

The BT and the Wall Street Journal on the Jamal Campaign

New York
10 August 1995

To the Editor of *Workers Vanguard*:

Monday's stay of execution was vital to the battle for the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Its achievement is a crucial tactical victory, which can open the way to the more profound victory we need—getting him off death row and freeing him.

This tactical victory was a result of mobilization by thousands of leftists, trade unionists and blacks throughout the world. The more profound victory will be possible only through the mobilization of even broader layers, and in larger activities. With the consistent application of united-front methods, Mumia Abu-Jamal will be freed.

The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee have done an admirable job in publicizing Mumia's case and mobilizing in his defense. But your recent article, "Anti-Communist Smear Targets Jamal Campaign" (*Workers Vanguard*, 28

July) can only undermine the effort required to save Mumia from the executioner's needle. Supposedly a response to attempts to sabotage the fight for Mumia's freedom, it in fact resorts to Stalinist-style cop baiting to further the narrow organizational interests of the Spartacist League.

In the article you claim that the polemics of the Bolshevik Tendency exposing your cult-like internal regime are really aimed at sabotaging the fight for Mumia and bringing down state repression on your heads. You write that "defamatory ravings about the SL as a 'cult' feed into the *Wall Street Journal's* vintage redhating, which is aimed at spiking the necessary mass protest that is essential in fighting for Jamal's freedom" (emphasis in original). You write further that the BT "has always sought to be the

instrument of bigger forces with its provocative slurs and slanders against the Spartacist League," insinuating that we (along with other left groups mentioned in your article) are in league with sinister forces (like the FBI, maybe?) to "get" the SL.

You find particularly sinister the *WSJ* article's mention of the fact that we "deride [our] old party as 'Jimstown,' a takeoff on Jonestown." What the *WSJ* reporter didn't know, however, is that the term "Jimstown" (from our article, "The Road to Jimstown," published ten years ago) was only indirectly derived from Jonestown. Its immediate antecedent was your characterization of Jack Barnes' Socialist Workers Party as "Barnestown." You also fail to mention that for years you have publicly labeled the Healyites, the Revolutionary Workers League, the Freedom Socialist Party and other left groups "cults." When, during the Gulf War, you pointed to the years-long role of David North's Workers League as paid publicists for Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, and as apologists for the murder of members of the Iraqi Communist Party, the Workers League responded to these charges in exactly the same way that you respond to ours: they claimed you were attempting to set them up for government repression. Was the SL seeking to become "the instrument of bigger forces" against these other groups? Your accusations against them are no less a matter of public record than our claims about the SL, and are no less accessible to the *Wall Street Journal* or any other bourgeois newspaper. Or what about your remark in German-language *Spartacist* (Winter 1989-90) that we have "similar appetites" to those of the Mossad (Israeli secret police)? Did you think that such an insinuation posed no danger to our German comrades, in light of the resurgence of anti-Semitism in that country? The Spartacist League evidently believes it has a right to say anything about other left groups, but goes into a frenzy the minute it gets a taste of its own medicine.

Even more appalling is the fact that you explicitly equate any criticism of yourselves with an attack on Mumia Abu-Jamal. You are hardly the only group active in the fight for his freedom. We, along with ourselves and others, have participated in demonstrations for Mumia in every part of the world where we have comrades, including the San Francisco Bay Area, Berlin, Hamburg and London. An English supporter got a resolution for freeing Mumia passed in the Birmingham Trades Council. Our New Zealand section has initiated two demonstrations calling to free Mumia, the first in 1990. A New York comrade got his union (Local 2110, UAW) to send a protest letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania on Mumia's behalf. Our Toronto group has helped to build two demonstrations for Mumia so far, and is now participating alongside your members in efforts for another mobilization on 14 August. Our name appears on the PDC poster for this rally as one of the endorsers.

According to your logic, Trotskyists in the 1930s, by pointing to the bureaucratic internal regime of the U.S. Communist Party and its cult of Stalin, were sabotaging the campaign to defend the Scottsboro Boys. The Stalinists themselves seized every opportunity to make this point. But Trotskyist exposures of Stalinist betrayals from Germany to Spain, or their condemnations of the Moscow Trials, never prevented them from defending the Soviet Union against imperialism, or from defending American Stalinists from McCarthyite witchhunts. Similarly, our knowledge of the cult-like practices of the SL leadership does not prevent us from seeking united fronts to defend Mumia, nor from defending the SL against repression by the state.

For many years the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee, to their credit, campaigned for Mumia's freedom before many were familiar with the case. More became involved when Mumia's death warrant was signed, including many of the SL's competitors on the left. Rather

than welcoming these organizations to the fight, your reflex has been to defend your turf in truly sectarian fashion, writing that other leftists "'venomous hatred of the Trotskyist Spartacist League far outweighs their professed defense of Jamal'" (emphasis added). In other words, you are Mumia's only *real* defenders on the socialist left. Some of your members even went so far as to claim that our protest letter to Pennsylvania's Governor Ridge, which states that "For each activist you strike down, ten will arise to take his or her place," means that we somehow conceive of Mumia's murder as a positive development!

In the wake of your recent altercation with the International Socialist Organization, you write "that their 'support' to the campaign for Jamal isn't worth the paper it's printed on," and that "united-front action[s] are completely alien to the ISO, which has been noticeably absent (or represented by token teams) at recent demonstrations for Jamal." Yet at one major recent demonstration for Jamal in New York City (Saturday, July 22), where approximately 400 showed up, the ISO had many times more members than the SL, who turned up with fewer than ten people. In a city where you could have mobilized 50 of your own members at the very least (not to mention your periphery), this is truly shameful. Could this lack of enthusiasm be explained by the fact that the demonstration was called by the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition, and not the SL or PDC? It would seem that united-front actions are somewhat "alien" to the SL as well. The SL, in fact, rarely engages in united-fronts it does not initiate and unilaterally control. While there has been an unevenness in your methods internationally, on the whole your approach has been more reminiscent of the Third Period Stalinist "united front from below" which allowed Hitler to take power in Germany, than to the Trotskyist approach of negotiations among as many organizations as possible to mobilize the maximum forces in united action.

The campaign to save Mumia places the Spartacist leadership in a particular bind. On the one hand, it wants to maintain the SL's reputation as Mumia's best defenders, and build a broad campaign on his behalf. On the other hand, the leadership is uncomfortable about the fact that such a campaign will inevitably bring SL members into wider contact with other leftists—a development the SL leadership tries to avoid for fear that the rank and file may begin to question the leadership's claims to infallibility. Hence the reluctance to participate in non-SL events and the need for cop-hating attacks in the pages of *Workers Vanguard*.

It is this kind of sectarian behavior, and not the fact that we and others dare to criticize the Spartacist League, that truly sabotages the fight for Mumia's freedom. Yet we insist that one need not be a fan of the SL leadership to keep working with the SL and anyone else who is willing to fight for the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

On behalf of the International
Bolshevik Tendency,
David Eastman

WV replies: The anti-communist smears of the *Wall Street Journal* aimed at spiking the outpouring of international support for Mumia Abu-Jamal are of no consequence to the Bolshevik Tendency. Why would they be?

For eight years the International Communist League, the Partisan Defense Committee and its fraternal legal and social defense organizations around the world, have fought to spark an international campaign in Jamal's defense. Throughout this entire period, you can scour the pages of the BT's main international journal, *1917*, and not find one substantive article on Jamal's case.

It's hardly as if the BT numbers among those leftists who claim they did not take up Jamal's defense because they were "not familiar with the case." On the contrary, for over a decade, this outfit—whose leadership is composed mostly of people who quit our organization in the

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TROTSKY

Friedrich Engels, Pioneer of Modern Communism

August 5 marks the hundredth anniversary of the death of Friedrich Engels, who together with his close comrade Karl Marx laid the foundations of scientific socialism. Their 1848 pamphlet, *The Communist Manifesto*, pointed to the working class as the force for eliminating capitalist exploitation and oppression and ushering in a classless society. They fought to organize an international party of the working class, first in the

Communist League (1847) and then the First International (1864). Engels made a definitive contribution to the struggle for women's emancipation with his 1884 book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, uncovering the roots of women's oppression in the family and class society. While many reformists pay lip service to Engels, they scorn the concepts of the dictatorship of the proletariat and materialist dialectics which he defended and developed. In honoring the memory of this founder of the communist movement, we publish an excerpt from an 1895 obituary by Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin.

On August 5 (new style), 1895, Frederick Engels died in London. After his friend Karl Marx (who died in 1883), Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the modern proletariat in the whole civilized world. From the time that fate brought Karl Marx and Frederick Engels together, the two friends devoted their life's work to a common cause. And so to understand what Frederick Engels has done for the proletariat, one must have a clear idea of the significance of Marx's teaching and work for the development of the contemporary working-class movement. Marx and Engels were the first to show that the working class and its demands are a necessary outcome of the present economic system, which together with the bourgeoisie inevitably creates and organizes the proletariat. They showed that it is not the well-meaning efforts of noble-minded individuals, but the class struggle of the organized proletariat that will deliver humanity from the evils which now oppress it. In their scientific works, Marx and Engels were the first to explain that socialism is not the invention of dreamers, but the final aim and necessary result of the development of the productive forces in modern society. All recorded history hitherto has been a history of class struggle, of the succession of the rule and victory of certain social classes over others. And this will continue until the foundations of class struggle and of class domination—private property and anarchic social production—disappear. The interests of the proletariat demand the destruction of these foundations, and therefore the conscious class struggle of the organized workers must be directed against them. And every class struggle is a political struggle....

The services rendered by Marx and Engels to the working class may be expressed in a few words thus: they taught the working class to know itself and be conscious of itself, and they substituted science for dreams.

—V.I. Lenin, "Frederick Engels" (Autumn 1895)

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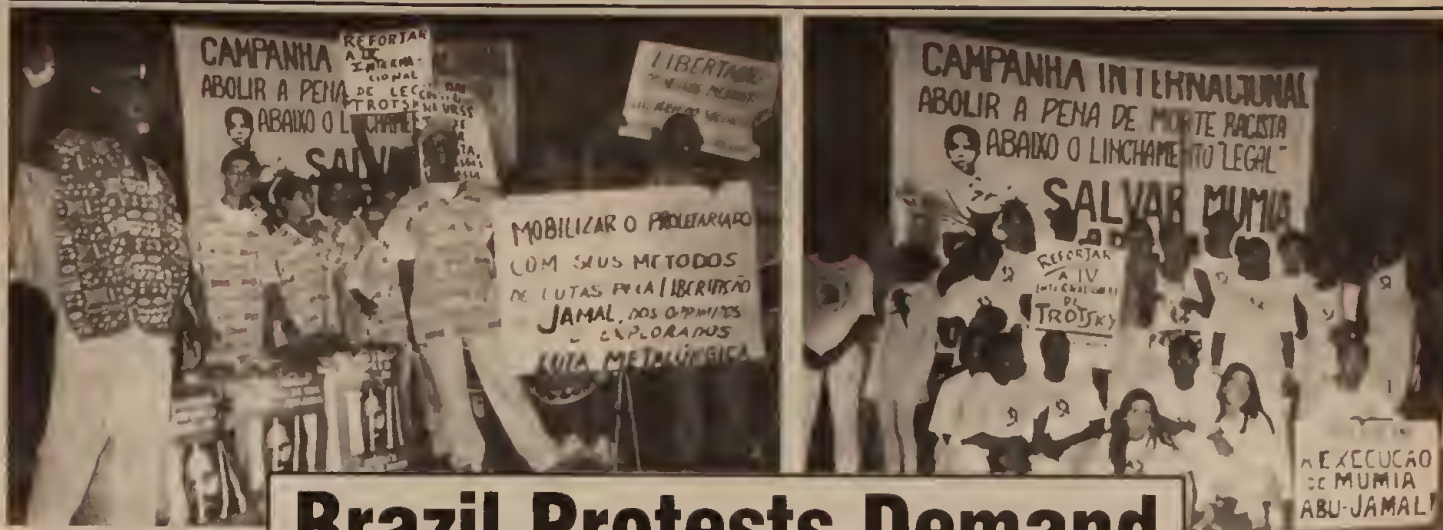
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25 August 1995



Brazil Protests Demand Freedom for Jamal

With the world's largest black population outside Nigeria and a powerful, combative labor movement, Brazil has seen a rapid growth of the campaign to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Brought to the country last November by our fraternal comrades of Luta Metalúrgica (Metalworkers Struggle), the Jamal campaign has been embraced by a wide range of trade unions, black organizations, human rights, political and cultural forces, as well as receiving extensive press and television coverage.

In Brasília, the nation's capital, the Professional Journalists Union, the United Black Movement, bank and postal workers unions and a host of other labor and black groups have energetically taken up the case, forming the Brasília Campaign to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal. Bullhounding in front of the central bus station, young black and union activists have gathered more than 2,300 signatures on petitions for Mumia.

On August 2, about 200 protesters participated in a spirited labor/black rally in front of the U.S. embassy in Brasília. The protest was announced by a union sound truck and bright red posters plastered across the city. A circular for the rally by the CUT (United Workers Federation) of the federal district showed a picture of Jamal framed by the words, "This Man Is Supposed to Die, But We Can Stop It."

Chaired by Journalists Union secretary Jacira Silva and punctuated by traditional Brazilian drum music, the event opened with a call by Américo Antunes, president of the National Federation of Journalists, on the unions to mobilize for freedom



Top: August 9 rally for Jamal in "steel city" Volta Redonda featured young musicians and capoeira martial arts performance. Above: Some 200 protested outside the U.S. embassy in Brasília, August 2.

for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Jamal's courageous work as the "voice of the voiceless" was stressed by Chico Pereira, president of the Interstate Radio Journalists Federation. Aguinaldo Moraes of the Judicial Workers Union (made up of secretaries, court reporters and employees other than police and prison guards) stated: "Around the world the courts serve the rich and powerful against the poor and oppressed.... The resources of our union are at the disposal of this campaign."

A number of national and district congressmen addressed the rally, including representatives of the PT (Workers Party), People's Socialist Party and Com-

munist Party. In addition to speakers for Luta Metalúrgica (LM) and the International Communist League, left groups included the PSTU (United Socialist Workers Party) and Causa Operária (Workers Cause). The Brasília demonstration received extensive coverage in the national press. On the day of the rally, the daily *Correio Brasileiro* cited Leon Trotsky and Mumia Abu-Jamal as figures known for their "defense of the cause of all the working people."

Across the country, in Volta Redonda (state of Rio de Janeiro) a labor/black rally for Jamal was held on August 10. Volta Redonda is "steel city," known

throughout Brazil for the 1988 army massacre of striking workers who were occupying Latin America's largest steel plant. First called by Luta Metalúrgica in leaflets for its July elec-

tion campaign in the steel workers union, the spirited rally of over 200 was co-sponsored by the Municipal Workers Union and drew support from 14 black, slum-dweller and left groups. A highlight of the event was a performance by the Agua Limpa Warriors street children's music group, bearing Mumia posters on their drums, and a group performing *capoeira*, a martial art invented by Brazilian slaves.

The rally was held at the Memorial to Zumbi (known as "the Black Spartacus"), heroic leader of a "republic" of escaped slaves at Palmares who was murdered by the slavocracy 300 years ago this November. Quoting from a letter by Jamal to a black activist in Brasília, several demonstrators held signs saying, "Zumbi is one of my heroes"—Mumia Abu-Jamal. A huge LM banner with the slogans of the international campaign dominated the area, and the Brazilian Socialist Party hung up a large banner calling for Jamal's freedom. Speakers cited a proclamation by the mayor and city council scoring the racist political persecution against Jamal, demanding his freedom and declaring that "the death penalty must be banished from the face of the earth."

Labor/black support for Jamal in Brazil has escalated particularly since May, when LM took the campaign to the conference of Anti-Racist Trade Unionists of the CUT, where hundreds of

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Join the Campaign!

