

## Only Socialist Revolution Can End Imperialist War

# U.S. Rulers Target Serbian People

MAY 10—U.S. jets dropped anti-personnel cluster bombs on the Serbian city of Nis last week, devastating a hospital and an outdoor market, killing 15 people and wounding 70. This gruesome atrocity exemplified the U.S./NATO rulers' intensifying war of terror against the people of Serbia. The following day, three NATO missiles crashed into the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, killing three people and injuring many more. In recent days, U.S./NATO war jets have repeatedly bombed generators and power grids. While issuing ever more perfunctory "apologies" for inflicting "collateral damage"—the slaughter of civilians by the hundreds—the imperialists barely even try to disguise the obvious fact that *the aim of the U.S./NATO bombing is to terrorize the Serbian population.*

The Italian newsweekly *L'Espresso* (6 May) reports that NATO has now implemented "phase three" of its bombing campaign, specifically targeting water and power supplies and telephone networks with the aim of inflicting maximum suffering in the hope that the population will turn against President Slobodan Milosevic. The article noted:

"Five weeks of bombing has brought Yugoslavia back to a pre-industrial era, with the destruction of factories, refineries, streets, bridges, railways, communications and command centers.... At the



Reuters

**U.S./NATO terror bombing is aimed at inflicting maximum suffering on civilian population of Serbia. U.S. jets dropped anti-personnel cluster bombs on city of Nis, killing 15 and destroying homes, a hospital and street market.**

## All U.S./NATO/UN Troops Out of the Balkans Now!

end of April, it was announced that a campaign had been launched against the aqueducts to destroy the system of water distribution. (Yugoslavs will begin to drink water from the Danube, and thousands of newborns will die and come down with dysentery—a scheme which was already tried and applied in Iraq.)

This underlines the cynicism of the imperialists' "human rights" pretenses. This is an imperialist war of domination against a small, dependent country in

which the international proletariat has a side, against the U.S./NATO rulers. As we wrote last issue: "The interests of U.S. workers lie not in saving the skins of this gang of strikebreakers, racists and warmongers, but rather in seeing them defeated. That means opposing the imperialist war aims of U.S. capitalism and standing in military defense of Serbia against U.S./NATO attack, demanding the withdrawal of all UN/NATO troops

domestic product will likely exceed that caused in World War II" (Inter Press Service). At the same time, the *L'Espresso* article reports that Serbian military losses have been limited to a couple of planes, a few tanks, one missile battery and some radar installations. In other

*continued on page 6*

## As NATO Bombs Factories

# Campaign Launched for Aid to Yugoslav Workers

On the night of April 9, NATO forces bombed the Zastava car factory in Kragujevac, Yugoslavia, *knowing that the plant was protected by a "live*

## Donate Now!

*shield" of workers.* Tens of workers were killed, scores were injured, many of them seriously, and the power plant supplying heat to the city's hospital, schools and residences was also bombed to bits. The Zastava plant employed some 20,000 workers. They

and another 60,000 from 200 companies linked to the plant are now out of work. "We are out of bread now. I hope that NATO will stop bombing us," said one of the injured workers. In response to this deliberate act of imperialist murder, workers organized by the Italian COBAS (Rank and File Committee) in Milano's Alfa Romeo plant staged a strike and decided there to

*continued on page 7*



WV Photo

**Spartacist League protest in Chicago: For proletarian revolutionary struggle against imperialist war!**



# Free Mumia Now!

## New Papers Filed in U.S. Supreme Court



WV Photo

With his fight for life and freedom posed with ever greater urgency, death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court on April 22 to hear his appeal to overturn his 1982 frame-up conviction on false charges of killing a Philadelphia policeman. The petition for a writ of *certiorari* calls for a review of last October's Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision, which upheld his conviction under hanging judge Albert Sabo and rubber-stamped Sabo's dismissal of a 1995 appeal by Jamal. The stay of execution which Mumia won toward the end of the 1995 appeal hearing holds while the current petition is pending.

As the new court papers state, Jamal "maintains his innocence and has, since his conviction, been able to uncover an array of evidence powerfully supporting his long-standing insistence that he is a victim of a monumental injustice." Yet at each step of the way, the racist courts have tossed aside overwhelming evidence of Jamal's innocence and police and prosecutorial misconduct as they prepare the legal lynching of this eloquent spokesman for the oppressed. (For

more on this, see *Black History* No. 15, August 1998, "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!")

Jamal's petition specifically challenges the outrageous violation of his Sixth Amendment rights to represent himself and be present in the courtroom during the 1982 trial. Jamal, who had prepared his own case, was stripped of his right to defend himself in both the jury selection and trial procedures and saddled instead with an attorney totally unprepared and unwilling to take over the defense. After Jamal protested this trampling of his rights, Sabo went on to order him removed from large portions of the trial. As a result, Mumia was tried virtually *in absentia*, kept in a jail cell without even a video or audio feed to allow him to follow the proceedings in which his life was at stake.

Jamal's removals from the courtroom came during critical moments in the trial, including the testimony of the central prosecution witness, Cynthia White, who had been coerced by the cops, and the presentation of the prosecution's phony ballistics evidence. When the prosecution presented a security guard who claimed

that Jamal had confessed shortly after the shooting, Jamal rose to demonstrate that the story was a total fabrication, asking why the guard had taken two months to report the "confession" to police. Once again, Jamal was dragged from the courtroom. He was also barred from a critical closed-door hearing to examine two police officers about a police report stating that Jamal had been shot by "arriving police reinforcements"—not by the slain officer, as the prosecution claimed.

A talented print and broadcast journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his searing exposés of racist injustice, Mumia had wide experience covering Philadelphia courts. The judge, prosecutors and cops feared that Jamal would be a strong advocate in the courtroom. The petition gives a taste of this in quoting one of Jamal's statements at the trial:

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

The wholesale denial of Jamal's rights in the sham 1982 "trial" and at every legal appeal since only underscores the impossibility of his receiving a "fair trial" from the racist courts. Nor can fighters for Mumia's freedom look for justice from the U.S. Supreme Court, which has been instrumental in speeding up executions and gutting federal *habeas*

*corpus* rights—from the 1987 *McCleskey* decision that evidence of racial bias in death sentences was "irrelevant" to the grotesque 1993 *Herrera* ruling that the execution of an innocent man would not violate constitutional rights! While Mumia and his lawyers pull every available legal lever on his behalf, what is crucially necessary is to bring to bear the social power of the integrated labor movement at the head of all opponents of racist capitalist injustice. Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!

\* \* \*

**Join the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Contact the Partisan Defense Committee. In New York: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099; phone (212) 406-4252; E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com. In Chicago: PDC, P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867; phone (312) 454-4931. In the Bay Area: PDC, P.O. Box 77462, San Francisco, CA 94107-0462; phone (510) 839-0852.**

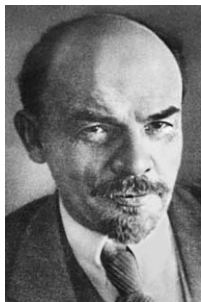
**Urgently needed contributions for Mumia's legal defense, which are tax-deductible, should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation, earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense," and sent to the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.■**



TROTSKY

### Defeat Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

*As the U.S. and its NATO partners rain terror down on Serbia, the reformist and centrist left either openly supports the war aims of the imperialists or issues impotent appeals to the bloody capitalist rulers to "stop the bombing." In this, they follow in the footsteps of the social democrats of the Second International, who supported their bourgeoisies in World War I and today administer many of the European capitalist*



LENIN

*governments waging war against Serbia. Our attitude is fundamentally counterposed. Like Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, we understand that the only way to put an end to imperialist war is through socialist revolution to sweep away the capitalist rulers and place the proletariat in power.*

Conferences with so-called programmes of "action" have till now confined themselves to announcing a more or less outspoken programme of sheer pacifism. Marxism is not pacifism. Of course, the speediest possible termination of the war must be striven for. However, the "peace" demand acquires a proletarian significance only if a *revolutionary* struggle is called for. Without a series of revolutions, what is called a democratic peace is a philistine Utopia. The purpose of a real programme of action can be served only by a *Marxist* programme which gives the masses a full and clear explanation of what has taken place, explains what imperialism is and how it should be combated, declares openly that the collapse of the Second International was brought about by opportunism, and openly calls for a Marxist International to be built up without and *against* the opportunists. Only a programme that shows that we have faith in ourselves and in Marxism and that we have proclaimed a life-and-death struggle against opportunism will sooner or later win us the sympathy of the genuinely proletarian masses.

—V.I. Lenin and G. Y. Zinoviev, *Socialism and War* (July/August 1915)

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The closing date for news in this issue is May 11.

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14 May 1999

## IRS: Hands Off Defenders of Mumia Abu-Jamal!

We print below a letter by the Partisan Defense Committee protesting a reported probe by federal tax authorities against the Black United Fund, a group which collects funds for defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal. This probe targets all of Jamal's supporters.

9 May 1999

To: Internal Revenue Service

The Partisan Defense Committee strongly protests the ominous threats from the Internal Revenue Service against the Black United Fund of Pennsylvania for its fundraising activ-

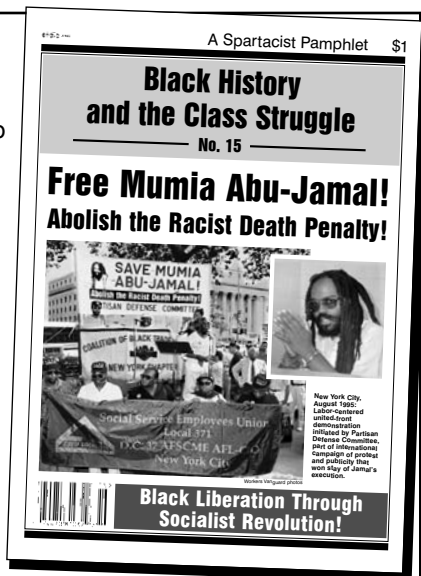
ities on behalf of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and against the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and donors to his cause. This maneuver is of a piece with the ongoing vendetta by the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) and its bloodthirsty cohorts aimed at intimidating the growing ranks of Jamal's supporters. The F.O.P. and its allies, meanwhile, raise tens of thousands of dollars in a sinister campaign to speed this innocent man to the execution chamber. IRS: Hands off Black United Fund!

### Contents include:

- Mumia Abu-Jamal's Life of Struggle
- Court Hearings: New Evidence of Frame-Up
- From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal "La Amistad and American Law"
- The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal
- For Non-Sectarian, Class-Struggle Defense!
- Death Row Speedup Targets Minorities
- Philly Cops' Reign of Terror
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## Liberals on Kosovo: Give War a Chance



Reuters



WV Photo



Fergus Wilkie

**Liberal Susan Sontag (left) and “Democratic Socialist” Bogdan Denitch (center) beat drums for terror war against Serbia, while “antiwar anarchist” Noam Chomsky peddles illusions in more “humane” imperialism.**

As U.S./NATO bombs rained down on the people of Serbia, the annual “Socialist Scholars Conference” opened in New York City last month with a plenary session where the chairman, Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) head Bogdan Denitch, decreed that there would be no discussion of the war. Sitting alongside this rabidly pro-imperialist warmonger, self-styled “antiwar radical” Noam Chomsky dutifully followed suit and said not a word against the war. In this gathering of a thousand supposed “socialists,” only the Trotskyist Spartacist League rose to voice proletarian revolutionary opposition to the U.S.-led imperialist terror bombing. Our comrades also raised signs demanding, “Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!” and “Defend Serbia Against U.S./NATO Attack!”

