framed on charges of killing a Philadelphia cop. Ridge vindictively signed the order setting Mumia's execution for August 17 knowing full well that his defense attorneys planned to file papers on June 5 demanding a new trial, a stay of execution and the removal from the case of notorious "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who presided over Mumia's frame-up trial and sentencing in 1982. The state has now taken a giant step in its longstanding campaign to silence Jamal, an eloquent journalist who years ago earned the title "voice of the voiceless" for his commentaries on the oppression faced by minorities and the poor in racist America.

Mumia was immediately moved from his cell in the Greene "supermax" isolation facility into more restrictive custody, which he called "a prison within a prison within a prison." In a telephone message, Mumia told his supporters that Ridge's action "was clearly political. He is at the call of those who are calling for my blood."

As we go to press, it was announced that the hearing for a stay of execution and to recuse Judge Sabo is being held in Philadelphia on July 12.

The signing of the death warrant was met with a wave of protests in over 40 cities in the U.S. and reaching around the world. In the last two weeks, Mumia's cause has been taken up at a workers demonstration in Johannesburg, South Africa of some 15,000 trade unionists and another in Rome, Italy drawing 60,000 to 70,000 workers and youth. Governor Ridge has already received over 20,000 faxes, letters and cards opposing Jamal's execution. One measure of the groundswell of support for Jamal is that Ridge's office has shut down his toll-free "800" number and has been changing his fax number virtually daily in a vain attempt to thwart the flood of messages demanding that Mumia must not die.

A leader of the Black Panthers in his teens and later a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE group, Jamal was sentenced to die for his political beliefs. Jamal has continued to speak out even in prison, writing regular columns which have been published in *Workers Vanguard* and in the black press nationwide. His intensely compassionate writings on prison life, the death penalty and racist oppression have now been brought to a broader audience through his new book, *Live from Death Row*, published in May by Addison-Wesley.

The emergency demonstrations on June 5 were built by the Partisan Defense Committee, Refuse & Resist,



New York City, June 5: A thousand demonstrators rally in midtown Manhattan demanding, "Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!"

Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and others. The protests were kicked off with a press conference and rally of 600 people in Philadelphia, as Jamal's legal team, led by noted civil liberties attorney Leonard Weinglass, filed court papers unequivocally establishing his innocence. Weinglass told the crowd, "Mumia Abu-Jamal never had a trial." Evidence was suppressed, witnesses were coerced, black jurors were purged. The new legal papers document 19 constitutional violations in Jamal's "trial" and present new evidence based on eyewitnesses as well as a re-examination of medical and ballistics reports which tear apart the prosecution's bogus case. Mumia should not have spent a day in jail, and we must fight today to free him from the clutches of this criminal injustice system.

Weinglass and PDC staff counsel Rachel Wolkenstein gave a full explanation of the case for Jamal's innocence and evidence that he was the victim of a racist, politically motivated frame-up. The Philadelphia event was the largest demonstration to date for Jamal in his hometown. This and other protests for Mumia

coast-to-coast and internationally, together with the powerful legal brief, breached the media wall of silence and slander against Jamal. For the first time in memory, both Philadelphia daily newspapers wrote accurate articles on Mumia's defense case, covering many of the key points of the legal statement. As well, the black press nationwide has been flooded with front-page articles protesting Jamal's threatened execution. The *Wall Street Journal* (16 June), however, ran a front-page article which sneers at "radical-left groups," including the Spartacist League (described as "a group of 20 people"), who "have a new hero, Mumia Abu-Jamal." This is a clear attempt to denigrate and diminish the growing movement to save Mumia's life.

Even as protests for Mumia mounted, on June 6 South Africa's Constitutional Court abolished the death penalty in that country, where executions of black and leftist militants were a key prop of the brutal, racist apartheid system. This action throws into stark relief the bloody machinery of legal lynching in the U.S., which is rooted in the subjugation of black people under

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See Page 6 **1982 Trial a Mockery of Justice**
The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mobilize Labor Against Racist Cop Terror!

S.F. Police Beat Black Man to Death

SAN FRANCISCO—On the night of June 4, Aaron Williams, a 35-year-old black man, died after 12 SF cops viciously beat him in front of his apartment and family. News of this atrocity was met with outrage in the city. It was the second of three killings by cops in San Francisco in a matter of weeks, and provoked immediate comparisons to the 1991 videotaped beating of black motorist Rodney King by the LAPD. The 1992 acquittal of those cops led to a multiracial upheaval in Los Angeles that still haunts America's racist rulers.

The death of Aaron Williams is a tragic result of the racist "war on drugs and crime," the green light for brazen police-state rule in the ghetto. A parolee released last December following a minor drug conviction in 1987 and several parole violations, Williams was a marked man. He was indeed the classic faceless black man hunted down, jailed and executed by America's racist cops.

According to the cops' own story, they went to his apartment after a break-in several blocks away where a "black man" was supposedly seen running south—the

opposite direction. Kimberly Williams, his sister, said the cops stood on the street and shouted, "Aaron Williams, we know you're up there. We know you're on parole. If you don't come out, we'll come in and get you" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 6 June). When Williams emerged, he was beaten with clubs and sprayed at least three times with pepper spray—including at least once while handcuffed. He was hogtied and a surgical mask placed over his mouth and nose. Witnesses saw several arriving cops acknowledge Williams and then kick him as he lay gagging and spitting blood.

Police terror is a fact of life in America's black ghettos. Aaron Williams lived and died in the Western Addition, recently nicknamed "Lower Pacific Heights" as yuppie gentrification drives out black residents. His uncle, Bill Bowser, said, "It's getting to the point where every black man in this neighborhood is being harassed. Every time something happened here, they come to arrest Aaron or his brother, Darren" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 7 June).

Marc Andaya, the cop who began the pursuit of Williams, is a former Oakland

cop who—in that infamous shoot-to-kill force—was suspended for 30 days and written up by a superior as a violent "cowboy." Moreover, pepper spray is potentially lethal: an ACLU study recently documented 27 deaths in California after its use by police. Yet SF coroner Boyd Stephens dismissed this and tried to blame the victim, announcing a "preliminary" finding of death due to cocaine-induced "excited delirium." The labor-hating *San Francisco Examiner* prominently displayed a "statement" by Kimberly Williams accusing her brother of attacking police. But then it came out that the statement was actually written by Andaya, and Kimberly said she was forced to sign it under threat of having her kids taken away!

As the cops and the local capitalist media were spreading the outrageous lie that Williams died from a "drug overdose," San Francisco's liberal establishment, from prominent black reverends and reformist misleaders to the Board of Supervisors, immediately moved to put the lid on angry protests. Black Democratic mayoral candidate and legendary Sacramento power broker Willie Brown has refused to say a word,

while his chief opponent, Democratic mayor and former police chief Frank Jordan, has launched no less than three whitewash investigations...by the cops, the Police Commission, and the cop-friendly Office of Citizen Complaints.

Meanwhile, in the last week riot police have been converging daily on San Francisco's UN Plaza, brandishing billy clubs to disperse hungry people trying to eat food distributed by the activist group Food Not Bombs. While Clinton and other luminaries celebrate the 50th anniversary of the UN Charter, nearly 100 people have been arrested, including Food Not Bombs supporter Donald James Lanier, who was hospitalized.

The racist police are the armed fist of the capitalist state, and cannot be reformed. An army of cops mobilized when 50 protesters gathered to support the Williams family, who were meeting with Jordan at City Hall on June 7. Another protest at the Police Commission hearing was cleared out by a phalanx of riot police. The San Francisco labor movement, with the integrated Muni bus drivers and longshoremen in the forefront, must mobilize in defense of the besieged black community! ■



TROTSKY

Remember the Heroic Rosenbergs!

June 19 marks the anniversary of the chilling execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1953, at the height of the McCarthyite witchhunt. The Rosenbergs were railroaded to death in the electric chair for supposedly "conspiring" to pass the "secret of the atomic bomb" to the Russians. They went to their deaths heroically, denouncing the government's anti-Communist frame-up to the very end. The then-Trotskyist Socialist



LENIN

Workers Party (SWP), which came to the defense of the Rosenbergs, denounced their execution as "a deed of class hate and class vengeance." Today, Mumia Abu-Jamal is threatened with becoming the first political prisoner to be executed in this country since the Rosenbergs. In an editorial written before the execution of the Rosenbergs, the SWP emphasized the need for labor to rally to their defense and denounced the criminal passivity of the Cold War bureaucracy of the trade unions.

A terrible and irreversible injustice may soon take place in the Rosenberg case. Representatives of all sectors of the nation have rallied to the defense of the Rosenbergs, but labor has not yet been heard from. And the labor movement is the only power strong enough to stay the hand of the executioner.

The official leaders of the trade unions of America may feel that labor has no stake in this case. They may argue that only those who are sympathetic to "communism" or to the Soviet Union need be concerned about the fate of the Rosenbergs. They are wrong....

Labor must recall the fact that Sacco and Vanzetti were adjudged innocent years after their execution by Felix Frankfurter, who now sits on the Supreme Court which refused to give the Rosenbergs a chance to present new evidence. Labor must recall that Tom Mooney, also sentenced to death in a hysterical atmosphere, was saved by the protest of labor and also later found to be innocent.

Time is short! Labor must act at once. The top leadership of the AFL, the CIO and the independent unions have a clear duty to appeal for a stay of execution and for a new trial. If they fail in this duty, they may help the witch hunters to strike one of the greatest possible blows against labor.

—"Labor Must Fight This Injustice," *Militant* (8 June 1953)

S.F.: Protest Mass Arrest of Jamal Demonstrators!

On June 26, hundreds of San Francisco cops cordoned off a demonstration for Mumia Abu-Jamal and then brutally and wantonly dragged off nearly 300 people, including five children. In response, the Partisan Defense Committee initiated an emergency protest the next day against the arrests and issued the following statement to San Francisco District Attorney Arlo Smith.

The Partisan Defense Committee demands the immediate release and the dropping of all charges against nearly three hundred protesters who were rounded up and thrown in jail by the SF cops last night. This assault on a demonstration in defense of black death row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man who was framed up and sentenced to die for his political beliefs, is part and parcel of a sinister and frenzied national vendetta by the "Fraternal Order of Police" to have Jamal executed and to intimidate and silence his supporters.

With an ex-police chief as mayor, the SF cops increasingly act like they are a law unto themselves, marauding in the streets and assaulting the home-

less, radicals, blacks and anybody who "gets in their way." Last night's mass arrest comes in the context of vicious cop attacks on the homeless and Food Not Bombs activists over the past week. The wanton brutality of Mayor Jordan's Operation Matrix, which has made homelessness and feeding the hungry a "crime" in San Francisco, has been brought home with a vengeance to "clean up" the streets for the United Nations "celebrations." Down with Operation Matrix!

The jailing of 274 people, many on frame-up felony charges (!), is the biggest mass arrest in San Francisco since 1992, when the police trapped and busted 575 demonstrators protesting the racist acquittal of the L.A. cops who beat black motorist Rodney King within an inch of his life. The comparison is hardly coincidental as the current mass arrest of anti-racist protesters comes on the heels of the killing of Aaron Williams, who was beaten to death by a sadistic gang of twelve SF cops.

Drop all charges against the anti-racist protesters!

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Spartacist Forums

**Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
Down with the New COINTELPRO!**

Mumia Abu-Jamal Must Not Die!

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BERKELEY

When New York City cops went berserk at a national police meeting in Washington, D.C. on May 15, ripping apart seven hotels and terrorizing guests, it was no joke. This was an ominous show of unrestrained cop power, as the enforcers of capitalist "law and order" flaunted, downtown in the nation's capital, the wild and wanton way in which they police the ghettos and barrios every day and night.

The yearly gathering of drunken, depraved police in Washington each May has more than a whiff of fascism about it. This year marauding cops banged on doors, pulled fire alarms, sprayed corridors with fire extinguishers and forced the evacuation of several Washington hotels at 3:15 a.m. Among those who experienced this chilling spectacle were trade unionists from the Letter Carriers and nurses, who were holding national gatherings in Washington.

Somebody called the cops, but the perpetrators were the cops. When the D.C. police arrived and discovered the rioters were the NYPD, they left without making arrests. The police "blue wall of silence" held solid as the scandal mounted in the following weeks. So far one woman cop from Queens has resigned as the designated fall guy, and two men were "suspended."

The drunken rampage was preceded by a mass meeting of uniformed police addressed by Bill Clinton. Attending as an honored guest was Maureen Faulkner, widow of Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner, for whose shooting death in 1981 black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed and is now facing execution.

New York's rulers didn't appreciate this unauthorized public display by their blue-uniformed thugs, but the NYPD soon staged some very official demonstrations of its armed might. Two weeks after the D.C. rampage, an army of hundreds of cops wielding submachine guns—supported by helicopters circling overhead and an armored assault vehicle clanking up East 13th Street—mounted an attack on squatters on the Lower East Side.

The massive police operation on May 30 was aimed at a couple dozen artists and anarchists who for the past ten years have been rehabilitating several abandoned buildings on Manhattan's Lower East Side. "We just can't allow people to not pay rent," intoned Giuliani as a die-hard defender of "property rights." So with police snipers on the rooftops, the bomb squad at the ready and the block sealed off by hundreds of riot cops with full-size bulletproof shields, black-suited ninja squads moved in. They came over the roofs with guns drawn, cut open the doors which had been welded shut by the squatters and dragged the residents through the darkened stairways. The NYPD's armored vehicle was poised to ram through the front doors of the buildings on command.

Then, on June 12, the Puerto Rican Day parade up Fifth Avenue erupted in Bronx cheers, as Giuliani was booed solidly along the march route. The mayor barely missed being hit with flying mangoes at one point. So that night, the cops (or City Hall directly) decided it was payback time. As thousands of Puerto Rican families were sitting on their stoops and dancing in the streets in the late evening, police descended on the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn.

The cops went block by block, stopping cars, cracking heads, spraying pepper gas and dragging people into the paddy wagons. They declared the Puerto Rican flags on sticks being carried home from the parade were "weapons." Windows and doors of apartment buildings were smashed as the cops busted in to gain "access" to the roofs. More than 136 people were arrested in the midnight roundup.

And from Brooklyn to the Bronx, the number of minority victims of racist cop terror steadily mounts. The cop in Sheephead Bay who fired a 9mm semi-automatic at pointblank range into the

NYPD on the Rampage



La Paz? San Salvador? No, it's the Lower East Side, New York City. Mayor Giuliani sent in NYPD armored personnel carrier to oust squatters as helicopters circled and submachine gun-toting cops moved in, May 30.

back of 16-year-old Yong Zin Huang's head in March was cleared as a grand jury ruled the discharge "accidental." Outrage still burns in the South Bronx over the police killings in February. Anthony Baez was killed with a choke hold for the "crime" of tossing a football near a police car. Anthony Rosario and Hilton Vega were shot in the back, fourteen and eight times respectively. Margarita Rosario, Anthony's mother and Hilton's aunt, has been tireless in seeking justice for this crime. She is organizing a protest on July 7 outside the Bronx Supreme Court.

The increasingly honapartist New York City police force is spurred on by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who came to office as the "cops" candidate after egging on a mob of 10,000 armed white cops as they stormed City Hall in a 1992 riot against the then mayor, black Democrat David Dinkins. Now the NYPD's swaggering, badge-toting bullies are the spearhead of Giuliani's frontal attack on minorities, workers, students, the homeless and the poor.

Bipartisan Capitalist Class War

In mid-June, a bipartisan budget agreement was worked out between the mayor and the Democratic-controlled City Council, including an \$800 million spending cut and another \$600 million to be coughed up by the municipal unions. The public school system will be especially devastated, with deep cuts to day care and "special ed" and eliminating summer programs. And now City University is carrying out a racist purge, further gutting open admissions, by jacking up tuition and slashing SEEK remedial programs, notably English-language courses which have allowed thousands of immigrant students to go to college.

Over the past several decades, New York City has lost hundreds of thousands of industrial jobs. Just since 1989, another 270,000 private sector jobs have been eliminated. Now Giuliani is seeking to cut tens of thousands of municipal workers. Against the menacing power of the racist cops, and the budget ax being wielded as brutally as the billy club, what is needed is old-fashioned class struggle. But the fight to defend jobs, hospitals, schools and social programs is sabotaged

by a labor bureaucracy whose collaboration with the city rulers' class war on labor, minorities and the poor is destroying union strength in this city.