The international campaign of protest has temporarily stayed the executioner's hand, but Mumia Abu-Jamal is still under the shadow of death. The struggle for his freedom continues. As Mumia said himself in "The Stay," Judge Sabo's August 7 ruling was an attempt "to blunt the edge off of a growing and militant anti-death penalty movement.... Let us utilize this precious time to build a stronger and broader movement, to not 'stay' one execution, but to halt them all!"

1 Organize protest! Pass motions demanding Jamal's freedom 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. Get on the Partisan Defense Committee phone tree to organize in your area.

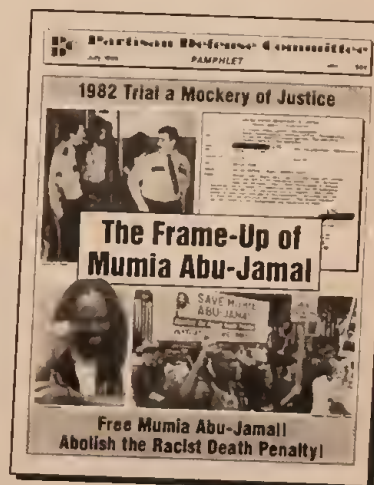
2 Spread the word! The current issue of the PDC's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* is devoted to the struggle to save Mumia Abu-Jamal. And the new PDC pamphlet, *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, exposes in detail the prosecution's case of lies, the coercion of witnesses and the FBI's COINTELPRO terror campaign against Mumia and the Black Panther Party. Order bundles of the special campaign issue of *Class-Struggle*

Defense Notes and *The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 25 copies of either publication for \$10. For only \$1, buy the PDC's new button: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" 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 from the PDC at the address below. Contributions of \$5 or more to the PDC include a year's subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*.

3 Send protests to: Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Ridge changes 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) 789-2500; fax (717) 783-3369.

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.

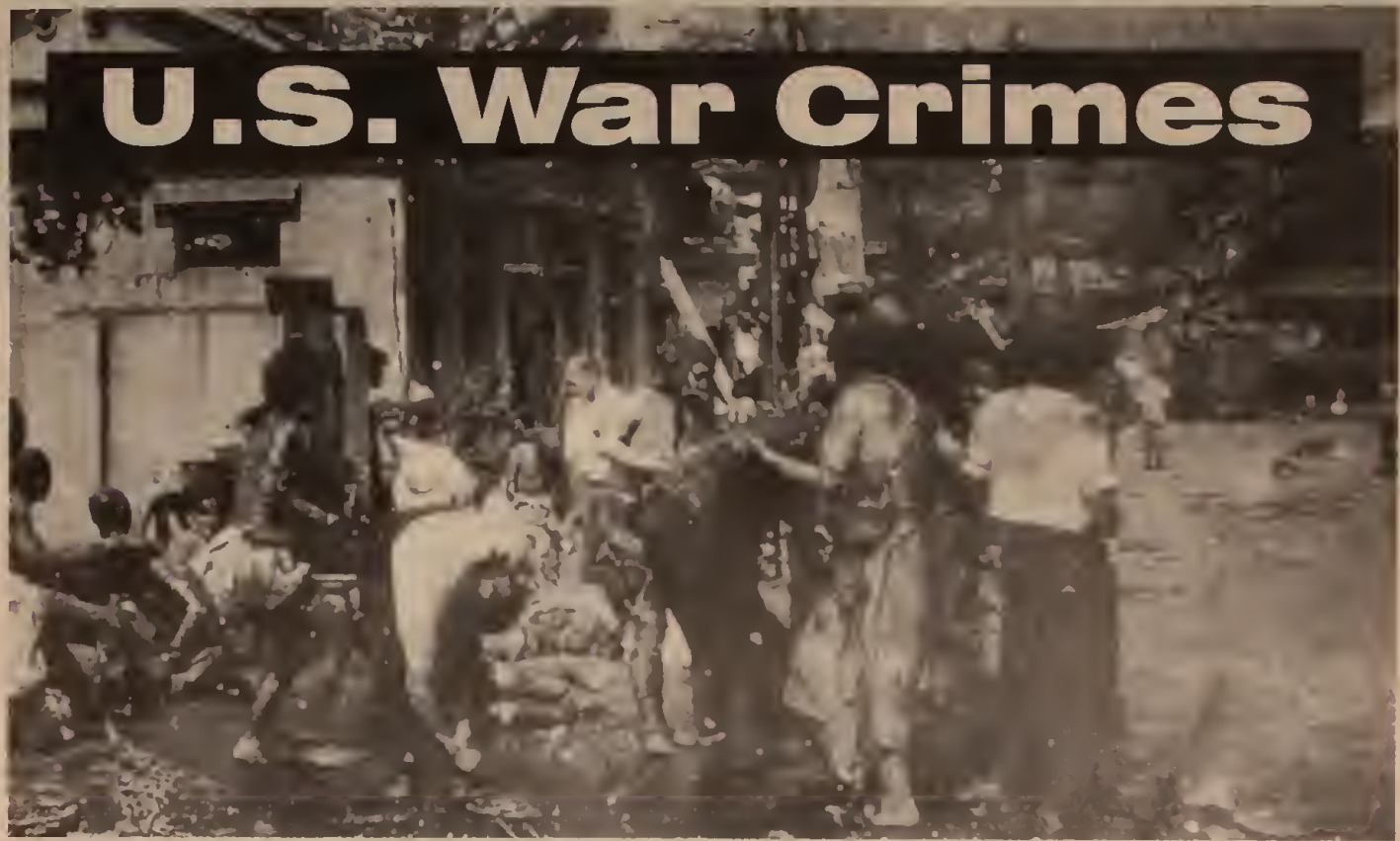


Spread the word: order bundles of the new PDC pamphlet!

For more information: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013 • (212) 406-4252

Hiroshima, Nagasaki:

U.S. War Crimes



Yoshito Matsuhide

Hiroshima, 6 August 1945: Three hours after the atomic blast, burned survivors wander the city in agony.

The 50th anniversary of the end of World War II and of the horrendous U.S. A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki this month comes amid an orgy of racist Japan-bashing. Early this year, a hysterical campaign by jingoists and militarists forced the Smithsonian Institution to cancel a planned exhibition on Hiroshima featuring the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 which dropped the A-bomb on that city, because the presentation included photographs showing the horrors suffered by Japanese civilians. The fact is that the racist rulers of imperialist America used already defeated Japan as a human testing ground to prove to the world—and above all to the Soviet Union—that they would stop at nothing in their bloody drive for global domination.

Today, following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, as interimperialist rivalries intensify and chauvinist protectionism paves the way toward a new interimperialist war, the lessons of World War II are as urgent as ever. We reprint below a section of a statement which was recently published by our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan (Japanese *Spartacist* No. 17, August 1995). The SGJ's internationalist declaration was sold in Japanese and English at 50th anniversary commemorations in Hiroshima.

* * *

Fifty years ago, on August 6 in Hiroshima and three days later on August 9 in Nagasaki, U.S. imperialism committed one of history's greatest crimes—the nuclear bombing of two major Japanese cities. In a matter of seconds these two cities, one an industrial center and the other a port city, were reduced to irradiated rubble, and an estimated 200,000 people were incinerated in a ruthless display of military might intended to intimidate the Soviet Union and proclaim to all the hegemony of arrogant U.S. imperialism in the postwar order. The bombs that obliterated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, primitive by today's nuclear standards, are an ominous portent of what

the next world war will bring.

Tens of millions died in the imperialist-created slaughterhouse called World War II that was fought, in the main, between competing ruling classes over the redistribution of markets. The world proletariat had no interest in which set of exploiters emerged victorious; the side of the international working class in World War II was with the defense of the USSR, created by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, and the uprisings in the colonies that sought to throw off the chains of imperialist subjugation.

The expectation of a postwar "American Century" was short-lived: the Chinese Revolution and later America's long, dirty war against Vietnam exploded U.S. imperialist triumphalism. Soon, too, the defeated imperialist powers Japan and Germany had rebuilt powerful capitalist economies, while the U.S. remained the unchallenged "world policeman," borrowing and spending for armaments instead of industrial investment. Interimperialist rivalry was muted in the interests of Cold War unity against the USSR and all the deformed workers states. Today, the collapse of Stalinism, quickly ushering in capitalist counterrevolutions in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, has created the "new world disorder": the intensification of trade rivalries and interimperialist conflict is already laying the basis for another global conflagration.

Nuclear Nightmare

On the morning of 6 August 1945, in a matter of seconds, Hiroshima was transformed from a thriving urban center to a killing field of unimaginable proportions. A survivor described the horror: "With a violent flash that ripped the sky apart and a thunderous sound that shook the earth to its foundation, Hiroshima was pounded to the ground in an instant. Then, from where a whole city once was, a huge column of fire hounded straight up toward heaven.... The dead and wounded lay fallen, piled up, everywhere; the carnage was like a scene in

hell. Then, fires broke out all over and soon merged into a huge conflagration.... As a fierce whirlwind blew, half-naked and stark naked bodies, darkly soiled and covered with blood, began moving.... One after another fell down and died" (*Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi* [Record of the Hiroshima A-Bomb War Disaster]).

Ground Zero in Nagasaki was the Urakami District, a valley that was home to Nagasaki's main residential communities, schools, churches and factories. Compared to Hiroshima, the blast damage was even more severe. Forty percent of all buildings were destroyed and 6.7 square kilometers of the city were completely demolished and reduced to rubble. According to one eyewitness, "fires erupted all at once over a huge area, and burned furiously until, all at once, the huge conflagration died down. For a while, the whole earth was roaring and belching fire" (Juji Takatani, *Bakushin*

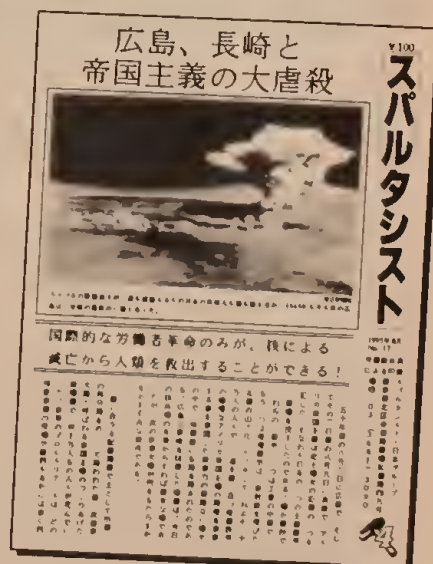
no Oka ni te [On a Hill Near Ground Zero]).

In a 22 August 1945 public speech, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon delivered a stinging indictment of this conscious, murderous act:

"What a commentary on the real nature of capitalism in its decadent phase is this, that the scientific conquest of the marvelous secret of atomic energy, which might rationally be used to lighten the burdens of all mankind, is employed first for the wholesale destruction of half a million people."

In both cities, a fireball with a temperature reaching millions of degrees at its center was formed one ten-thousandth of a second after the explosion. The fireball expanded and reached its maximum size one second following the explosion. Thirty minutes later, moisture condensed on rising ash and dust and came down as "black rain," laden with atomic fallout, to contaminate food and drinking water. Fifteen percent of the energy from

Japanese *Spartacist* No. 17, publication of the Spartacist Group Japan, distributed at 50th anniversary commemorations in Hiroshima, now available for \$1 from Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.



an atomic bomb is released in the form of radiation, and approximately 20 percent of the deaths in both cities were attributed to initial exposure to gamma rays and neutrons emitted within one minute of the explosion. Half of the *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) were marked for life with keloid scars, the result of thermal radiation burns. They suffered from massive bleeding, lowered white-cell and platelet counts, leukemia and multiple myeloma, cancers of the thyroid, breast, lungs and salivary glands. Delayed growth and congenital malformations such as microcephaly (an abnormally small head, often accompanied by mental retardation) appeared among thousands of children exposed to radiation in utero. The aftereffects of this nuclear nightmare continue to affect the survivors and their descendants from these two devastated cities.

World War II, Imperialist Savagery and Racism

While Hiroshima and Nagasaki stagger the imagination with imperialism's capacity to inflict death and destruction upon the world's people, this savage war crime expresses the logic of 20th century, imperialist war. World War I inflicted massive casualty rates in the trenches that shocked the world, but World War II technologically extended this wholesale destruction of human life to the civilian population of most of the combatant nations. This imperialist savagery was especially directed against the USSR degenerated workers state, where 27 million lives were lost, and prerevolutionary colonial China, where Japanese imperialism slaughtered millions upon millions.

World War II in the Pacific, fought over which competing imperialist power would rape China, was also fueled by the U.S. bourgeoisie's deep-seated anti-Asian racism. Using the attack on Pearl Harbor as a rallying cry to whip the American population into a war fever, American war propaganda continually depicted their Japanese adversaries as "sneak attackers," and the most common epithet for the Japanese was "yellow monkeys," portraying them as animals with no inherent right to exist. Anti-Asian "yellow peril" racism in the U.S. has a long history, going back over a century to the anti-Chinese exclusion laws. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, nearly the entire West Coast Japanese population was rounded up and carted off to barren concentration camps, while their homes, shops and farms were confiscated. Ernie Pyle, a famous American WW II GI reporter, described this racist attitude when he transferred from Europe to the Pacific in 1945: "In Europe we felt that our enemies, horrible and deadly as they were, were still people.... But out here I soon gathered that the Japanese were looked upon as something subhuman and repulsive; the way some people feel about cockroaches or mice." This racist disdain was warmly reciprocated by the Japanese army officer corps.

American racism was perfectly mirrored in the war propaganda of the right-wing militarist regime in Japan. The press was a barrage of anti-scientific Japanese-chauvinist garbage, from the grossly anti-Semitic cartoons—borrowed from Hitler's Nazis, with whom Japan was allied—and other racist crap aimed against the Americans. Government propaganda trumpeted endless mystical-fascistic "eugenic" and "cultural" glorifications of Japan's "destiny" to dominate the other peoples of Asia. Even today this racist government refuses to acknowledge the thousands of Korean forced laborers who also died in these atomic blasts, and forbids memorials to these victims inside the official "Peace Parks."

Japan's debilitating 1943 naval defeat at Midway determined the eventual outcome of the war, but the American ruling class consciously planned not merely to defeat Japan but to inflict genocidal mass murder. By 1945, with Japan's military defeated and in disarray, the U.S. mili-

tary continually flew murderous incendiary bombing raids on the Japanese civilian population centers; by August 1945, 58 Japanese cities had been leveled by intensive U.S. bombing. A concentrated March 1945 air raid on Tokyo in one day inflicted 100,000 deaths and burnt to the ground major portions of Japan's capital. By 1945, the bombing tonnage delivered by the mass-produced B-29s employed in the Pacific theater

wrote 15 years ago: "With racist calculation the already defeated Japanese were chosen as the human testing ground to prove to American imperialism's opponents—especially the USSR—that the USA will stop at *nothing* to maintain world dominion."

The Japanese bourgeoisie's racism and chauvinism was brutally evident everywhere. Castigating their imperialist opponents as cowards, mongrels, beasts and



Dresden - February 1945

Deutsche Fotothek Dresden



Tokyo - March 1945

Kyoda

Even without nuclear weapons, "democratic" imperialists carried out horrendous war crimes. U.S. and Britain incinerated Dresden; U.S. firebombing of Tokyo slaughtered over 100,000.

had surpassed the savage bombing carried out in Europe.

This imperialist savagery reached its apex with the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a ghastly bloodletting driven by racist spite, since the defeated Japanese bourgeoisie had been actively seeking a peace settlement weeks before the B-29s flew their nuclear sorties. Martin Sherwin makes the point that in doing research for *The World Destroyed—The Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance*, he never found a document where Germany was mentioned as a potential nuclear target. It was U.S. government policy to drop the bombs without prior warning to "make a profound psychological impression," to target an area with a "war plant employing a large number of workers and closely surrounded by workers' houses," an area undamaged by conventional bombing so the bomb's effects could be accurately measured. Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki met this criteria.