Against these social-patriots and lukewarm liberals who gather once a year to sagely intone on Marxism—while spitting on the Marxist program of proletarian revolution—we carry forward the revolutionary heritage of Marx and Engels. Like Marx, we understand that the fundamental division in capitalist society is between those who must sell their labor power in order to survive and those who live off the exploitation of that labor. Like Lenin, we understand that imperialism war is endemic to capitalism, whose drive for profits means competition for markets and spheres of influence.

As Marx put it, capitalism had created its “own gravedigger” in the proletariat, which by virtue of its role in creating all the wealth in capitalist society has the social power to overturn this system predicated on exploitation, oppression and war. Our purpose is to provide the revolutionary leadership which will mobilize that social power for a proletarian revolution to place the working class in power, expropriate the bourgeoisie and lay the basis for a socialist egalitarian society. Thus, we seek to mobilize the proletariat

in class-struggle opposition to the imperialist war against Serbia and strive for the *defeat* of the U.S. capitalist rulers.

The purpose of Denitch and the DSA, as well as the other purported socialists and radicals at the Socialist Scholars Conference, is the opposite—to provide a “democratic” façade to the depredations of imperialism. Denitch’s DSA has long been a loyal component of the Democratic Party, a capitalist party of war and racism. A shrill advocate of Clinton’s war, the Croatian-born Denitch chastises his more squeamish comrades in a *Nation* (26 April) editorial that “opposition to US military intervention...shouldn’t become obsessive dogma.” He baldly added, “The bombing should stop only when Belgrade agrees to pull out or is pushed out of Kosovo, if necessary by ground troops.”

While Denitch is so contemptible that he is reviled even within his own organization, his pro-war line is typical of a whole range of liberals, warmed-over New Leftists and renegades from Marxism. A chemically pure expression of the latter is Tim Wohlforth, onetime leader of the fake-Trotskyist Workers League, who screamed at the time of the U.S./NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serbs in 1995: “Give war a chance!” Joining these types are an array of liberal intellectual glitterati like Susan Sontag and Christopher Hitchens. Hitchens uses his column in the *Nation* (17 May) to sneer at the “self-pitying” types who attend “peace” events carrying the target symbol worn by Serbs to protest the NATO bombing of civilians. He concludes by urging NATO that if it is not to accept “a sordid carve-up brokered with Russia,” its only option is a “full-scale invasion.” Hitchens, who fashions himself a “bad boy” intellectual, is also a longstanding opponent of women’s right to abortion.

Sontag was a radical antiwar writer during the Vietnam War who in 1982 shocked even many anti-Communist

“leftists” when she declared, “Communism is in itself a variant, the most successful variant, of fascism” (quoted in Alan Wald, *The New York Intellectuals* [1987]). Now, an article by Sontag in the *New York Times Magazine* (2 May) boosting the U.S./NATO bombing of Serbia as a “just war” for the Kosovo Albanians drips with chauvinism:

“Are we not saying that European lives, European suffering are more valuable, more worth acting on to protect, than the lives of people in the Middle East, Africa and Asia?... ”

“Yes, to care about the fate of the people in Kosovo is Eurocentric, and what’s wrong with that?”

Bringing up the rear of these drummer boys and girls for “human rights” imperialism is the eminent Professor Chomsky, who trades on his credentials as a noted linguist in order to hoodwink leftist youth with his armchair “anarchism.” For all his long, boring speeches exposing some of the crimes of U.S. imperialism, Chomsky is an out-and-out liberal whose “anarchism” is a cover for virulent hostility to Leninism and the 1917 Bolshevik-led workers revolution in Rus-

sia. In an interview in *Against the Current* (March/April 1995), Chomsky crowed over the capitalist counterrevolution which plunged the working people of the former Soviet Union and East Europe into misery and fratricidal bloodletting, saying: “It’s like the fall of fascism. It opens new opportunities for socialism.”

And Chomsky knows a thing or two about fascism. Exemplifying liberal “evenhandedness,” in the early 1980s he publicly defended Nazi Holocaust apologist Robert Faurisson, a French academic. When French leftists criticized him for his vile stand, Chomsky countered that this was because they were under the “great influence of Leninism”!

Chomsky’s performance at the Socialist Scholars Conference was typical of this intellectual charlatan. While not openly supporting the U.S./NATO war aims, he sows ideological confusion which serves to corral leftist youth behind the hope for a more “humane” imperialism. In his recent Internet statement on the *Z Magazine* Web site, “The Current Bombings: Behind the Rhetoric,” the good professor leads his reader on a quest for the mythical good imperialist who meets the “heavy burden of proof...in undertaking the threat or use of force in violation of the principles of international order.” Chomsky opposes the current terror bombing only because it contradicts the “regime of international law and international order, binding on all states, based on the UN Charter.” For this “anarchist,” imperialist war is justified if carried out with good intentions or under the auspices of the United Nations! Indeed, when U.S./NATO “peacekeeping” forces went into Bosnia in 1995 under UN authorization, Chomsky announced: “I probably would have voted for sending the troops” (*Class Warfare* [1996]).

If the U.S. has thus far sidelined the UN, it is only because it does not currently serve the American rulers in their war of domination in the Balkans. But the UN has been a fig leaf for imperialist slaughter from the 1950-53 counterrevolutionary war in Korea to the 1991 Gulf War and ongoing bombing and starvation blockade against Iraq to neocolonialist interventions from Somalia to Haiti.

*continued on page 4*

### Spartacist Forums

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Tran/Columbia Spectator

**Reformism rots the mind: liberal pacifism at ISO-organized teach-in at Columbia University, April 13. Socialist revolution is the only way to end imperialist war!**



# U.S. Imperialism Sponsors Islamic Fundamentalism

## The Hideous Oppression of Women Under Islam

We publish below a May 8 letter by comrade Alan W. in Los Angeles.

Dear Comrades:

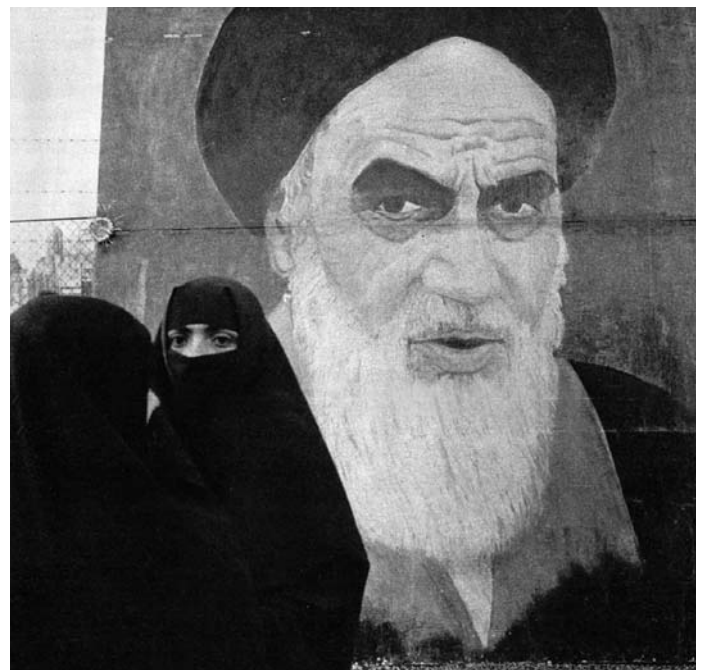
Our recent article "Iran: 20 Years of Islamic Dictatorship" (WV No. 708, 5 March) powerfully lays out how the Islamic Republic of Iran, even under the current "liberal" clericalist president Khatami, perpetuates and intensifies the horrible oppression of women symbolized by the stifling *chador*. For our uncompromising defense of women and the oppressed against reactionary religious terror, we have been the target of Islamic fundamentalists around the world. Recently, a Los Angeles Spartacist forum, held on April 17, titled "The Communist Fight For Women's Liberation in the Muslim East" was descended upon by over 20 members of the UCLA Muslim Student Association screaming, "Death to communists" in Persian (see page 5).

The reactionaries of the Muslim Student Association and their like feel the

of their support for Palestinian national rights. The anti-immigrant, anti-black racism promoted by this country's white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant capitalist rulers goes hand in hand with their fomenting of puritanical religious reaction against abortion rights and gay rights.

I wanted to draw your attention to a subject that has gotten recent media attention: "honor killings" of women in Islamic countries for sexual activities, insolence, disobedience, independence... for being a human being. These killings are not rare aberrations, but cold and calculated murders that are carried out regularly and condoned and encouraged by the state, society, religion and culture. Over the past few months, a good deal of news coverage has been devoted to the subject, much like female genital mutilation some years back. These have included articles in the *New York Times* and *Middle East Report* as well as the English editions of the Israeli *Ha'aretz*

**Khomeini's 1979 "Islamic revolution" imposed imprisonment of Iranian women in head-to-toe chadors.**



Abbas/Gamma-Liaison

actions are paraded around as "defenders of honor." After all, they argue, is it not ridiculous to reprimand a man for ill-treating his "property"? There are also hundreds of women who sit on death row in Pakistan for killing their husbands—these women will be hanged for defending themselves. And such atrocities are not confined to hellholes like Afghanistan or Pakistan.

According to Khaled Al-Qudra, former attorney general of Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority—which remains firmly under the thumb of the bloody Zionist rulers of Israel—some 70 percent of all

they once knew. More often than not, they die slow, pathetic deaths. In fact, several of the women shown on the recent BBC special died shortly after the piece was filmed. In the past few years, burning with kerosene has become the preferred method of torture and murder over the age-old practice of stoning. Thousands upon thousands of women are murdered every year by vile scum all over the Muslim world.

It is not a matter of "honor killings" (or some other form of barbaric brutality against women) alone. Rather, it is a question of everyday existence. The majority of women in the Muslim world are not burnt alive or sprayed with acid or subjected to physical harm that is life-threatening in the immediate sense. However, they mostly lead an existence hardly above that of cattle. And those faced with physical danger are not too small a minority. To be recognized as a human being in the cruel hoax they call life is a radical step for these poor women.

Since the so-called "death of Communism," the U.S. bourgeoisie has been on a rampage against "political Islam" and "terrorism" as the greatest evils to ever befall the world. While it is true that Islamic fundamentalism is a grave danger to women and all the oppressed, the U.S. imperialists seek to whitewash their own role in both its rise and these horrendous crimes against women. The imperialists have long cultivated Islamic fundamentalism as a weapon against communism. In 1950, U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles pointed to a "common bond" with the "religions of the East," whose "spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism." The vicious bastards who run this country have backed the most reactionary and murderous forces in the world, such as Suharto of Indonesia, whose rule was sealed with the murder of over 500,000 communists, leftists, women and ethnic Chinese in 1965-66—a bloodbath carried out in league with Islamic mobs and with the direct assistance of the CIA.

Despite what the U.S. media portrays, the heinous subjugation of women (to speak nothing of what homosexuals go through) goes back long, long before Muslim fundamentalism became the bugaboo that it is today. It is bitterly disgusting that the same American ruling class that backed to the hilt the fundamentalist Afghan forces against the Soviet Red Army can today condemn the practices of their former allies (and in some countries present allies). In our fight for new October Revolutions throughout the world, we seek to forge Trotskyist parties in the Near East based on the program of permanent revolution. Defending and extending proletarian power will be a red army including women armed to the teeth to mete out revolutionary justice. ■

UPI



wind in their sails today because of the ongoing terror bombings of Serbia, supposedly in defense of Muslim Albanians in Kosovo. The racist American bourgeoisie, which is carrying out the murder of countless civilians in the Balkans, does not care a bit for the Muslim refugees. In fact, in the name of "anti-terrorism," Muslims and Arabs in this country have been the target of vicious racism and deportations. It is enough to recall the anti-Arab witchhunt in the U.S. during the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq and the years-long vendetta against the L.A. Eight, targeted for deportation because

and the Egyptian *Al-Ahram Weekly*. Recently, the BBC aired a special on "honor killings" in Pakistan, which ABC's *Nightline* replayed in the United States.