Last month it was documented (by Wayne Barrett in the *Village Voice*, 30 May) that five city union leaders, including Sandra Feldman for the UFT and Stanley Hill of AFSCME's DC 37, signed a letter drafted by Mayor Giuliani asking Governor Pataki to cut the state contribution to the city budget by hundreds of millions of dollars. Why? Since the city must put up "matching funds" to state contributions, cutting the state funds would allow the city to slash its Medicaid and welfare allotments. Behind this was the union bureaucrats' vile scheme to "protect" jobs by starving welfare recipients and slashing medical services to the poor!

But while this Old Guard of NYC labor officialdom is working hand in glove with Giuliani, trading in the human misery of the unemployed minority populations (and sacrificing their own members' jobs), the more activist union leaders like Dennis Rivera of Local 1199 still politically handcuff the workers' struggles to the Democratic Party. Whether it is Democrat Dinkins or Republican Giuliani in City Hall, it is the capitalist ruling class,

from Wall Street to Washington, which dictates their moves.

There is a tremendous potential for class struggle in this city. From CUNY students to city workers to tenants rights activists, there are many thousands who are eager to be mobilized in struggle. What's needed is a leadership committed to class struggle instead of the class collaboration which has brought us Giuliani, Pataki and Clinton. A class-struggle workers party would fight for jobs for all; for free quality health care, including free abortion on demand, for free 24-hour day care; for open admissions, no tuition and living stipends for college students, and full citizenship rights for all immigrants. The city already pays almost one-fifth of its budget in debt service to the banks—so cancel the debt! But a real fight for such a program will soon see the debt collectors showing up looking suspiciously like the 82nd Airborne.

As we wrote in "Giuliani's Budget of Doom" (WV No. 618, 10 March): "In New York and everywhere, the fight to defend the unions, to heat back racist cop terror, for housing for the homeless and health care for the poor, must be part of a struggle to sweep away the profit system of the racist rulers and their state." ■

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Pro-Cop "Socialists" Substitute Fist for Brain...Again

ISO Goons Beaten Back

On June 17, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) assaulted members and supporters of the Spartacist League who were distributing a leaflet pointedly questioning the ISO's belated defense of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, particularly in light of their view that the racist cops can be won to the side of the working class and oppressed through "struggle." This leaflet and a protest statement are reprinted below.

The ISO's gangsterism is devastating evidence that their "support" to the campaign for Jamal isn't worth the paper it's printed on. For years, while the ISO maintained a stony silence, the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization affiliated with the SL, initiated mass rallies and protests on behalf of Jamal seeking to unite the broadest possible spectrum of political groups, unionists and others in this country and internationally for a common purpose while scrupulously maintaining the right of all participants to raise their own particular political viewpoints.

Who benefits from the ISO's slander, censorship and violence against us? Answer: the racist rulers and their cops who want to see Mumia dead. The FBI's "counter-intelligence program," COINTELPRO, used the same tactics—lies and "dirty tricks" aimed at fomenting disunity and violence—in their campaign against the left, particularly aimed at destroying the Black Panther Party. Wit-

tingly or unwittingly, the ISO's gangsterism leaves them open to being used as the tool of more sinister agencies.

Our rebuff of the ISO's attack and our immediate full exposure of the incident stands in contrast to their guilty public silence and semiprivate and ever-twisting lies on the Internet. Finally, on June 24, the ISO "Steering Committee" came up with an "official" statement which, however, is not for public distribution! Here we find the following amalgam of slander: the SL's "actions, rather than helping to build our movement, are aimed at destroying it"; "among the Spartacist League's initiatives is the Partisan Defense Committee"; "the PDC has been heavily involved with the campaign to free Pennsylvania death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal." You don't need to read between the lines to get the message of this smear job—i.e., one of the main organizations fighting to mobilize in Jamal's defense are "thugs" who want to "destroy" the workers movement and therefore...you shouldn't get involved.

It will take more than a large bucket of clorox to make this wash. But again, *cui bono* (who benefits) from the ISO's slanders? The international outcry for Jamal is a thorn in the side of the capitalist rulers who want to press ahead with the first explicitly political execution in this country since the murders of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1953. Seizing on the heinous bombing of the federal build-

ing in Oklahoma, Clinton is ramming through a new COINTELPRO.

The ruling class understands, as do we, that a mass protest to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty strikes a blow against the whole system of capitalist repression. So do their media mouthpieces. The ISO's attack came on the heels of a front-page article in the 16 June *Wall Street Journal* which portrayed Jamal's supporters and the Spartacist League in particular as cultists. Recall the government's mass murder of the black men, women and children in the MOVE commune in Philadelphia or the 87 charred bodies of the Branch Davidians in Waco to understand the deadly impact of being declared a cult on the front page of a major capitalist newspaper.

Beyond the lies, the ISO's statement reveals breathtaking contempt for their own membership. Hundreds of participants at their national gathering in Chicago saw SL supporters distributing literature and engaging in political discussion. Yet the ISO statement asserts that one of our sales teams "carried no literature and made no attempt to talk to any one arriving for the meeting." ISO members face the grim choice of corruption: either they must swear to a story they know is not true, or, if they are troubled by lies and violence, they will be driven out of the organization and perhaps give up on left-wing politics alto-

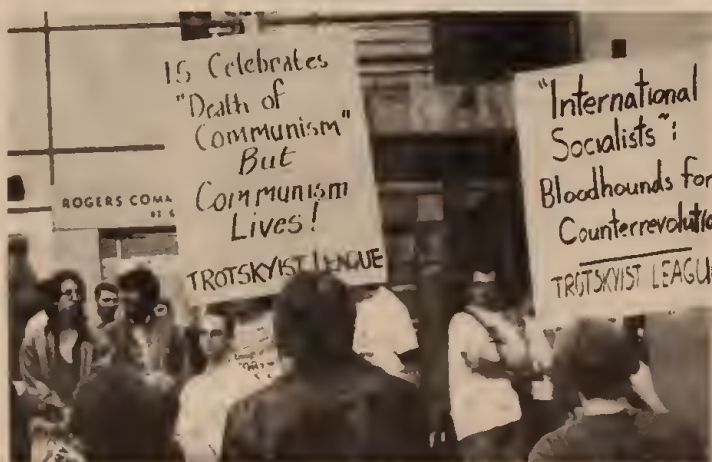
gether. In this way, too, the ISO leadership does the bourgeoisie's dirty work.

Clearly the purpose here is for the ISO to control its membership by drawing a blood line. A number of ISO members have seen the fight to free Jamal as vital to the fight against racist American capitalism, and one which they rightly thought the ISO should be involved in. Finally their leadership responded with articles in defense of Jamal, but the fact that we have long been in the lead in the campaign for Jamal, mobilizing and cooperating with diverse groups and tendencies, gives the lie to the ISO leadership's satanic depiction of our organization as a bunch of crazed sectarians and "disrupters." Violence and slander is the way they resolve that contradiction.

The abject hypocrisy of the ISO's current stance of opposition to violence is revealed in the following news from South Africa. When a supporter of the ISO's affiliate, the International Socialists of South Africa (ISSA), was informed of the Chicago events, he boasted of his own participation in "gooning" Spartacist comrades in Britain and screamed at our comrade, "You are nothing! You are a peanut of an organization." Troubled by this response, an observer from the South African Communist Party (which claims 50,000 members) replied, "By your logic, then the South African Communist Party ought to do the same thing to you." Think about it.

On June 17 outside a publicly advertised gathering of the International Socialist Organization at DePaul University in Chicago, an ISO goon squad got a richly deserved lesson in what happens to people who mistakenly think they can physically assault the Spartacist League. All leftists who have witnessed and experienced the ISO's bureaucratic exclusions and violent gangsterism against communists and socialists should savor our defense of workers democracy and victory over their thuggery.

The ISO has a long history of intolerance to open political discussion or debate. Instead the ISO attempts to seal off its members by drawing a blood line against left-wing critics. Evidently, we hit a very raw nerve with our leaflet (see facing page) which questions how the ISO reconciles their new (and shamefully belated) defense of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal with their longstanding support to cops, prison guards, and their pervasive illusions in and support to the capitalist state. Or perhaps, as the ISO tries to worm its way into the Staley workers defense milieu, our exposure of ISO support to union-husting—from crossing



For years the International Socialists/ISO cowards have been infamous for their thug attacks on other leftists. Above: Trotskyist League of Canada protests I.S.' frenzied anti-communist attack on our comrades, August 1992.

picket lines to cheering the feds' takeover of the Teamsters—was too hot to handle?

The facts are these: Spartacist members and supporters distributed literature on Fullerton Avenue outside and well away from the public sessions of the ISO national educational. A distribution on June 16 went without incident, but on the next night, after an appearance by ISO leader Ahmed Shawki and his sidekick Joel Geier, the ISO amassed a large goon squad and began bumping and shoving our vastly outnumbered comrades as they prepared to leave the site. The grotesque sensibilities and cowardice of the ISO were consistently manifested in their proclivity to especially single out black people and women for their hully boy tactics.

An SL supporter who intervened to try and defuse the situation was jumped from behind and hit in the back of the head with a blunt instrument, sustaining a gash requiring five stitches. Then, every ISO goon was swept aside swiftly and effectively while their chief bully,

one Joe Allen, was deposited on his ass. As Allen cried and wailed for an ambulance, panicked ISOers hacked away. Then they called over the campus cops.

Gangsterism is the trait which defines the ISO and its affiliates worldwide. Last fall at Boston University, the ISO assaulted Spartacus Youth Club members who were distributing literature advocating the abolition of the racist death penalty and the urgent defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal. In Britain, the *Socialist Organizer* group called for an official labor movement inquiry into the gangsterous violence directed at other political tendencies at the annual summer week of "discussion and debate" organized by the British Socialist Workers Party (the parent tendency of which the ISO is an abused child). In August 1992, the ISO's Canadian affiliate launched a brutal, misogynist assault on a small woman comrade of ours in Toronto, an outrage which prompted public protest by an independent witness.

It is the ISO's excruciating political contradictions which give rise to their

lies and violence. As Trotskyists, we relish the clash of opinion in open political debate which is essential to distilling revolutionary class consciousness. This is perceived as a threat by the ISO which pursues a frenzied chase for "popularity" instead of political program. Attacks on the left are the corollary of their quest for "respectability" in the eyes of the capitalist state. Karl Marx's observation seems most apt when applied to the ISO: "The only antidote to mental suffering is physical pain."

The lesson in workers democracy delivered to the ISO on June 17 in Chicago ought to have some educational value for ISO members everywhere. As the founder of American Trotskyism, James P. Cannon, said of the early Trotskyists' militant defense of their rights against Stalinist gangsterism, the Stalinists saw the Trotskyists "not only stand their ground and give back blow for blow but also give the ignorant, misguided young hoodlums a propaganda speech and a tract for the good of their souls." And the Trotskyists recruited a few on the firing line.

The ISO and their cothinkers internationally are on notice: This is a political fight and we welcome it. If you want to distribute literature in support of racist cop "unions" outside our meetings in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, that's your right. If you want to come in and explain why you cross picket lines and support government union-busting, while we outline how to build a class-struggle workers party, that's your right too and we will scrupulously uphold it. The ISO leadership knows this. In fact, the ISO spoke along with many other participants at the PDC-initiated June 5th rally in Chicago to protest the signing of the death warrant for Mumia Abu-Jamal. But if you throw up your goon squad, if you try to silence our revolutionary message with fists, then you will do so at your own risk.

Chicago Spartacist League
18 June 1995

Spartacist League Public Offices

—MARXIST LITERATURE—

Bay Area

Thurs. 5:30-8:00 p.m., Sat. 1:00-5:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor (near 17th Street)
Oakland, California Phone: (510) 839-0851

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The ISO, the Death Penalty and the Cops

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

For over a decade, Mumia Abu-Jamal has been entombed in a cell on death row in Pennsylvania for a crime he did not commit, sentenced to die for his political beliefs. A former Black Panther, supporter of the MOVE organization and an award-winning journalist who even on death row continues to use his searingly eloquent voice to expose the crimes of America's rulers, Jamal is the symbol of what the death penalty is all about in the racist, capitalist U.S.A. On June 1, Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge signed an execution warrant against Jamal.

The Partisan Defense Committee, a non-sectarian legal and social defense organization whose purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League/U.S., has long fought to mobilize the broadest social forces in the fight to save Mumia's life. This cause has been taken up in the U.S. and internationally by many thousands of trade unionists, leftists, writers, artists, political figures and other opponents of the racist death penalty.

After years of silence, the International Socialist Organization published an article in Jamal's defense in the June 9 issue of *Socialist Worker*. This is an about-face and we look forward to the ISO mobilizing its forces in the desperately needed united-front efforts to save Jamal's life. At the same time, taking up the cause of a man who the media, the government and the cops lyngly revile as a "cop killer" must pose some excruciating contradictions for the ISO to deal with (and perhaps this is the reason for their belated defense of Jamal).

The police frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal is stark testimony to the Marxist understanding that the cops are the armed thugs and enforcers for the racist rule of the wealthy few against any who would oppose them. But how does this jibe with the ISO's view that the police are "workers in uniform" whose strikes and demands for "union" rights should be supported? One of the baldest expressions of this position was made

by John Molyneux, a leading "theoretician" of the ISO's parent organization, the British Socialist Workers Party. In his misnamed "Teach Yourself Marxism" column, Molyneux opined that "part of the struggle to smash the state may involve supporting rebellions of sections of the police against their officers and employers" (*Socialist Worker*, 28 August 1993).

Cop "rebellions" are aimed at getting rid of any restrictions on their ability to terrorize the inner cities, smash strikes and exact vengeance against all other perceived "enemies." The Philadelphia police "union," the Fraternal Order of Police, has been on campaign footing to have Jamal put to death. With the backing of other police "unions" they have been mobilizing to silence Jamal and intimidate his supporters. *Socialist Worker* denounces the racism of the Philly cops but presumably the ISO would support them if they were "on strike" for better pay and working conditions i.e., more money to carry out their terror.

In its review of Jamal's book "Live from Death Row," *Socialist Worker* notes that the "most powerful essays in the book describe the barbaric and dehumanizing routine of prison life." The hands-on agents of this barbarism are the prison guards. Yet the ISO's mentors in the British SWP have happily bragged of prison guards setting up *Socialist Worker* readers' circles!

And what of other police agencies? Since the time he was a 15-year-old spokesman for the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party, Jamal was a target of the Philly cops and the FBI's COINTELPRO program. Thirty-eight Panthers were murdered and hundreds of others jailed on frame-up charges in this deadly FBI vendetta. Jamal is a supporter of the MOVE organization. In 1985, in a joint operation of the Philly cops, city administration, FBI and Reagan government, the MOVE household was firebombed, murdering 11 black

men, women and children and incinerating an entire neighborhood.

Today, seizing on the hideous Oklahoma bombing, the Clinton administration has rammed through a new COINTELPRO, the "Omnibus Counterterrorism Act," which targets virtually the entire population of the U.S. In a leaflet at UC Berkeley the ISO responded by asking "Can we rely on the FBI to protect us?" That self-proclaimed socialists would even pose such a question, speaks volumes of the ISO's view of the state as a benign and in some cases even a benevolent force (particularly in its Democratic Party face).

That's why the ISO meekly submits control of anti-fascist protests to the racist police. Typically, the ISO waltzes its members and supporters into fenced-in police pens—surrounded by cops with their guns, their gas, their nightsticks and their horses—to impotently "protest" the fascists without ever mobilizing to stop them. That's also why the ISO appeals to the agencies of the U.S. government—anti-labor gangsters with state power—to rid the Teamsters of "mob influence." The whole demeanor and language of the ISO is that of housebroken "socialists" who take care not to "offend" the powers that be and the "public opinion" (i.e., bourgeois ideology) the capitalist rulers purvey.

The title of a recent *Socialist Worker* (12 May) article, for example, reads "Death Penalty Not a Deterrent to Murder." But the death penalty is murder, executed by the racist capitalist rulers. We are opposed to the death penalty on principle. We do not accord this government the right to say who lives and who dies. In racist America, the death penalty is the lynch rope of the Ku Klux Klan made "legal," embedded in a history going back to the slave codes which defined black people as chattel.