U.S. president Harry Truman, upon receiving the news that Hiroshima had been leveled, exulted that "This is the greatest thing in history!" and gloated: "With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces.... We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely U.S. imperialism used these nuclear weapons for both racist and political reasons. *Workers Vanguard*

hairy barbarians, Japanese officers routinely ordered the execution of American and British prisoners, rationalizing that only cowards who deserved to die would surrender. But the chauvinist and genocidal frenzy of Japanese imperialism was mainly unleashed on the masses throughout Asia whom its "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" was designed to conquer. While claiming they were fighting a war of liberation to free Asia from Western and white colonial domination, the new Japanese masters of East Asia imposed their own style of imperialist exploitation that proved just as vicious and oppressive as the former British, Dutch and American overlords.

Japanese imperialism's racist atrocities were especially directed against the Chinese, both in mainland China and among the overseas Chinese populations throughout East Asia. Newly commissioned Japanese officers were often tested for combat readiness and *samurai* spirit by being ordered to behead bound and emaciated Chinese prisoners. Infantrymen learned bayonet techniques on live Chinese POWs. The viciousness of Japanese occupation policies in Asia was vividly demonstrated by the Guangdong (Kwantung) Army's massacre, rape and torture of unarmed civilians after the fall of Nanjing (Nanking) in December 1937.

The seizure of Asian women to serve as "comfort women," the *ianfu*, was widespread and systematic. These women were forced into sexual slavery to

service the Japanese army in the field, from Manchuria to Indonesia (see "Japanese Imperial Army Enslaved Women," *Women and Revolution* No. 41, Summer-Autumn 1992).

A large percentage of forced laborers and *ianfu* were taken from Korea, then a Japanese colony since 1910. Dozens of slave labor camps were built throughout China in a program reminiscent of Nazi Germany. Forced laborers worked in coal mines for 16 hours a day, subsisting on a starvation diet, penned in with electrified barbed wire fences, and fed opium to make them "less conscious of exhaustion, hunger and pain, allowing them to work much like robots" (*Korea Times*, 15 July 1993).

This is the real legacy of the Second World War: imperialist carnage. Nanjing, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were chilling examples of the slaughter and devastation that will be repeated in a coming war if the imperialist bourgeoisie is not overthrown by proletarian socialist revolution.

Revolutionary Opposition to Imperialist War

During World War II, the American and Japanese social democrats supported their own bourgeoisies while the Stalinist parties, following their line of "anti-fascist" class collaboration, took the side of the "democratic" Allies. It was only Trotsky's Fourth International, founded in 1938, that stood on Lenin's 1914 position of revolutionary defeatism on all sides of the imperialist conflict, and fought for unconditional military defense of the USSR against German imperialism, as well as for victory of all anti-colonial struggles. The FI fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy which undermined the defense of the USSR and imperiled the remaining gains of the October Revolution, and for world socialist revolution to break the imperialist encirclement of the USSR.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) of today stands on the shoulders of the Fourth International and the then-revolutionary American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), who opposed U.S. imperialism during World War II and immediately denounced the criminal nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. We also honor the heroic Soviet spies, the "Red Orchestra" network of Leopold Trepper, which operated in Nazi-occupied Europe, and Richard Sorge and Ozaki Hotsumi, who were executed by Japanese imperialism on 7 November 1944 for their courageous defense of the USSR (see "All Honor to Richard Sorge and Ozaki Hotsumi!" translated in *Australasian Spartacist* Nos. 155 [Summer 1994-95] and 156 [Winter 1995]).

In May 1940, an emergency conference of the Fourth International was held and its main document, written by Leon Trotsky, on "Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution," concluded:

"At the same time we do not forget for a moment that this war is not our war. In contradistinction to the Second and Third Internationals, the Fourth International builds its policy not on the military fortunes of the capitalist states but on the transformation of the imperialist war into a war of the workers against the capitalists, on the overthrow of the ruling classes of all countries, on the world socialist revolution...."

"Independently of the course of the war, we fulfill our basic task: we explain to the workers the irreconcilability between their interests and the interests of blood-thirsty capitalism; we mobilize the toilers against imperialism; we propagate the unity of the workers in all warring and neutral countries; we call for the fraternization of workers and soldiers within each country, and of soldiers with soldiers on the opposite side of the battle front; we mobilize the women and youth against the war; we carry on constant, persistent, tireless preparation for the revolution—in the factories, in the mills, in the villages, in the barracks, at the front, and in the fleet."

"This is our program. Proletarians of the world, there is no other way out except to unite under the banner of the Fourth International!" ■

A Case Study of Chauvinism

David North "Abolishes" the Right to Self-Determination

Part One of this article, polemicalizing against a pamphlet by David North's International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), titled "The Road to Tuzla," appeared in WV No. 626 (28 July)

From Sri Lanka...

In his speech, "Permanent Revolution and the National Question Today," North says he drew inspiration for the ICFI's opposition to self-determination from Keerthi Balasuriya, a former leader of their largest section, the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) of Sri Lanka.

Following Sri Lanka's independence in 1948 from the racist colonial rule of the British and the subsequent passage of a Sinhala-only language law in 1956, the national chauvinism of the Sinhalese ruling class has led to an increasing, and increasingly bloody, communal

PART TWO OF TWO

polarization of the Sinhala and Tamil peoples of the island. This reached a watershed with the 1983 government-inspired pogroms against the Tamils. Hundreds upon hundreds of Tamils were murdered in bloodcurdling wholesale massacres. Tamil homes and businesses in Colombo were burnt to the ground (often with the occupants inside), economic and geographic interpenetration of the two peoples was severed in blood as the Tamils were increasingly compacted in the North and East of the island.

Sinhala communalism, designed and instigated by the Lankan ruling class, has always been wielded to assert its own class domination over both the Tamil and Sinhalese working people and oppressed, to head off any popular revolt by preventing *class unity*. From our inception as a tendency in the 1960s, we have championed the rights of the oppressed Tamil people. At the same time, we oppose Tamil nationalism, which, for example, dismissed the struggles of the strategically placed Tamil plantation workers in the central highlands of the island. In fact, the Tamil nationalist politicians wrote off these stateless "Indian Tamils" who had lived and worked on the island for more than a century. In fighting against the popular-frontist betrayals of the once-Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), we pointed out that their class collaboration was rooted in an accommodation to anti-Tamil Sinhalese chauvinism.

We had always called "For the Right of Self-Determination of the Tamil People!" From the time of the 1983 anti-Tamil pogroms, we raised the demand for the right of Tamil Eelam. As we wrote in "Massacre in Sri Lanka" (WV No. 336, 12 August 1983):

"The impact of the bloodletting and mass population transfers can only be described as a catastrophe...."

"What is posed now as a minimal democratic demand is a plebiscite of the Tamil working people to decide on the formation of an independent state in the North...."

"What is desperately necessary is the building of an internationalist Trotskyist party in Sri Lanka, necessarily substantially based among the exploited Tamil masses. The struggle against the hideous national oppression of the Tamils and communalism is central to forging such a party."



Tamil guerrilla fighters slaughtered by Lankan army in northern area around Jaffna in July. Denouncing struggles for self-determination, David North's Workers League refuses to call for army out of Tamil areas.

In the early 1970s, Healy's ICFI stridently opposed the national rights of the oppressed Tamil people, arguing that a separate Tamil state would only serve imperialism. By the late '70s, however, they were uncritically cheering the petty-bourgeois nationalist "Tamil Tigers" (LTTE). In the late 1980s, the RCL did manage to approximate a decent and correct line—defending the right of self-determination for the Tamil minority, opposing the intervention of India, demanding the withdrawal of the Sinhalese government troops from the Northern and Eastern Provinces and calling "For a United Socialist States of Tamil Eelam and Sri Lanka."

Now, RCL leader Wije Dias repudiates the Tamil struggle for self-determination. For all North's denunciations of Healy, he and his supporters have come full circle to the original chauvinist position (as articulated by Michael Banda) of Healy's ICFI. In Dias' words:

"If the LTTE established a separate Eelam state, it would, like any other

comprador regime, offer the masses of Tamils as cheap labour to the transnational corporations. This is inevitable, as there exists no possibility of implementing any programme of national development under the present capitalist global system of production.... These nationalist aspirations lead not to national liberation, but to national subjugation to imperialism."

—International Worker [Britain], 22 January 1994

This is truly Orwellian—to "prevent" national subjugation to imperialism one must preserve national subjugation to the dominant state power and to...imperialism. Even the demand for withdrawal of the Lankan army from the Tamil areas is missing from articles in the ICFI's *International Workers Bulletin*—rather contradicting all the bombast about the RCL's opposition to what is euphemistically termed the government's "racist" war. The Northites even mimic the chauvinism of the Sinhalese rulers by referring to the Tamil areas with quotation marks around the term traditional homelands.

This chauvinist denial of the right of self-determination for the Tamil people is alibied in the name of "proletarian internationalism." But the Northites' opposition to Tamil national rights is not simply confined to the "here and now." The RCL's previous call for "A United Socialist States of Tamil Eelam and Sri Lanka" has been changed to the call for a single "Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and Eelam." J.V. Stalin had a similar idea when in 1922, as Commissar of Nationalities, he highhandedly sought to subordinate the national independence of the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani soviet republics by turning their nascent Transcaucasian federation into a single federated republic. When Lenin then objected to Stalin's subsequent plans to bring the Transcaucasian republics into the Russian republic, Stalin stubbornly persisted by incorporating the Transcaucasian federation again as a single republic into the new Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The last fight of Lenin's life was against the Great Russian chauvinism which was the initial signature of the emerging Stalinist bureaucracy.

Of a piece with their new appreciation of the Tamil national question in Sri Lanka, in "The Road to Tuzla" the Northites write, with apparent alarm, that "India is faced with the threat of dismemberment." Citing the fact that "The Marxist movement opposed the partition of India and Pakistan along ethnic and religious lines in 1947"—a partition that was engineered by British imperialism as the culminating act of over 300 years of colonial "divide and rule"—they oppose legitimate national struggles such as those in Kashmir and of the Sikhs in the Punjab. This is nothing other than an apology for the maintenance of bourgeois "secular" India, a living hell for oppressed castes, women and myriad different peoples and nationalities.

...to Quebec

In Canada, leading up to the electoral victory of the bourgeois-nationalist Parti Québécois (PQ) in the Quebec elections last fall, the Northites were screaming like a bunch of Alberta prairie yahoos: "A PQ victory would throw the continued existence of the 127-year-old Canadian nation-state into question and raise the specter of a Yugoslav-style civil war in North America" (*International Workers Bulletin*, 29 August 1994)! The idea that Quebec is about to become the next Bosnia is truly dérangé. Unlike the Balkans, where the bloody nationalist conflicts are inspired by the competition of interpenetrated peoples for the same territory, Quebec is a separate French-speaking nation with a common people, common language, common culture and common history. Although Native Indians would certainly continue to get it in the neck should Quebec secede (not that they aren't presently abused and denigrated by the English-Canadian imperialist rulers), independence would hardly require "ethnic cleansing" to drive out another people or nationality.

Quebec was forcibly incorporated into British North America following the 1759 defeat of the French garrison on the Plains of Abraham. In 1867, the national subjugation of the Québécois was the cornerstone of Canadian confederation. Almost 100 years later,



Spartacist publications in Tamil and Sinhala in 1982 called "For the Right of Self-Determination of Tamil People!"

the belated emergence of Quebec from clerical-dominated backwardness produced an upwardly mobile French-speaking petty bourgeoisie, and at the same time there emerged one of the most militant and class-conscious proletariats in all of North America. Opposition to Anglo chauvinism and the suppression of the national and language rights of the Québécois fueled an upsurge in labor militancy in the late 1960s and early '70s.

The Quebec labor bureaucrats channeled the militancy and combativity of the Québécois working class into support for the bourgeois-nationalist Parti Québécois. In this they were assisted by the Anglo chauvinism of the labor misleaders in the rest of Canada, who militantly opposed the legitimate national and language rights of the Québécois. The fact that Quebec is a separate nation, with corresponding national rights—i.e. the right to independence—is similarly not even given a nod in the *Bulletin's* articles on the question. Nor do they mention, much less oppose, the raving Anglo chauvinism against Quebec in English Canada.

Today, such chauvinism is particularly represented by the prairie-based Reform Party, which is now one of the two major opposition parties in the Canadian parliament. The other major opposition party is the Bloc Québécois—the federal analogue to the PQ which now rules Quebec. This alone should give some idea of the dominance of the Quebec national question in Canada and the extent to which it poisons relations between the workers of Quebec and English Canada.

Our Canadian comrades of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste have consistently championed Quebec's unconditional right to independence, not out of support to the emergent Québécois bourgeoisie's aspirations to become *maîtres chez nous* (masters in our own house), but out of a proletarian internationalist commitment to remove the national barriers to the class unity of the English- and French-speaking workers of North America. The Northites, however, although claiming to fight "to unite workers in Canada with their class brothers in the US and Mexico," refuse to defend Quebec's right to independence. This is antithetical to an internationalist struggle for revolutionary working-class unity.

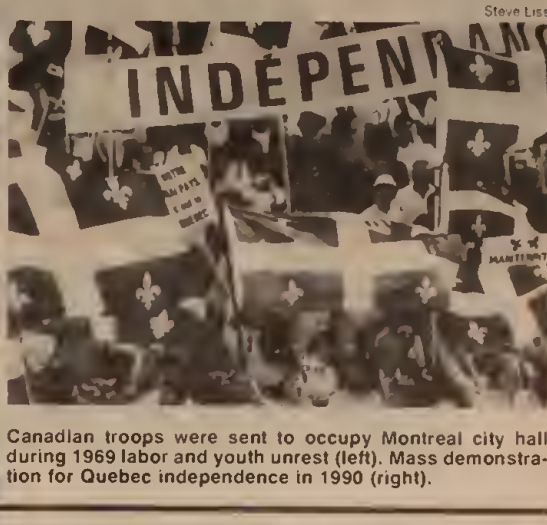
On the contrary, it is simply a backhanded endorsement of the "unity" of the Canadian bourgeois state. In the words of Lenin:

"The proletariat cannot remain silent on the question of the frontiers of a state founded on national oppression, a question so 'unpleasant' for the imperialist bourgeoisie. The proletariat must struggle against the enforced retention of oppressed nations within the bounds of the given state, which means that they must fight for the right to self-determination. The proletariat must demand freedom of political separation for the colonies and nations oppressed by 'their own' nation. Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words; neither confidence nor class solidarity would be possible between the workers of the oppressed and the oppressor nations; the hypocrisy of the reformists and Kautskyites, who defend self-determination but remain silent about the nations oppressed by 'their own' nation and kept in 'their own' state by force, would remain unexposed."

—"The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (January-February 1916)

Counterfeit "Orthodoxy"

While the Northites' open rejection of the right of nations to self-determination may be a new innovation, getting there was not a very big step. They have long sneered at racial and other forms of oppression born of capitalist exploitation as somehow irrelevant to the "class struggle"—by which they meant the pursuit of a crude workerist adaptation to the racist Cold War labor bureaucrats. At the



Canadian troops were sent to occupy Montreal city hall during 1969 labor and youth unrest (left). Mass demonstration for Quebec independence in 1990 (right).

height of the Vietnam antiwar protests and struggles for black freedom, the *Bulletin* put forward a program for a labor party which took up neither opposition to the war nor the fight for black liberation!