Today, Pakistani prisons have several thousand female prisoners convicted of such "crimes" as sex outside marriage, eloping, adultery, insolence, lack of religious morality, etc. These are the "lucky" ones who do not get killed. Meanwhile, no man ever gets punished for any form of abuse toward women. In fact, those who murder or attempt to murder their wives, daughters or sisters for such



**Ronald Reagan hosted anti-Soviet Afghan mujahedin in 1983 at the White House. U.S.-sponsored Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats murdered school teachers for teaching girls to read.**

murders in the Gaza Strip and West Bank are "honor killings"! An article in the Spring 1998 issue of *Middle East Report* recounts a number of harrowing tales of Palestinian women butchered for their "lack of morality." And, in Palestine as everywhere else, it makes no difference whether a woman "defaced" her and her family's "honor" through consensual sex or through some savage rape. An extreme example (or maybe not so extreme) was a four-year-old girl who was raped by a 25-year-old man and left to bleed to death by her family. The only reason she survived was because a shelter for such women took the poor child in. And this is among the more cosmopolitan Palestinians!

In Egypt, particularly the rural south, most people are not buried in graves but in rickety mausoleum-type structures. When your daughter gets pregnant outside marriage, it is considered perfectly acceptable, reasonable and normal (though illegal but hardly ever prosecuted) to bury her alive to starve and thirst to death in the dark mausoleum halls in the midst of bodies stinking of death.

In countries like Afghanistan, "honor killings" are carried out to the full extent of the "law" by the ruling Taliban fundamentalist thugs themselves. If the victims of such atrocities manage to survive, rather than receive essential medical attention and emotional sympathies, they are shunned and utterly exiled from all

### WORKERS VANGUARD

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# UCLA: Socialist Action Plays Footsie With Islamic Fundamentalists

We print below a leaflet issued by the Los Angeles Spartacus Youth Club on May 1.

On April 14, the fake-left Socialist Action joined hands with the anti-communist UCLA Muslim Student Association (MSA) in a “panel discussion” on the UN starvation sanctions against Iraq. Less than one week later, a Spartacist forum held in Hollywood on the communist fight for women’s liberation in the Muslim East was descended upon by two dozen MSAers chanting “Marg Bar Communists” (death to communists) and holding pickets reading, “Honk if you hate communists.” Ominously, one of them had a syringe and was giving instructions to his cohorts on how to use it. The MSA’s planned provocation to shut down our forum failed, and the event continued to its conclusion. Eventually, the cops were called and this threw the MSA’s plans for a physical battle into disarray.

To pseudo-Marxist groups like Socialist Action there is no contradiction between their socialist veneer and being in bed with the fundamentalist MSA. Socialist Action fully backed the rise of the reactionary Khomeiniite mullahs in Iran, which has meant hell for workers, peasants, national and ethnic minorities, and women. Likewise, they cheered on the murderous CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan against the heroic Red Army, whose intervention defended women’s access to such basic rights as educa-

tion and jobs. Islamic fundamentalism goes hand in hand with anti-communism and imperialism. In the pursuit of “mass movements,” no matter how reactionary, Socialist Action joins ranks with those who scream “death to communists” and hail religious bigots who burn unveiled women with acid.

Socialist Action, which endorsed the call for sanctions in the Persian Gulf slaughter, refuses to defend Serbia today. In fact, their conception of an “antiwar” action is to sell their newspaper to *pro*-NATO demonstrators, as their comrades in Toronto did. So, it is not coincidental that they find such hearty allies in the pro-bombing MSA, which went so far as to berate U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen when he spoke at UCLA last fall for taking over “three months to act in Kosovo” (*Daily Bruin*, 29 October 1998). The social-chauvinism of these “bring our boys home,” yellow-ribbon “socialists” opens the door for them to co-sponsor “panel discussions” on Iraq with the MSA apologists for imperialist murder in the Balkans.

We in the Spartacus Youth Club, youth group of the revolutionary communist Spartacist League (U.S. section of the International Communist League), defend the right of self-determination for the Kosovar Albanians, but that question is currently subordinated to the necessary military defense of Serbia against imperialist aggression. Those who ped-

Women in Afghanistan. Socialist Action cheered on CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries.



dle the line that this war is in defense of Muslim Albanians are lackeys for imperialism and worse. **Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! Defend Serbia against U.S./NATO attack!**

The MSA is consistent in its anti-communism. It throws its lot with the most reactionary, woman-hating and *murdering* mullahs, clerics and thugs across the globe. But it is a scathing indictment of the “progressive” milieu on this campus that the MSA is welcomed with open arms. In addition to frolicking under the sheets with Socialist Action, the MSA is part of the Affirmative Action Coalition, whose hallmark has been to demand representation on the campus admissions board so it can decide who gets *excluded* from higher education. Perhaps the MSA would propose the exclusion of women from the university, much like their co-thinkers in Afghanistan and Iran do?!

As Marxists we oppose all forms of religious reaction, which in the U.S. is most powerfully expressed in murderous anti-abortion, anti-gay and racist Protestant Puritanism that will have Muslims in its crosshairs.

We look to the heritage of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which began to lay the material basis for the emancipation of women by socializing the functions of the family, the fundamental root of women’s oppression in class society.

The Bolsheviks fought to smash the enslavement of women to the veil, to their husbands and fathers, and to hideous religious subjugation in all its forms. Heroic female Bolshevik cadre even donned the veil as a measure of defense against murderous mullahs to bring the message of emancipation to the down-trodden women of the Muslim East. As the forum emphasized, “From among the women who today cower under the *chador* or the *paranja*, the International Communist League will recruit many of the leading cadre of the coming socialist revolution.” **For women’s liberation through socialist revolution!**

The SYC fights to win anti-racist and anti-capitalist youth to the perspective of building the revolutionary, multiracial workers party necessary for the victory of socialist revolution. We are looking for students with a gut hatred of the ravages of U.S. imperialism at home and abroad who will ally with the working class. This perspective stands in sharp contrast to Socialist Action’s cowardly capitulation before woman-hating fundamentalists and imperialist butchers. If you want to fight for black liberation, women’s liberation, free abortion on demand, full democratic rights for gays, full citizenship rights for immigrants; if you want to fight for a socialist egalitarian society free of war, exploitation, racial and sexual oppression, join the SYC! ■



WV Photo

Trotskyists hailed 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, organized international campaign for aid to embattled city of Jalalabad following Kremlin’s treacherous 1989 withdrawal.

## Liberals...

(continued from page 3)

Today, after well over a million Iraqi men, women and children have been killed by the UN starvation blockade, Chomsky joins with other liberals in signing “A Call to Action on Sanctions and the U.S. War Against the People of Iraq” (8 January). But in 1991, Chomsky (along with rad-libs like Alexander Cockburn) called on Washington to implement “sanctions” as a “peaceful means prescribed by international law” in order “to secure Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait, settle regional issues, and move towards a more decent world” (*Z Magazine*, February 1991).

Chomsky performs a valuable service for U.S. imperialism, diverting critical-minded youth into the lap of the ruling class by sowing his own weary, but comfortable, despair at the prospect of social struggle. Having attained success in the petty-bourgeois academic world so attractive to many students, Chomsky “manufactures consent” for the bourgeois order by invoking an anti-communist “radical” alternative to Marxism and the

fight for proletarian revolution. Indeed, Chomsky’s closest connection to the proletariat is probably with the janitors who clean his MIT office.

Yet the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) gushes, “There is a tremendous amount that socialists can learn and take from Chomsky’s work” (*International Socialism*, Spring 1997). Rejecting the possibility that the proletariat can be mobilized on the basis of a revolutionary program, the ISO embraces the liberals’ view that the capitalist state can serve the interests of workers and the oppressed, albeit with some mass pressure “from below.” The ISO was forged as a tendency in 1950 in the crucible of social-democratic anti-Communism. Driven by hostility to the Soviet degenerated workers state, they embraced imperialist “democracy” as the alternative to “Stalinist totalitarianism.” And they simply carry this forward today. In January 1991, the ISO jettisoned its nominal opposition to the imperialist embargo against Iraq in order to endorse a liberal “Campaign for Peace” march in Washington that explicitly called for UN sanctions. Today, the ISO impotently pleads with the U.S. rulers to “stop the bombing” while at the

same time begging Clinton to help the Albanian refugees, thus lending credence to the imperialists’ “human rights” war propaganda. Like Chomsky, the ISO looks to the United Nations, complaining that the U.S. prevented the UN from sending an expeditionary force “to intervene in the conflict” in Rwanda five years ago (*Socialist Worker*, 23 April).

In an article titled “The Treason of the Intellectuals” (May 1947), written on the heels of a massive strike wave, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon said of the once-radical intellectuals who embraced U.S. imperialism’s Cold War against the Soviet Union:

“Great class battles have taken place, and more momentous ones are in preparation. The workers are on the march. But all is quiet on the intellectual front. The imperialists ‘pacified’ that sector without a fight.

“The American intellectuals didn’t simply step out for a rest, like tired warriors nursing their wounds after a hard campaign. They quit before the fight got really started. They took it on the lam. They deserted and betrayed....

“They went over to the enemy, unconditionally and all the way, with all their bags and such baggage as they had, and helped to lie the youth into the war.”

Today’s crop of rad-lib intellectuals trumpet the “death of communism” and would have all believe that no alternative to imperialism exists. But in spite of their most heartfelt wishes, history is not over and class struggle persists. The capitalist system of exploitation, racism and imperialist war is not the only world possible. There is an alternative: the fight for socialist revolution to establish the rule of the working class worldwide. Those youth who set their sights higher than a comfortable career in academia as ideologists for the imperialist war machine should join with the Spartacus Youth Clubs in our fight for a communist future for humanity. ■

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# Serbia...

(continued from page 1)

words, “Nothing. The Serbian army is intact, protected in caves just as 50 years ago, with well-armed depots, munitions, fuel, food.... This is the truth after five weeks of war. The rest is propaganda.”

The result has been increased pressures for a U.S./NATO ground war in Kosovo, along with a flurry of diplomatic activity aimed at using capitalist Russia as a “soft cop” to impose a deal on Milosevic. But the imperialists face problems with both approaches, as the latest London *Economist* (8 May) indicates in its cover story, “Making the Best of a Bungled War.” While both Hungary and Macedonia have allowed use of their airspace and military bases, they refuse to be used as staging areas for a ground assault. In Greece, popular sentiment against the war is so strong that a contingent of British soldiers which recently arrived in the port of Salonika was confined to a warehouse for fear that they would be attacked by the population. That leaves Albania where, despite inadequate ports, roads and bridges, U.S./NATO forces have been assembling for a possible ground assault. The removal of Kosovo Albanian refugees from the area around Kukes in northern Albania, which was presented by the capitalist media as a grand “humanitarian”



ist powers are also reflected in the fact that the blockade against oil shipments to Serbia decreed at last month’s NATO summit in Washington has remained a dead letter. Moscow openly defied the ban, while France and Germany vetoed a U.S. proposal to give NATO commanders authority to use military force to enforce it. Italy, which has been particularly shaken up by the war, is pursuing its own parallel negotiations, inviting “moderate” Kosovar Albanian Ibrahim Rugova to Rome after he had reportedly conferred with Milosevic. The Italian coalition government headed by Prime Minister Massimo D’Alema’s Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) threatens to fall if the war intensifies.