For the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club the fight to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal and to abolish the rac-

ist death penalty is an integral part of our fight for black freedom in a socialist America. Now is the time that all opponents of the racist death penalty—particularly the multiracial working class which has the social power to strike a real blow against this whole system of racist reaction—must be mobilized to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. United-front actions, in which all participants can express their particular views, also allow for the exchange and clash of opinion which is vital to building a revolutionary workers party that can lead the fight for a socialist America. It is a good thing that the ISO has finally decided to take up the defense of Jamal. But the ISO's policy of slander, exclusionism and violence are antithetical to the cause of mobilizing mass social protest to save Mumia's life. Less than a year ago, several ISO thugs physically attacked three members of the Spartacus Youth Club outside a death penalty forum at Boston University. Petitions and literature for Jamal were ripped out of our comrades' hands, seized in stacks off our literature table, torn to shreds and thrown out on the street. Substituting the fist for the brain, the ISO leadership's tactics have long been to attempt to draw a blood line to seal off new members from political debate.

In a taped message from death row to a 1993 New York rally in his defense sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee, Mumia spoke powerfully to what is posed: "This government, which homed babies in Philadelphia and Baghdad, which mows down babies in Somalia, is sowing the seeds of their own destruction. It is a time, not for confusion, but for opportunity, to transform what is into what must be." For us, to "transform what is into what must be" means a proletarian revolutionary fight to bring down the entire system of American capitalism which is predicated on racist exploitation.

To accomplish this task there can be no confusion over the nature of the capitalist state, its cops, prison guards and other agencies of repression. While the ISO leadership's helated defense of Jamal smacks of Oscar Wilde's statement that "hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue," those who genuinely want to fight for a socialist America would do well to at least ponder the evident contradiction between this goal and the political views of the ISO.

Spartacist League
16 June 1995

Angry Workers Protest Plan to Close L.A. County Hospital



Downs/L.A. Times

Over 1,500 hospital workers rallied to save the L.A. County-USC Medical Center on June 21. Joined by hundreds of workers from other SEIU locals, health care workers from SEIU Local 660 protested a proposal to close the largest public hospital in the country and slash as many as 18,200 jobs. The largely black and Hispanic workers angrily denounced the budget cuts at a raucous Board of Supervisors hearing at the County Hall of Administration.

County-USC provides crucial medical services for hundreds of thousands of minorities and immigrants, including 40 percent of the care to AIDS patients in the county. Closing this hospital would literally condemn these people to die in the streets. The proposal to close the hospital comes on the heels of the passage of the racist, anti-immigrant Prop 187 and Governor Wilson's recent elimination of all state affirmative action programs.

The fight to save County-USC and other public hospitals demands a response by all L.A. labor, from Teamster truckers to the powerful ILWU longshoremen, from SEIU's militant "Justice for Janitors" to the unionized public employees facing mass layoffs. The recent organizing drive by Mexican and Latin American carpenters in Orange County shows the deep roots of militancy which immigrant labor has infused into this historically open-shop city.

Breaking with the pro-capitalist union tops, whose only strategy is support for phony "pro-labor" Democrats, is critical. Bust the budget cutters! Keep County-USC open! For free, quality health care for all!

1982 Trial a Mockery of Justice

On Monday, June 5, Mumia Abu-Jamal's legal team, led by prominent civil liberties attorney Leonard Weinglass, filed some 500 pages of legal papers seeking a new trial and the overturn of Jamal's death sentence. Early the previous Friday morning, as he was preparing his case in the prison law library at Pennsylvania's Greene Correctional Institution isolation facility, Jamal was handed an execution warrant by prison authorities. He was immediately removed from there, deprived of his notes and other possessions and taken to a new cell in an even more restrictive area of death row where prisoners are held after warrants have been signed. Knowing full well that Jamal's lawyers were about to submit papers which unambiguously demonstrated his innocence, on the night of June 1 Governor Tom Ridge had nevertheless gone ahead and signed Jamal's death warrant scheduling his execution by lethal injection for August 17. Ridge's aim, he cynically proclaimed, was "to fulfill a campaign promise." This vindictive act was but the latest chapter in the grotesque history of the racist state vendetta against Mumia Abu-Jamal.

For 13 years, Mumia Abu-Jamal has been imprisoned on death row, falsely charged and convicted for the killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in December 1981. For 13 years, Jamal has proclaimed his innocence and indicted the system of racist injustice that seeks to kill him. He has powerfully accused his accusers of a politically motivated frame-up, a frame-up aimed at silencing forever his powerful voice on behalf of the oppressed. By the time of his arrest, Jamal was widely recognized as one of the most prominent young broadcast journalists in Philadelphia and president of the Philadelphia chapter of the Association of Black Journalists. For his fearless and incisive exposures of racism and police brutality, Mumia had earned the title the "voice of the voiceless"—as well as the undying hatred of the Philadelphia cops and their "law and order" allies in government and the media.

In many respects, Mumia was accorded the frame-up "justice" typically meted out to black people by this capitalist system, which regularly railroads ghetto youth into prison hellholes and has the highest rate of incarceration of any industrialized Western country. But in this case there was more. Mumia Abu-Jamal was not just an ordinary

The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal



Jamal in hospital after being shot and beaten by Philadelphia cops, December 1981. Falling to kill him in the streets, the "justice" system framed him up and now threatens to execute this courageous fighter for the oppressed.

young black man who got ensnared in a racist nightmare by being in the wrong place at the wrong time. As a Black Panther Party activist, journalist, potential black leader and later supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization, Mumia was targeted for death by the forces of "law and order."

As 700 pages of FBI files recently released after a three-year battle show, from the time he emerged as a 15-year-old spokesman for the Philadelphia Panthers in 1969, he was subjected to constant surveillance, harassment and frame-up attempts by the FBI's COINTELPRO terror operation aimed at "neutralizing" black and leftist militants. A 24 October 1969 FBI report urging that Jamal be placed under high-level surveillance noted:

"In spite of the subject's age (15 years), Philadelphia feels that his continued participation in BPP activities in the Philadelphia Division, his position in the Philadelphia Branch of the BPP, and his past inclination to appear and speak at public gatherings, the subject should be included on the Security Index."

Everly/Philadelphia Daily News



Mumia Abu-Jamal taken out of courtroom by sheriffs. Mumia wasn't allowed to defend himself or even to be present for much of the trial by notorious "hanging judge" Albert Sabo.

When Mumia told MOVE's side of the story following a bloody 1978 cop siege of its Powelton Village home, then mayor and former police commissioner Frank Rizzo fingered a "new breed" of journalist, such as Jamal, which, he threatened, would one day "be held responsible and accountable for what you do." Three years later, on a dark Philadelphia street at four in the morning, the cops finally got the chance they'd been waiting for.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal has come to symbolize what the barbaric and racist death penalty is all about, and the "law and order" reactionaries hate him for this as well. They seek to paint the 3,000 people—overwhelmingly poor, black or Hispanic—on the country's death rows as nameless, faceless sadistic killers. And Mumia's eloquent and compassionate voice puts the lie to that.

The Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and its allies have waged a vicious and frenzied vendetta to silence Jamal and intimidate his supporters. Following a rally for Jamal in Philadelphia in 1990, FOP head Richard Costello screamed for the electric chair for Mumia and an "electric couch" for his supporters. When last year National Public Radio agreed to air a series of commentaries on prison life by Jamal, the FOP launched a noisy campaign of intimidation which was taken up by Republican Senator Dole and succeeded in censoring Jamal. And Democratic president Clinton has made a point of appearing at the FOP's annual Washington, D.C. rallies for cop power.

When a collection of Jamal's prison commentaries was brought out this May as a book by a major publisher, *Live from Death Row* (Addison-Wesley, 1995), the forces who want to see him dead orchestrated a high-powered media campaign seeking to drown out the passionate humanity expressed in his writings. The big media, ranging from the *Washington Post* to the *New York Post* and Dan Rath-

er's CBS-TV *Evening News*, tried to demonize Mumia as a vicious and sadistic "cop killer" by cynically parading around the dead cop's widow. In account after nauseating account, Maureen Faulkner "recalled" how Jamal "smiled" at her while a criminalist held up her husband's bloodied shirt during the trial to display the bullet holes. But, as the trial transcript shows, Jamal was not even in the courtroom when this alleged incident happened.

The forces of death have also propagated the lie that Jamal was accorded "due process" of law and found guilty by a "jury of his peers." Thus, in a June 2 letter to actors Ed Asner and Mike Farrell and other prominent supporters of Jamal, on the official stationery of Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham, Assistant D.A. Arnold Gordon wrote:

"From an evidentiary standpoint, the case against Mumia Abu-Jamal was overwhelming, one of the strongest I have seen in my twenty-five years as a prosecutor. A jury found him guilty and pronounced a justly deserved death sentence."

In fact, Mumia's trial was a mockery of justice from beginning to end, deeply tainted in every respect, as we will show in detail in examining the "overwhelming" evidence outlined by Gordon and presented by the prosecution in June-July 1982. As lead counsel Len Weinglass said at a June 5 press conference following the filing of the legal papers, "Mumia Abu-Jamal never had a trial." As these papers document, the "trial" was replete with violations of Jamal's constitutional rights and marked by widespread police and prosecutorial misconduct, including suppression of evidence of Jamal's innocence, coercion of witnesses and racist elimination of potential black jurors. In an article in *New York Newsday* (22 June), writer Terry Bisson captured the blatant miscarriage of justice at Jamal's trial:

"Abu-Jamal's murder trial was a policeman's dream. Denied the right to represent himself, he was defended by a reluctant incompetent who was later disbarred (and who has since filed an affidavit detailing his delinquencies). Abu-Jamal was prosecuted by a district attorney who was later reprimanded for withholding evidence in another trial. Abu-Jamal was allowed only \$150 to interview witnesses. 'But best of all was the judge. A life-time member of the Fraternal Order of Police, branded a 'defendant's nightmare' by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Judge Albert F. Sabo has sentenced more men to die (31 to date, only two of them white) than any other sitting judge in America. A fellow judge once called his courtroom a 'vacation for prosecutors' because of his bias toward convictions."

From the time the Partisan Defense Committee took up Jamal's case more than eight years ago, we have emphasized that the fight to save him cannot rely on the capitalist courts but rather must look to the mobilization of the masses, centrally the social power of the labor movement. Since then, trade unions representing millions of workers—in the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, South Africa and elsewhere—have spoken out for Jamal. Many tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, have signed petitions or written letters to the Pennsylvania governor's office demanding that "Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!" Thousands have taken to the street, including in emergency demonstrations following the signing of the death warrant. Thousands must now be turned into tens and hundreds of thousands, bringing

An Open Letter to President Mandela to Save the Life of Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Paul Trehwela

For Attention:

President Nelson Mandela
State President's Office
Cape Town
Republic of South Africa
Dear President Mandela,

I am appealing to you to use the respect in which you are held internationally to try to stop the execution in the United States of a black political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

I am writing to you as a fellow *mugwenya* from the grim time in the early 1960s, when the shadow of the gallows hung over you too.

Abu-Jamal is due to be executed in Pennsylvania on 17 August. He has been involved in radical black politics in the U.S. since he was first arrested at the age of 14, in 1968, in a protest against the presidential campaign of the

racist governor, George Wallace. The following year he supported the founder of the Black Panther Freedom Party, Huey Newton, then in prison.

His trial in 1982, following the death of a policeman in a shoot-out the previous year, was crowded with irregularities.

I have supported the campaign to save the life of Abu-Jamal since 1990, when I spoke at a meeting in London in his defence. I said then that in a society in which "the black 9 percent of the population of Pennsylvania gives birth to 56 percent of the population on death row, we are in the presence of truly South African conditions."

If South Africa can suspend the death penalty, that should apply at least equally for Abu-Jamal.

When I think about Abu-Jamal, my emotions go back to the time when my fellow co-accused and I were in the Fort Prison in Johannesburg, on trial, in late 1964. Our courageous solicitor,

Joel Joffe, was also the attorney representing the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe heroes Vuyisile Mini, Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Mkaba. On the day before their hanging in Pretoria Central Prison on 6 November 1964, Joel brought us messages from our doomed comrades and we sent our own message of love and solidarity to them, with Joel.

We held a memorial service for them in the yard at the Fort, as I'm sure you did also on Robben Island. Ivan Schermbucker and Eli Weinberg, both now dead, guided our thoughts.

A year later we white political prisoners were transferred from Pretoria Local Prison to Central Prison, when the authorities wanted to use our cells to hold their Namibian prisoners from Swapo, including Toivo, while they brutalised and tortured them.

During the six months we were held in Pretoria Central, we listened to the executions of black prisoners every few

weeks, through the singing of the Condemned prisoners in B Wing. It was awful—one of the worst experiences of my life.

Please, Mr. President, let our South African experience speak loudly and clearly to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal in Pennsylvania, in memory of Mini, Khayinga, Mkaba, and so many others. Use the force of your international reputation to urge that the execution be set aside, in the same way that an international campaign helped to stay the hand of the judge in your trial.

The address of the Governor of Pennsylvania is: Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120, United States of America.

With deep respect,
Paul Trehwela

Political prisoner, Johannesburg and Pretoria, 1964-67.

Editor, Umkhonto we Sizwe underground newspaper, *Freedom Fighter*, Johannesburg, 1963-64.

Co-editor, *Searchlight South Africa*, London, 1988-94.

Aylesbury, Britain.

16 June 1995

South Africa Freedom Day

to bear the weight of the working class in this urgent phase of the struggle to save Mumia and secure his freedom.

The Prosecution's Case: Three Legs, All Lies

In dissecting the travesty of justice which placed Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row, we will begin by looking at the prosecution's account of the shooting incident. What happened in the early morning hours of 9 December 1981? It is undisputed that the events unfolded when an old VW owned by Jamal's brother, Billy, was pulled over by Faulkner. One of the occupants got out. The cop started beating him. Jamal, who was moonlighting as a cab driver at the time, happened to be in the area and saw this. These events took place at about 3:55 in the morning in the middle of Philly's red light district. The street was dark, but the bars were closing and a number of people were in the area on foot or driving through. A number of shots rang out. The whole incident lasted less than two minutes, and a number of police cars immediately

began converging on the scene. Jamal was found critically wounded from a bullet through the chest. Nearby lay a wounded Faulkner. Jamal eventually recovered after surgery, but the cop died an hour later.

As Jamal's lead counsel Leonard Weinglass said at the Philadelphia press conference on June 5, the prosecution's case against Jamal rested on three legs. First, the prosecution claimed three eyewitnesses identified Jamal as the shooter. Second, the prosecution claimed Jamal "confessed" to the shooting when he arrived at the hospital to be treated for his wounds. Third, the prosecution argued that the fact that Jamal's gun was found at the scene showed he did the shooting. As Jamal's new legal filings, show in careful detail, each prosecution claim was false and based on evidence which had been twisted around to implicate Jamal.

1 The Non-Smoking Gun: Ballistics and Forensics

Let us first deal with the question of the gun and the shooting. The prosecution theory of what happened during the shooting incident, as outlined by Assis-

tant D.A. Gordon in his June 2 letter, runs as follows:

"Abu-Jamal, who had been driving a cab in the area, ran from across the street toward Officer Faulkner. Abu-Jamal shot the officer once in the back. Officer Faulkner fell to the ground; Abu-Jamal aimed and shot the officer four more times, including a shot through the center of his face. Officer Faulkner was able to fire one shot at Abu-Jamal during the shooting."

Gordon goes on to say that the bullet that killed Faulkner was "fired within twenty inches of the officer's face," the one in his back "was fired from a distance of approximately nine inches, and the shots that went through his clothing, were also fired at extremely close range." According to Gordon, two guns were recovered at the scene: "Officer Faulkner's weapon had been fired once, and Abu-Jamal's weapon contained five spent cartridges." These were +P cartridges, and, says Gordon, "The bullet that was removed from Officer Faulkner was also a +P bullet, but it was so mutilated that no comparison could be made to a bullet test fired from Abu-Jamal's gun."

Note carefully that Gordon does not talk of Jamal's gun having been fired. If

you want to find out whether a gun has been fired recently, it's not hard: just smell the barrel for the odor of burnt gunpowder. (Ballistics experts say that the smell remains for four to five hours, and certainly would be present after four to five minutes.) Either the police incredibly failed to perform this simple test, or they hid the fact that Jamal's gun was indeed not used that night. As for the +P bullets, this variety of pistol ammunition is widely available. And while cops say Jamal's gun, which was licensed to him, had five spent cartridges, the cops never recovered more than three bullets from the scene. One of these was removed from Faulkner's body. As Jamal's legal brief notes, "the Medical Examiner judged the fatal bullet to be a .44 caliber. Mr. Jamal's gun was a .38 caliber pistol."