In a long series of articles in the U.S. Workers League's *Bulletin* titled "The Politics of the Spartacist League," written in the mid-1980s, the WL denounced us for "An Obsession With Race." Why? By the Northites' lights, *Workers Vanguard* featured too many articles on the question of black oppression, racist terror and opposition to fascism, and not enough on "workers." Never mind that blacks are heavily represented in the ranks of organized labor and that the fight against racist and fascist terror is integral to the defense of the labor movement as a whole. But obviously not for the *Bulletin*. In 1983, it ran an article smearing the SL-initiated November 1982 labor/black mobilization in Washington, D.C.—in which over 5,000 black workers and youth came out and stopped the Klan—as "an adventure which played right into the hands of the police!"

Even Gerry Healy wrote of "D. North's whiter than white socialism." In American society, where the forcible segregation of blacks at the bottom is a keystone of U.S. capitalism, labor must champion the cause of black liberation if it is to break the chains of capitalist exploitation and degradation. This, the Northites claimed, is to "counterpose... struggle against racism" to "the struggle of the working class."

The same *Bulletin* series reviled us for the simple (and eminently truthful) statement that the hard-fought 1986 strike by Hormel meatpackers had been knifed by the "labor traitors that currently make up the top leadership of the American labor movement." The Workers League sneered that this was only further evidence of our "virulent hatred of the working class and deep pessimism." The Northites' equation of the trade-union misleaders with the unions themselves has been one of their few political constants. Now they have simply reversed the equation. From squealing that to attack the labor bureaucrats was some kind of "proof" of "hatred of the working class," they have gone on to pronouncing that the unions as a whole can no longer be considered workers organizations! A few years back, in one of his ponderous speeches, titled "The End of the USSR," David North declared that "to define the AFL-CIO as a working class organization is to blind the working class" (*Bulletin*, 10 January 1992).

The unions have been grievously undermined by the pro-capitalist labor tops to the point where organized labor in this country is increasingly a hollow shell. Nonetheless, even though now only representing a small percentage of the working class, the unions are still the economic organizations of the working class. To transform them into

fighting organizations for the working class and all of the oppressed requires a political struggle to break the trade-union bureaucracy's stranglehold and replace these sellouts with a class-struggle leadership.

But it is precisely such a political struggle that is excluded in either incarnation of the Northite line on the unions. From appealing to the AFL-CIO tops to do everything from launch general strikes to form a labor party, the Northites now equate all of organized labor with the bosses and their government. Such a view of the unions is one that is obviously not shared by the capitalists or their state, which have poured some billions of dollars into mercenary strikebreaking outfits. Far from promoting working-class struggle, the Northites' appeals for the workers to junk their unions neatly dovetail with the interests of the union-busting bosses.

There are, of course, so-called "unions" which have fit North's description as "direct instruments of imperialism." Solidarność in Poland is one, and one which the Northites eagerly and vigorously supported. Another is the "Union of Democratic Miners" in Britain. Consisting of a bunch of scabs on the heroic British coal strike of 1984-85, this "union" was set up at the behest of the Thatcher government to destroy the National Union of Miners (NUM).

Healy/North's ICFI had its own hand to play against the British miners union. On the eve of the strike, Healy's press made a big splash by scandalizing NUM leader Arthur Scargill for his correct opposition to Solidarność as "anti-socialist." This scurrilous anti-Communist campaign was instantly picked up by the Fleet Street tabloids as well as the Labour Party/Trades Union Congress right wing with the aim of isolating the miners union and trying to crush it. The campaign to smear and discredit Scargill was taken up by the British secret police of MI5 as part of a full-scale mobilization of all the forces of the capitalist state aimed at destroying the miners union. Yet even now the Northites' only criticism of Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) when it comes to the British miners is that it supposedly "ruled out any criticism of Scargill" (*International Workers Bulletin*, 25 April 1994)!

Classless Demagogues

In the concluding portions of "The Road to Tuzla," North's ICFI statement declares that Cliff Slaughter's WRP "has been transformed as the result of a protracted national opportunist degeneration into a bourgeois tendency." That just about finishes it. North's organization has written off the unions, the social-democratic and ex-Stalinist parties, all of what they perceive as their major "Trotskyist" contenders—from Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat to Slaughter's WRP—as thoroughly bourgeois organizations. As Hegel and Marx would

say, the Northites have obliterated all contradictions—to the end of portraying themselves as the last, the only, proletarian leaders on the face of the planet.

The Northites' description of Slaughter's organization sounds all too much like their own, particularly the statement that the positions of the WRP serve to "ideologically" condition its membership "to reject any connection between the party's politics, on the one hand, and the class interests of the proletariat and the principled positions of Marxism, on the other." More than ten years ago, in responding to the *Bulletin's* smear of our anti-Klan mobilization in Washington, D.C., we wrote that the leaders of Healy's ICFI were "classless demagogues, all-purpose mock extremists whose radicalism has nothing in common with socialist struggle" ("Smash Fascist Smear of SL," *WV* No. 379, 17 May 1985).

Every few years, the membership of North's ICFI have their heads put through another "dialectical" wringer. From prostration before bourgeois-nationalist regimes, it is now pronounced that any and all struggles for self-determination must be vigorously opposed. After years of pandering to the AFL-CIO tops, the membership is now told that the unions are the "direct instruments of imperialism" and must be destroyed.

North's grand speeches proclaiming "decisive turning points" for the proletariat not only serve to justify and reinforce his organization's distance from the class struggle, they are a direct echo of the interests of the imperialists. The ICFI's "theories" are nothing but cowardly rationalizations for sneering at struggle against chauvinist oppression, and for writing off the economic defense organizations of the working class, in order to boost their own petty advantage. The Northites' policies are those of poseurs seeking a niche as spoilers. Otherwise, they are utterly devoid of, and antithetical to, a program which can lead the international working class and oppressed to a socialist victory over their exploiters. ■

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Young Spartacus

South African Unions Take Up Jamal's Fight as Their Own

The campaign to save the life of *Mumia Abu-Jamal* has reverberated throughout South Africa, where black and "coloured" (mixed-race) working-class militants see in the political persecution of this outspoken opponent of racist injustice in the U.S. a mirror of their own repression by the apartheid state. In the late spring, comrades of the *Spartacist League/U.S. and Partisan Defense Committee* made a trip

Eyewitness Report

to South Africa to raise support for Jamal's case and to engage leftist and working-class organizations in political discussion on the strategy to combat the continued racist oppression and capitalist exploitation of *Mandela/Dr. Klerk's* neo-apartheid regime.

We reprint below a speech by comrade *Don Alexander*, which he gave upon his return at a *Spartacist* forum on July 8 in Berkeley, California. In the weeks that have followed, support from South African trade unions and civic organizations has multiplied (see "*South African Workers Fight to Save Jamal*," *WV* No. 626, 28 July). Most recently, South African president *Nelson Mandela* sent a letter to Pennsylvania governor *Ridge* asking him to commute the death sentence imposed upon *Mumia Abu-Jamal*.

The power of labor is being brought to bear on behalf of *Mumia Abu-Jamal* in South Africa. A comrade with whom I worked in South Africa spoke to a rally of 15,000 black workers in Johannesburg on June 19 where they chanted slogans



July 26 march to the U.S. embassy in Pretoria protested threatened execution of *Mumia Abu-Jamal*.

to stop the execution of *Mumia* and to abolish the racist death penalty. This is an important development. If, for example, there were a one-day political strike to save *Mumia* by the Congress of South African Trade Unions, COSATU, which represents 1.5 million workers, and if it were joined by the other black labor federation, NACTU, the National Council of Trade Unions, that would reverberate around the world.

The tremendous receptivity to the international fight to save *Mumia* was powerfully expressed in South Africa, where I was for two weeks in late May and part of June. The black trade unions, principally COSATU and also NACTU, are rallying to this fight. I and other comrades talked to a number of militant blacks, coloureds, Indians, anti-racist

whites and left organizations and death penalty abolitionists who know that the barbaric racist death penalty is the expression of racial subjugation and legally sanctioned state murder. While I was there, the Constitutional Court abolished the death penalty. However, the neo-apartheid capitalist government of *Mandela* and *De Klerk* continues to try to weaken and break the powerful black labor movement.

It was the struggles of the militant black working class that broke down the rigid apartheid of the white-supremacist racist police state, only to see installed black front men for the *Randlords* who preside over continued racial oppression and capitalist exploitation. In Johannesburg and Cape Town, we brought to class-conscious workers and militant youth our program for international class-struggle defense to free *Mumia* and for world socialist revolution. In numerous discussions, we posed the necessity for workers' revolution to sweep away racist capitalist domination.

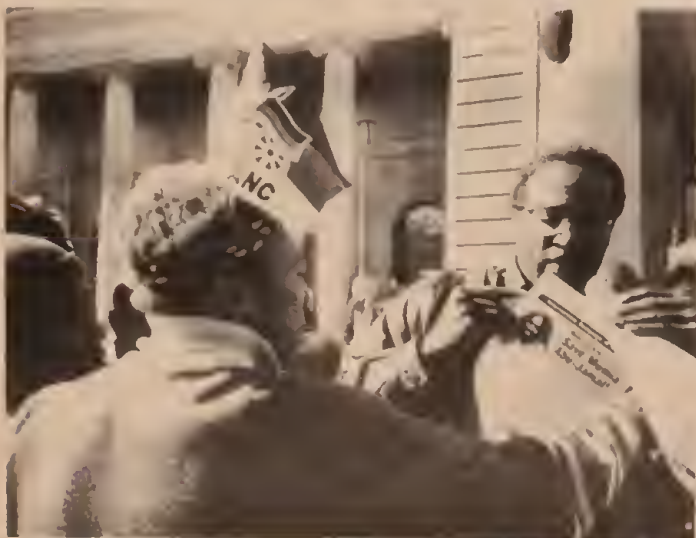
A week before I arrived, over 100 black miners, a number of whom were migrants from various places in southern Africa, were killed in a mining disaster. An underground train jumped its tracks, fell into a shaft, snapped the cables controlling an elevator and plunged 1,650 feet to the bottom. There were no safety mechanisms in place to stop it, to break the fall of the train or the elevator. The gold magnates, the owners of the Anglo American mine called the *Vaal Reef's Mine*, didn't want to spend the money because black life is cheap, though it's been the sweat and blood of black workers that is the source of the enormous riches of the racist bosses. This was industrial murder, and it underscores the reality of the brutal superexploitation of black labor which is the bedrock of apartheid.

This was the context in which I visited the "new" South Africa. Traveling

around Johannesburg, through the townships and in Cape Town, I saw the horrible poverty of the black and coloured masses, millions of whom are squatters within earshot of major cities. The tin roof hovels, the lack of elementary sanitation facilities—these were the visible signs of the "new" South Africa, embodied in the so-called power-sharing neo-apartheid capitalist regime. The Government of National Unity promised massive housing construction, but what is the reality? Supposedly under the Reconstruction and Development Program, the RDP, a million houses in five years were going to be built. Eight hundred have been built out of an initial target of 50,000 in the first year. It is estimated that nine million blacks are jobless, and youth unemployment is in the 70 to 80 percent range in most of the townships. Women workers, mainly black and coloured, are the first to be laid off—which has taken place in certain industries like textile, food and beverage. Also, there are dwindling gold reserves in South Africa; a lot of miners are being let go. And trade-union membership is plummeting.

Hardly a day passed in which I didn't either hear or read about the deportation of immigrants, especially Mozambicans and Zimbabweans, who are being scapegoated for the bankruptcy of the capitalist system. There's a lot of talk about a crime wave that has hit big cities, especially *Jo'burg*; there's taxi-war shoot-outs, vicious competition along the lines. But of course this desperate poverty is a product of the capitalist system that cannot provide jobs and housing and education. And the main response on the part of the government is gun control—just like it is here—to take the guns out of the hands of the black workers and youth in order for the capitalist state to maintain a monopoly on the means of violence. Also one of the things that the *Mandela/De Klerk* government warned was that the main danger at the moment was . . . the left. The government admitted the considerable number of street crimes that are being committed by the police, who seek to supplement their income.

South Africa cries out today for a revolutionary leadership, for a revolutionary workers party that will lead a fight for state power, for a black-centered workers government based upon the simple proposition that those who labor must rule. An important step in that direction is the growing support in South Africa for *Mumia*. A lot has happened since I left a month ago. There was a meeting in a black township 60 miles from Johannesburg. Militant black youth and other residents from the squatters' settlement called *Serafina* also came to this meeting. We visited these places, and when we asked people what they thought of the government Reconstruc-



Comrade *Don Alexander* publicizing meeting for *Jamal* at June 6 trade-union demonstration in Johannesburg.

tion and Development Program, the so-called pro-poor, pro-working-class program, one resident snapped, "Oh yeah, the RDP. You mean Rich People Developing Poor People. Oh, that program."

The meeting in this township near Johannesburg attracted leaders of the working class from different political parties—AZAPO, the Azanian Peoples' Organisation; the Pan Africanist Congress; African National Congress. They crowded into a room wall to wall, shoulder to shoulder, to watch the video on Mumia. And they were very vocal about the opposition to the frame-up of Mumia. They took leaflets to raise this among broader layers of the working class and the oppressed.

On June 6, I went to a massive march to the Chamber of Mines, over 100,000 black workers in Johannesburg that shut down a major part of the city. In a march in South Africa, you really march. You run. They call it the *toyi-toyi*. You use every part of your body. It makes aerobics tame by comparison. It was a very militant and defiant demonstration of black workers, men and women who want to fight for their interests. And there were a lot of pro-socialist slogans at this demonstration because they haven't bought the bourgeois lie that communism is dead.

Unfortunately, the pro-capitalist leadership of the march—at which Mandela spoke—simply want to modify the reactionary Labor Relations Act, which is aimed at crippling the labor movement by subordinating the unions to the capitalist state. The purpose of the march was to pressure the state to come up with a less repressive labor law governing the relations between labor and capital, whose interests are irreconcilably opposed.

We explained to people on the march the direct connection between the recent industrial murder at the Vaal Reets Mine and the state's attempt to silence Mumia. The capitalist class that in South Africa wants to maintain the brutal system of superexploitation of black labor is the same capitalist class that in the U.S. wants to kill Mumia and crush all of those who stand up for the "voice of the voiceless." We were mobbed when we started passing out Mumia leaflets. Word passed along that the leaflets were being distributed to stop the execution of a political prisoner in the U.S. who was black, and there was great interest and excitement.

We were also there to meet people and tell them about our public forum the next night. The public meeting in Johannesburg for Jamal at the Workers Library was a success. People came from unions, youth from left organizations like the South African Communist Party, the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action, shop stewards in the NUMSA union, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, which is one of the more militant COSATU affiliates. They came to watch the video and to join the fight to free Mumia. Blacks, coloureds, Indians and whites gathered to express their solidarity with Mumia. The video and our comments afterward emphasizing the urgency of this struggle had a big impact.

Now, once again I want to emphasize that the South African working class, the proletariat, are very class-conscious. But it's hard to overemphasize the joint to their consciousness when they learned about the realities of life in racist capitalist America. People didn't know about the brutal nature of racism and exploitation taking place in this country. They thought that America was some kind of haven of democracy. For many, it was shocking and an eye-opener to see, in the video, the racist murder of MOVE in 1985, to see cops kicking in heads of black youth, to find out about the cops that killed Black Panthers in their beds for defying the racist capitalist oppres-

sors, to learn that Geronimo ji Jaga (Prait) has been in prison for 25 years for a crime he didn't commit, and also to learn that in Clinton/Gingrich's America, there's a massive bipartisan assault on rights of the working class and of the oppressed.

There was genuine surprise when they learned how closely especially black Americans pay attention to their struggles because they saw and see in the



Tens of thousands of black workers demonstrated in Johannesburg, chafing under fetters of the Mandela/De Klerk neo-apartheid "power sharing" regime.

savage white-supremacist capitalist regime of South Africa a mirror of their own oppression. It was a revelation for many to learn that black workers in the U.S. form a strategic component of the multiracial working class who have been inspired by their struggles for liberation in South Africa and who under revolutionary leadership have the power to lead a fight to bury the racist capitalist system in the U.S.