Reuters

**U.S. aircraft carrier *Theodore Roosevelt* in the Adriatic Sea. While intensifying air war against Serbia, U.S./NATO imperialists pour in more troops, weapons to prepare for ground invasion.**

gesture, was in fact designed to clear one of the key valleys leading into Kosovo in preparation for a possible land assault.

Meanwhile, the destruction of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade—which the CIA reportedly believed to be the site of a Serbian military supplier—has sharpened opposition to the NATO war by China and Russia. Beijing condemned the bombing as a “crime of war that should be punished,” while the American embassy there and U.S. government offices in other Chinese cities have been surrounded by rock-throwing protesters for the past couple of days, as thousands have poured into the streets in outrage over the attack. With China holding a veto in the United Nations Security Council, the embassy attack could well frustrate any attempt by NATO to get UN approval for an occupation force in Kosovo.

Clinton hailed last week’s statement by the foreign ministers of Russia and the Group of Seven—the U.S. and other major capitalist powers—as marking Moscow’s acceptance of armed forces to occupy Kosovo. The agreement signed by Russia deliberately omitted any mention of NATO, but Washington continues to insist that any occupation force must have the U.S.-dominated NATO “at its core.” France and Germany have been pushing for an occupation under the banner of the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), a European-dominated military alliance, as a way of undercutting U.S. influence in the region. We oppose *all* such occupation forces in the Balkans—whether under the auspices of NATO, the UN or the OSCE—including troops from Yeltsin’s Russia.

The tensions among the major capital-

Working-class opposition to the war is widespread in Italy, and mutinies have reportedly broken out in the conscript military. Attempts by the trade-union bureaucracy and the PDS to use May Day demonstrations to whip up working-class support for the war led to street clashes between PDS supporters and antiwar demonstrators. In many cities, cops blocked contingents of the syndicalist-influenced COBAS trade-union formations from entering the central squares. The COBAS have initiated a fund drive for Yugoslav workers whose factories were bombed by NATO (see “Campaign Launched for Aid to Yugoslav Workers,” page 1).

Even in the U.S., the ruling class has not been particularly successful in generating popular support for this war despite the media blitz about Albanian refugees. The House voted last week to bar the president from sending ground troops into Kosovo without Congress-

sional approval and, on a tie vote, rejected a resolution supporting the air strikes against Serbia. The *Wall Street Journal* (30 April) opined that this is “as close as we get under our system to a no-confidence vote” and called on Clinton to broaden his support by forming a “war cabinet” with pro-war Republicans. Significant sections of the “isolationist” Republican right oppose the current military adventure in the Balkans. AFL-CIO head John Sweeney endorsed Clinton’s “humanitarian” war aims at the onset of the war, but the trade-union tops have since largely avoided any mention of the war. Among black people and other minorities in particular, there is widespread skepticism over the “humanitarian” pretensions of the American ruling class.

Enter Jesse Jackson. An embarrassed Clinton frantically tried to head off Jackson’s trip to Belgrade to negotiate the release of three captured U.S. soldiers and ordered the most intense night of bombing against the Serbian capital while Jackson was there. But the reality is that Jackson was on a face-saving mission for U.S. imperialism. This front man for the racist U.S. rulers seeks to mobilize the black population behind the war by strengthening its “human rights” cover. The pro-Democratic Party black press, which had previously turned a blind eye to the bombing of Serbia, was now filled with accolades for Jackson’s “political coup.” As a black transit worker in Chicago who had been hostile to the war said, “Jesse seized the moral high ground.”

Jackson’s prayerful “moral” preachings are a cover for support to U.S. imperialism’s war of domination. The U.S., Jackson told a May 8 meeting in Chicago, must “use our minds, morals and missiles.” Jackson endorses the capitalist rulers’ war aims, fearing only that U.S. imperialism may get caught in a quagmire, warning that “our tactics are increasingly risky.” Jackson’s talk of “negotiations,” no less than Clinton’s, is nothing but a means to further U.S. imperialist ambitions. As Jackson put it, if Milosevic is “not willing as we think he ought to be, then there’s always the option to continue the fight” (*Daily Challenge*, 4 May).

The reformist “socialist” organizations in this country have joined in pacifist appeals to “stop the bombing.” Their common bond—whether they embrace rabid Serb chauvinism like the Workers World Party or echo imperialist “human rights” propaganda about the Kosovo Albanians like the International Socialist Organization—is to pressure the capital-

ist rulers to end the war. Our aim is to *mobilize the proletariat in class struggle to defeat the bourgeoisie and overthrow the imperialist order through socialist revolution*. This perspective is presented below, in an edited transcript of a talk by Spartacist League Central Committee member Ed Clarkson at an April 29 New York City SL forum.

\* \* \*

During the course of this war, the International Socialist Organization, which on rare occasions pretends to stand in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky, has made the not very sage observation that bombs don’t make peace. It’s interesting to explore Lenin and Trotsky on the question of imperialist war. In Lenin’s *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), written as competing blocs of imperialist powers were engaged in the First World War, we have: “Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired a pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.” Lenin then explained the political repercussions of this—that capitalism had exhausted its progressive role on the planet and that the only road to progress was proletarian revolution. The choices were socialism or the barbarism of war, the ultimate result of imperialist competition.

To that, Trotsky added his analysis of permanent revolution, which has special relevance to the statelets in the Balkans—that the national bourgeoisies in the backward, dependent countries are tied by a thousand threads to the dominant imperialists and are therefore too servile and too bound to the imperialist system to play any role in leading the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Therefore, in such backward countries, the proletariat, leading the oppressed, must seize state power to even begin to accomplish the tasks of the democratic revolution and, in the process, begin on the road to socialism. In the case of the former Yugoslavia, the bourgeois states are in fact products of the capitalist counterrevolution which ripped apart the bureaucratically deformed workers state that formerly existed there.

Now, there is a program that flows from this understanding of Lenin and Trotsky: Defeat imperialism—and for revolutionaries in this country, specifically U.S. imperialism—through workers revolution! Defend Serbia against U.S./NATO attack! Down with all the United Nations economic sanctions! All U.S./NATO/UN troops out of the Balkans! We militarily defend Serbia without the least political support to Milosevic. The capitalist states, or statelets, in this patchwork of ethnic enclaves—which still contain areas of considerable interpenetration—perpetrate atrocities to achieve “ethnic cleansing” in rough proportion to their military capacity to do so. Down with all the nationalist butchers, from Milosevic to Tudjman! Workers to power—For a socialist federation of the Balkans in a workers Europe!

This Leninist programmatic understanding is alien to the other self-



Reuters



La Repubblica



Der Spiegel

**Imperialist-instigated counterrevolution ripped apart Yugoslav deformed workers state in early 1990s, fueling all-sided nationalist bloodletting. From left: Bosnian Muslim fundamentalists, Croatian soldiers giving fascist salute, Serbian Chetnik chauvinists.**

# Donate Now to Aid Yugoslav Workers!

(continued from page 1)

initiate a fundraising campaign for the workers of Zastava and other bombed factories. The COBAS initiative states:

“Every thing that exists on Yugoslav territory has now become a military target. We will not be told the true number of civilian dead and wounded in these 40 days of mad bombing until the ultimate massacre. But we already know that hundreds of factories, bridges, dwellings, railroads, telecommunications, electrical plants, aqueducts have already been razed to the ground. Hundreds of thousands of families are reduced to misery and the infrastructure for sustaining every human convenience is in ever more jeopardy. Devastated refineries and chemical factories leak poisonous waste into the soil, air and water, which will spread death across an ever wider area. The illegal use of depleted uranium shells will contaminate entire generations. There is no possible motivation in the world that could justify such a massacre of a population.... And meanwhile the stock market rises.”

Almost two weeks before the NATO attack, Zastava workers issued a letter dated March 26 “to the public of all NATO member countries” which warned that a live shield of workers would be occupying the plant around the clock to protect it against NATO bombing and gave their precise latitude and longitude coordinates. This warning was widely published in the international press; yet knowing that this was an auto factory occupied by civilians, NATO bombed anyway. On the night of the bombing, the Zastava workers issued another letter to the public: “The live shield is broken through.... What none among us either could or was willing to assume as possible did happen: Kragujevac has re-experienced its World War II tragedy; its citizens have again become the target of a barbarian assault.” In 1941, in three horrendously bloody days of World War II, 300 schoolchildren and 7,000 citizens were executed in Kragujevac by German Nazi occupation forces in reprisal for standing up to the fascists.

NATO’s coldblooded murder of the Zastava workers was a deliberate act of terror and a warning to the proletariat throughout the region. The Zastava workers were engaged in a hard-fought strike against the Milosevic government just two and a half years ago. From the most basic demand of “We want bread!” to “We are Zastava! The factory is ours!”, these workers fought the impoverishment that capitalist counterrevolution has brought to this former deformed workers state. In their drive to dominate the world for imperialist exploitation, the last thing U.S.-led NATO forces will tolerate is a *class-struggle fight by the workers of Serbia against the capitalist Milosevic regime*.

As leader of the central bank, Milosevic spearheaded the breakup of the Yugoslav planned economy with “market reforms” and then fueled “greater Serbia” chauvinism particularly against the Kosovo Albanians. He personifies the link between capitalist restoration and murderous nationalism, as does his Croatian counterpart Tudjman, who idolizes the fascist Ustasha, as well as Bosnian Islamic reactionary leader Izetbegovic. Against the poison of nationalism, we in the International Communist League fight for the *class unity* of the workers of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo, to overthrow all the bloody nationalist regimes in the region. *For a socialist federation of the Balkans!*



no credit



Yugoslavia Review

**Zastava auto plant in ruins (top) after NATO bombed factory knowing that workers were inside. Plant had employed 20,000 workers.**

**Defend Serbia against U.S./NATO imperialism!**

Other groups participating in the campaign of aid to Yugoslav workers have different political viewpoints. In Italy, *Proposta*, the pale “left opposition” in Rifondazione Comunista (RC), actively supported the previous Ulivo/RC popular-front government which invaded Albania. Today *Proposta* can’t even muster a basic call for the immediate withdrawal of all Italian troops from the Balkans. Capitulating to different pressures, the small Italian pseudo-Trotskyist group Voce Operaia supports this campaign as part of its overt political support to Milosevic, who is a proven enemy of Yugoslav workers. And the COBAS overall have a syndicalist deprecation of the urgent need to forge a Leninist

party to lead the proletariat, as a tribune of the people fighting on behalf of all of the oppressed, to their own state power through a proletarian socialist revolution.

The perspective of socialist revolution, which requires the instrumentality of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead it, is the only way to put an end to the capitalist system which breeds war. Despite the deep political disagreements we have with many of the participants in this campaign, sections of the ICL around the world will fully participate in the spirit of the united front: March separately, strike together—with full freedom of political criticism within a common effort in defense of the interests of the international proletariat! We salute the COBAS for taking the initiative with this campaign.