The police crime lab reported just enough test results to show that the rifling pattern of Jamal's gun (eight lands and grooves and a right-hand twist) was "consistent" with the bullet that killed the cop. But there are millions of guns with that rifling pattern in the U.S. A ballistics expert retained by Jamal's current legal team, having examined the police reports, lists a series of "issues of a firearm evidence nature which required further investigation and testing." Either police failed to do the normal tests or, more likely, the results proved Jamal's gun was not used and so they were kept secret. Particularly damning is the cops' failure to report if they tested Jamal's hands for gunshot residue. Yet, the ballistics expert pointed out, "In 1981 such tests were frequently performed when a suspect was apprehended immediately after a shooting incident." The police ballistics report was so inconclusive that a Homicide Division captain admitted at the time:

"One expert might say the bullet came from Mumia's gun and another might be brought in from Iowa who will say, 'I've got 20 years' experience and I say it didn't come from that gun.' We just don't know."

—Philadelphia Bulletin,
11 December 1981

A re-examination by Jamal's experts of the forensics reports also disproves the prosecution theory of how the shooting took place. If Faulkner was shot at "extremely close range," there normally would have been gunshot residue (stippling) on the back of his jacket, but there was none. Moreover, the prosecution

continued on page 10



Philadelphia Daily News



Owens/Bulletin

Left: Philly cops beat Delbert Africa in 1978 raid on MOVE home in Powelton Village. Above: Racist mayor of Philadelphia, Frank Rizzo, at press conference where he justified the assault and threatened "new breed" of journalist. Mumia Abu-Jamal is at left in photo.

Jamal Must Not Die!...

(continued from page 1)

chattel slavery. The current rate of executions in the U.S., now the only industrialized Western country to retain the death penalty, is double that of the highest previous annual rate since the assembly line of death was started up again in 1976 after a brief pause. For his part, Ridge has ordered 15 executions since taking office in January after winning the state house on a right-wing, pro-death platform. In May, Keith Zettlemyer became the first victim of "Governor Death" and the first to be executed in the state since 1962.

The threat to execute Jamal comes in the context of a concerted effort by the Democratic White House and Republican Congress to massively increase police powers. By near-unanimous vote, on June 7 the U.S. Senate approved Clinton's draconian "Counterterrorism" bill. Among many other attacks on basic liberties, this bill guts centuries-old *habeas corpus* protections against wrongful imprisonment by limiting challenges of death sentences to one federal appeal within one year of conviction—which in many cases will mean no right to appeal at all.

In the midst of a bipartisan attack on social programs from welfare to Medicare, particularly targeting the black ghetto masses, Clinton and Gingrich are intent on reviving J. Edgar Hoover's COINTELPRO terror operation of the 1960s and '70s. This program of assassination, disruption and surveillance against leftist and black organizations—which led to the killing of 38 Panther members—also went after Mumia from the time he was a 15-year-old leader of the Philadelphia Panthers. Now the government wants a new COINTELPRO directed at the entire population.

In their quest to kill this award-winning journalist, the state of Pennsylvania has joined ranks with the reactionary regime in Iran, which issued a *fatwa* (death sentence) against author Salman Rushdie for his humanistic writings, and Bangladesh, where a similar edict was proclaimed by Islamic reactionaries against leftist woman writer Taslima Nasrin.

The publication of Jamal's book had already touched off a well-orchestrated national campaign by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) to vilify Jamal as "profiting from a crime" and to call for a boycott of Addison-Wesley. Last month, racist FOP thugs from New York, New Jersey and Philly picketed a fund-raising event for Jamal in Manhattan featuring the actor Giancarlo Esposito and other prominent personalities. And the day the



Philadelphia, June 5: Several hundred marched to protest planned execution of Jamal following press conference by his lawyers.

warrant was announced, Philadelphia assistant district attorney Arnold Gordon issued a letter to celebrities who have spoken out for Jamal. Repeating the tissue of lies that made up the prosecution's "case" against Mumia, the letter denounced the "ill-advised" publication of Jamal's book as "the only true miscarriage of justice here" and threatened Jamal's supporters for their "insult to police officers."

When it comes to "miscarriage of justice," the Philly cops and their honchos in Harrisburg have been up to their necks in scandals and convictions. Former Philly FOP head John Shaw was recently sentenced to prison for racketeering and fraud, another Philly cop was convicted earlier this month for shaking down motorists, and state attorney general Ernest D. Preate Jr. just resigned after pleading guilty to an illegal gambling scam. Furthermore, a Jewish ex-cop has sued the Philadelphia police department for blatant anti-Semitism.

Ominously, as Philadelphia's Police Advisory Commission announced hearings into the savage 1994 cop killing of Hispanic truck driver Moises DeJesus, FOP head Richard Costello baldly vowed that no cop would cooperate with the panel. Such statements show that the enforcers of capitalist "justice" feel they are above even the fig leaf of legal restraint. In 1990 the FOP's Costello threatened that Jamal's supporters should be put on an "electric couch."

They Want to Silence Jamal Forever

As state officials ready the execution guerny, they have simultaneously escalated their campaign to silence Jamal and his supporters. Prison authorities

have imposed new disciplinary measures aimed at sealing off Jamal from the public. Only days after the signing of the execution warrant, Pennsylvania launched a vindictive disciplinary action against Jamal, accusing Mumia, his attorneys, Addison-Wesley and others with being part of a "conspiracy" to help bring his book out! The effect of this has been to further cut Mumia off from his attorneys and the media. On June 27, Jamal filed for an injunction against the prison to stop the authorities' interference with Jamal's correspondence with his attorneys and to allow paralegal visits and press interviews.

Mumia refuses to be silenced by such measures. Even while facing the most restrictive conditions, Jamal has produced a stream of new articles countering the campaign to kill him. In "First Amendment Rites," he reports on a June 9 Department of Corrections hearing where an examiner concluded:

"Jamal does not deny the [journalism] charges but cites a violation of First Amendment rites....
"The 'examiner' found me 'guilty' and sentenced a man with less than 75 days to live, to 30 days 'DCS' or disciplinary custody status, to start immediately.
"I've been called many things, but 'convicted journalist'? That's a new one!"

The racist rulers intend to execute Mumia as a sign that they will brook no defiance. Murderous police terror has intensified as the ruling class pushes through a program aimed at wiping out a whole layer of the ghetto population by dismantling welfare and other social programs. In this climate of social reaction, Mumia is being set up to be the first political prisoner executed in the U.S. since Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were killed in the electric chair in

1953, victims of McCarthyite Cold War anti-Communism.

We must not let that happen! It is necessary to build on the momentum of the wave of recent protests with a strategy aimed at mass mobilizations of blacks, Hispanics and all the intended victims of capitalist repression, centrally seeking to unlock the social power of the integrated labor movement. The Spartacist League and PDC have insisted on the importance of united-front defense of class-war prisoners, emphasizing the need for different organizations to join together in common action while freely proclaiming their own political views. It is noteworthy that of late a number of leftist groups have joined the campaign to save Jamal. We have also insisted that this is not only a struggle for Mumia's life—it's a fight against the institution of the death penalty itself, a barbaric means of repression which in the U.S. is necessarily racist. *Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!*

Worldwide Rallies Demand: Mumia Must Not Die!

The emergency demonstrations in the U.S., which brought thousands onto the streets across the country, were the largest protests against the death penalty in decades. At a rally in Boston held at the memorial to the black Civil War soldiers of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment, a statement was read from Michael and Robert Meeropol, children of the Rosenbergs. They stated: "Our parents were almost saved by the mobilization of thousands of Americans.... We must not shy away from the defense of Mumia. We must make sure that NO AMERICAN POLITICAL PRISONER suffers the fate of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg."

In Oakland, California over 500 demonstrated, including a contingent from the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, which unfurled its banner next to the speaker's platform. Owen Marron, executive secretary of the Alameda County Central Labor Council, linked the defense of Jamal with the struggle against anti-labor repression and pledged labor's support in the fight for Jamal's life. Also on the West Coast, the Los Angeles County Democratic Party Central Committee recently passed a resolution urging a new trial for Mumia and the recusal of Judge Sabo, who, it notes, "has sentenced more people to death (31, all but two persons of color) than any other judge in the United States."

In New York, over 1,000 marched around Madison Square Garden, chanting, "Free Mumia!" A truck driver who honked his horn in solidarity was arrested by police on the spot. Earlier, on June 3 in Minneapolis, cops viciously attacked a demonstration of 200 Jamal supporters, charging into the crowd on horseback, macing them and arresting

Black Press Covers Jamal Campaign

Mumia Abu-Jamal death warrant stirs national protests



THOUSANDS AROUND THE NATION MARCH TO PROTEST EXECUTION

By ELINOR TATUM
Step the execution! Free Mumia! That's what thousands of people are doing in cities across the nation today. They are protesting the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a black man who was convicted of murdering a police officer in 1981. The protests are part of a nationwide campaign to save Mumia's life. In Philadelphia, thousands of people gathered in front of the state house to demand a new trial for Mumia. In New York, protesters marched through the city streets, carrying signs that read "Free Mumia" and "Abolish the Death Penalty." The protests are a show of solidarity with Mumia and a demand for justice. The campaign to save Mumia is gaining momentum across the country. In South Africa, the ANC has announced that it will support the campaign to save Mumia. The ANC is the first South African organization to do so. The campaign to save Mumia is a fight against racism and for the rights of all people. It is a fight for a more just and equitable society. The campaign to save Mumia is a fight for the future of our country. It is a fight for a better world for all of us.

Philadelphia

SCOOP

The fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal

9 June 1995

Mumia Abu-Jamal files appeal against scheduled execution

By Carolyn Thomas
The Philadelphia Tribune
6 June 1995

Jamal Struggle Escalates In Face of Execution

by Lisa Washington
PHILADELPHIA
New Observer
7 June 1995

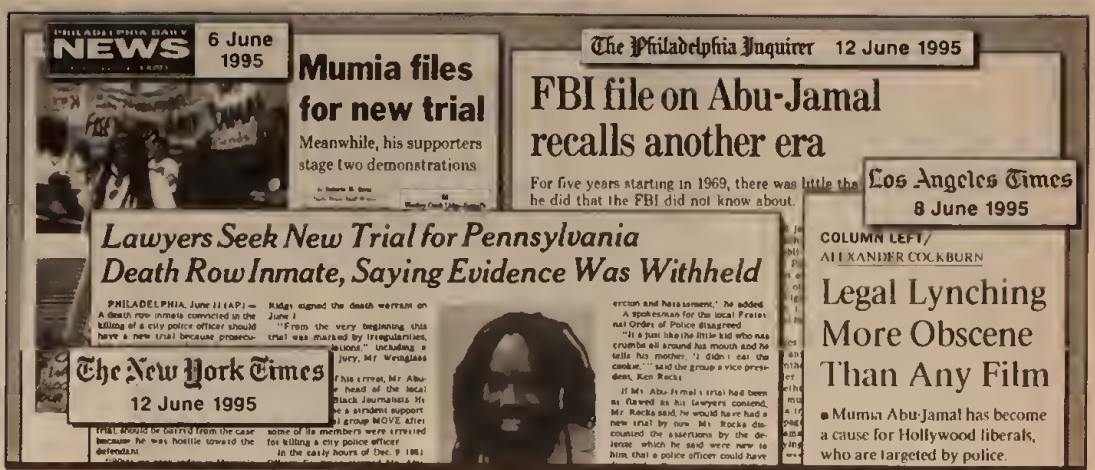
eleven. In his column "Free Speech = Police Riot," Jamal condemns the cop attack, remarking that the demonstrators "don't need to read *Live from Death Row* to find out how innocent people can be beaten and arrested by brutal cops, nor how cops routinely lie in police reports to support arrests. They now know by their lived experience, what they saw, heard or felt, how this evil abuse of state power proliferates."

Demonstrations for Jamal were also held in numerous other cities, from Seattle to Detroit to Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal in Canada. Around the world, the fight for Jamal has become the focal point of struggle against the racist death penalty in the U.S. Trade unions representing millions of workers have added their voices to demand that Mumia must not die. On June 15, the European Parliament unanimously approved a resolution reaffirming its "complete opposition to the death penalty" and calling for a stay of execution and a new trial for Jamal, noting "the appeals of many people, human rights organizations, trade unions and other organizations worldwide, which are fighting to save the life of Mr. Mumia Abu-Jamal."

Nowhere is support for Mumia growing faster than in South Africa, where militants identify his plight with their own struggle against apartheid terror (see *WV* No. 624, 2 June). In a May 31 letter to Governor Ridge condemning the threat to execute Jamal, the predominantly black Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) wrote that "our organisation has struggled against all forms of racism, oppression and the use of [the] death sentence to silence political activists." Now the country's second-largest union federation, the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU), has added its voice to the fight to save Jamal.

The very day the signing of Jamal's death warrant was announced, African National Congress (ANC) secretary general M.C. Ramaphosa fired off a protest letter to Ridge. On June 19, at a rally in Johannesburg organized by COSATU as part of a national day of action, a spokesman for the Partisan Defense Committee addressed a crowd of 15,000 workers who enthusiastically took up the chant, "Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!"

Internationally, within days of Ridge's execution order, protests spread from Sydney, Australia to Tokyo and Paris. While on tour in London, Jesse Jackson was informed of the death warrant and told a public meeting June 4, "We are all in prayer that Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die by capital punishment." Addressing a June 7 London rally, Labour Party Member of Parliament Jeremy Corbyn said, "This proposed legal murder of someone who is not even guilty of the crime for which he has been charged is yet another example of the brutality of the law and order lobby in the United



States and indeed exactly the same law and order lobby that is at work in this country as well." John Monks, head of the British Trades Union Congress, has also sent a protest statement to Ridge.

A June 23 protest in Warsaw drew 200 supporters of Mumia's cause. In Italy, a national demonstration for Jamal in Rome on June 24 was made an official part of a larger protest against pension cuts the same day. Demonstrators in the Jamal contingent chanted, "Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!" "Freedom for all the comrades in jail!" and "Freedom for all communists!" As Jamal's supporters merged with the larger rally, a banner

The 60,000 to 70,000 workers there then shouted their unanimous agreement with this proposal, placing the demonstration officially on record in defense of Jamal.

Demonstrations in several cities in Germany have drawn Turkish and Kurdish immigrant youth, anti-fascist militants and leftists, including two protests in Berlin of some 300 people each. The June 7 Berlin protest heard a statement from Markus Wolf, a refugee from Hitler's Third Reich who was later the head of East German intelligence and himself victimized by a vicious witchhunt by the German Fourth Reich. Wolf recalled his parents' support to the international cam-

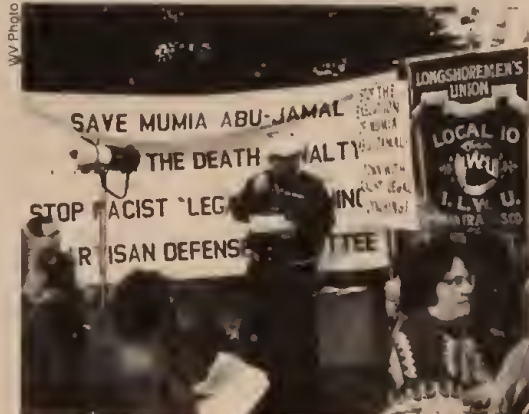
worldwide movement in the 1930s to prevent the legal lynching of the Scottsboro Boys, nine black youths framed on charges of raping two white women in Alabama. What is particularly critical today is to turn the support Mumia's cause has begun to receive from the labor movement into the sort of concrete action indicated by the workers' protests in Johannesburg and Rome. While in the U.S. in particular the trade unions have taken one blow after another under their pro-capitalist misleaders, as part of the struggle to reinvigorate the labor movement it is necessary to translate the evident sentiment for Jamal's cause into mass protest and struggle.