So there was a deeply felt solidarity with Mumia and the struggles against racism in the U.S., and we worked hard to gather their support. The South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union, SACCABU, a militant union which waged a hard-fought struggle last year against the Pick 'n Pay grocery store chain, sent a letter to Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge:

"In South Africa we have long struggled against racism and oppression and the use of jails and death sentences to silence political protest. In this regard we drew strength from millions of activists and other citizens of countries throughout the world who protested against the Apartheid state's attacks on the lives of black people and democrats of all communities. We know from bitter experience how a state criminalises the activities of political activists in order to silence them. The case of our first democratically-elected President is but one such example."

In a May 25 statement, the Food Farming Beverage and Allied Workers Union of South Africa remarked that, "Comrade Mumia is a victim of imperialist and capitalist racism. He is not only on the wrong side of the colour-line, but he has also dared to challenge the *status quo*." Now, this is a clear recognition of not only the racist nature of the death penalty, but its use as a class weapon to destroy opposition to the reactionary attacks of the capitalist ruling class.

The National Union of Metalworkers, one of the most powerful unions in South Africa, representing 187,000 workers, also added their voice in support of Mumia. We also gathered support from the African National Congress. We met with Mandela's secretary in Johannesburg. They know all about the case, particularly now. In Cape Town, where the legislature and the parliament is, we met with Cyril Ramaphosa, who is a former

leader of the National Union of Metalworkers and is now secretary general of the African National Congress. Ramaphosa sent a letter in support of Mumia. Also, you can read in the current *Workers Vanguard* the powerful letter from Paul Trewhele, co-editor of *Searchlight South Africa*, to Mandela asking him "to urge that the execution be set aside."

We also met with Moses Mayekiso, a former Metalworkers leader, now a leader

of the South African Communist Party and a member of parliament. Mayekiso was very responsive. Ten years ago, he was one of the Alexandra Township Five who were framed and faced execution by the apartheid state. We were also able to mobilize black workers who support Mumia in the Metalworkers union and the Turning Wheel Workers' Union, a newly formed union that last year staged a militant truck blockade that tied up the roads. The Mandela/De Klerk government had jailed some of the leaders of that union and warned the workers what would happen to them if they defied the government.

Former ANC guerrilla leaders Joe Modise (right), now defense minister, and his deputy Ronnie Kasrils (center) share a laugh with apartheid army commander Georg Meiring.



The impressive labor support is a promising beginning in the struggle to root this solidarity firmly in the powerful labor movement and in the townships. The recognition that there are common interests of the oppressed and exploited worldwide is crucial. From South Africa to the U.S., the campaign against the racist death penalty is part of the fight to smash the whole chain of oppression of the capitalist state in the struggle for international working-class revolution.

The absence of revolutionary leadership and a revolutionary party is keenly felt in South Africa. There must be a determined struggle to break the black

working class and the oppressed non-white masses from the nationalist misleaders of the African National Congress, to break the so-called Tripartite Alliance between the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party, COSATU, who are in a coalition with the so-called "democratic" capitalists of the National Party. The government that exists in South Africa is a nationalist popular front, a coalition between workers organizations and sections of the ruling class in defense of capitalist private property. We stand with Trotsky's program of permanent revolution, that in backward capitalist countries in which the bourgeois-democratic revolutions of the past have not been achieved, the working class must take power in order to carry out elementary democratic tasks, from giving land to those who till it, to achieving genuine political democracy and national independence.

All talk of healing and reconciliation and "letting bygones be bygones"—and while I was there, the big world rugby tournament in Cape Town was hailed as a "vehicle of reconciliation"—is a fraud, for the simple reason that there are antagonistic interests between the oppressed black masses and the privileged white minority. Under capitalism, under the system of the private ownership of the means of production, there can be no equality between the oppressed and the oppressors, between the capitalists and the working class. So while there are more blacks in parliament and a few black millionaires, state power remains in the hands of the white capitalist class and its armed bodies of men defending the capitalists' property. The economic and social dominance of the white minority remains intact.

Now, we talked to a lot of different groups. Our pamphlet *Black History and the Class Struggle* calling for proletarian revolution in South Africa was very powerful. In many of our discussions with South African leftists, one illusion that surfaced time and again was that there will be a stable multiracial bourgeois order in South Africa. So many of the youth and workers with whom we spoke believe that the task is to make the centerpiece of the government's pro-

gram, the Reconstruction and Development Program, work for them, to make capitalism work. We had long arguments on how the whole program of the popular front, which is a reformist program, has paved the way for bloody defeat for the working class, from Spain in the 1930s to Chile in the 1970s.

There's nothing in the RDP that deals with the burning needs of the masses. The ANC and Mandela have betrayed the black masses and turned their backs on their earlier populist promises of nationalization, land distribution and even "one man, one vote." The masses

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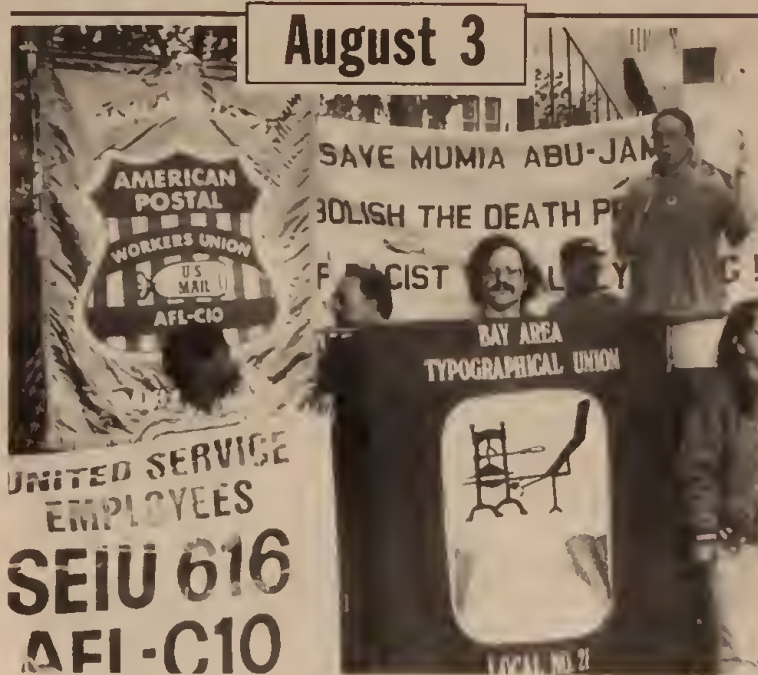
SYC Speaker: Free Mumia Now!

We reprint below an edited speech by Spartacus Youth Club member *Skye White* that was given at the *Paroxysm Defense Committee*-initiated labor/black mobilization to free Mumia Abu-Jamal in Oakland, August 3.

People say all sorts of things about the "X generation"—the "slacker generation." What is behind this? Actually, it's the ruling class saying youth have no value. Not schools but prisons. No welfare, no drinking, no sex, no jobs! Mumia Abu-Jamal himself wrote: "This is not the lost generation...they are probably the most aware generation since Nat Turner's.... They are all potential revolutionaries with the historic power to transform dull realities." But we can accomplish this only by allying with the social power of the working class.

In the Spartacus Youth Club, we see the death penalty as but one tool in the broad arsenal of weapons possessed by the ruling class in order to subjugate and oppress minorities, youth and the working class. If we mobilize enough social power to save Mumia's life, we will be striking a blow against the entire racist institution of legal lynching.

Over 100 years ago, Friedrich Engels said: "The state is an organization for the protection of the possessing class against the non-possessing class." Look at the cases of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Geronimo Pratt, unionist Bob Buck and huge numbers of other political prisoners in the prison hellholes of this country. Look around at what happens on the streets of American cities which are controlled by the cops. Last week a 14-year-old Latino, Antonio Gutiérrez, was shot in cold blood by the LAPD in Lincoln Heights. Two months ago, Aaron Williams was beaten to death by 12 San Francisco cops. The same system that has locked Jamal into the halls of prison torture, the courts which today seek to thwart justice for Jamal at every turn, are vital for the very existence of capi-



SYC activist *Skye White* addresses labor/minority mobilization for Mumia Abu-Jamal which drew hundreds of unionists and anti-racist militants in Oakland, August 3.

talism and function solely so that the few can continue to exploit the many. In the U.S., one half of one percent of the population owns 40 percent of everything. There is no possibility of reforming capitalism; this society is in the death throes of its own decay.

In 1917 there was a revolution in Russia that brought workers to power. The revolution was led by the Bolsheviks headed by Lenin and Trotsky. The only real solution is building a revolutionary workers party like the Bolshevik Party. For over 70 years, we Trotskyists fought to defend the USSR from world imperialism. With the counterrevolution in the USSR, which was the result of years of Stalinist betrayals, the ruling class of the

U.S. is now engaged in a vicious battle to dominate the world's markets and resources.

In Mexico, the Democrats, the "liberal imperialists," are starving Mexican workers and peasants with the North American Free Trade Agreement, which is designed to pit American workers against their class brothers and sisters in Mexico. At home, this means scapegoating immigrants, denying health care and an education to anyone who isn't a citizen. We say: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

These days, any minority or working-class kid in this country no longer has the right to an education! Frederick Douglass keenly understood that the

struggle for literacy was a struggle against the institution of slavery. With the abolishing of affirmative action, the bourgeoisie is declaring that education is a privilege for the rich, they are saying that they have no need to educate youth who they cannot use as workers. While California schools deteriorate, the prisons are booming. This is the meaning of the "war on drugs" and the "three strikes you're out" bill—in reality this is a class war on blacks, labor and the poor. We must fight to defend affirmative action. In the Spartacus Youth Clubs, we say: Open admissions, no tuition and a living stipend for all students!

A revolutionary workers party, tribune of all the people, would pose a real, class-struggle solution at every turn when faced by the vicious cut-backs, take-backs and rollbacks, on the road to leading the working class to power through a socialist revolution!

The legacy of slavery has left the working class cruelly divided along race lines, and history has shown us that black and union rights march forward together but slide back separately. With the complicity of the labor bureaucracy, the working class has remained fettered by racism through the "lesser evil" of the Democratic Party. The bottom line is that the war against blacks, immigrants, youth, homeless, workers, is a class war. NOT race against race, but class against class!

Mumia was right when he remarked that every inch of ground won has come through militant struggle. And again in the words of the revolutionary Abolitionist Frederick Douglass: "Without struggle, there is no progress." The turnout here today is what we need to free Jamal and needs to be a lesson for students and youth: Ally with the power of labor, not the racist school administrations, not the ruling-class Democratic Party! Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! ■

South Africa...

(continued from page 9)

have been told to tighten their belts so that the white capitalists and the new black elite can rake in their profits undisturbed. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank—the architects of murderous poverty and misery for the poor and oppressed people throughout the world—are calling the shots in South Africa.

Capitalist politicians here—black and white, Democratic and Republican, Jesse Jackson and Bill Clinton and their reformist tails like the Communist Party and Socialist Action and many other groups—went into a kind of religious frenzy with the coming to power of Mandela, hollering "Free at last!" as if the murderous apartheid system was simply a matter of legally sanctioned racism—as opposed to an entire people made foreigners in their own country. The International Communist League told the truth, the simple truth from day one that Mandela and the ANC would betray the black masses.

Well, what are they doing? The bourgeois-nationalist government is demolishing squatters' settlements of blacks and of coloureds. The former head of the CP who was the housing minister, Joe Slovo, called for an end to "the culture of the nonpayment of rents." So while I was there, the government

started turning off the electricity and lights in the townships. The South African National Defence Force, the army, is crushing the struggles of the blacks for land—in a country where whites, who are 13 percent of the population, own 86 percent of the land and 90 percent of the total wealth.

We talked to many leftists in several organizations—the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action, Comrades for a Workers Government, International Socialist Movement—who have big illusions in the so-called neutrality of the capitalist state. They put forth the line that the cops, the capitalist police, are workers, that there are "good cops," that there are "progressive" cops. Now, there's a very large black so-called police union, called Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union, POPCRU, that has been very active in South Africa, staging protests for higher pay, against racism on the police force, for bigger guns—the usual things. The cops in South Africa, like in every capitalist country that has ever existed, defend the interests of the possessing class, the capitalists, against the exploited and the oppressed. And we should never buy the lie that they are workers because it's not only a lie; it's a deadly illusion. Every ruling class in history has had armed bodies of men defending to the death their so-called right to exploit. So we had big fights on this question. We did get some revolutionary minded youth to step back and

rethink this question because they and we know that this is no abstract question, but goes to the heart of making a revolution in which a revolutionary vanguard party that is a tribune of the people can lead the working class in insurrection to smash the capitalist state machine.

We also laid out in our discussions with serious militant workers and youth who have been through some battles that the capitalist system cannot be reformed. A number of them want to do social work in the townships. We don't argue against the need to win the advanced layer of the working class to build an internationalist revolutionary party that will stand at the head of the struggle for national and social liberation in South Africa; that would fight for the nationalization of the urban lands to wipe out homelessness; to expropriate without compensation the white-owned agribusinesses, to give the land to the black agricultural workers who are without any; that would fight for jobs for all through a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work; that would stand up for women's rights, for equal pay for equal work, and for free abortion on demand, which is a hot issue increasingly in South Africa; that will defend democratic rights for gays; that will fight for full citizenship rights for foreign workers in the struggle for the establishment of a black-centered workers

government fighting not only for socialist revolution in South Africa, not only for a socialist federation of southern Africa, but for world revolution.

Especially in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which served as a counterweight to bloody U.S. imperialism, imperialism has been emboldened. From the U.S. imperialist slaughter of over 100,000 Iraqis—not counting the subsequent death by starvation inflicted on the Iraqi masses—to the racist colonialist invasion of Somalia and Haiti, U.S. imperialism and its rulers, Reagan, Bush, Clinton and whoever is elected next, are racist mass murderers. There will be no successful workers revolution in South Africa apart from the struggle for international working-class revolution, centrally in the industrial centers of Western Europe, Japan and North America.

Everything depends upon building a fighting international revolutionary vanguard party that genuinely bases itself upon the call to action of the first Communist International, that workers of the world must unite—we have nothing to lose but our chains. If we are to change the world, this is what must guide us in this fight to free Mumia. We have a world to win against imperialist bandits and mass murderers in the White House, Congress and the Pentagon, the bloodiest ruling class that history has ever known. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

Refuse & Resist Challenges the
Fraternal Order of Police to Debate!

Put Up or Shut Up!

The FOP is constantly running off at the mouth about how the case against Mumia Abu-Jamal is ironclad, and how anybody who protests the railroad doesn't know the facts. At the same time prison authorities have gagged Mumia so he is not allowed talk to the press, Hanging Judge Sabo has gagged the defense and not allowed them to call most of their witnesses, and the FOP (in the finest tradition of Nazi stormtroopers) tries to strongarm any establishment that would hold a pro-Mumia program.

All this is because you don't have a case against Mumia. But if you think different, here's your chance.

We challenge the FOP to stop hiding, and appear where Judge Sabo and the editors of the *Daily News* can't protect you from the embarrassing facts.

The rules would be simple

- 1) a neutral and impartial moderator
- 2) equal speaking time for both sides, each side pick the person or persons they want to present their argument
- 3) a large public venue in Philadelphia, each side gets to distribute one half of the audience tickets.

How about it FOP? Or does the thought of a fair debate and the public learning the facts send you ducking for cover?

We're waiting
Our phone number is 215-387-5213



Grotesque offer from
Refuse & Resist to
"debate" racist FOP:
R&R's militant
posture cloaks
dangerous illusions
in the state.

of comprehension of the bourgeois state and what social power exists to combat it: the power of the working class."