As soon as this campaign of material aid for Yugoslav workers was brought to our attention by CODIS-PRO, the legal and social defense organization whose purpose is in accordance with the views of our comrades in the Lega Trotskista d’Italia, the ICL actively joined the campaign. At an antiwar demonstration in London on May 8, over £250 was collected, a gesture which enabled demonstrators to take an active stand against their “own” bourgeoisie and do something that will concretely help the Yugoslav workers suffering under the NATO bombing. This revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist opposition to one’s own ruling class thoroughly exposes the miserable fake left’s “Workers Aid for Kosovo” crowd as pawns for Blair and Clinton. (Indeed, as Workers Power marched in April amid placards screaming, “NATO Good Luck!”, exposure is not difficult!) In 1993, Workers Power and other centrists and reformists forged a “Workers Aid for Bosnia,” which under the pretense of international workers aid in fact worked hand in glove with UN troops on behalf of the Bosnian Muslims against the Serbs. In so doing, these leftists who posture as “antiwar” helped set the stage for the direct imperialist military intervention taking place against the Serbs in Yugoslavia today.

Here in the belly of the imperialist beast, we have a special obligation to take a stand against Washington’s murderous war in the Balkans. The Partisan Defense Committee is raising funds—and donating every dime—for the COBAS-initiated campaign of aid to Yugoslav workers. COBAS’ goal is to raise a billion lire (some \$560,000) and transmit the funds directly to the workers of Zastava and other bombed factories. We urge our readers to donate generously and give direct material aid to the workers and their families struggling for survival under the U.S./NATO murderous war of aggression against Serbia and its civilian population. This is truly a cause in the interest of the whole of the working people. *The working class has no fatherland! Defeat imperialism through workers revolution! Defend Serbia!*

**Contributions can be made out to the Partisan Defense Committee (earmarked “For Yugoslav Workers”) and sent to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.**

described socialists, both in this country and in Europe. In this country, the focus tends to be on “butter not bombs”—incidentally, a demand recently raised by the fascists in Germany. Within the European left, groups like the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire in France push the line that the European imperialist armies should intervene on the ground on their own behalf in counterposition to the U.S. At bottom, all of these groups call for a more effective imperialist policy, directed towards creating a “free Kosovo” through the agency of the Kosovo Liberation Army or implying that imperialism can choose a more humane policy rather than assert its dominance militarily on foreign soil.

There is a just cause for self-determination for Kosovo, a point we have made since 1976. But that cause is currently subordinated to the imperialist attack on Serbia. Most clearly through the Rambouillet agreement which preceded the war, the Kosovo Liberation Army has subordinated itself to the imperialists and openly operates as spotters for U.S. planes bombing Serbia and Kosovo. There was, incidentally, a codicil to the Rambouillet agreements, which specifically called for the free intervention of

NATO troops into Serbia itself. It read: “NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft, and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the FRY [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] including associated airspace and territorial waters.” This is essentially an attack on Serbia’s right to even exist as a separate state.

**“Human Rights” Outcry: Cover for Imperialist Slaughter**

I have a quote here from Trotsky when he was a correspondent covering the Balkan Wars a couple of years before World War I. Now, the situation in the Balkans was the flashpoint of World War I, not the cause. When the Austro-Hungarian empire perceived that it had not obtained sufficient satisfaction for the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand by Serbian nationalists in June 1914, this was deemed to be worth the 20 to 30 million European lives expended in the process of the war. From Trotsky:

“The abstract humanitarian-moralistic way of looking at the process of history is the most barren of all. I know this very well. But the chaotic mass of material acquisitions, habits, customs, and prejudices that we call civilization hypnotizes

us all, inspiring the false confidence that the main thing in human progress has already been achieved—and then war comes, and reveals that we have not yet crept out on all fours from the barbaric period of our history. We have learned how to wear suspenders, to write clever leading articles, and to make milk chocolate, but when we need to reach a serious decision about how a few different tribes are to live together on a well-endowed

European peninsula, we are incapable of finding any other method than mutual extermination on a mass scale.”

—Trotsky, *The Balkan Wars* (1912-13)

In World War I, the imperialist powers revealed themselves as the prime engine of such extermination. Now if you add to this statement the arsenal of nuclear *continued on page 8*

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# Serbia...

(continued from page 7)

weapons, substitute for suspenders Nike tennis shoes and for milk chocolate personal computers, we are at essentially the same place today. World proletarian revolution is the only alternative to the nuclear annihilation of humanity.

It is interesting to explore the human rights credentials of imperialism, and specifically of the U.S. imperialists. Let us remember that even in its pre-imperialist history, the U.S. made valiant efforts to exterminate the Native Indian population in this country—not to forget the history of black slavery. At the onset of U.S. imperialism, in the last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, tens of thousands of fighters for Filipino independence were slaughtered in the interests of the now-imperialist U.S. ruling class. There followed two world wars—with, say, a hundred million dead—the latter ending with an American flourish, the nuclear incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, cities of no military value whatsoever. And this primarily as a warning to the Soviet Union.

A side point here is that air wars are always, primarily, an instrument for terrorizing the population and remain so in the current war. Another is that the U.S. has no particular history of suffering the impact of its imperialist wars. The U.S.

ing social revolutions, as in Korea and Vietnam. All this from a ruling class which exterminates or frames up fighters for black liberation—such as the Black Panthers, Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) and Mumia Abu-Jamal—or fighters for Puerto Rican independence like José Solís Jordán in Chicago. And the International Monetary Fund, which is primarily an economic agency of the American imperialists, is currently starving thousands of people to death each day in Asia and Africa.

## Liberal Imperialist Warmongers

Speaking of the bombing of Serbia, “Mad” Albright recently said the U.S. intends to force the Serbs to bend to its will no matter what amount of “collateral damage”—i.e., terror—that entails. And that is the important thing—U.S. imperialism intends to impose its will. In 1991, German imperialism, its appetite sharpened by the counterrevolutionary annexation of the East German deformed workers state, moved to separate Slovenia and Croatia from Yugoslavia. Initially the U.S. opposed this. But presented with a fait accompli, the U.S. then moved to impose its will over the other imperialist powers in Europe.

So in fact it was imperialism that smashed up the deformed workers state in Yugoslavia, that fostered and armed its various reactionary nationalist components and now makes the pretense of fixing it. It is quite clear that NATO realized



Tanjug

**Yugoslav Communist Party leader Josip Broz Tito led multinational Partisans in struggle against Nazi occupation forces in World War II.**

It’s worth recalling that the counter-revolutionary war in Vietnam was also launched by liberal Democrats, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. The Democratic Party in this country is usually the party of war. This is both because of its influence over trade unionists, black people and other working people who will have to fight the war and because, normally through the agency of the trade-union bureaucracy, it can combine “America first” jingoism with some promise of scant handouts—and god knows there’s been damned little of that recently.

This war, as many have noted, is the liberals’ war, promoted by the *New York Times*, the *New York Review of Books*, Jesse Jackson, the social democrats of *In These Times* and other so-called leftists. Jackson, of course, is now trying to free the three American soldiers captured by Belgrade, though he may get himself bombed by Clinton in the process. Meanwhile, it is generally the case that the “isolationist” bourgeois right—from Pat Buchanan, who is as close as America gets these days to a clerical fascist, through much of the Republican Party—wants no deeper involvement, if not out of this conflict altogether.

There’s a point to be made here. The NATO alliance is really a house of cards. France is deemed suspect by the U.S.—there were even reports some months ago that it was excluded from NATO military planning—because its military officers are seen as spies for Serbia. Greece and Italy are currently opposed to a land invasion, while Turkey looks to recover its influence in the region lost with the smashing of the Ottoman empire in World War I.

As in the years before World War I, the Balkans are not just a patchwork of peoples but also a patchwork of counterposed interests of the greater and lesser state powers of the area. If you push at Serbia, you push at Russia and at France. If you push at Macedonia, Greece becomes agitated. Push at Albania, it agitates Turkey and Italy. Push Romania, France again becomes excited. If you push at Greece, you animate Britain and Germany, which tend to compete in the area with the U.S. In other words, the more the imperialist powers attempt to operate together, the more toes are stepped on in the process, and abrasions accrue. And this points to the irrationality of imperialism.

It was the final overturn of the October Revolution in the USSR in 1991-92 that stoked the appetites of the various imperialisms, which no longer felt constrained by the sacred cause of unity against the Soviet Union. The USSR was the military and economic powerhouse of the degenerated and deformed workers states, societies where capitalism had been overthrown but political power was in the hands of a Stalinist bureaucratic caste. It is quite possible that the current imperialist effort in the Balkans could result in reducing NATO to its reality, which is an American-British military and political alliance.

Now, this war is not likely to result in World War III and the destruction of humanity. But such abrasions could very well lay the basis for fueling the next go-around in imperialist rivalries. These

have already been seen on the trade front with the recent “banana war” between the U.S. and Europe. Of course, this sounds absurd, but the bananas have names—they’re called Chiquita and Dole. This country is ruled by the corporations. When they phone and say, “You haven’t done enough about this problem,” shit happens.

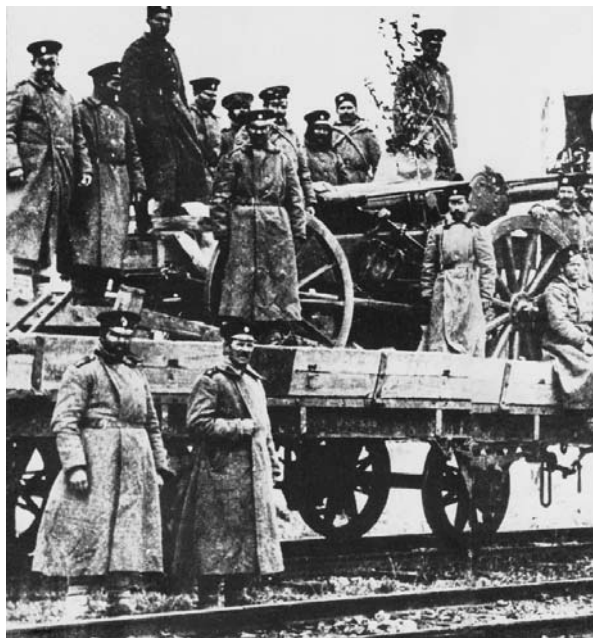
Especially in the U.S., where politics tends to theology, there’s a need to dress up imperialist aspirations for increased power and enrichment—which is to say, simply, greed—in the sackcloth of morality and piety. This requires supplementation with bald-faced hypocrisy and lying. NATO spokesmen are often much less creative in this regard than the “dog ate my homework” type of excuse from schoolchildren. So the initial response by the U.S. and NATO to a report that they’d bombed a column of Albanian refugees was to call it a lie: “We didn’t do it, the Serbs did it.” Then they hold a news conference where a NATO spokesman admits they did it and turns to the general, who confesses to bombing another convoy of Albanians. Finally, it turns out they bombed both convoys.

Incidentally, one of the lessons from Vietnam for the bourgeoisie was to “manage” the news much more tightly in a war, attenuating even the limited capacity or willingness of the bourgeois media to reveal a soupçon of truth. So in the current war, for instance, there’s the case of the disappearing Albanian male population in Kosovo, which repeatedly “disappears” and is then repeatedly seen on TV waving at cameras. Then there’s the great crime of the Serbs driving the Albanians out and the great crime of not letting them leave—which are reported with equal fury by NATO spokesmen. Recently, we were to believe that the destruction of Milosevic’s villa was not what it was, an assassination attempt, but an attack on a military headquarters. No doubt those sneaky Serbs were hiding a nuclear submarine in his Jacuzzi.