There is no place in this fight, or in the labor movement in general, for the police, black or white. Whatever their personal feelings about the death penalty, black cops are just as much a part of the capitalist apparatus of racist repression as their white brothers-in-blue. At the June 5 Philly rally, after a representative of the National Black Police Officer's Association spoke, PDC speaker Ed Jarvis said of the threatened execution of Jamal:

"This legal lynching is one side of the legal lynchings that go on every day against black people, against working-class people by both black as well as white cops.... It's time to build a working-class party. It's time to save Mumia Abu-Jamal. Abolish the death penalty! Finish the Civil War!"

The state's lust for the blood of a man whose "crime" is to speak forcefully for those on the bottom of this society is an object lesson for all those struggling for social equality and a decent life for all. Black freedom, and the liberation of all from conditions of social decay and regimentation, will finally come only through a workers revolution that sweeps away the bloody capitalist state, its prisons, courts and cops, and with it the death penalty and all other barbaric vestiges of oppression and exploitation. ■

Oakland, June 5: Brian McWilliams, president of International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 10, addresses rally to save Mumia Abu-Jamal.

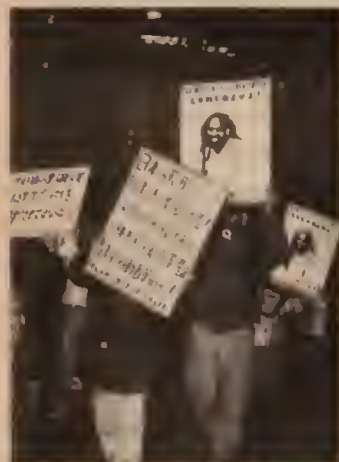


was set up next to the official podium reading, "Save the Life of Mumia Abu-Jamal! No to the Racist Death Penalty!" signed by the Committee for Social and Workers Defense, a fraternal organization of the PDC. After a speaker from the Mumia contingent from Naples called for Jamal's freedom, one of the official platform speakers said, "I think that I can safely say that all of us here want to express our solidarity with Mumia Abu-Jamal, that we all defend Mumia Abu-Jamal. Do you all agree?"

campaign for the labor martyrs Sacco and Vanzetti, executed in 1927, and declared, "During Nazi rule and the Holocaust we owed our lives to international solidarity.... I therefore ask every individual who has met with injustice or who is fighting for his rights to join the demand to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal."

A Proletarian Strategy to Smash Racist Repression

A massive outcry to save Mumia's life is urgently necessary. It took a powerful



Spartacist Japan



Workers Hammer



Spartacist

International protests against death sentence for Mumia Abu-Jamal. From left: Tokyo, London, Berlin. Left: Spartacist Group Japan sign reads, "Death Penalty in Japan: Barbaric Legacy of Feudalism. Death Penalty in America: Racist Legacy of Slavery."

Frame-Up...

(continued from page 7)

claim that Jamal was shot while standing over an already wounded Faulkner is physically impossible, according to Dr. John A. Hayes, a forensic pathologist who is the New York City Associate Medical Examiner and a former chief resident in anatomic pathology at the Boston University School of Medicine. Dr. Hayes points out that the bullet Faulkner fired at Jamal had a steep downward trajectory, entering his chest at the nipple and lodging in his lower back.

2 The "Confession": A Belated Fabrication

The second leg of the prosecution's case is that Jamal—an experienced court reporter and journalist—supposedly made a loud "confession" of guilt in the hospital. Again we quote Assistant D.A. Gordon:

"White doctors were attempting to provide emergency treatment to Officer Faulkner, other police officers were trying, despite Abu-Jamal's resistance, to bring him into the emergency room. While in the vestibule, Abu-Jamal turned to Officer Faulkner's former partner and said, 'I shot the mother fucker and I hope the mother fucker dies.' Abu-Jamal shouted this again when he was brought within a few feet of the area where Officer Faulkner was being unsuccessfully treated. (Hospital workers testified to Jamal's rantings at his trial.)"

In the first place, by the time Jamal was brutally dumped on the floor outside the door of the emergency room, with his arms handcuffed behind his back, he was in no condition to shout or "rant" much of anything. He had been shot through the liver, with a bullet lodged against his spine. A doctor who examined Jamal no more than ten minutes after his arrival found him "weak...on the verge of fainting." Another doctor who saw Jamal when he was first brought in—at the time of the alleged confession—only heard him moan as a cop kicked him.

The "hospital workers" who claimed to hear Jamal loudly proclaim his guilt were a cop and a security guard. The cop was Garry Bell, Faulkner's partner and "best friend," who admitted he threatened to kill Jamal. (Three years earlier, Bell had shot dead a motorist after pulling him over for an alleged traffic violation in the middle of the night in the black ghetto of West Philadelphia.) The security guard, who first lied that she didn't know Faulkner at all, subsequently admitted that she'd



Camino Books

frequently had coffee with him.

More importantly, neither Bell nor the security guard said anything about a "confession" until more than two months after the fact, when Jamal pressed brutality charges against the cops who beat him at the hospital. It was not in Bell's police log that night nor in a statement he gave a week later. However, Gary Wakshul, the cop who was assigned to guard Jamal and was with him the entire time between his arrest and his medical treatment, wrote in his official report that day that "during this time the negro male made no statements."

3 The Witnesses: Coercion and Concoctions

Now we come to the prosecution's "eyewitnesses," Gordon writes:

"Officer Shoemaker, the first officer on the scene, saw Officer Faulkner lying in a pool of blood and saw Abu-Jamal sitting on the curb next to a gun. He ordered Abu-Jamal to freeze. Abu-Jamal instead reached for the gun. Officer Shoemaker again yelled, 'freeze,' but Abu-Jamal continued reaching for his weapon which the officer kicked out of his reach.... Abu-Jamal was identified as the shooter on the scene by three eyewitnesses who had never lost sight of him during the entire incident."

Even by the cops' own accounts of what happened at the time, this story stinks. The "three eyewitnesses" were Cynthia White, a prostitute who said she was working the southeast corner at 13th and Locust at the time of the shooting; Robert Chobert, a cab driver; and Mark Scanlan, a young white motorist who candidly admitted he'd been drinking and what he remembered was "confusion." On the scene, Scanlan told police that Jamal was the VW driver, and said he didn't know where the shooter went.



Rizzo with his hero, J. Edgar Hoover, in 1972. Above: "Prosecutor in robes" Judge Sabo and Pennsylvania "Governor Death" Tom Ridge.

At the trial, Scanlan said he couldn't identify the shooter at all. Furthermore, none of these "eyewitnesses who had never lost sight" of Jamal saw him being shot.

As for Chobert, he initially told arriving police that the shooter was 225 pounds and "ran away." Chobert later said the shooter ran "30 steps," and then changed that at the trial to only ten feet. Jamal, however, weighed 170 pounds and was found where he fell critically wounded at the scene. Chobert, who is white, supposedly identified Jamal from among three black men with dreadlocks on the scene that night. Chobert's "identification" of Jamal consisted of the police asking "is that the guy?" as they opened the van in which Jamal lay with his face and chest "very, very bloody" (as another witness reported). During this period, Chobert was on probation for felony arson (he was paid for throwing a Molotov cocktail at a school), with two prior charges for driving while intoxicated. Given that his livelihood depended on driving a taxi, this made him eminently susceptible to police pressure.

The star prosecution witness was Cynthia White. She was the only trial witness who claimed to see Jamal, gun in hand, shoot Faulkner. Initially even she denied seeing Jamal with a gun. White claimed the shooter was 5'8"—Jamal is 6'1". White claimed to be standing right where the VW pulled over. But no other witnesses—including Chobert and Scanlan—saw her there, and the only witness who recalled seeing her at all said she was over a half block away. White had a police record a mile long. At the time of the trial, she was serving 18 months for prostitution in Massachusetts, with 38 prior arrests and three prostitution

charges awaiting trial in Philadelphia. Following the shooting, Faulkner's precinct was given her photo and told to refer her to the Homicide Division if she was taken in. In the next ten days, she was taken to Homicide twice—on prostitution charges! Each time she was let off; each time she tailored her story more to the cops' liking to implicate Jamal.

The prosecution primly denied that White had been offered a deal for her testimony. But another witness, Veronica Jones, a prostitute who knew her, testified that a few weeks after the shooting, police hauled Jones in and offered to give her a deal like White:

"They were getting on me, telling me I was in the area and I seen Mumia, you know, do it, you know, intentionally. They were trying to get me to say something that the other girl said...and they told us we can work the area if we tell them."

Judge Sabo struck that testimony from the record as "not relevant" and "far afield." However, White did indeed continue to "work the area" not only with impunity, but with police protection. A recent affidavit by an investigator who tried (unsuccessfully) to interview White on Jamal's behalf at the time reveals: "There were always two (2) plainclothesmen near where she worked her corner on Locust." So much for the prosecution's "three eyewitnesses."

On the other hand, while only the dubious White claimed (belatedly) to "see" Jamal shoot Faulkner, at least five witnesses saw a black male run from the scene after the shooting in the direction of an alley about the distance of Chobert's "30 steps" away. Two of them, Chobert and William Singletary, explicitly said the running man was the shooter. Jones also initially reported seeing one or two men "sort of jogging"

Join the Campaign!

1 Organize protest! Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and church organizations. Get your union or organization to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Jamal. Publicize Jamal's case in your union or organization's newsletter. Prepare for emergency demonstrations—get on the Partisan Defense Committee phone tree to organize in your area.

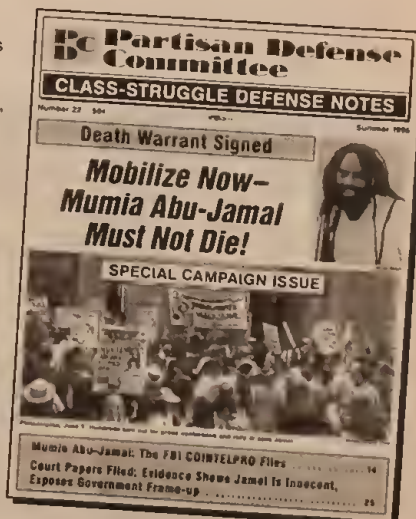


2 Spread the word! The current issue of the PDC's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* is devoted to the struggle to save Mumia Abu-Jamal. Order bundles of this special campaign issue from the PDC, 25 copies for \$10.00. Get your local bookstore to stock Jamal's powerful *Live from Death Row*. Contact the PDC for speakers, to arrange showings of the PDC's video, *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*. The video can be purchased for \$30.00 from the PDC at the address below.

3 Send protests to: Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120. In the first week after he signed Jamal's death warrant, Ridge received over 20,000 letters of protest. Now he's changing his phone and fax number daily to try and stay ahead of the growing movement for Jamal! As we go to press, the numbers are: phone (717) 787-2500; fax (717) 783-8609.

4 Funds are urgently needed! To get a new trial and overturn the death sentence could cost over a million dollars. Make a contribution today to the Bill of Rights Foundation (earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense") and mail it to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001.

5 Write to Jamal to express your solidarity: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA 15370-8090.



Contributions of \$5.00 or more to the PDC include a year's subscription to CSDN.

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

"An Easy Kill..."



The root of the legal term "trial" is the English word, "try."

At the root of every trial is the state prosecutor, who "tries" to convict the accused, using every means at his considerable disposal: the wealth of the state, the police, experts, and behind it all, the power of government to compel, to intimidate, to destroy.

For far too many defendants, their meager resources are no match for the awesome resources of a government of millions, and the "battle" is lost before it is even truly joined.

One need look no further than that daily American true-life soap opera, "The Simpsons" (O.J., not Homer) where you have an enormously wealthy defendant, holding his own with the state, as he fields, quite literally, some of the best legal talent money can buy. Consider if his name were, say, "O.J. Jackson," and he was an average, poor Joe, with a mortgage, a 7-year-old car, and alimony to pay. Given the same set of facts, isn't it the simple unvarnished truth that this O.J. would be on Death Row by now, facing two death sentences?

What does this say about "Justice" in America?

I thought of these things after my death warrant was signed a few days ago, and I read, somewhere, that the prosecutor at my trial, Joseph McGill, remarked that it "was the strongest case I ever tried."

My first thought was, if that was so, why did he feel the need to argue, at the guilt/innocence stage of the trial:

"If your decision of course were to acquit, to allow

the defendant to walk out, that is fine. There is nothing I can do and there is nothing that the judge or anyone could do that would affect that in any way.

"If you find the defendant guilty of course there would be appeal after appeal and perhaps there could be a reversal of the case, or whatever, so that may not be final." [From *Commonwealth v. Abu-Jamal*, 7/1/82, p. 146]

Why would a prosecutor, one wonders, tell a jury such a thing, in his "strongest case ever tried"?

But, of course, in this life, all things are relative, as are the terms, "strong" or "weak." For instance, most men think of women as "the weaker sex," but if men had to give birth the very thought would make most faint.

Were *Commonwealth v. Beasley*, *Commonwealth v. West*, *Commonwealth v. Simmons*, or *Commonwealth v. Baker* also "strong" cases? Logic suggests they were weak ones, for, in each case, Prosecutor McGill made the exact, almost *verbatim* argument to the jury, and each case was reversed, by at least one appellate court.

Was the trial of MOVE bombing survivor Ramona Africa a "strong" one, where the jury was told "not to worry," "do not concern yourselves about when, or if, others, police, firemen, city officials will be charged in connection with the MOVE bombing," and "that is not for you to consider"? Here, again, McGill played prosecutor, and Ramona spent 7 long years in a prison hellhole, for surviving her attempted murder. (Is it mere coincidence that no other person, no cop, no official, no one *except Ramona herself*,

was ever even charged in the police bombing of which she was the victim?)

What of the trial *Commonwealth v. Connor*, where a man, based on police, ballistics and witness testimony, was convicted of first-degree murder of a girl child, prosecuted by Prosecutor McGill, and sentenced to spend the rest of his natural life in prison hellholes, where he was beaten, stabbed, spit on and dogged because he was a convicted "baby-raper"; was this a "strong" case?

After 11 years of this hell, through the efforts of an extraordinary defense attorney and his family, it was learned that the "murder weapon" presented to the jury, a 12 ga. shotgun, did not cause the baby's death, as she was not shot, but stabbed, repeatedly, with an ice-pick. (Mr. Connor was arrested largely on the basis of his known ownership of a 12 ga. shotgun.)

In all of these cases, McGill (now a defense lawyer for cops in the FOP who rob, steal, or kill) played the role of prosecutor, sending men to Death Row or life in prison, with a mustached smile, and a promise to most jurors of the defendants' right to "appeal after appeal after appeal."

For such a guy, what does a "strong" case look like?

8 June 1995

©1995 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Philadelphia black journalist, is on death row at Pennsylvania's Greene state prison. Framed up because of his political views, Jamal faces death for his defiance of the racist, capitalist order. His columns appear periodically in *Workers Vanguard* and other newspapers.

To get involved in the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the death penalty, contact the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.

away, but later recanted under police pressure. Dessie Hightower, a defense witness, actually testified at the trial that he saw a black man flee the scene after the shooting. Another witness, Debbie Kordansky, who was not available for testimony, also saw a man run away in the same direction.

Singletary was threatened with violence and arrest during his interview at police headquarters, as the cops threw away every statement he wrote until he finally relented by denying that he had seen the shooting. Following this, he was repeatedly harassed and threatened at his place of business, until he finally shut down and moved to another state. Singletary's story, which the police kept from Jamal and his attorney at the time, has been revealed for the first time in Jamal's new legal filings.

Finally, as to Assistant D.A. Gordon's claim that Jamal "reached for the gun" when the cops arrived on the scene, that story was invented by cop Shoemaker to justify his kicking Jamal, wounded and bleeding, in the face. The report filed that night by Shoemaker's own partner noted only that Jamal was pleading for help—saying, "I'm shot, I'm shot"—while the partner "went to the curb and recovered two revolvers...because I saw an intoxicated white male walk down from the corner...[and] was concerned about him going near the weapons."

The "Trial": A Travesty of Justice

1 A Hanging Judge

This, then, was the morass of contrived, coerced, partial and contradictory "evidence" which Assistant D.A. Gordon claims to be "overwhelming, one of the strongest" cases he has ever seen. To secure a conviction on this basis, the cops, prosecutors and courts saw to it

that Mumia was denied even a semblance of "due process," from his initial arraignment to jury selection to final sentencing. During the course of the trial, Jamal repeatedly protested the violation of his rights, exclaiming on one occasion:

"I have been told from the duration of this trial, the beginning of the trial, the inception of the trial, that I had a number of constitutional rights. Chiefly among them the right to represent myself. The right to select a jury of my peers. The right to face witnesses and examine them based on information they have given. Those rights were taken from me... I want my rights in this courtroom because my life is on the line."