For the entire three weeks that Mumia's lawyers argued the case for a new trial last month, the FOP mobilized an armed contingent of thugs to be in court every day, menacing Jamal's family and supporters and sneering their approval to every contemptuous attack from Sabo against Jamal and his defense team. The day Sabo was finally forced to issue a stay of execution, one of the FOP bullies was quoted by the *New York Times* (8 August) as sneering, "It makes you wonder, maybe we should have executed him at 13th and Locust." When the court recessed on August 15, Mumia's supporters rose and raised fists in his honor, while the cops rose in response, gave the "thumbs down" sign and bayed for Mumia's death. This is the extent of "debate" possible with the FOP!

Many R&R members have already been on the receiving end of such "debates": police beatings and jail. More than sowing illusions in the state, the call to debate the FOP makes a joke out of the racist, murderous intent of the cops who are the strong arm of an increasingly repressive system. The way

zilian capitalism since its inception and key to maintaining superexploitation through one of the world's lowest minimum wages. The recent massacre of landless peasants in the Amazon state of Rondônia once again shows the bloody face of state terror in "democratic" Brazil.

At the Volta Redonda rally, LM speakers underlined the need to mobilize the power of the international working class in the fight to save Jamal: "We of Luta Metalúrgica, together with our brothers the Spartacists, want all the peoples of the earth to be equal. The life of Mumia Abu-Jamal represents the lives of our brothers killed in [racist massacres at] Vigário Geral, Candelária and Carandirú and landless peasants killed by the landlords." LM signs called to "Break with the Popular Front, For a Multiracial Revolutionary Workers Party!" and "For the Internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky."

Rightist forces in Brazil are currently pushing to introduce capital punishment, with Rio de Janeiro's mayor praising New York governor Pataki's pro-death penalty campaign. As a sign at the V.R. protest read: "From Philadelphia to Volta Redonda, Capitalism Means Racist Terror." By joining the international campaign to defend Mumia Abu-Jamal, workers, blacks and youth strike a blow against racist capitalist oppression in Brazil and around the world. ■

Debate the Philly Cops?!

Refuse and Resist: The "Street Fighting" Face of Liberalism

the FOP "debates" its opponents can be seen in the cops' savage beating of Delbert Africa in their attack on a MOVE house in 1978, and in the police bombing of the MOVE commune and murder of eleven black people in 1985.

On August 10, R&R followed up their earlier leaflet by berating the FOP for not showing up to protest outside a fundraiser for Mumia at Local 1199C hospital workers headquarters. Titled "Fraternal Order of Punk-Outs a 'No Show'," the press release states, "By ducking out, the FOP also avoided having to answer the challenge from Refuse & Resist to the FOP to hold a public debate on the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal." What exactly would it mean for these thugs not to "punk out"? In late July, the FOP massed more than 300 armed cops outside the 1199C headquarters, because that union had dared to support Jamal. Some Refuse & Resist members have argued for the debate challenge with the line that "the cops would never accept anyway." But what if they *did* accept? In its August 10 leaflet, R&R is virtually asking for the cops to stage another armed demonstration outside the headquarters of an integrated union.

The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) has thoroughly imbued R&R with the messianic moralism of the RCP's Maoist politics—in reality just another version of the class collaboration preached by Stalin and all his heirs (including Mao). They don't even call to abolish the death penalty, because they support its use under Stalin and Mao!

The R&R members who see their "resistance" politics as being a step on the road to revolutionary politics are sadly mistaken. Those won to struggle under R&R's leadership are never broken from liberal bourgeois ideology. Liberal, moral conceptions of "justice" and "righteousness" replace a scientific analysis of exploitation and a class understanding of the forces necessary to overthrow imperialism. R&R members are sincere anti-racist militants and fighters for Jamal, but from a worldview which does not fundamentally challenge the capitalist status quo.

Some R&R members actually see the multiracial American working class as bought off by the racist rulers and incapable of struggle. As SYC'er Joe Sol said at the August 3 labor/black mobilization for Jamal in New York:

"Over the years, the absence of labor struggle has led many youth to look everywhere but to the power of the multiracial working class—front individual confrontations with the cops, to seeing the most oppressed as the most revolutionary. The leadership of the unions—potential organs of workers power—has been firmly in the stranglehold of the Democratic Party. And any struggles that have broken out have been throttled by the agents of the ruling class in the unions."

The Spartacus Youth Clubs, Sol emphasized, fight to link the struggles of youth against police repression to the social power of the multiracial working class.

In contrast, the RCP feeds off a despairing outlook bred by defeats, seeking to find a substitute for the social power of labor by encouraging and developing a radical-liberal milieu in R&R.

As the international campaign in defense of Jamal is embraced by organizations representing millions of workers, the RCP looks in the other direction, toward the "middle class." In an article headlined "What Will It Take to Save the Life of Mumia Abu-Jamal?" they write:

"The hattle around Mumia has the potential to help turn this around—to change the equation and bring tens of thousands of middle class people into the struggle to defend a revolutionary voice of the oppressed. The imperialists greatly fear this kind of alliance—that's why they put so much emphasis on threatening and ridiculing people from the middle classes (like prominent artists) who take up this cause."

—Revolutionary Worker, 25 June

The fact that prominent artists, intellectuals, black politicians and other liberals were mobilized to protest Jamal's threatened execution is certainly part of the reason Judge Sabo was finally pressured into granting a stay. But to base your strategy on mobilizing such support is to limit the struggle to save Jamal to what the liberals find acceptable. And that's just the kind of class collaboration typified by the American Communist Party. These liberals who have faith in the courts are worried—even death penalty advocates now worry—that Mumia's case could undermine faith in the legal system, of which the death penalty is a key component. Liberals like Jesse Jackson see the execution of Jamal as an ugly blotch on their shining American "justice" system. Who but liberals would have any interest in a debate with the FOP? The liberals want a new trial for Jamal in order to refurbish the image of the racist American state. If you base your strategy on appealing for "middle-class" support, as the RCP does, refurbishing the image of the state is exactly what you do.

The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee see the struggle to save Mumia Abu-Jamal as part of the fight necessary to rearm the American working class to struggle in its own interests against the capitalist state. In our propaganda and in our agitation around Jamal, we emphasize that Mumia's case is no aberration; it's what the death penalty is all about, it's what American "justice" is all about. We point out that the American capitalist order is built on the bedrock of black oppression; the fostering of racism and racial divisions is a key tool in the arsenal of the ruling class.

In waging this political fight to get the working class to take up Mumia's cause as its own, we are building the long-term political class consciousness necessary, not only to unleash the social power of the working class to free Mumia, but to bring down the entire rotten imperialist world order. That's a fight anti-racist youth should want to join. ■

Brazil Protests...

(continued from page 3)

unionists—including CUT president Vicente Paulo da Silva—signed statements demanding "Mumia Abu-Jamal Must Not Die!" A series of black women's groups in São Paulo have taken up Jamal's case; and as support spread three state governors, the Federal District legislature and renowned novelist Jorge Amado issued statements in defense of Jamal. In the last month, smaller events on behalf of Jamal have been held in São Paulo and in the city of Rio de Janeiro, called by the Unified Black Movement and CUT unionists.

Brazil's white capitalist elite has long pushed the myth of "racial democracy," claiming that after slavery was abolished in 1888 by Princess Regent Isabel, the country has been one big family without "race problems." This lie has traditionally been echoed by the dominant forces in the labor movement and virtually the entire spectrum of the Brazilian left. Yet brutal racist oppression—which in recent years has included the systematic murder of thousands of black street children—has been the bedrock of Bra-

Mumia's Freedom...

(continued from page 1)

"Although many radicals and progressives expressed joy at news of the stay, other political analysts saw it as a clever move by a clever judge, who did what higher courts would've done and, in so doing, attempted to blunt the edge off of a growing and militant anti-death penalty movement, in Philadelphia and beyond, thereby stymieing a series of planned demonstrations. "Whatever the reasoning, let us utilize this precious time to build a stronger and broader movement, to not 'stay' one execution, but to halt them all! Down with the racist U.S. death penalty!"

The protests for Jamal; the unabashed bias against him shown by Sabo, which has been reported in newspapers around the world; the brisk sales of Mumia's book, *Live from Death Row*, now in its sixth printing; all this has helped make Jamal's case an embarrassment for the U.S. ruling class. The sight of thousands marching against America's racist "justice" system is particularly untimely as the Democratic White House joins with the Republican Congress to beef up police powers and accelerate the rate of executions. This program was codified in Clinton's "anti-crime" legislation and now by the "counterterrorism" bill, which guts *habeas corpus* protections against wrongful imprisonment, the primary means by which death sentence reversals have been achieved. On July 26, Congress did its bit for death by eliminating funds for 20 regional law centers which specialize in death-penalty appeals.

Jamal has always linked his fight with the struggle to abolish the death penalty. Recently, Jamal pleaded with fellow Pennsylvania inmate Leon Moser to fight his execution, scheduled a few days before Mumia's. Moser, however, was killed by lethal injection on August 16 after the U.S. Supreme Court intervened twice in two days to reverse stays of execution granted by a U.S. district judge who was seeking a hearing on Moser's mental competency. (Moser had earlier been treated at Fairview State Hospital for the criminally insane.)

After the second stay was upheld by an appeals court at 9:00 p.m. on August 16, the U.S. Supreme Court acted at literally the eleventh hour to reverse it. Less than 30 minutes later, Moser was strapped to the gurney and the lethal drugs began to flow, while the federal judge's law clerk was in communication with Governor Ridge's general counsel, pleading to conduct the competency hearing by telephone! The week before, Oklahoma death row prisoner Robert Brecheen, who was scheduled to die in a few hours, tried to commit suicide. Prison guards promptly revived Brecheen...in order to carry out his execution by lethal injection. In Moser and Brecheen's cases, the state majestically declared it would brook no challenge to its sovereign "right" to kill its subjects.

In the wake of the swelling tide of protests for Jamal, important sections of the ruling class would prefer to see him locked away for life instead of killing him and turning him into a martyr. They want to entomb Jamal in what he describes as "prison hell." Philadelphia's daily newspapers have repeatedly editorialized along these lines. They have now been joined by the *Washington Post* as well as the U.S. bourgeoisie's "paper of record," the *New York Times*, which wrote in a 17 August editorial, "[Jamal's] supporters are right to fight his execution." The *Times* continued, "They should be careful, however, in portraying him as the hapless victim of vindictive prosecutors and shoddy defense attorneys.... The trial record tells a different story."

In fact, the 1982 "trial" was a blatant frame-up based on a tissue of lies, presided over by a notorious hanging judge. It was held in a climate of vicious cop persecution of the black MOVE group,



Contingents of workers marched with union banners in Philadelphia rally for Jamal, August 12. Mobilize the power of labor to free Mumia!

who in 1985 were to suffer eleven dead when the Philly cops, in league with the FBI, bombed their West Philly home. Getting Mumia was part of the cops' campaign to destroy MOVE, and was the culmination of years of FBI/cop targeting of Jamal going back to the government's war against the Black Panther Party.

Sabo: "Justice Is Just an Emotional Feeling"

Jamal's defense team, headed by Leonard Weinglass, has been waging a herculean battle against a virulently hostile court to overturn the 1982 conviction and sentencing. The Post-Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) papers forming the core of Jamal's defense paint a clear picture of his innocence and the state's murderous vendetta against him, including evidence that was not available, or not made available, in 1982. A new book published by Common Courage Press, titled *Race for Justice*, includes these papers. An amended version of the PCRA submitted this month includes more new evidence.

On August 15, the PCRA hearing was recessed until September 11, when "findings of fact" will be presented and final oral arguments heard. While the prosecution pushed to have the defense rest its case, Jamal's attorneys argued that potential witnesses are continuing to come forward and must be heard. No one who has sat through any part of the hearings can expect Sabo, who presided over the original trial, to rule in favor of Jamal's appeal. Ever since refusing on July 12 to remove himself from hearing the case, Sabo has tried to thwart Jamal's defense in any way he can. Outrageously, he routinely ruled against defense demands for discovery of information which the prosecution has kept

covered up. Sabo, a retired member of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), oozes with contempt for Jamal and his attorneys, at one point telling Weinglass, "Objection is overruled, whatever it was." Sabo has also threatened to arrest demonstrators outside, whose shouts of "Free Mumia!" and "Sabo Must Go!" have been heard in court.

When Sabo ordered evidentiary proceedings to begin on only two days' notice, Jamal's attorneys appealed to the state Supreme Court, which ordered Sabo to grant an extra week before the hearings began. Sabo quashed over 25 defense subpoenas for witnesses, refused to allow evidence on four claims of constitutional violations, and ruled for the prosecution and against the defense on virtually every objection raised in the hearing. In "L'affaire Mumia," an exasperated *Philadelphia Inquirer* (13 August) editorialized that Sabo "seemed to be fighting the last war—ridiculing, interrupting and generally feeding the worst suspicions of Abu-Jamal's supporters."

On August 2, when Wolkenstein objected to the quashing of subpoenas and the disallowing of any evidence challenging Pennsylvania's death penalty on the grounds of racial bias, Sabo ordered her taken into custody, handcuffed and thrown into jail. In an interview with reporter Sally O'Brien, Jamal, ridiculing the charge that he had disrupted the 1982 trial, pointed out that "what should be clear to everyone is that the behavior of the judge hasn't changed one iota." On August 11, Weinglass was slapped with a \$1,000 fine for taking "too long" to hand over autopsy slides. "Explaining" these blatant attempts at intimidation, Sabo told the defense, "Counselor, justice is just an emotional feeling."

Jamal's attorneys began their case by

calling character witnesses who testified to the enormous respect Mumia was held in as a youth and later as a journalist. One of those testifying, black Pennsylvania State Senator Dave Richardson, a longtime friend of Mumia's, died suddenly of a heart attack on August 18. None of these witnesses were presented when Mumia was railroaded 13 years before. His court-appointed attorney at the time, Anthony Jackson, also testified at the PCRA hearing, confirming defense claims that he was grossly ineffective as counsel and that he was provided almost no resources to conduct a defense.

Also called to the stand was Gary Wakshul, the cop who guarded Jamal from his arrest until he was treated in the hospital. A key element of the 1982 frame-up was the tale that Jamal had "confessed" before entering the hospital emergency room—a "confession" first reported two months after the incident. Wakshul, however, had submitted a report after his shift stating that "the negro male [Mumia] made no comments." On the stand, Wakshul incredibly claimed that he was too shocked by the "confession" to remember it...until a month or two later, at a meeting called by the D.A.'s office to orchestrate the cops' testimony. This was the first time this meeting had ever been made public.

Several witnesses gave evidence that Jamal did not shoot Faulkner. One, William Singletary, said not only that he saw another man shoot the cop and run away, but that Jamal then approached Faulkner asking if he could help him. Singletary described being pressured to submit false testimony. He was held for hours at the Police Administration Building, where cops repeatedly "tore up" or "threw in the trash" the statements they did not approve. Finally, a Detective Green warned him "to write what he wanted me to write [or] they would take me in the elevator and beat me up."

Another witness, William Harmon, who was called to the stand by Sabo over defense objections that they had had virtually no time to interview him, testified that two men shot Faulkner, and that neither was Jamal. In order to denigrate his statements, prosecutors pointed to Harmon's criminal record, and even asked whether the fact that he had often been arrested without serving time had to do with his being a cop informant. But three out of four of the D.A.'s key witnesses in 1982 had criminal records. One of them, the prostitute Cynthia White, had 38 arrests to her name and was allowed to work the streets under police protection after giving their line. In contrast, Harmon, a black man currently in state prison, risks being denied parole for another six years as a result of speaking out.

Yet another witness, Arnold Howard, testified how he and two other black men were arrested the night of the shooting because police thought one of them might be the fleeing shooter. Police tested their hands for nitrates—to see if they had fired a gun—a test they didn't perform on Jamal!