This kind of morality and piety also played out domestically over the past year or so in the preoccupation of Congress and the bourgeois media over who has been polishing Clinton’s scepter—by report, evidently not Hillary. But little or no attention is devoted to the precipitous decline in the living standards of working people, the disappearance of health insurance for growing numbers, the erosion of public education, the youth without futures, the black men re-enslaved in America’s prisons and shot down on the street by the racist cops. All of this during a longish economic boom, during “good times.”

## For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

Much of the world working class once saw socialism, if a distant dream, still as its future. Not so today. Under the impact of the bourgeois triumphalism in the wake of what was a historic defeat for the world working class—capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR and East Europe—to many in the world, socialism seems to have been proven a failure. It is our job as Leninists to bring to the proletariat the understanding of its historic class interests, the need to seize state



Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

**Balkan Wars of 1912-13, flashpoint of nationalist hatreds and imperialist intrigues which were prelude to World War I. Bulgarian troops en route to battle in war against Turks.**

bourgeoisie has a tendency not only to see itself as all-powerful but as invulnerable, and therefore must be considered not just the most dangerous power economically and militarily but the one most likely to misjudge and trigger a wider war.

After World War II, which left the U.S. economically and politically dominant compared to any other imperialist power, the lion’s share of imperialist terror and destruction has been its bailiwick. Over two million killed in Korea after the Second World War, some three million or more in Vietnam dead, a half million to a million more in quelling uprisings in South America, up to a million in Indonesia, and a million-plus to date in Iraq through the starvation blockade, to control world oil supplies.

In the immediate post-World War II period, for the most part these wars were directed at the threat of “Communism” and sometimes specifically at suppress-

from the beginning that the bombing would cause Milosevic to move against the Albanian population in Kosovo, and in fact it is openly confessed by the U.S. military staff that they desire the removal of the Albanians so that NATO can more “humanely” bomb the Serbs in that area.

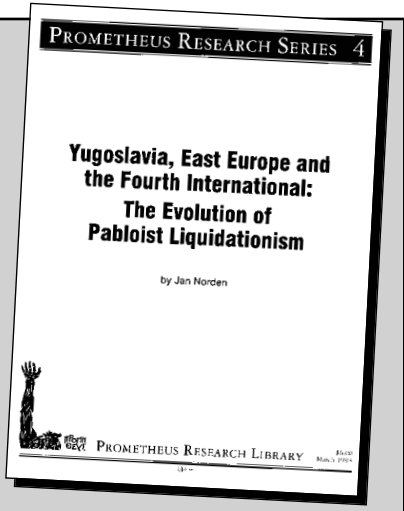
There’s a question if this war is well-conceived even from the standpoint of U.S. imperialist policy. An occupation of Kosovo by 20,000 or so American troops, especially if joined by what is currently projected to be a sizable Russian contingent, is likely to be able to do nothing except add heat to that tinderbox. Nevertheless, it looks like more—perhaps including a land invasion—is on the agenda. And there is a wing of the American bourgeoisie that wants a land war, that wants to smash the “Vietnam syndrome,” the continuing popular resistance here to any military commitment entailing significant U.S. casualties.

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power and organize an egalitarian socialist society.

The October Revolution of 1917 demonstrated in practice that the proletariat in power was the sole force for human progress on the planet. It occurred precisely because the working class of Russia was led by a party, the Bolsheviks, which steadfastly opposed its “own” Russian imperialism amid the patriotic fury and charnel house of World War I. The working class in power, through the rule of soviets (workers councils), expropriated the capitalists and landlords—ushering in a planned, collectivized economy—while implementing the tasks of the democratic revolution like land to the peasantry and national self-determination. As Marxists, revolutionary internationalists, the Bolsheviks’ primary efforts were directed toward proletarian revolutions in the major advanced industrial countries of Europe, notably Germany.

It was the failure to carry through a socialist revolution in Germany in 1923, in particular, which paved the way to a political counterrevolution in the isolated and impoverished Soviet Union in 1923-24. The Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky was destroyed, the revolutionary leadership replaced by the representatives of the large bureaucracy administering the workers state. The political program of the counterrevolution was nationalism, soon to be called by Stalin “socialism in one country”—an impossibility from the standpoint of Marxists. The soviets and other organizations of the working class were destroyed, as was the revolutionary consciousness of the Soviet proletariat, with Marxist internationalism replaced by nationalism. In order to ensure the position and privileges of the bureaucratic caste, the Stalinists became virulent opponents within the international workers movement of proletarian revolution. By the mid-1930s, this had taken the form of openly advocating bourgeois reform governments under the rubric of the “People’s Front.” Finally, large sectors of the bureaucracy became agents for imperialist economic penetration and, eventually, for counterrevolution and the reintroduction of capitalism in those societies.

On the other hand, it is a measure of the power of a planned, collectivized economy even when deformed by Stalinist misrule and in relatively backward societies that for the most part all had jobs, all had places to live, all had education, all had medical care. It was this strength that enabled the Red Army, virtually unassisted, to smash the Nazi war machine in World War II. As Trotskyist revolutionaries, our task was to militarily defend the degenerated/deformed workers states against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. At the same time, we called for political revolution against the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. This program is still on the agenda today for the remaining deformed workers states: China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba.

The Yugoslav deformed workers state was a particular expression of the contradictory character of these societies. As a result of the German military occupation in World War II, a fascist regime was established in Croatia under the Ustasha. In Serbia, you had the monarchist Chetniks, who occasionally collaborated with the Nazis and occasionally militarily resisted the occupation forces. The Bosnian Muslims in no small part collaborated with the Nazis during the occupation. Tito’s Yugoslav Communist Party (YCP), on the other hand, played a unique role. Tito’s Partisans actually mobilized people from the various ethnic areas of Yugoslavia, from Croatia, from Serbia, from Bosnia. And their distinction was this: should you be captured by them, you wouldn’t be killed because of your ethnicity. Because of that, they were able to mobilize a quite effective force in resisting the German occupation. At the end of the war, the local capitalists—who had been tied to the occupation regime or one or another of the defeated nationalist forces—were expropriated. The result was a deformed workers state, led not by political organs of



Pro-Democratic Party black press cheers Jesse Jackson as he tries to mobilize black population behind Clinton’s Balkans slaughter.

the working class, soviets, but by the staff of the Titoist guerrilla army and the Stalinist YCP.

To defend its narrow national interests against the Moscow Stalinist regime, the Belgrade bureaucracy initially tilted quite heavily toward NATO. I remember when I was a kid during the Cold War, and *Life* magazine would have diagrams showing the (bad) red planes and the (good) blue planes, and the Yugoslav planes were blue. Yugoslavia was also the very first deformed workers state to experiment with “market socialism.” On the other hand, that deformed revolution managed for a good period of time to cut across the various nationalist antagonisms of the area and, to some extent, the economic disparities between the regions, leading in the urban areas especially to significant intermarriage between various nationalities. All of that has now been destroyed. Particularly after Tito’s death, and with the intensification of market forces, the disparities between the regions and thus the different nationalisms revived and intensified until the multinational Yugoslav deformed workers state was finally ripped apart.

I remember when Tito died in 1980, just after I’d moved to Chicago. There were a number of Serbian churches in the Gary, Indiana area that mourned his death—and Tito was of Croat and Slovene descent. Can anyone imagine that sort of thing happening today? Nor will it happen again until we build revolutionary parties in those areas and the multinational proletariat establishes its class rule. Within the framework of Stalinist nationalism, Tito’s regime went about as far as it could in overcoming national divisions. But to open the road to the development of a genuinely socialist society, particularly in this backward region, what was needed was a struggle for workers revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe, creating the economic basis for genuine national equality in the Balkans and throughout the continent. What is required today is that the working class in the former Yugoslavia overthrow its various nationalist butchers—from Serbia’s Milosevic to Croatia’s Tudjman—and forge a Socialist Federation of the Balkans, which must necessarily be part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

**Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Proletarian Revolution!**

Now I suppose for many young people today, the Russian question—the question of the degenerated and deformed workers states—seems rather an abstrac-

tion. There’s a phenomenon referred to in Europe today: “The ’68ers are in charge.” Now in this country, if one thinks of 1968, you think of SDS and the cop attack against leftist antiwar protesters at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. But in Europe, ’68 refers to the French general strike which opened up a revolutionary situation in France and the possibility of proletarian power—which was then betrayed, primarily through the agency of the French Communist Party. The ’68ers now in charge—to some extent in Germany, France and Italy—are “leftist” veterans of that period. These are the individuals who are today among the primary architects of imperialist aggression in the Balkans.

How did they get that way? In the interim, these people, to a man, sided with one or another pro-imperialist reactionary mobilization against the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states—Solidarność in Poland, the Sajudis in Lithuania, various other nationalist forces. That was a school for these individuals. And going through that school, they learned to be what they are today, the prime proponents of imperialist domination on the European continent. That’s not an abstraction. That’s the result of class collaboration, because the Russian question drew the class line.

The Spartacist League fights for the overthrow of American imperialism through proletarian revolution, just as the other sections of the International Communist League fight for the overthrow of their bourgeoisies through working-class revolution. Here in the U.S., the racist oppression of black people acts to maintain the backwardness of the proletariat and to impede the formation of a revolutionary workers party. However, black workers are integrated significantly on the factory floor and form a substantial and strategic component of the trade-union movement. The way forward is to link the cause of black liberation to proletarian revolution through a fight for revolutionary integrationism. The way forward is to forge a multiracial revolutionary working-class party with a significant black leadership component.

The pro-capitalist AFL-CIO trade-union bureaucracy and its left hangers-on must be mercilessly exposed—through political struggle within the trade unions—as traitors to the working class. It is necessary to break the ties of the trade unions to the war party of racist American imperialism, the Democrats. The trade-union bureaucrats subordinate the interests of the proletariat to the class

enemy, the American imperialist rulers, and call for reliance on the capitalist state and its courts—including through inviting direct government intervention into the unions—to supposedly provide “justice” for American workers. Now this isn’t just begging but an actual disarming and betrayal of the working class and of black people and other minorities.

Jesse Jackson and the Congressional Black Caucus are foursquare for the war effort in spite of the fact that it would seem the majority of black people in this country have serious reservations about this war. The not-so-hidden wish expressed by Jackson in supporting Clinton’s war was that it would have been good if the U.S. had intervened in a similar way in Africa, notably during the slaughter of Tutsis by Hutu death squads in Rwanda five years ago. This is in fact a call for another Somalia, where U.S./UN imperialist forces intervening under the cover of “famine relief” killed hundreds of people. Meanwhile, Jackson appeals to the racist U.S. capitalists to “empower” black people, while joining with the likes of New York Democrat Al Sharpton in trying to quell outrage over the police killing of black African Amadou Diallo and pushing the lie that the cops in this racist society can be “cleaned up.”

There cannot be one step forward toward the formation of the American revolutionary workers party without an all-out fight against “America first” chauvinism and protectionism, against those who support the war aims of U.S. imperialism, against those who pit native-born against immigrant workers. It is necessary to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. From the standpoint of this racist ruling class, racial and ethnic minorities—citizens or not—are deemed “aliens” to be despised, segregated and oppressed in America’s ghettos and barrios.

The fight for the future requires the program of revolutionary Marxism. It requires an organization of revolutionaries, a party of the Bolshevik type, to organize opposition to America’s bosses, to mobilize the working class as the tribune of all the people and to fight its “own” imperialist order. It requires an organization that exposes every capitulation to blood-drenched American imperialism, an organization committed to overthrowing this rotten imperialist order through socialist revolution and to establishing worldwide proletarian rule. That is the purpose and program of the Spartacist League and the International Communist League. ■

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# Puerto Rico...