Jamal got a "trial" in name only. He had no counsel to speak of. An indigent man jailed without bail, Jamal was granted only \$150 each for an investigator and medical and ballistics experts. No pathologist or ballistics expert would accept so low a retainer, and the investigator ran out of funds after tracking down only two of the over 100 people interviewed by the police. His court-appointed attorney, Anthony Jackson, protested he was too busy to handle the case and needed help. Four times, Jackson requested additional funds from the court; four times, the request was denied. Finally, Jamal asked to represent himself and prepared his own case for trial. Then, on the first day of the trial, the court completely stripped Jamal of his self-representation rights and forced Jackson to take over the defense. When Jamal protested, he was ejected from the court and missed large portions of the trial. That left the unprepared, unwilling and bungling Jackson—who failed even to subpoena witnesses or prepare them before putting them on the stand—to handle the defense alone.

Sabo is the most notorious hanging judge in the country, the "king of death row." He had served for 16 years as an undersheriff and is a retired member of the Fraternal Order of Police. Even former prosecutors have called Sabo a

"prosecutor in robes." When he learned he had been rated unqualified by one-third of attorneys surveyed, Sabo openly bragged about his pro-prosecution bias, saying if he were a defense attorney "I wouldn't vote for me, either."

The prosecutor, Joseph McGill, was no stranger to frame-up prosecutions. McGill put another defendant, Matthew Connor, away on a life sentence for allegedly shooting a young girl, largely on the basis that a shotgun was found in his home; only after eleven years did it come to light that the girl had been killed not with a shotgun but with an ice pick! McGill's jury arguments against Jamal were a textbook in prosecutorial dirty tricks. With Judge Sabo egging him to "go ahead," McGill told the jury not to worry about sentencing Jamal to death because he would have "appeal after appeal after appeal." Knowing this case had racially polarized the city, McGill pushed the overwhelmingly white jury to return a conviction because "the people of Philadelphia" demand "action."

2 A Kangaroo Court

In a "bedside arraignment" on 9 December 1981, Jamal was charged with murder in the first degree, i.e., premeditated murder. But even by the cops' own account, there could have been no premeditation in this shooting incident which, from the time Faulkner pulled over the VW until he lay wounded on the street, lasted less than two minutes. Presiding over the arraignment was... Municipal Judge Lynne Abraham, currently Philadelphia D.A.

Long before Mumia had his "day in court," he had been tried and convicted by the Philadelphia media. Faulkner's death was front-page news—and he was treated with all the sympathy and honor the capitalist press accords a dead cop—while Jamal was a prominent and controversial black personality. While an initial *Philadelphia Inquirer* (10 Decem-

ber 1981) headline read, "Jamal: An Eloquent Activist Not Afraid to Raise His Voice," the *Philly Daily News* (9 December 1981) was quick to point out that Jamal "wears his hair in dreadlocks and was associated with several black activists causes."

Radio talk shows were flooded with calls, some of them demanding that Jamal be lynched. Article after article hammered away at his connections with MOVE and the Black Panthers, repeatedly invoking the Panthers' use of the Maoist slogan, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

Two days after the shooting, the *Daily News* falsely reported that "Preliminary ballistics tests indicate the shots that killed Police Officer Faulkner were fired from the gun recovered from radio newsmen Mumia Abu-Jamal." Four weeks later, a front-page headline blared, "Jamal Confessed," attributing the claim not to Garry Bell but to a police inspector (who was subsequently convicted on payoff and tax evasion charges). This inspector was never called to testify at Jamal's trial. By the time of the trial, all but seven of the 80 or so members of the jury pool admitted to being familiar with media coverage of the case.

Judge Sabo and prosecutor McGill carefully screened the jury to ensure its "law and order" bias. On the third day of jury selection, Sabo denied Jamal—who was then still formally representing himself—the right to interview prospective jurors, claiming that the pace was too slow. McGill systematically excluded blacks from the jury, using eleven of his 15 peremptory challenges to remove all but three of 14 potential black jurors. One of the remaining three, a black woman who was the only juror personally selected by Jamal and who the judge had opposed from the beginning, was then removed by Sabo behind Jamal's back after she left briefly before the trial began to attend to a personal

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Frame-Up...

(continued from page 11)

emergency. (When a white juror had to leave for a day in the middle of testimony, Sabo not only provided him with a court escort but rescheduled the proceedings to suit him.) The black juror was then replaced by a white man who openly confessed to bias in the case when interviewed by Jamal's attorney.

New evidence also reveals that during jury deliberations a clique of white jurors formed a secret faction which met to discuss the case at night and then took over the deliberations by picking one of their own as foreman.

In being excluded from the judge's consultation over the black juror and another secret consultation, Jamal's rights were violated both as legal counsel and as defendant. When Jackson protested on one occasion, "I would not want to do that out of the presence of Mr. Jamal," Sabo snapped back: "I don't care about Mr. Jamal." Indeed, Jamal's rights were violated time and again during the trial. The court rejected repeated requests for a lineup to test White and Chobert's identification of Jamal. The court allowed the cops and prosecution to refuse to hand over the addresses of people they interviewed. The prosecution not only concealed evidence of Jamal's innocence, but also intimidated and coerced witnesses to conform to the cops' story. This was a clear and flagrant violation of the constitutional right to due process.

The Brady rule stipulates that the prosecution's failure to disclose evidence favorable to the defense invalidates a guilty verdict. The most egregious example of this in Jamal's case is how the cops threatened Singletary into changing his story and then forced him out of town. But it is not the only instance. The prosecution refused to reveal that one of the witnesses (Hightower) who saw a man run from the shooting scene had passed a lie detector test. They hid the fact that at least one other witness (Robert Harkins) was shown a photo array and apparently did not identify Jamal as the shooter. Harkins was never called to testify and recently admitted to Jamal's new investigator that a "detective 'downtown'" told him "not to talk with anyone from the defense." The prosecution also withheld numerous other pieces of information, including secret meetings with witnesses and evidence concerning the unreliability of the autopsy.

Another key legal guideline discarded in Jamal's case was the *Chambers* ruling which mandates that the jury must be allowed to hear testimony which would affect the credibility of prosecution witnesses. Sabo refused to allow Chobert to be cross-examined on his previous felony conviction. He struck the prostitute Veronica Jones' testimony of a police deal with Cynthia White. And when the defense asked for the detectives who interviewed Jones to testify, Sabo fumed, "we don't have to prove every witness

is a liar on the stand."

Most importantly, Sabo, McGill and the cops ganged up to make sure that Jamal's police guard Wakshul, who could have refuted the purported "confession," would not testify. When Jamal's lawyer called for Wakshul to appear, the following exchange ensued:

"Court: What is this officer that you want? What is he going to testify to?"
"Jackson: That he picked Jamal up at the scene."
"Court: So?"

"Jackson: During this time the negro male made no comment. He was with him the entire time."

"Prosecutor: He is not around I am going to object to bringing this guy in."

Then, as McGill supposedly went to check on Wakshul's whereabouts, Sabo insinuated, "he could be on vacation." Sure enough, despite a "no vacation" order on Wakshul's police report, McGill soon returned to report that "he is on vacation until July 8th." Sabo then adamantly denied Jamal's appeal for a continuance, sneering: "Your attorney and you goofed."

3 The Lynch Law Sentence

Following this monstrous frame-up, on 2 July 1982, the jury returned a verdict of first-degree murder. The next day, the Saturday of the July 4th weekend, Jamal was sentenced to death. Jamal's appointed attorney made no effort to prepare for the sentencing hearing and didn't call a single character witness to say why this talented and courageous writer, who had no prior criminal record and no history of violence, should not die. When Jamal rose to read a statement protesting the guilty verdict and the denial of his rights, Sabo used this as an excuse to let McGill openly introduce Jamal's political past and beliefs into the trial. McGill "cross-examined" Jamal about a 1970 newspaper interview in which he talked about his Panther activities. The trial transcript shows the following exchange:

"Q: You've often been quoted as saying this: 'Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.' Do you remember saying that, sir?"

"A: I remember writing that. That's a quotation from Mao-Tse-Tung...."

"Q: Do you recall saying: 'All power to the people'?"

"A: Yes."

"Q: Do you believe that your actions as well as your philosophy are consistent with the quote, 'Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.'"

"A: I believe that America has proven that quote to be true."

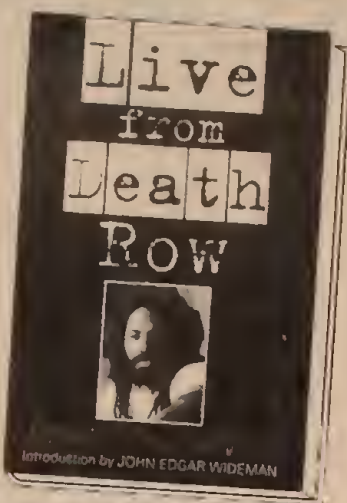
McGill then argued that Jamal should die because these decade-old quotes supposedly proved that he had intended to kill a cop "all the way back then." Based on constant surveillance by the Philly cops and the FBI and on Jamal's police files, which they didn't disclose, the prosecution knew that from "way back then" Jamal had never committed any criminal acts but had simply spoken out for his political beliefs.

In his argument to the jury during the sentencing phase, prosecutor McGill

also sought to convince them that they would bear no responsibility for the legal lynching, claiming that Jamal could submit "appeal after appeal after appeal," so that in reality the death sentence would be no death sentence at all. This, as well, was a flagrant violation of Jamal's rights.

4 "Appeal After Appeal After Appeal"?

When in 1989 Jamal appealed this flagrant use of his political associations in his sentencing, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court hacked up its man McGill, arguing that Jamal's membership in "an unpopular political organization" like the Black Panther Party demonstrated his "longstanding disdain



Jamal's recently published book has infuriated his persecutors.

for the system." The entire proceedings had an extraordinary character. Jamal's appeal was decided on by only four of the seven justices. Chief Justice Nix actively intervened in the oral arguments against the district attorney, making the point that the argument of repeated appeals had already been found unconstitutional in instances where the same D.A. (McGill) used the same language before the same judge (Sabo). Yet mysteriously, the chief justice did not participate in the vote.

Three years later, in a 1992 ruling on the *Dawson* case, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a death sentence because the prosecutor had cited the defendant's association with the fascist Aryan Brotherhood. Yet the U.S. Supreme Court twice turned down a review of Jamal's appeal on the same grounds, once in 1990 and again at the time the *Dawson* case was pending before the court. In this and a hundred other ways, it is clear that Jamal's trial was a political frame-up from start to finish, from hot to top.

Justice Demands Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal is an object lesson in the class nature of the capitalist state. The cops, the courts and the entire "criminal justice" system colluded and conspired to bring down this man whose only crime was that he was an eloquent and effective critic of the racist oppression they perpetrate and promote. As the legal papers recently filed by Jamal summarize in conclusion, "In this case, every basic trial element—the defense, the prosecution, the jury, and the court—was so riddled with prejudicial error as to deny Mr. Jamal any semblance of a fair proceeding." *Mumia Abu-Jamal did not have a fair trial, he could not have had a fair trial and he would not now be allowed to have a fair trial.*

Jamal is fighting for his life in a climate of all-sided racist reaction. Just look at the political rulers of this country. Democratic president Bill Clinton took time out from his 1992 presidential campaign, when he was governor of Arkansas, to rush back to Little Rock to personally oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black man. The U.S. Congress last year added—with near unanimity—some 60 more capital offenses to the federal lawbooks. Now, with equal bipartisan fervor, it intends to define virtually any crime involving a handgun as a "terrorist" act warranting the death penalty. And more than once in the past year alone, the courts have allowed the executions of death row prisoners who were demonstrably innocent. Meanwhile, more than one and a half million people, most of them black and Hispanic, already languish behind prison bars. As Jamal points out in his column, "An Easy Kill..." (see page 11 in this issue), only with the millions of dollars of an O.J. Simpson can a black man hope for even a semblance of justice in America's courts.

In Pennsylvania, Jamal's case is a defining political issue. The governor is a fervent advocate of the death penalty who was once a prosecutor himself. In response to a question about racial bias in Jamal's trial, where the jury was overwhelmingly white, Ridge ludicrously asserted that juries are "colorblind.... Color has nothing to do with their ultimate decision." In the 1987 *McCleskey* ruling, even the U.S. Supreme Court admitted that race has plenty to do with death sentences, but ruled that it didn't matter. Ultimately, this boils down to the "principle" enunciated by Chief Justice Taney in the 1857 *Dred Scott* slavery case, that blacks "had no rights which a white man was bound to respect." It took a Civil War to overturn that verdict and the slave system which it represented, and it will take workers revolution to overturn capitalism and its system of criminal injustice. Our fight against the racist death penalty is part and parcel of the struggle to finish the unfinished tasks of the Civil War through a third, socialist American revolution.

The application of the death penalty is racist everywhere in the United States, but it is perhaps even more egregiously so in Pennsylvania. Well over half the men on death row in Pennsylvania were sentenced in heavily minority Philadelphia, which has consigned more people to the death mills than any city except Houston in the Deep South. Although Philadelphia (40 percent black) and Allegheny County (Pittsburgh and its suburbs, which are 90 percent white) have roughly the same population, Philadelphia has sent 15 times as many people to death row, and 80 percent of those from Philadelphia are black. The Philadelphia D.A. seeks the death penalty in as much as 85 percent of capital cases. The Philadelphia juridical system is marked by an unconstitutional "Homicide Unit" of hanging judges—like Sabo—who only hear murder cases. This special panel is apparently self-selecting: these are the judges who really groove on death. Jamal's lawyers have moved to disqualify Sabo as a biased judge, but under Pennsylvania's rules Sabo comes out of semiretirement to rule on his own bias!

For many years, Philadelphia was Rizzotown, as the notoriously racist police commissioner and then mayor ran the city with an iron fist of terror and brutalized the black population. But it did not require a Rizzo to frame up Jamal, nor to firebomb the MOVE home in 1985, killing eleven black men, women and children and destroying an entire city block. That heinous police crime was overseen by black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, who at the same time refused to go to the scene because he said he feared

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La Migra's Privatized Prisons

Revolt in INS Hell

Warren Goldberg

On June 18, some 300 refugees who were being held by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at a horrific "prison for profit" in Elizabeth, New Jersey rose up in anger and desperation and drove out their racist tormentors. The furious prisoners virtually destroyed the jail before being overpowered six hours later by club-wielding riot cops. The devastation testified to the detainees' bitter resentment: metal tables bolted to the floor were ripped up and torn to pieces, cinderblock walls were smashed, and sinks, toilets and other fixtures were pulverized. On the wall near the guards' post was painted the single word, "Freedom."

These prisoners were locked up without having been accused of any crime—practically all were seeking political asylum in the U.S. Many had endured horrendous persecution in their countries of origin. Yet, as with most asylum seekers who arrive in this country without the proper documents in hand, no sooner had they landed at New York City's airports than the INS summarily hauled them off to jail. There, they were physically and sexually assaulted by guards, denied food and exercise, and bombarded with racial and ethnic slurs. Now the INS threatens to hit the "ringleaders" of this desperate revolt with criminal charges or deportation.

In a blatant attempt to discourage asylum seekers, the INS warehouses (in

this case literally) thousands of refugees in the most appalling conditions. The Elizabeth detention center, a converted warehouse in an industrial area, was run by Esmor Correctional Services, one of the largest of the score of companies managing private, for-profit prison operations across the country. For operating this and other jails, Esmor gets \$75 to \$100 a day from the INS for each detainee and then turns a profit by brutalizing the inmates and driving conditions down to an inhuman level (an incredibly low \$1.12 per day was spent for each person's meals).

In Elizabeth, prisoners were shackled to tables and chairs when meeting with visitors, lights were left on all night preventing sleep, and no one was allowed outside of the windowless building for exercise. Yet these conditions, which many endured for more than six months as they waited for hearings on their appeals for political asylum, are not substantially worse than those in the notorious centers run by *la migra* itself, such as El Centro in California's Imperial Valley, "El Corralón" (The Big Corral) in Bayview, Texas, and the Krome Avenue facility in Miami.