New York, August 3: Labor/black mobilization for Jamal, initiated by Partisan Defense Committee, drew 1,000 people, including contingents from SSEU Local 371, Local 1199 hospital workers, Mall Handlers and Teamsters. Speaking at podium, Jim Webb, president of Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

The final 1982 eyewitness to be called was Robert Chobert, a white cab driver whose license had been revoked and who had a prior conviction for arson, a fact which Sabo kept from the jury in 1982. Chobert first reported to police that he saw Faulkner's assailant run away. This could not have been Jamal, who was found sitting on the curb bleeding from his wound. Chobert changed his testimony for the trial, claiming that Jamal was the shooter. At the PCRA hearing, he admitted that then-prosecutor Joseph McGill had promised to "look into" getting his driver's license back. Chobert never did get it back, but managed nevertheless to drive without a license for the next ten years without being charged!

Central to the evidence exonerating Jamal are 800 pages of FBI files detailing years of FBI/cop surveillance and "dirty tricks" against him, including an attempt to frame him for a murder in Bermuda that occurred while Jamal was working in Philadelphia. Sabo ruled these papers "irrelevant." When Wolkenstein attempted to submit a deposition from a Pennsylvania Corrections Department official showing that privileged correspondence between Jamal and his attorneys had been intercepted, opened and given to the governor's office, Sabo screamed that was not his doing and again threatened her with arrest.

Many who have joined the protests for Jamal center their demands on the call for a "fair trial," which they feel would surely result in reversal of the death sentence. If things were being done strictly "by the book," even the truncated version of Jamal's defense allowed by Sabo should be enough to at least grant his petition for a new trial. According to the *Brady* rule, for example, failure by the prosecution to disclose evidence favorable to the defense is grounds for invalidating a guilty verdict. In addition to the D.A.'s and cops' coercing false testimony from witnesses, the PCRA hearings revealed that a bullet fragment taken from Faulkner's body had "disappeared."

But the capitalist legal system is anything but fair when it comes to such an outspoken black opponent of racism and exploitation. For many youth, what is happening in the courtroom and on the streets is a real eye-opener. The events daily demonstrate the truth of Russian revolutionary Marxist V.I. Lenin's description of bourgeois democracy as "democracy only for the rich, for the minority." In the U.S., with centuries of subjugation of black people first as chattel slaves and then as wage slaves, the state apparatus—cops, courts, prisons—is racist to the core.

In these hearings, Sabo once again led a "legal lynching" posse with the D.A.'s office and the FOP. Early in the hearings, Wolkenstein protested that the FOP contingent in attendance was allowed to waltz into court with its weapons while Mumia's own family was harassed as they passed through a "Frisk-Em" metal-detecting gate. Portraying Mumia's supporters as some sort of terrorist band, Sabo responded that the cops were "protecting" him.

In a column printed in the *New York Times* (13 August) and several other newspapers, D.A. Lynne Abraham, whose office seeks the death sentence more than any other jurisdiction in the U.S., sneers that the notion that Mumia "was a famous journalist whom the police framed to silence his unpopular political views" is "ludicrous." What's ludicrous is that Abraham would write this when Philadelphia newspapers are filled daily with exposés of police frame-ups, corruption and violence. Currently, over 1,100 arrests may be overturned as a result of investigations into the 39th precinct in North Philadelphia alone.

Anyone coming out for Jamal in Philly is a potential target of the cops. The largest union in the city, hospital and health care workers Local 1199C, was besieged by 300 gun-toting cops for daring to rent its hall for a Jamal benefit in July. In Los Angeles, Boulder, Colorado, New

York City and other places, dozens have been arrested for demonstrating for Jamal, some of whom face felony charges. We demand the dropping of all charges against these protesters!

Frame-ups, cop terror and judicial raiding are inherent in the capitalist system of racist injustice. It will take massive social struggle, tapping the power of the organized working class, to win his freedom. Nothing short of workers revolution will destroy this repressive machinery—and with it the racist death penalty—and open up the vista of freedom from oppression and human degradation.

For United-Front Defense of Jamal

The protests calling to stop the execution of Jamal have made this issue front-page news around the world and a political question of growing importance. French president Jacques Chirac directed his ambassador in Washington "to take, in a strictly humanitarian sense, and respecting American law, any step that might help to save the life of Mr. Mumia Abu-Jamal." German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel wrote to Pennsylvania gov-

ernor Ridge to protest Jamal's impending execution as well as the death penalty. The Belgian government and Italian parliament called for stopping the execution. In South Africa, where there have been weekly protests outside the U.S. consulate in Cape Town, president Nelson Mandela, pointing to the recent abolition of the death penalty there, wrote to Governor Ridge to "use your power as Governor of the State of Pennsylvania to commute the death sentence imposed upon Mumia Abu-Jamal." There continue to be demonstrations throughout Germany and other European countries.



AP

Jamal entering court in handcuffs. Court artist's depiction of defense attorney Rachel Wolkenstein being dragged to jail in handcuffs on orders of "hanging judge" Sabo.



Susan Schary

Jamal's fellow writers have increasingly been speaking out for him. Journalists unions in Germany, Britain and South Africa have made Jamal an honorary member, as has the National Writers Union, organized by the UAW, in the U.S. The International PEN writers group held emergency press conferences in Paris and New York on August 1. Recently, the Union of Journalists of Cuba wrote: "Judicial monstrosities like those in Mumia Abu-Jamal's case are inconsistent with those who describe the American society as a model of respect to freedom of speech, of conscience and other basic human rights." Such solidarity is like garlic to a vampire in the case of the wretched National Association of Black Journalists in the U.S., which refuses to even demand a new trial for Jamal, calling instead for "judicial review" of his case.

The Partisan Defense Committee has always stressed the centrality of mobilizing the labor movement in the fight for Jamal. In early August, a series of united-front demonstrations initiated by the PDC from New York, Oakland, Chicago and L.A. to Toronto and Vancouver, Canada and Melbourne and Sydney, Aus-

tralia brought out key trade unions which pledged to continue this struggle. A 1,000-strong demonstration in New York on August 3 drew contingents from Social Services Employees Union Local 371, AFSCME District Council 37, Local 1199 health and hospital workers union, Teamsters Local 808 and others. Among the more than 700 who marched the same day in Oakland, California were contingents from the ILWU longshore union and several locals of the SEIU service workers, along with speakers from the Alameda County and San Francisco Central Labor Councils.

The New York City rally tied the fight for Mumia with the struggle against racist cop terror at home. Margarita Rosario, whose son Anthony and nephew Hilton Vega were executed by cops, shot in the back while lying face down on the floor, spoke movingly: "We want justice for Mumia as much as I want justice for my son." In Oakland, Larry Wright, co-chair of the stewards council of ILWU Local 10, compared Jamal's case with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, executed in 1953 in a climate of anti-Communist hysteria, calling it a "political attempted execu-

Where to Take the Fight to Free Mumia

tion" that is racist and "against the working class.... That's why the Longshoremen have taken a strong stand to free Mumia." United-front actions, where organizations can speak in their own name and carry their own signs and banners, are critical in building mass support for Jamal's freedom. Unfortunately, in a clear act of political censorship, organizers of the August 12 Philadelphia demonstration, initiated by the National People's Campaign (NPC), refused speakers for the PDC, Refuse & Resist and MOVE, all of whom have long been active in Mumia's defense. At the same time, a representative of crackpot ultrarightist Lyndon LaRouche was allowed to speak. In response to the exclusion of the PDC from a rally called by the "Coalition to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal" in Vancouver, a vice president of the local postal workers union wrote: "Political exclusionism is not the way to achieve victory in this case. Especially at a time when we need the broadest base of forces dedicated to Mumia's defense."

NPC is making Mumia's cause a focus of their "caravan" to Washington to plead that the Democrats fight the Republicans' "Contract With America."

In Jamal's case, it's not hard to see the bankruptcy of this strategy, as the courts conspire with the governor's mansion and a national cop network to ram through Jamal's execution. But what strategy should militants adopt? Following the August 3 New York rally, there was a spirited debate at the AFSCME DC 37 hall after a screening of the video, "From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal." Various anarchists, Refuse & Resist supporters and others desperately looking at the approaching August 17 execution date advocated civil disobedience and symbolic acts like shutting off lights across the city at a given time. What the "radical" proponents of "CD" share with liberals is a lack of any perspective of mobilizing mass support for Mumia. In particular, they despair of bringing out the forces of organized labor, which has been hamstringed by its pro-capitalist leadership while the bosses have decimated the unions in their war against working people and the poor. It

is precisely through getting the unions to fight for the masses of the ghettos and barrios that labor will steel itself for its own battles.

The core of the New York labor-centered rally on August 3 were the black- and Hispanic-centered unions. Several union speakers at the rally pointed to their own experience in fighting for freedom for Angela Davis in the 1970s, and in fighting union-busting today. As a PDC speaker at the rally remarked: "The struggle for workers' rights and black rights must go forward together or we will all fall back separately." This sentiment was echoed by Larry Adams, president of Mail Handlers Union Local 300, who declared: "To the degree that the trade unions take up this struggle is the degree to which we will forge the necessary social force to save Mumia, all political prisoners, and to in fact rid society of all forms of oppression and exploitation."

The labor-centered demonstrations initiated by the PDC have laid the basis for further organizing in the unions with the aim of pulling out many tens of thousands of workers in alliance with the minority poor. The need to unleash labor/black power is inseparable from the question of revolutionary leadership of the working class. As Don Alexander of the Spartacist League told the August 3 rally in Oakland, "The fight to free Mumia can be a turning point in reviving the labor movement, which is on its back because it is chained to the parties of the rich." What is needed, Alexander continued, is "a complete break from the Democratic Party and the pro-capitalist union leadership, and the forging in struggle of a revolutionary workers party."

Spread the campaign—Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

One-Day Strike Shuts West Coast Ports

SAN FRANCISCO—On August 7, longshoremen shut down every major port on the West Coast in a one-day strike that took the bosses by surprise. At 23 ports from San Diego to Vancouver—including the San Francisco Bay Area, L.A. and Long Beach (the busiest port in the country)—freight ground to a halt. The stoppage "demonstrated a clout that organized labor has lost in other industries," the *Los Angeles Times* (9 August) lamented, describing the reaction of shipping employers. This was indeed a small taste of the enormous potential power of the integrated working class.

A statement of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) cited "long-simmering disputes" with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), the shipping bosses' organization, including "intentions to cease operations at certain small ports," threats against ILWU clerks' jobs, and a drive to privatize those ports now publicly owned, as well as harassment of unionists. The strike came five days after an arbitrator upheld

disciplinary action against two former union officials and members of ILWU Local 19 in Seattle. Pat Vukich, former local president, and Wayne Erickson, former business agent, were suspended for 15 days following a provocation by two foremen brought in from Tacoma—one of whom reportedly wore a wire to set up the union members.

The power of the ILWU is the product of hard class struggle. But the PMA's attacks on the union have been greatly encouraged by decades of deals struck by union tops bargaining away the union's basic strength, from Harry Bridges' M&M ("Mechanization and Modernization") contract in 1961 to the last contract in 1993, which codified a vicious four-tier wage system. In 1992, a serious union-hustling attack by Southern Pacific—which fired 350 ILWU members at a key container yard at Carson in Southern California—was met with a "sickout" to blow off steam without a serious attempt to shut down the facility and defend the union jobs. What's

needed is to mobilize the union's militant power in defense of longshoremen and on behalf of the exploited and oppressed.

In particular divisions in the union, which are fostered by the union bureaucracy and exploited by the PMA, must be erased with hard class struggle. "Casual" workers, often working only a few hours each month, spend years without benefits or union membership before they can become "B" men—who in turn must wait additional years to become "A" men with full union rights. The ruling class is on a racist rampage against blacks and immigrants as part of an assault on all working people and the poor. Nowhere is the power of the working class to stand against them clearer than in the strategic, heavily integrated West Coast longshore union. There must be a fight for jobs for all—including "B" men and casuals—at full pay and pensions, with special training and recruitment programs for minorities and women.

At the time of the 1992 multiracial upheaval over the acquittal of the racist

cops who brutally battered Rodney King, we called on the ILWU and other key unions to undertake political strike action against the martial law imposed by Republican governor Pete Wilson (with the agreement of Democratic L.A. mayor Tom Bradley). But under a leadership wedded to the racist, capitalist Democratic Party, the ability of the union even to defend itself is hampered. The ILWU tops have erected election billboards for mayoral candidate Willie Brown atop the Local 10 hall in San Francisco. The favorite of the SF Labor Council, Brown is notorious for brokering the California budget cuts that have slashed welfare and dealt such a blow to the state teachers unions.

The subordination of the unions to the bosses' parties and the capitalist courts and anti-labor laws is precisely what has produced the unions' "loss of clout." A leadership must be forged in struggle against that strategy, to make the unions what they should be—weapons of the workers and oppressed in the fight for power.

Poison...

(continued from page 2)

early 1980s—have pursued a singular (and hostile) obsession with every word, every speech, every meeting and intervention of the Spartacist League with the aim of demonstrating our supposed "bureaucratic degeneracy."

Even now when virtually every radical newspaper in the world has banner headlines on Jamal, the most recent issue of 1917 features only a photo box of themselves at a Jamal demonstration in Montreal. Perhaps they feel tender about mentioning that Jamal is a supporter of the MOVE organization. The BT was horrified when the New York SL invited MOVE supporters to speak at a memorial meeting for the victims of the 1985 bombing of the Philly MOVE commune.

The BT had not a word to say in protest against the racist murder of eleven black people at the hands of the Philadelphia police, the FBI and the Reagan White House, who all collaborated in the bombing. The BT's only "comment" was an article in the very first issue of 1917 (Winter 1986) attacking the Spartacist League for not making polemics against MOVE philosophy the center of our memorial meeting.

Now, the BT accuses us of somehow trying to hog the campaign for Jamal's freedom for our own organizational and sectarian advantage. Their letter, which was distributed at a recent Spartacist forum in New York, alleges that the SL and PDC think of ourselves as "Mumia's only real defenders." Quite the contrary, since we took up this case in 1987 we knew only too well that we would have to get much broader forces involved if there was going to be any chance of saving Jamal's life, much less winning his freedom.

This has finally started to happen, partly due to our efforts but also due to the efforts of others who got involved earlier on, and particularly as the result of the publication—again through the work of others—of Jamal's book, *Live from Death Row*. Within our frame of reference when we took up this case, we have been successful in making Jamal's cause known domestically and internationally as a compelling example of what the death penalty is all about in the U.S., and in getting other social forces involved in the fight to save his life. In other words, a battle has been joined.

A myriad of other groups and individ-

uals are now working for Mumia's freedom. And certainly nobody ever stood in the way of the BT getting involved or taking up Jamal's defense in their own right. Yet now they whine that our "approach" to mobilizing united-front actions in defense of Jamal "has been more reminiscent of the Third Period Stalinist 'united front from below' which allowed Hitler to take power in Germany!"

No one could ever accuse these guys of having a sense of proportion even in their slander-mongering. Speaking of united-front mobilizations against the fascists, we can't help but note that the BT has generally absented itself from the mass labor/minority demonstrations initiated by the SL and the PDC that have stopped the Klan and Nazis. But they did spill a lot of ink denouncing us for abandoning trade-union work in favor of "community organizing" when we initiated labor/black struggle leagues linked to the SL, attempting to build on the success of these anti-fascist actions.

The BT's counterposition of their idea of organized labor to the black plebeian masses echoes the racist poison spewed by the AFL-CIO bureaucrats. In our fight to mobilize the social power of the multiracial working class in Jamal's defense, we have emphasized that for labor to become a fighting force against union-busting and strikebreaking it must actively champion the defense of the desperately impoverished populations of the ghettos and barrios.