(continued from page 12)

was about sending a signal to the people of Puerto Rico that this is what happens to you if you dare the authority of the United States government in Puerto Rico” (*Chicago Ink*, March 1998). Indeed, there is a long and sordid history of the American colonial rulers trying to silence advocates of Puerto Rican independence. In 1950, nationalist leader Pedro Albizu Campos, who had already been imprisoned once, was put behind bars for violating *la mordaza*, Puerto Rico’s gag law analogue to the anti-communist Smith Act. This blatant “thought crimes” prosecution was based on speeches Albizu had made.

The frame-up of Solís is part of an ongoing witchhunt of Puerto Rican activists in Chicago. Last year, Illinois state legislators launched an investigation aimed at proving an alleged conspiracy to channel state funds from Chicago’s Roberto Clemente High School to the Puerto Rican Cultural Center for use in promoting the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners. Marrero played a prominent role in testifying against Puerto Rican activists in those hearings. Indeed, Solís stated that the FBI repeatedly tried to get him to finger Puerto Rican Cultural Center director José López, the brother of an imprisoned nationalist. López himself had spent eight months in prison for refusing to testify in the 1977 trial which sent his brother to prison. Now a federal grand jury is reportedly looking at ways to indict Puerto Rican activists for other possible “crimes” (*La Raza*, 11 March).

## U.S. Militarism and Colonial Oppression

Ever since America’s rulers seized Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War of 1898, which marked the emergence of the U.S. as an imperialist power, they have brutally suppressed every struggle against colonial oppression on



Zayas/El Nuevo Día

**July 1998: Two-day general strike against privatization of telephone company in Puerto Rico was derailed by labor bureaucrats who subordinated unions to capitalist politicians and program of bourgeois nationalism.**

the island (see “A Century of U.S. Imperialist Plunder,” WV No. 686, 13 March 1998). Puerto Ricans chafe under the yoke of Yankee imperialist domination. The working people on the island are exploited as a low-wage labor pool by capitalists seeking to maximize their profit margins. Though nominally citizens of the U.S., Puerto Ricans have no right to vote in federal elections and no voting representation in Congress; they are politically dispossessed and suffer the national oppression of a colonized people.

U.S. militarism sharpens the contradictions of life as second-class citizens for Puerto Ricans. Fully three-quarters of the tiny island of Vieques is used as a bombing range by the U.S. military, and a total of 13 percent of the colony’s scarce land is appropriated by the military, including the huge Roosevelt Roads naval base, the largest in the world. Puerto Rico is key to American military designs as the gateway to Central and South America, particularly the Panama Canal, and as a training ground and staging area for imperialist attacks throughout the region, especially against Cuba. We call for uncondi-

tional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. At the same time, we call for proletarian political revolution to oust the Castroite Stalinist bureaucracy, linking this to the internationalist struggle for socialist revolution throughout the hemisphere.

The pervasive U.S. military presence on Puerto Rico has provoked a wave of anger and protest after an American jet, practicing for the imperialist terror bombing of the Balkans with 500-pound bombs, missed its target and killed a Vieques resident. Even the pro-statehood ruling party felt compelled to beg Clinton to prohibit the use of live ammunition, while the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) has loudly called for the Navy’s exit from Vieques and for “demilitarization of Puerto Rico” (*Nuevo Día*, 21 April). But the PIP has made it amply clear that an independent capitalist Puerto Rico under the thumb of U.S. imperialism would be quite willing to maintain U.S. bases if the price was right. We say: All U.S. troops and bases out of Puerto Rico now!

The U.S. bourgeoisie denies Puerto Rico national sovereignty and discriminates against Puerto Ricans economically, linguistically, racially, politically and culturally. Last December, Puerto Ricans went to the polls for the third referendum on the island’s status in three decades. This vote, like the preceding referendums, offered “choices” designed to continue the colonial domination of the island. While some 46 percent voted for the statehood option pushed by the colonial administration, 2 percent for independence and less than 1 percent for continued “commonwealth” status, a bare majority of voters chose “none of the above.” As a register of popular sympathies, it was a sham and only useful insofar as the results indicate the simmering discontent and profound ambivalence of the Puerto Rican masses for whom “status” festers as the national ulcer. Even those who fervently want to get out from under the heel of U.S. colonial subjugation understandably fear a downward economic plunge if ties were severed with the U.S. Any formal “independence” achieved through a U.S.-sponsored referendum or Congressional proclamation—as opposed to a revolutionary struggle against U.S. imperialism—could only be a cover for neocolonial U.S. domination. As we wrote in WV No. 704 (8 January): “We Trotskyists of the International Communist League fight for a revolu-

tionary solution to the Puerto Rican national question. As forthright opponents of all forms of U.S. imperialist colonial oppression, we favor the independence of Puerto Rico in order to fight against chauvinism in the United States and to undercut the bourgeois-nationalist leadership of the working class on the island. But given the evident and understandable contradictions of Puerto Ricans on the question, we do not advocate that independence be *forced* on them. The sympathies of the population are a large factor for Marxists in determining how to get the national question off the agenda and clear the road for revolutionary internationalist class struggle. Therefore, today we champion the *right of independence for Puerto Rico.*”

## For Proletarian Class Independence!

The two-day general strike last summer, supporting a strike by *telefonistas* against privatization of the phone company, provided a palpable demonstration of the power of the Puerto Rican proletariat. However, the strike was derailed by labor bureaucrats who subordinated the political independence of the working class—a burning necessity if it is to fight for its interests as distinct from those of the class enemy, the bourgeoisie—to the program of bourgeois nationalism and tied the unions to bourgeois political and right-wing religious elements through a class-collaborationist front (CAOS). Priests were trotted out to lead prayer vigils, while the union tops pushed the lie that the cops facing down strikers on the picket lines were workers, too. The workers’ anxieties over the layoffs to come with privatization were channeled into classless nationalist slogans like “Puerto Rico is not to be sold.” The nationalist lie of *el pueblo unido* (the people united) disappears the conflict between labor and capital and is counterposed to a proletarian struggle for state power.

What was urgently posed by the *telefonista* struggles last summer was the need to construct a revolutionary workers party to break the working masses from the nationalist parties and their handmaidens in the trade-union bureaucracy. It is only through workers revolution that Puerto Rico will be fully liberated from colonial oppression. We seek to forge the international class unity of the workers of Puerto Rico and the United States against both the U.S. capitalists and the local bourgeois overseers, in a fight for socialist revolution on the island, and internationally. This is the perspective of *permanent revolution*, as first outlined by the great Russian revolutionary, Leon Trotsky.

The Puerto Rican bourgeoisie is too weak, corrupt and tied to imperialism to wage a struggle for national liberation, a task historically associated with the bourgeois revolutions. Meanwhile, petty-bourgeois nationalists have sought to pressure the United Nations—a den of imperialist robbers and their victims—to intervene against American colonialism. Such futile pressure politics have sometimes been augmented by courageous but desperate acts of individual terror—which bring the day of liberation no closer while leading to increased state repression—like the 1954 shooting attack in the U.S. House of Representatives and the 1981 blowing up of nine National Guard planes in San Juan by Los Macheteros. Marxists oppose the strategy of individual terrorism, which is based on a rejection of the revolutionary capacity of the working class. We nevertheless

## In Defense of the Right to Privacy Free Dr. Kevorkian!

Because he helped Thomas Youk, a man suffering advanced-stage Lou Gehrig’s disease, with his requested suicide, Dr. Jack Kevorkian was sentenced this month by a Michigan judge to 25 years in prison. Judge Jessica Cooper sentenced the 70-year-old doctor despite a tearful appeal by Melody Youk, who described her husband as being in constant pain, afraid he would choke on his own saliva because he was too weak to swallow, and confined to a wheelchair with the wasting disease. Youk’s entire family supported his decision to end his life. “Why doesn’t the prosecutor charge me with conspiracy to murder?” angrily asked Youk’s brother Terrence after the trial.

For this government and its legal system, truth, justice and the easing of human agony are of no concern. Dr. Kevorkian, who represented himself, had sought to use the trial as a forum on the “right to die.” Instead, the judge hammered home the vindictive message that Kevorkian had to be punished for “disrespect for a society that exists because of the strength of the legal system.”

In fact, the entire bourgeois “justice” system, with its courts, cops and prisons, exists to preserve the rule of the capitalist class over the rest of society, by its own repressive laws and by murderous police terror on the streets. Despite many polls showing that most of the population supports some form of the “right to die,” politicians continue to enact laws against assisted suicide. Thumping bibles and

pushing religious superstition to prop up a deeply unjust society, Democrats and Republicans join in denying individuals the right to decide how and when they will die, while simultaneously overseeing expansion of the racist death penalty and the grisly machinery of state terror.

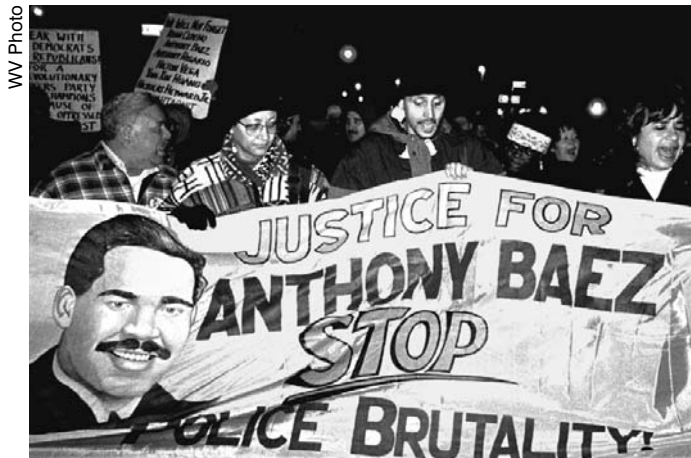
For us, Dr. Kevorkian has committed no crime. What is at issue here is the most basic right to privacy, the right to be left alone in intimate personal matters like death and sex. The same religious fanatics who terrorize abortion clinics in the name of “life” are a moving force to ensure that you die in agony in the name of “god.” As we wrote in “In Defense of Dr. Kevorkian” (WV No. 593, 4 February 1994):

“The big problem is the state, priests and preachers, and the upper echelons of the medical establishment who ordain that they, and only they, have the ‘god-given right’ to determine how you live and how you die....

“The priests and preachers simply provide the ideological overlay to the interests of the rich, propertied few. To maintain their rule, they try to enforce their control over all aspects of the lives of the rest of us, from birth to death.”

As Marxists, we fight for the expansion of human freedoms—for proletarian rule and a socialist society in which all human beings can live with dignity, without being forced to sell their labor power to blood-sucking parasites and without being forced to expose their most private decisions to the scrutiny of the state. Free Dr. Kevorkian!

**Anthony Baez was victim of killer cops in the Bronx. Puerto Ricans in U.S. are subjected to brutal racist oppression.**



WV Photo

# Newport News...

(continued from page 12)

lines. Crucial to such a perspective is that the union actively champion black rights against the vicious racism which the bosses have used to keep the South a bastion of the “open shop.” A recent cross-burning outside the home of an interracial couple in nearby Virginia Beach was an ominous example of the racist terror which is also aimed at suppressing integrated labor struggle.

Reporting on Honda’s plans to build an auto plant in rural Alabama, the *New York Times* (7 May) wrote: “Southern states have been very successful in luring auto makers, partly because their anti-union laws and traditions make it hard for the United Automobile Workers union to organize workers.” A victory for the workers in the integrated Newport News union—whose wages have been frozen at an average of \$14 an hour even for highly skilled workers—could be a gateway to organizing the South. That means defying the bosses’ “right to work” laws; it means mass picket lines, solidarity strikes and an all-out fight against racist discrimination on and off the job.