The revolt by refugees in Elizabeth takes place against the backdrop of a growing anti-immigrant frenzy whipped up by both capitalist parties. This was symbolized by the passage last fall of Proposition 187 in California, which would deprive illegal immi-

Desperate asylum seekers who rebelled against inhuman treatment in Elizabeth, New Jersey immigration jail are rounded up by cops.



grants of public benefits, and the approval by the Republican-dominated House of Representatives of a welfare bill that would virtually deprive legal immigrants of access to federal assistance programs. Meanwhile, Democrat Clinton is rapidly expanding the Border Patrol and has called for cutting immigration by one-third and barring all unskilled workers.

It has also been revealed that the Clinton administration is developing "contingency plans"—inspired by its racist policy of sending Haitian refugees to U.S. military bases in Panama and Guantánamo, Cuba—to create military-run concentration camps for immigrants fleeing an economic crisis or "political upheaval" in Mexico or Central America. At the same time, the federal government ended the protected

status which allowed people fleeing death squad terror in Guatemala and Salvador to remain in the U.S., exposing some 200,000 refugees to possible forced return and savage repression.

Recently, Clinton kicked off his '96 presidential campaign by engaging in some electoral Japan-bashing at the General Motors plant in Edison, New Jersey. In the present period of heightened inter-imperialist rivalries and burgeoning trade wars, anti-immigrant racism is fostered by the bourgeois politicians to undercut the integrated working-class struggle that's urgently needed to bring down this bankrupt capitalist system. No reprisals against the Elizabeth INS prisoners! Asylum for victims of right-wing terror! Full citizenship rights for everyone who's made it to this country!

for his life at the hands of the cops.

In Philly, many of the same people who hounded Jamal from the time he was a teenage political activist until they railroaded him onto death row are still around today in positions of power. The Philadelphia D.A. in 1981 was Ed Rendell, who two days after Jamal's arrest was already proclaiming Jamal guilty of murder; today Rendell is mayor. The Assistant D.A. who prosecuted Jamal, Joseph McGill, is today openly working as an attorney for the FOP, defending its members against charges of bribery, theft and corruption. And the arraignment judge in Mumia's case, Lynne Abraham, is now the "liberal" D.A. whose office has weighed in to try to intimidate opposition to Jamal's legal lynching.

Assistant D.A. Gordon's letter laid out the prosecution's tissue of lies in Jamal's case, and also issued some very real threats. He concluded with a denunciation that the "ill-advised Addison-Wesley decision to publish Mr. Abu-Jamal's book and reward him with a profit for his deed, looks to be the only true miscarriage of justice here," and ominously warned that those who support Jamal are guilty of an "insult to police officers, families of murder victims and the thousands of law-abiding citizens who are no doubt repulsed by your misguided and misinformed support for this very cunning but despicable murderer."

Nor did the FBI and its agents and surrogates in Pennsylvania cease their scrutiny and surveillance of Jamal with the demise of the Black Panther Party and the supposed dissolution of CO-INTELPRO's Murder, Inc. As revealed by Jamal's recently released FBI files, they continued to keep tabs on him and his supporters at least as recently as 1991. Now it has been determined, on the basis of pretrial discovery in a civil rights lawsuit by Jamal against the prison author-

ities, that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has been intercepting, copying and evidently circulating *privileged correspondence* between Jamal and his attorneys. This includes several letters this year and at least two letters from 1994 which contained sensitive information about the legal strategy and investigation being pursued in Jamal's quest for a new trial and the overturn of his death sentence. And since the warrant was signed, all of Jamal's correspondence with his attorneys is being opened. This blatant violation of Jamal's constitutional rights is a concerted conspiracy to spy on and spike his legal defense efforts.

This sinister web of spying, intimidation and frame-up is not an aberration which can be cleaned from the system, as liberals would have it. Rather it goes to the very core of the capitalist state which, with its cops and courts, its prosecutors and executioners, is an instrument for the repression of the working class and the oppressed. This is part of the Marxist understanding of the capitalist state, and as Marxists we understand that it will take nothing less than a workers revolution to sweep away this machinery of state terror whose purpose is to keep profits and interest payments flowing into the coffers of Wall Street. As part of a multiracial revolutionary workers party which champions the cause of all the oppressed, black workers will play a key role in sweeping away this system of exploitation, war and racism. Only in a socialist America, as part of an international socialist society, will working people and minorities find not only civil but social justice, a society in which youth will be faced not with a nightmare of ghetto and prison hell-holes but education and meaningful employment.

Jamal's case is what capitalist state repression is all about: he was brutally beaten by the Philadelphia police as a

14-year-old anti-racist protester, spied on by the local "red squad" and the FBI, placed on "subversives" lists and subjected to several attempted frame-ups as a teenage youth. He was then shot by the cops in the dead of night, and when they failed to execute him on the streets, they have tried ever since to kill him through the courts. His trial was a travesty of justice from the start, presided over by a notorious hanging judge, with evidence suppressed, witnesses intimidated and black jurors excluded. The death sentence was blatantly based on his political beliefs, and his appeals have been dismissed out of hand. But despite the overwhelming forces arrayed against him, he has continued to fight, to be the "voice of the voiceless."

Mumia Abu-Jamal has been a special target of the racist rulers, because he dared *and dares* to speak out with force and passion against their injustices. But the system which has tormented him also oppresses black and Hispanic minorities as a whole, as its apparatus of legal repression defends the property and interests of the tiny handful of fabulously wealthy capitalists against the working people who produce their wealth. Jamal's case serves as a reminder of the fundamental realities of capitalism, for the nightmare he has endured continues today. The recent FBI/cop street execution in Philadelphia of an unarmed 23-year-old black man, Glenn Thomas, is but one of the countless state-sanctioned murders which are a daily occurrence in the ghettos and barrios.

In Clinton/Gingrich's America, what possibility is there for a valiant fighter against oppression like Mumia Abu-Jamal to find justice in the criminal court system? The legal proceedings against him have been hopelessly tainted. When the police have ruthlessly suppressed, destroyed, and mutilated the evidence beyond recognition, when the D.A.'s office with its smear campaign has

shown it will tell any lie to see Jamal dead, when the judges are hangmen in robes—what possible chance does Jamal ever have to get a "fair trial" from this lynch mob? Simple justice demands that Jamal be freed immediately. He must be free to write, free to publish, here on the outside where he belongs and where he can continue to struggle against racist capitalist oppression.

From IWW revolutionary labor organizer Frank Little to San Francisco unionists Tom Mooney and Warren Billings to anarchist workers Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in the early years of the century, to the heroic Rosenbergs in the McCarthyite 1950s, to the 38 Black Panthers who were gunned down in the '60s—and the many more who were jailed, some of them still behind bars today, like Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)—Mumia Abu-Jamal is one in a long line of fighters for social justice who have been grievously victimized by the capitalist rulers. Jamal should not have spent a day in jail in the first place, and he should not be in prison now. He should be allowed to join his family and to join all those who seek and struggle for a society in which there will be no racist frame-ups and legal lynchings. While Jamal's lawyers pull every possible legal lever to win his freedom, what's urgently needed is to mobilize millions of workers and the oppressed worldwide to demand: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

NOTICE
Workers Vanguard skips
alternate issues in June,
July and August.
Our next issue will
be dated July 28.

Balkans...

(continued from page 16)

relatively impoverished Balkans. As it was, Tito's "market socialism," which opened Yugoslavia to increasing imperialist economic penetration, reinforced disparities among the various regions, fueling resurgent nationalism.

Especially after Tito's death in 1980, the Yugoslav Stalinist bureaucracy increasingly fractured along national lines. In the late 1980s the strident nationalist Slobodan Milosevic, who took over the leadership of the Serbian League of Communists, trampled on Tito's carefully balanced national arrangements, beginning with a violent attack on the Albanians of Kosovo. Milosevic's drive for a "Greater Serbia," in turn, reinforced anti-Communist nationalism in Croatia and Slovenia, the wealthier, traditionally Roman Catholic northernmost republics of Yugoslavia which were formerly part of the Germanic sphere of influence. Recent documents have revealed that for decades the West German secret service worked closely with the Croatian Ustasha and other right-wing nationalists to bring about the breakup of Titoist Yugoslavia.

As capitalist counterrevolution swept across East Europe, the terminal crisis of Titoist Yugoslavia came in early 1991 when newly elected right-wing nationalist governments in Croatia and Slovenia declared secession from the federated state. The United States, Britain and France made a halfhearted diplomatic effort to preserve a Yugoslav state while restructuring its economy along capitalist lines. But at this point the newly reunified German Fourth Reich entered the scene in a decisive way and steam-rolled its European allies into recognizing the independence of Slovenia, Croatia and, somewhat later, Bosnia.

We wrote at the time: "The masters of the Frankfurt banks and Ruhr factories believe that with reunification last year they have reversed the Third Reich's defeat in World War II. In Yugoslavia they are seeking to reverse Germany's defeat in World War I" (W1 No. 531, 19 July 1991). Before World War I, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia were part of the decaying Austro-Hungarian empire, the junior partner of Germany's Wilhelmine Second Reich (empire) led by Bismarck and his successors. The present drive of the Fourth Reich of German imperialism to restore its sphere of influence in the northern Balkans is not simply motivated by historical sentiment or a desire for revenge. This region contains a wealth of minerals of strategic importance to German industry.

The Serbs were not only the largest nationality in pre-1991 Yugoslavia but also the most geographically dispersed. A quarter of the Serb population lived outside of its own national republic, mainly in Croatia and Bosnia. With the breakup of Yugoslavia, these large Serbian communities confronted hostile nationalist regimes in Zagreb and Sarajevo. Fear of becoming an oppressed minority, combined with chauvinist sentiment for a Greater Serbia, ignited a new

series of Balkan wars.

These began in the frontier regions of Croatia as local Serbian militias backed by the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army fought forces loyal to the fascist regime of Franjo Tudjman in Zagreb. By the end of 1991, the Serbs controlled 30 percent of Croatia with Tudjman & Co. vowing to retake this territory when they were strong enough to do so. Next came the three-sided communalist bloodletting in Bosnia between Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims. The Serbs—making up about a third of Bosnia's population—were a largely peasant population which owned over 60 percent of the land in the republic, while the Bosnian Muslims were a predominantly urbanized

rewrote its "Order No. 1" for an "out-of-area" deployment of German military forces to include "possible support for a multinational coalition" in Bosnia. Since then preparations have been "going ahead full-throttle for departure in the direction of the Balkans," wrote *Der Spiegel* (19 June). And now the decision to deploy has been made. At the same time, German chancellor Kohl declared, "Germany must in no case allow itself to get drawn into the war."

German imperialism is presently inhibited by the burden of its history from undertaking resolute military action by itself. The atrocities committed by the Wehrmacht and Hitler's Croatian and Bosnian Muslim fascist puppets during



Black Star

German chancellor Helmut Kohl (right) with Clinton in February. Cold War imperialist alliance unraveling in New World Disorder as imperialists scramble over Balkans.

people. Thus when the war began the well-armed Serb forces were able to take over most of the countryside and lay siege to Sarajevo and the other cities where the Muslims were concentrated.

Since the end of 1992, the situation in ex-Yugoslavia has been one of strategic stalemate. The Croat and Bosnian Muslim forces, while building up their manpower and military hardware, have not been strong enough to roll back the Serbs. And the Western imperialist powers, each for different and conflicting reasons, have been unwilling to launch a major war against the Serbs on behalf of their Croatian and/or Bosnian Muslim clients.

Post-Soviet NATO, Post-Soviet Russia and the Balkan Quagmire

"Step by step, mission by mission, token force by token force, the German military is inching its way back toward the battlefield, 50 years after it lost Hitler's war and bid a humiliating farewell to arms," wrote the *Los Angeles Times* (20 June). "Now, with NATO defense ministries putting together a rapid-reaction force for Bosnia-Herzegovina, the postwar German army is on the verge of its most politically charged extra-territorial undertaking yet: 2,000 soldiers, 12 C-160 transport aircraft and about a dozen Tornado attack planes are being readied for possible action in the Balkan war." Following the NATO meeting in Paris, Bonn's defense ministry

World War II are seared into the national consciousness of the Serbian people. The liberal social-democratic *Die Zeit* (16 June) writes: "All reasons of historical experience and present rationality force the Germans to a 'policy of restraint.' Thus, we will never expose ourselves militarily on our own, but only based on an unambiguously documented request from the [NATO] Alliance or the UN in conjunction with others." However, the introduction of the soldiers of the Fourth Reich into the Balkans, even in the guise of UN "peacekeepers," would encounter determined and fanatical resistance by the Serbs. Hence Bonn's strategy is to maneuver and pressure the British and French to fight the Serbs to make the Balkans safe for the Deutsche Bank.

Britain and France were the main high-power allies of Serbia against Germany in both World Wars I and II. Partly for that reason, London and Paris saw the breakup of Yugoslavia as an opportunity to reassert their status as regional powers mediating between the contending Balkan nationalisms, acting somewhat independently of the Germans, guiding the Americans and finessing the Russians. The British and French therefore introduced small military contingents into the region to give credibility to their diplomatic maneuvers. But this is a tricky and dangerous game, which can easily get out of hand. The *London Independent* (30 May) recently quoted with approval Bismarck's comments about getting involved with the Balkan conflicts of his day: "One must give these sheep stealers plainly to understand that the European governments have no need to harness themselves to their lusts and rivalries."

In order to avoid becoming harnessed to the lusts and rivalries of the warring Balkan nationalists, especially the Serbs, the British and French want to employ American military power. Whether, and for what purpose, that power should be deployed is currently being hotly debated in Washington and Wall Street. With the end of the Cold War, U.S. ruling circles now see Japan Inc. as Enemy No. 1. Clinton's rapidly escalating trade war against Japan, especially imposing 100 percent tariffs on luxury-model Toyotas and Nissans, has ruffled the West European bourgeoisie, who fear Washington may do the same to them (see "Clinton Heats Up Trade War," W1 No. 624, 2 June). If Washington now acts in

the Balkans with the same unilateral disdain for its imperialist "allies," this would further antagonize the West Europeans, possibly leading to the disintegration of NATO. And the U.S. ruling class does not want that to happen, at least not now.

If the trade war with Japan impinges on Washington's actions and inactions in the Balkans, U.S. relations with post-Soviet Russia are a far more direct and important factor. When in December 1991, following his ascendancy the previous August, Boris Yeltsin kicked Gorbachev out of the Kremlin and declared the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union, the American ruling class celebrated the "death of communism" and looked forward to Russia becoming a junior partner in a Washington-dominated "New World Order." But things haven't worked out that way. As Russia descends into social chaos, rampant criminality and bloody national conflicts (e.g., the Chechen war), its new rulers have expressed their own imperial ambitions harking back to the tsarist empire. Increasingly, bourgeois opinion in the U.S. views post-Soviet Russia as a dangerous place and a loose cannon on the world political scene.

Tsarist Russia was the historic great-power protector of its Serbian "little brothers," and the Yeltsin regime has intervened in the present Balkan conflict in order to reassert Russia's role as a great European power. Moscow has simultaneously acted as a lawyer for the Serbs in the international diplomatic arena and as a soft cop toward the Serbs on behalf of the Western, particularly German, imperialists. Thus the Russians helped convince Milosevic to accept the German-sponsored Croatia-Bosnia federation last year. If the U.S. takes a tougher line toward the Serbs, especially backed up by large-scale military action, this would strengthen the forces of anti-Western nationalism in Russia. The *London Independent* (29 May) lays out a worst-case scenario in this regard:

"The risk is that Russia and America will become ranged on opposing sides in a war in south-eastern Europe. Last week, it was mainly American warplanes that bombed the Serbs. The Russian president, using Serbian hostage-taking as his cue, has effectively vetoed another raid....

"The most urgent question of all for Europe is how to prevent a new east-west schism on the continent."

The U.S. ruling class—increasingly distrustful of post-Soviet Russia, increasingly hostile to Japan—is inclined to placate the West Europeans over the Balkans. This line was expressed in a candid and cynical way by *New York Times* foreign affairs specialist Thomas Friedman, in a column entitled "Allies" (7 June):

"I don't give two cents about Bosnia. Not two cents. The people there have brought on their own troubles. But I do feel loyalty to the allies who have put their own troops in harm's way... The Bosnians will come and go, but good friends whom we can count on for solving problems that really do involve our national interest are hard to find."

But for all the pious declarations of America's responsibility to its longtime West European allies, the logic of the Balkan war is intensifying the divisions among the NATO powers as events of the past few months so clearly demonstrate.