The BT writes that we are "uncomfortable" with trying to build the broadest possible campaign in Jamal's defense because the SL leadership is afraid of bringing "SL members into wider contact with other leftists." We don't know exactly what kind of contact the BT has in mind here (except that they have no objection when the International Socialist Organization "contacts" our members' heads with their fists). At the united-front rallies and demonstrations initiated by the PDC in Jamal's defense, we have welcomed all those, whatever their political views, who have come together behind the slogans "Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" to participate with their own propaganda, placards, chants and speakers—including the BT.

Another letter from the International Bolshevik Tendency to our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain argues that we have undermined Mumia's defense by not setting up a "united-front com-

mittee." We don't know what world the BT lives in, but we have a lot more grasp of social reality and our own social weight than to believe that a "Free Mumia Committee" of ourselves, the BT and a bunch of other small leftist organizations would be able to rally the social forces necessary to win Mumia's freedom.

In any case, to argue as the IBT does in its letter to the SL/B, that the absence of such a committee kept other left organizations from really mobilizing for a PDC-initiated demonstration in defense of Jamal that was held in London on July 22 is laughable. The very same day, at the very same time, these very same "leftists" had mobilized their forces for a pro-imperialist demonstration calling to "Stop the Rape of Bosnia." This was a quite conscious decision for all of these groups whose demonstration was called some time after the Jamal protest had been widely advertised. Remarkably, but not at all surprisingly, the BT has not a word to say against those whose own perceived sectarian advantage and capitulationist political priorities led them to counterpose their "Workers Aid for Bosnia" march to a demonstration in defense of Jamal.

Other than themselves, the New York BT takes up the cudgels for the International Socialist Organization (ISO), taking great offense at our statement against those "'socialists' whose venomous hatred of the Trotskyist Spartacist League far outweighs their professed defense of Jamal." Well, you don't even

have to take our word for it. The ISO puts it quite baldly in their own words in the recent "I.S. Notes" of their Canadian section:

"Internationally, there has been growing support for the campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal from the death penalty. Unfortunately, until very recently it was completely dominated by the Parisian Defense Ctee, a Spartacist League front group and some equally unfriendly anarchist groupings.

"With the approach of the date set for Abu-Jamal's execution, Aug. 17, there has been an opening to organize around the issue—preferably without the PDC."

The ISO's means of trying to get rid of the SL and PDC can be seen in their vicious thug attack on our comrades outside an ISO conference in Chicago. This the BT ob-so-politely describes as "our recent altercation" with the ISO. Now the BT's sudden interest in Jamal's case comes at a time when the PDC has been censored from speaking at events in defense of Jamal in Philadelphia and Vancouver.

We are revolutionary communists, and absent a broader tide of revolutionary social struggle, larger forces to our right will try to exclude us from any issue they choose to interest themselves in. Conveniently, now the BT pops up, providing arguments in advance for those leftists, anti-communist liberals and black nationalists who, now that the case has become popular internationally, would like to see us pushed aside. The BT says it's all our fault. What does this say about them? ■

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Balkans...

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complained bitterly that they were ordered to "retreat without firing a bullet."

Unlike 1991, the Serbian army did not intervene on the side of the vastly outnumbered and outgunned Krajina Serbs, nor did the Bosnian Serb forces send in reinforcements. As it attempts to strike a deal with the imperialists aimed at lifting the suffocating embargo of Serbia, the Belgrade regime has grown increasingly frustrated with the hardline stance of the Croatian and Bosnian Serb leaders. Milosevic sent in a regular Serbian army general to take command of the Krajina army and also moved to assert control of the Bosnian Serb high command, while sidelining ultranationalist Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic. On August 4, an editorial in Belgrade's government-run newspaper, *Politika*, declared that the Krajina Serb leadership was no longer fit to hold office. A day later, it no longer did.

The outlines of a Serb/Croat deal aimed at dividing up Bosnia with imperialist blessings, first discussed by Milosevic and Tudjman as far back as 1991, have been clear for months. In late April, the Croatian army overran the Serb-populated region of western Slavonia, again with little resistance, driving out 15,000 Serbs. Then, in July, Bosnian Serb forces took the UN "safe havens" of Zepa and Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia near the Croatian border, expelling some 40,000 Muslims. Now, with Tudjman's "ethnic purification" of Krajina, there has been a big step toward compacting the Serb, Croat and Slavic Muslim peoples into distinct territories.

Western imperialist politicians who for years have hypocritically droned on about Bosnia's "multiethnic democracy" are now rejoicing how the map of ex-Yugoslavia has suddenly become "tidier." As the *Washington Post* (10 August) reported: "The Clinton administration is hoping to persuade the Western allies to support a new carve-up of Bosnia that would technically preserve the nation's existence but effectively divide it between neighbors Croatia and Serbia." The Muslim-clericalist regime of Alija Izetbegovic would be left with a thin sliver in the middle, a "Greater Sarajevo" (as a *New York Times* op-ed piece by Ronald Steel headlined), an entity which could easily be gobbled up by Croatia and Serbia. Even as the NATO imperialists were vowing to defend the

Muslim enclave around Gorazde with massive air attacks against the Serbs, one official glibly remarked, "The eastern enclaves were always just bargaining chips for Sarajevo, though we could never say so" (*New York Times*, 2 August).

They can say so now because the imperialists think they've got a deal. After initially denouncing the Croatian offensive, France and Britain—which have the largest "peacekeeping" contingents in Bosnia—have now endorsed Washington's proposal. Returning from a meeting with his patrons in Moscow, Milosevic declared he will only deal with the Americans, and even the Bosnian Serb "foreign minister" says the U.S. plan "could be acceptable for the Bosnian Serbs." But in the volatile Balkan powder keg, nothing is certain. Fighting continues to rage in at least three areas, and if Tudjman were to go for eastern Slavonia, for example, it would likely ignite an all-out war between Serbia and Croatia—with Serbia holding the military preponderance.

Even if the Western powers and Russia succeed in imposing a fragile "peace" settlement on the Balkan peoples, it would necessarily perpetuate national oppression and injustice, creating the conditions for future wars when the internal and international balance of forces change. The forced population transfers of over 2.5 million people to date, seething with sentiment for revenge, can only fuel further fratricidal conflict and is already being manipulated to that end by the nationalist regimes. Thus, Milosevic hopes to channel thousands of the Krajina refugees into the predominantly ethnic Albanian region of Kosovo, long a flash point of tension between Serbia and Albania. As we have insisted from the outset of the bloody Balkan conflict, the only just resolution for all the peoples in the region lies in revolutionary struggle of the working masses to sweep away their respective counterrevolutionary nationalist regimes through socialist revolution.

For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

In the new "tell it like it is" posture of the imperialist press aimed at justifying "American Realpolitik," the *New York Times* (18 August) observed: "The wars of Yugoslavia's destruction have essentially involved violent shifts of population aimed at carving ethnically uniform swaths of territory from the ruins of a mixed society." We have insisted on this point for years (see "'Ethnic Cleansing' and Nationalist War," WV No. 580, 16

July 1993) in debunking the lies of the *Times* and other imperialist mouthpieces, which placed sole responsibility for the Balkan bloodbath on supposed "genocide" by the Serbs, grotesquely equating this with the Nazi Holocaust. In fact, it was Tudjman's Ustaša antecedents who as the Nazis' allies murdered hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Communists.

Much of the fake left also joined in the imperialist crusade over "poor little Bosnia." In the case of the United Secretariat and other self-styled "Trotskyist" groups in West Europe, this took the form of open material support to the Muslim nationalist regime in Sarajevo through "Workers Aid for Bosnia," a stalking horse for direct imperialist intervention against the Serbs. Yet these "socialist humanitarians" turn a blind eye to the imperialist economic blockade of Serbia, which has devastated the country, leaving almost two million jobless and particularly victimizing the old, the very young and the poor.

The nationalist civil wars were a direct antecedent to and by-product of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Yugoslav deformed workers state. Under capitalism, which is based on the nation-state, the conflicting national claims of geographically interpenetrated peoples (as in the Balkans, Israel/Palestine, the Caucasus, etc.) can only be resolved through forced population transfers—or simply genocide. The only just alternative requires proletarian power, eliminating capitalism and laying the basis for an internationalist solution. The victory of Tito's Communist Partisans against the German Nazis and Croat and Serb nationalists in World War II made possible the relative ethnic harmony which existed in Bosnia before capitalist restoration. Yet only the extension of socialist revolution to the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe could provide the economic basis for genuine national equality in the relatively impoverished Balkans.

As it was, Tito's "market socialism," which opened Yugoslavia to increasing imperialist economic penetration, reinforced and widened disparities between the various regions, fueling resurgent nationalism and eventually paving the way for capitalist restoration. Finally, in 1991, Germany provoked the secession of Croatia, triggering the breakup of Yugoslavia and the nationalist slaughter that continues. The German Fourth Reich aims to secure neocolonial control in the region to ensure its economic

Drang nach Osten (drive to the East).

If the Serbs have been more effective in their pursuit of "ethnic cleansing," it is not only because they began with superior firepower, but also because they were dispersed more widely through the region. Serbs controlled most of the Bosnian countryside because they were largely peasants, while the Slavic Muslim population was concentrated in urban areas. Also, the internal administrative borders of the Yugoslav republics were drawn by Tito as part of a conscious policy of diluting the influence of the predominant nationality, the Serbs. Thus forced population transfers are inherent in the process of recreating capitalist states in the region. And the Croat and Bosnian Muslim nationalists have been no less ruthless than the Serbs when they had the chance. Since 1991, the Zagreb regime has expelled well over half a million Serbs, and many more Muslims, from its territory, while the far weaker Sarajevo regime has made its intentions clear by increasingly consolidating around Muslim clericalism.

As it was before World War I, the Balkan region has again become a slaughterhouse of peoples and a cockpit for escalating imperialist rivalries which will ultimately lead to another interimperialist world war. The bourgeoisie today trumpets the "death of communism"—actually the death of Stalinism, which in the end dragged the multiethnic peoples of Yugoslavia back to the slaughterhouse of capitalism. The fate of Yugoslavia is a clear example of the need for communism, for international workers revolution. It was out of the carnage of World War I, triggered by an earlier round of nationalist bloodletting in the Balkans, that Lenin's Bolsheviks succeeded in leading the Russian workers to power in the world's first socialist revolution.

Reflecting growing war-weariness among the peoples of ex-Yugoslavia, one Bosnian Serb soldier exclaimed, "Now we are fed up with war, we want this finished but we don't know how to end it" (*New York Times*, 14 August). National antagonisms can be overcome only through working-class unity in struggle against the new exploiters—the imperialists and their local agents. The first step toward a just and lasting peace is the formation of revolutionary workers parties capable of winning the masses away from the counterrevolutionary nationalist demagogues on all sides in the fight for a Socialist Federation of the Balkans as part of a Socialist United States of Europe. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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

U.S., Germany Sponsor Croatian Offensive



Invasion of Krajina by fascist Croatian regime led to "ethnic cleansing" of 200,000 Serbs.

"Croatia's Army Redraws the Balkan Map," headlined the *Wall Street Journal* triumphantly. Encouraged and supported by the United States and Germany, Croatia's successful offensive against the Serb-populated region of Krajina early this month marks a major shift in the nationalist wars which have accompanied the breakup of Yugoslavia. Some 200,000 Serbs have been driven from the land where their ancestors lived for centuries, by far the biggest single act of "ethnic cleansing" in the four-year-long Balkan bloodbath. Frightened and desperate, they clogged the highways in flight as their possessions were looted and their homes torched by the Croatian army. Even as they retreated, the refugees were beaten and fired at, including several elderly Serbs who were gunned down at pointblank range.

Its imperialist sponsors in Washington and Bonn hailed Croatia's bloody escalation of war and the brutal uprooting of an entire population as a step toward "peace." Within days, President Clinton dispatched foreign policy adviser Anthony Lake on a tour of European capitals to secure NATO backing for a U.S.-brokered, imperialist-imposed settlement on the feuding Balkan nationalist regimes. Unwilling to risk the life of even a single American soldier in the Balkan quagmire, the U.S. has until now been stymied in its desire to project its influence in the Balkans and teach a bloody lesson to recalcitrant Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic. But particularly with the Republican-controlled Congress pushing for a unilateral lifting

of the (nonexistent) embargo on military aid to Bosnia and the continuing stalemate in ex-Yugoslavia looming as an issue in the '96 elections, the Clinton administration finally decided to let the fascist regime of Franjo Tudjman in Croatia do the dirty work for it.

A Clinton aide cynically admitted that Zagreb's invasion had been given "an amber light tinted green." "Operation Storm" was supervised from start to finish by the U.S. Despite the phony UN arms embargo, the U.S. has long been funneling arms and "advisers" to Croatia and Bosnia. The London *Independent* (7 August) reported: "After the 1991 [Serb-

Croat] war, the US Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General John Galvin, was in contact with the Croatian defence ministry, and another US general, Major-General John Sewall, has advised on military organisation."

Since the end of last year, some 15 high-ranking "former" U.S. military officers—headed by Major General Richard Griffiths, who "retired" only last December—have been working with the Croatian army under contract to a "private" Pentagon asset called Military Professional Resources, Inc. General Sewall has been counseling the Bosnian Muslim army on battle tactics. Meanwhile, for

the first time since the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia, German soldiers are now on the ground in Croatia, while last week German Tornado jets based in northern Italy across the Adriatic began flying overhead. Ironically, the base at Piacenza was used by the Luftwaffe in World War II.

Moreover, the U.S. ambassador to Zagreb, Peter Galbraith, was present at the mid-July meeting when Croatian and Bosnian Muslim officials agreed to launch the Krajina offensive under the pretext of lifting the siege by Serbian and dissident Muslim forces of Bihać in western Bosnia. As Croatian artillery bombarded the Krajina Serb center of Knin on August 4, U.S. Navy warplanes took out a Serb missile battery near the town. At the same time, U.S. war secretary William Perry openly alibied Washington and Bonn's Croatian clients:

"The Croatian government has an obvious frustration with the move of the Bosnian Serbs and the Krajina Serbs into Bihać, and their actions are intended, among other things, to stop that."

This was echoed by German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel: "One cannot forget that Croatian patience was severely tested by years of Serbian aggression."

U.S., Germany Back Drive for Greater Croatia

In the ethnic civil wars that have raged in the former Yugoslavia since 1991, proletarian revolutionaries have opposed all the competing nationalist forces, as well as all imperialist intervention, including under a UN flag, and denouncing the starvation embargo of Serbia. In recent months, we have noted that NATO's insertion of beelie-up military strike forces has pointed to a change in the character of the war, "subordinating the Croat and Bosnian Muslim armies to an imperialist war against the Serbs" (*WV* No. 624, 2 June). The recent Croatian offensive has clearly been controlled by German and U.S. imperialism. At the same time, the offensive was marked by little real fighting on the ground—pointing to an imperialist-brokered deal between Zagreb and Belgrade.

As he strutted through "liberated" Knin, now hedged with the Croatian coat of arms lifted from the World War II fascist Ustashi regime, Tudjman crowed that his army had ensured "the stability of the Croatian state for centuries to come." But the success of Tudjman's blitzkrieg was not simply a matter of Croat military prowess and imperialist backing. In fact, the Croatian sweep encountered virtually no resistance. As the Croats prepared to invade Knin, "the entire Krajina Serb army seemed to have vanished" (*Time*, 14 August). Soldiers

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Victory to Detroit Newspaper Strike!

On August 19, club-swinging cops attacked a picket line of 300 striking workers and their supporters outside a printing plant in the Sterling Heights suburb of Detroit. Four picketers were arrested as police repeatedly charged the line to run scab delivery trucks through. Some 2,500 pressmen, reporters, truck drivers and clerks have been on strike against the *Detroit News* and the *Free Press* since July 13. Drop the charges! Mobilize Detroit labor to shut down the presses and stop the scabs! For mass, militant pickets that nobody and nothing crosses!