But far from seeking to mobilize labor’s social power, the USWA International leadership pushes reliance on the class enemy, looking to the politicians of the capitalist Democratic Party and issuing flag-waving appeals to the “national interest.” The April 21 Washington, D.C. rally organized by the USWA tops was aimed at urging Congress to show “appreciation for the contributions these workers make to our national defense.” But as we have warned throughout this strike, the “national interest” is the capitalists’ *class* interests—i.e., profits. The capitalist rulers are waging a war against tiny Serbia for the same reason they bust unions and oppress minorities in the U.S.—to strengthen their ability to exploit working people around the world. It is in the class interests of the U.S. proletariat to oppose the imperialist military adventures of this government and the capitalist ruling class it represents.

The bureaucracy’s policy of class collaboration, based on the lie that there is a

partnership between labor and capital, directly undermines the strike. The USWA International tops’ appeals to Democratic Party politicians—falsely painting them as “friends of labor”—to pressure management to the bargaining table is an open invitation for government intervention. If the capitalist government does intervene—likely using the pretext of “national defense”—it will be to *break* the strike.

Meanwhile, the union misleaders do nothing to counter the violence-baiting, strikebreaking propaganda churned out

bing so that production can begin. The company is straining to get the critical cranes operating, causing several accidents in the process. Managers, engineers, painting and sandblasting contractors and Navy inspection personnel have been waltzing into the yard from the start. The Boilermakers union—which does repair work in the yard—is honoring the picket lines, and ILA longshoremen, workers at other shipyards and other unionists have joined the picket lines in solidarity. But IBEW-organized contractors are crossing the picket lines.



WV Photo

**Longshoremen in Norfolk, Virginia marched against segregation, for school busing in 1983. For a workers party that champions the cause of all the exploited and oppressed!**

by the capitalist media—the occasional strike bulletins focus on issues like financial assistance while strikers have been generally kept in the dark. At the same time, the USWA tops promote illusions in the “neutrality” of the police. The cops are racist strikebreakers whose job is to enforce the anti-union laws. One picket gate captain told *Workers Vanguard* how a state cop bluntly warned him: “I am here to monitor you, not the traffic.”

Refusing to mobilize the mass pickets needed to shut the shipyard down tight, the USWA bureaucracy plays into the company’s efforts to drag out the strike and induce enough workers into scab-

**Picket lines mean don’t cross!**

More ominously, a growing number of Local 8888 members have also reportedly started scabbing. A headline in the *Wall Street Journal* (5 May) gloats: “Newport News Strikers Say 25% Are Back at Job.” One striker told WV that this was little more than an effort to “stampede” the workers. But it is foolhardy and dangerous to dismiss the threat posed by unskilled workers scabbing on the strike, as the union tops do by arguing that production depends on skilled labor. This treacherous line not only alibis scabbing but undermines the very basis of the *industrial union*—bringing together workers from all job

defend militants who seek to strike at the class enemy in the name of the oppressed masses. On the other hand, the 1975 FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation) bombing of Fraunces Tavern in New York City, in which four innocent people were killed, was an indefensible act of indiscriminate terror from the standpoint of the working class, and its perpetrators would be punished accordingly by a workers government.

Almost all of the 15 *independentistas* currently imprisoned were charged with “conspiracy,” a sinister government catchall designed to punish “thought crimes.” Sentenced to a total of over a thousand years in prison, some have spent many years in “supermax” hell-holes where they undergo “white torture”—22 or 23 hours a day in brightly lit, white-painted isolation cells where they are denied any human contact at all. The government vendetta against the

Puerto Rican nationalists is of a piece with the FBI’s COINTELPRO campaign of assassination and frame-up against the Black Panther Party, in which 38 Panther activists were killed and hundreds more imprisoned. It is notable that José Solís was among the endorsers of the labor-centered mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee in Chicago last November to demand freedom for MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Many of the jailed *independentistas* lived and worked in Chicago, a historic center of the independence movement. With the second-largest Puerto Rican population on the U.S. mainland, Chicago has been the scene of repeated racist cop rampages in the barrios, including one in 1966 which provoked a two-day upheaval of outrage and another in 1977 against a Puerto Rican Day celebration. The Chicago area is also one of

the main proletarian concentrations on the North American continent. Puerto Rican workers constitute a significant portion of that labor force, from the factories on the West Side and suburban Chicago to the steel mills in northwestern Indiana. Puerto Rican workers here and on the eastern seaboard are a living bridge between workers in the U.S. and their class brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico. As we wrote in WV No. 704:

“We fight for the release of Puerto Rican nationalist political prisoners as an urgent cause for the North American proletariat. Through such struggles, we work to break the ideological shackles of the chauvinist labor misleaders who tie the workers to their exploiters through the medium of false consciousness such as anti-immigrant racism and job-trusting protectionism.... “Puerto Rico is a society linked directly, economically, to the U.S., and culturally and linguistically to the laboring masses throughout Latin America and much of

categories in the shipyard—which was forged through a bitter, three-month strike in 1979 marked by violent cop attacks on the picket lines.

The organizing of an industrial union also placed in the hands of the workers a potentially powerful weapon to combat management attempts to pit workers against each other, white against black, men against women. In this shipyard widely described as a “plantation,” company discrimination against black and women workers is rampant. While blacks and women have long formed a solid core of Local 8888 members, white workers have increasingly joined the union as they feel the lash of company speedup and wage-gouging. One woman union member with over 20 years at Newport News told WV that many white workers felt they “had it made until in the last three to five years they have been screwed over so bad that everybody is finally waking up, they are finally realizing that the union is not just there for women and minorities.”

The outcome of this strike will have a huge effect on the ongoing battle to organize Louisiana’s Avondale shipyard, which had been slated to merge with Newport News. Now Litton Industries, which already owns the Ingalls shipyard in Mississippi, is attempting to buy both outfits and create the country’s largest shipbuilding company. Newport News management, which raked in \$66 million in profits last year, would like nothing better than to break the strike to sweeten any buyout.

The Newport News strike carries high stakes for workers in the racist, “open shop” South and the labor movement as a whole. The fight to unionize the South requires a class-struggle program and leadership based on the understanding that in racist America labor’s struggle can only move forward by taking up the fight against black oppression. As we wrote last issue:

“What is needed is a political fight inside the unions to oust the pro-capitalist bureaucracy and replace it with a class-struggle leadership—one which recognizes that the interests of labor are counterposed to those of the employers, their government and their political parties. Break with the Democrats! For a workers party that fights for a workers government!” ■

the Caribbean. The course of Puerto Rican independence from the yoke of Yankee imperialism is not preordained. A revolutionary socialist upheaval in the U.S. would grant independence in a minute, as well as massive amounts of economic aid. The spark can also light the other way, with the militant proletariat in Puerto Rico inspiring struggle on the mainland, including a political battle against U.S. imperialist domination of the island.”

The key lies in forging multiracial revolutionary workers parties, Leninist vanguard parties which champion the cause of all the oppressed in leading the fight for socialist revolution in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

\* \* \*

Send money for legal defense to:

Committee to Defend José Solís  
c/o Law Offices of Jed Stone  
434 West Ontario Street  
Chicago, IL 60610

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

For the Right of Independence for Puerto Rico! All U.S. Troops, Bases Out!

## Defend Puerto Rican Independence Fighter José Solís!



La Raza

CHICAGO—On March 12, Dr. José Solís Jordán, an outspoken advocate of Puerto Rican independence, was convicted in a transparent frame-up trial for the bombing of a military recruitment office in Chicago in December 1992 in which no one was hurt and neither of the pipe bombs even fully exploded. Solís, a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, has repeatedly insisted on his innocence. Yet he

faces up to 55 years in a federal penitentiary, joining 15 other Puerto Rican nationalists imprisoned by the U.S. This is but the latest outrage in the 100-year history of American colonial oppression of Puerto Rico, as the government attempts to smash any opposition to its imperialist rule of the island. It is an attack on all opponents of imperialist oppression, on the entire left and the

labor movement. We demand: Free José Solís and all victims of U.S. colonial repression against Puerto Rico! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico!

In a classic COINTELPRO-style frame-up which followed his refusal to testify against another Puerto Rican nationalist, Solís was charged with the bombing five years after the event—only 13 minutes before the statute of limitations expired! In November 1997, a score of FBI agents outfitted like commandos—including some from the Chicago Domestic Terrorism Squad—invaded the Solís home in suburban San Juan. They handcuffed and strip-searched Solís in front of his terrified children and dragged him off for interrogation. For five hours, the Feds refused his demands to see a lawyer. They then claimed he confessed before the lawyer arrived. But there is no signed confession.

Solís was convicted on the basis of the concocted confession, a parade of lying FBI agents, and the testimony of Rafael Marrero, a paid government provocateur who received \$119,000 over a number of years. The only one to admit to planting the bombs, Marrero was granted immu-

nity from prosecution. This fink claimed that Solís, then a professor of education at Chicago's DePaul University, helped him build and plant the bombs. When the prosecutor asked Solís if the FBI, Marrero and another fink were lying about his involvement in the bombing, Solís replied: "It wouldn't be the first time it happened in history. Yes ma'am."

Noting that none of the Chicago jury spoke Spanish and was forced to rely on government translations for portions of the trial, some of Solís' supporters, who packed the courtroom throughout the trial, have stated that he would never have been convicted if the trial had occurred in Puerto Rico before a Spanish-speaking jury. That Solís was denied a jury of his peers in his own country is part and parcel of the frame-up methods of this racist imperialist "justice" system. But it is an illusion to expect justice from the courts of the colonial administration on the island, which along with the cops and the military are at the core of the state apparatus of capitalist-imperialist repression.

Following his arrest, Solís said: "This was not just about intimidating me. It

*continued on page 10*



Rivera/EI Diario-La Prensa

April 26 protest in New York City after U.S. war jet training on Puerto Rican island of Vieques dropped 500-pound bomb on civilians, killing one.

## Newport News Strike: Key Battle for Labor in "Open Shop" South

For Mass Pickets!  
No Reliance on Capitalist Politicians!

May 10—The strike at Newport News Shipbuilding by United Steelworkers (USWA) Local 8888, one of the few integrated, industrial unions in the "open shop" South, is at a critical stage. The workers' determination was seen in an April 28 march on company headquarters by some 2,500 strikers. Production at this key military supplier, which builds and maintains all of the Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and many of its submarines, remains at a halt.

But the shipyard has stayed open, and as the walkout enters its sixth week, the employers and the local press and radio stations have pulled out the stops in an effort to get workers to scab on the strike. As we wrote last issue, "The picketers' chant of '88, close the gate'

must become a reality. The key to winning the strike is *mass, militant, disciplined picket lines that shut the yard down tight*" (WV No. 712, 30 April).

Behind Newport News management stands Virginia's "right to work" laws which are wielded throughout the South in order to keep this a low-wage, non-union area. Virginia's statutes effectively ban real picket lines, forbidding "interference...with another person in the exercise of their right to work or enter their place of employment." To prevail against the company and these union-busting laws, the strikers must be armed with a class-struggle perspective aimed at mobilizing labor throughout the Virginia Tidewater area to build the picket

*continued on page 11*



WV Photo

Mass pickets are needed to shut Newport News down tight. Victory in this strike could open gateway to unionizing the South.