Thus another reason Washington's geostrategists are weighing intervention in Bosnia is that in the U.S. "absence the alternative means of bringing an imperialist 'peace' to the Balkans would be a German-Russian condominium in the former Yugoslavia, with each keeping their respective clients in-line. This is not for now, and certainly not with Washington's man Yeltsin in the Kremlin, but even the distant possibility of such a realignment would give the Pentagon nightmares, providing the masters of now-Greater Germany access to tremendous material resources (oil, minerals, grain), nuclear weapons and delivery systems. If the present national-ethnic civil war is undermining the pretense of



J.L. Charnel

The Balkans, historic tinderbox of Europe: assassination of Austrian archduke by Serb nationalists in Sarajevo in 1914 ignited first imperialist world war.

For Mass Pickets that No One Crosses!

NYC Hotel Workers Gird for Strike/Lockout

NEW YORK, June 27—Over 18,000 New York City hotel workers are facing the fight of their lives. At a rally today, thousands of hotel housekeepers, porters, food service and maintenance workers gave their approval for a strike against the Hotel Association of New York City, representing some 75 of the world's swankiest hotels. As we go to press, picket lines are due to go up at midnight on June 30 around hotels like the Waldorf-Astoria, the Grand Hyatt, the Helmsley—whose names and owners have become synonymous with opulence, privilege and greed. It's a showdown with the big hotel bosses—like the Hilton and Loews corporations—and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani on one side, against all of New York City labor, minorities and the poor.

The hotel bosses are clearly out to destroy the nine allied unions of the Hotel Trades Council and eliminate decades of hard-won gains in wages and work rules in one fell swoop. In addition to recruiting thousands of scabs through temporary employment agencies, they have stockpiled months of supplies and formed a "mutual defense pact" to simultaneously lock out all union workers when the contract expires and picket lines go up. And since massive scabberding is impossible without plenty of racist strikebreakers in blue, hotel management has already held high-level talks with the NYPD. Unfortunately, the Hotel Trades Council, led by Hotel Workers Local 6 president Vito Pitta, has signed "me too" agreements not to strike over 30 of the city's major hotels. This move will inevitably undercut the impact of the strike by making hotel rooms avail-



June 23: Hundreds of New York hotel workers rallied at the Waldorf-Astoria against hotel bosses' union-busting offensive.

able to businessmen and tourists.

The hotel bosses are facing a strike smack in the middle of tourist season, while they are experiencing record occupancy rates and profits. When labor-hating Mayor Giuliani pushed through a 6 percent reduction in hotel taxes, ostensibly to help the tourist industry, the greedy owners raised rates by 6.5 percent. Now they're out to bust the unions. In management's list of 55 giveback demands, one involves dropping the "concessionaire clause," which would enable the bosses to subcontract any and all hotel operations such as the restaurants and bars to "independent" scab outfits who pay minimum wage. Another is

to dump the "successor clause," which demands that new owners of unionized hotels honor the existing contract. Management is also asking for massive work rule changes and the right to fire restaurant staff based on a single complaint by a guest. One wonders if Leona Helmsley didn't spend all her time in jail dreaming these things up!

A strike can only be won on the picket line. The key will be bringing out all the hotel workers in New York and stopping the scabs with mass pickets. Turn the struck hotels into "Hotel Hell" through militant solidarity from Teamsters, sanitation workers, taxi drivers, maintenance workers and all NYC labor! The

budget assault on public employees, spearheaded by Rudy Giuliani and passed by liberal Democrats on the City Council, has hundreds of thousands of city workers itching for a chance to fight back.

The hotel unions—with women comprising over half the workforce and Hispanics, blacks, and Asians in the majority—represent a broad cross-section of the people who make this metropolis run. Living in neighborhoods ravaged by budget cuts and racist cop terror, they also live alongside workers in the city's most powerful unions, like transit workers who face the threat of layoffs and privatization. A solid hotel workers strike can become a flashpoint of struggle for all NYC labor.

Hotel Workers Local 6 has scored some victories in the last several years—notably at Tavern on the Green in 1989 and the Rainbow Room in 1992—thanks to the militancy of its largely immigrant workforce. The 1985 hotel strike electrified the city. Thousands-strong marches repeatedly snaked from hotel to hotel, snarling traffic in midtown Manhattan. That militancy, however, was squandered by NYC union tops who let 12,000 scabs saunter across picket lines and obeyed then-mayor Ed Koch's order that sanitation workers pick up the rotting hotel trash during the strike.

The hotel bosses have a "mutual defense pact." To spike the racist, anti-union offensive of the hotel owners, Giuliani and the Democrats, the labor movement had better forge a solid front for militant labor action. Smash scabbing with mass pickets that no one dares cross! Victory to the hotel workers! ■

a New World Order, a serious split in NATO would quickly put an end to such imperialist illusions.

U.S./UN/NATO Out of the Balkans!

In late April, the Croatian army launched an offensive taking over western Slavonia, a Serbian-populated region which Serb forces had controlled since the first round of the Balkan war ended in late 1991. More than 5,000 Serbian refugees fled the advancing Croatian army as hundreds were killed. The Serbs predictably retaliated by shelling the Croatian capital of Zagreb and renewing artillery attacks on Sarajevo.

The Americans, overriding the objections of the British and French, decided to "punish" the Serbs with air strikes against their arms depots in Bosnia. UN spokesman Fred Eckhardt blustered: "The idea was to send a strong political message that the escalating violence in Sarajevo had to stop." The Bosnian Serbs sent back a stronger message by taking British and French soldiers hostage and chaining some of them to the arms caches and other potential targets of American air power. The hostages were released in exchange for a promise of no further NATO air raids. The upshot was that the U.S. "get tough" policy toward the Serbs ended in humiliating its West European allies.

From the West European standpoint, insult was then added to injury by the Captain Scott O'Grady affair, the U.S. fighter pilot shot down by Bosnian Serbs who was rescued after hiding in the woods for six days. O'Grady was flown to Washington where he was greeted by Clinton and the media like a conquering hero. Clearly the American people are unwilling to risk the life of even a single U.S. soldier in the Balkan conflict.

Pointing to the "extraordinary overreaction" to O'Grady's rescue, British journalist Martin Woollacott castigated American foreign policy as "selfish, short-term, television-driven and subject to change at short notice" (London Guardian, June 10).

These short-notice changes reflect in good part differences within U.S. ruling circles between, to use conventional terms, hawks and doves. But in this case, the hawks want to defeat the Serbs without fighting them. Instead, they propose to build up the war-fighting capacity of the Bosnian Muslim forces. A prominent spokesman for this line is Republican Senate leader and presidential aspirant Robert Dole, who calls for lifting the UN-mandated arms embargo so that the Bosnian Muslims can supposedly fight the Serbs on equal terms.

The debate over the arms embargo has become a diplomatic charade since in any case it is not being enforced. Over the past few years advanced weaponry has been pouring in to the Sarajevo regime, mainly from Islamic countries, with U.S. approval. A senior State Department official conceded, "We're not really against someone helping the Muslims" (Washington Post, 14 April). The main "someone" arming the Bosnian Muslim forces is Iran, a state branded by American imperialism as the center of anti-Western Islamic fundamentalism and "international terrorism." But, as the saying goes, politics makes strange bedfellows.

The main obstacle preventing the Bosnian Muslims from getting the weapons they want is, in fact, their sometime ally, sometime enemy, the Croats. Bosnia is landlocked, so tanks and other heavy artillery have to pass through the Adriatic ports in Croatia...and sometimes they don't pass through. Because of their

lack of heavy weaponry, the current Muslim offensive to break the siege of Sarajevo is unlikely to result in a decisive victory over the Serbs but only an intensification of the war with massacres and counter-massacres by both sides.

If the imperialist "hawks" now vow to fight to the last Bosnian Muslim soldier, the "doves" place their hopes in, of all people, Slobodan Milosevic. Here is a man vilified for years by Western politicians and the media as the preeminent "war criminal" in the Balkans, the architect of "ethnic cleansing." Now he is presented as the indispensable figure to bring peace to the region. Washington is making a big diplomatic effort to induce Milosevic to recognize Bosnia on the basis of the boundaries it had as a Yugoslav republic in return for dropping the international economic sanctions against Serbia.

There is no doubt that Milosevic is willing to sell out his embattled Serbian brethren in Croatia and Bosnia in order to convince the Western imperialists that he is a man with whom they can do business. But whether the Belgrade strongman can control Serbian forces in Croatia and Bosnia, let alone the ultranationalists in Serbia itself, is another question entirely. The crazed nationalist fanatic Vojislav Seselj—once a Milosevic henchman and ally, now an opponent—argues that "Whatever the superpowers gain with Milosevic will stay only on paper. His negotiating power with other Serbs is minor now." A deal between the NATO powers and Milosevic is no more likely to end the seemingly interminable war in the Balkans than the current Bosnian Muslim offensive.

Milosevic has for some time been carrying out a balancing act, trying to placate the NATO imperialists while

singing a different tune in Belgrade. Not only will it be difficult for him to shove a diktat down the throats of those fighting in Bosnia, but Serbian society is not one seamless mass. While Milosevic, now head of the Serbian Socialist Party, has aggressively played the nationalist card, his wife, Mirjana Markovic, is the leading ideologist of the "Communist Alliance-Movement for Yugoslavia," which has been closely linked to the army and claims to oppose nationalism. "For the last three years," she has written, "our newspapers have been making heroes out of war profiteers, killers driven by religious hatred and other criminals who make their sick atrocities out to be acts of patriotism and bravery" (quoted in *Le Monde*, 24 May). More fundamentally, the working class, which has suffered greatly under the imperialist embargo and which in the pre-1991 Yugoslavia on several occasions exploded in ethnically integrated class struggle, can only be harmed by this intercommunal slaughter.

Marxist and proletarian internationalists oppose all sides in the squalid nationalist bloodbath that has ripped apart the former Yugoslavia, establishing capitalist rule over the corpses of workers and peasants of all nationalities. We oppose all forms of imperialist intervention in the Balkans, from economic boycotts to "peacekeeping" troops to NATO air strikes. A democratic and equitable resolution of the conflicting nationalist claims in the Balkans can only be achieved under the rule of the proletariat, the only class without an interest in pursuing nationalist goals. This bloody conflict underscores the need for Trotskyist parties, built in the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, to lead the fight for a socialist federation of the Balkans in a socialist united states of Europe. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

U.S./UN/NATO Out!

Imperialist Rivalry and the Balkan Slaughter

Last month, American warplanes bombed Bosnian Serb forces, which responded by taking British, French and other UN "peacekeepers" hostage. Clinton then announced that U.S. ground troops would participate in "a reconfiguration and a strengthening" of the UN forces. More than 23,000 U.S. military personnel were dispatched or readied for deployment to the Balkan region. On June 3 at a NATO meeting in Paris, Pentagon chief Perry pledged U.S. air support for a European "rapid reaction" force. Yet that same day, following the downing of a U.S. flier by Serb anti-aircraft rockets, and facing an uproar by the Republican-dominated Congress and a hostile public reaction, the American president backtracked, saying it was "extremely unlikely" U.S. soldiers would be involved, and then only to evacuate the UN forces.

This kind of zigzag and double-talk is by no means unique to the hapless and inept Clinton gang. Far from it. Sounding macho, France's newly elected rightist president, Jacques Chirac, declared that French troops would no longer be "humiliated" by the Serbs but would now fight back. The new 12,500-strong quick-reaction force has been set up for just that purpose. The French aircraft carrier *Foch* was dispatched to the Adriatic to join the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*. At the same time, French officials were negotiating a private deal with Bosnian Serbs to release UN "peacekeepers" being held hostage against further NATO air strikes, and they are now talking of pulling out their troops—the largest contingent of the UN/NATO forces in Bosnia—by the end of the year.

The latest development is the decision on June 26 by the German government to send armed forces to the Balkans. Tornad fighter jets equipped with sophis-



Serb forces bombed by U.S./NATO warplanes in Bosnia last month.

ticated radar-jamming equipment will join NATO flights and provide air cover for the UN rapid-reaction force. This marks a major step for post-reunification Germany, which has grown increasingly assertive since annexing East Germany in 1989-90. Bonn has already sent two warships to the area, and German officers are on board AWACS planes directing NATO air strikes, but this move marks the first combat mission for German military forces since World War II. The decision is expected to be approved by the Bundestag (parliament), and has split the opposition Social Democrats. Still, German war minister Volker Rühe emphasized that Bundeswehr ground troops will not be sent to the former Yugoslavia, where memories of the Nazi invasion are strong.

All of the parties involved in the Balkan bloodbath—the various Western imperialists, the Russians, the local nationalists—engage in constant maneuvers, backstabbing and reversals of policy. There have been countless and contradictory UN and NATO resolutions and "peace" plans, numerous cease-fires followed by new offensives and counter-offensives. Western governments routinely denounce the Serbian leaders as "war criminals" and then turn around and negotiate new "peacekeeping" arrangements with them. The disarray and divisions among the Western imperialists are mirrored by those of the embattled Bal-

kan nationalists. The Croats and Bosnian Muslims, supposedly allies against the Serbs in a German-sponsored federation, periodically turn on and fight one another. The Serbian nationalist camp, too, is divided into bitterly hostile factions quite capable of massacring each other.

Fundamentally, the Balkan bloodbath is the product of capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the destruction of the Soviet Union under the pressure of world imperialism. Throughout East Europe, that counterrevolution was fueled by, and in turn reinforced, resurgent nationalism. At the same time, with the disappearance of the Soviet Union the system of Cold War alliances is falling apart in the face of increasing *imperialist rivalry*, centrally between the United States, Germany and Japan. In announcing Bonn's decision to send air force, army and navy forces to the region, German "defense" minister Rühe "said that contributing to the Balkans mission will give Germany more clout in Europe," the AP (26 June) reported. "The Americans are clearly on the margins of the policy, with Britain and France leading the way," he said.

The wars precipitated by the breakup of Yugoslavia have exposed and intensified the tensions within NATO, which has lost its central reason for existence. Indeed, one right-wing ideologue in the U.S., Jonathan Clarke of the Cato Insti-

tute in Washington, argues for scrapping NATO altogether along with a total withdrawal from Bosnia: "During the Cold War, NATO served a vital purpose. But, by keeping the alliance alive beyond its useful life, American policymakers risk seeing the United States sucked into obscure wars where the American interest is slight and where the American role—as in Bosnia—makes a bad situation worse" (*Los Angeles Times*, 30 May).

U.S. policy in the Balkans, or rather the lack of any coherent policy, is not determined by what is happening on the ground in Bosnia and Croatia but rather by Washington's shifting relations with London, Paris, Bonn, Moscow and, indirectly, Tokyo. For all their hesitancy, NATO's insertion of oedipal strike forces points toward a change in the character of the war, "subordinating the Croat and Bosnian Muslim armies to an imperialist war against the Serbs," as we noted in our last issue. In that eventuality, it is the elementary duty of revolutionary Marxists and class-conscious workers to defend the Serbs against an imperialist onslaught.

German Fourth Reich Pushed Bloody Breakup of Yugoslavia

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was born out of World War II when Tito's Communist Partisans successfully battled the occupying Nazi German Wehrmacht as well as the Croatian fascist Ustasha and Serbian royalist Chetniks. Emerging from the war with immense popular and moral authority, Tito and his comrades socialized the economy—albeit in a bureaucratically controlled and deformed manner—in the name of the "brotherhood and unity" of the working people of Yugoslavia. Even a former U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia, Walter Zimmermann, contrasts the relative national unity under the Titoist system to the fratricidal nationalism of today:

"For all their sins, the Yugoslav Communist leaders rarely incited their captive audience to hate other Yugoslavs for their ethnic origins.... Indeed the main cliché of Tito's Yugoslavia was 'brotherhood and unity.' The nationalists are different. From Belgrade and Zagreb they constantly exhort citizens to hate members of different ethnic groups."

—New York Review of Books,
2 February

The murderous nationalism which was characteristic of interwar capitalist Yugoslavia has fed off and driven capitalist counterrevolution. This development was prepared by the bureaucratic deformations and inherent limitations of Yugoslav Stalнизм with its program of building "socialism in one country." Only extension of proletarian revolution to the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe could provide the economic basis for genuine national equality in the

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UN "peacekeepers" in Bosnia serve as cover for imperialists' maneuvers.