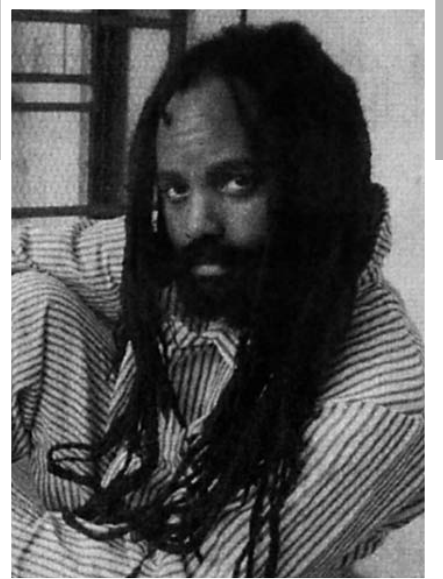


The Fight Is On Mobilize to Free Mumia Now!



Saul/Philadelphia Inquirer

The explosive new evidence introduced by new attorneys for Mumia Abu-Jamal on May 4 confirms beyond the shadow of a doubt what has been clear from the time he was arrested on false charges of killing Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner in December 1981: *Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man.* The new legal papers include affidavits attesting to Jamal's innocence not only by him and his brother Billy Cook, who was at the scene of the killing, but also a *sworn confession* by the man who actually shot Faulkner. In a signed statement, Arnold Beverly testifies that he was "hired, along with another guy, and paid to shoot and kill Faulkner" because Faulkner had reportedly been "a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen." The statement continues: "Faulkner was shot in the back and then in the face before Jamal came on the scene. Jamal had nothing to do with the shooting."

In his own affidavit, Jamal states: "I did not shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent." Jamal testifies that while filling out his log sheet in the cab he drove at the time, he heard shouting and "recognized my brother standing in the street staggering and dizzy. I immediately exited the cab and ran to his scream. As I came across the street I saw a uniformed cop turn toward me gun in hand, saw a flash and went down to my knees. I closed my eyes and sat still trying to breathe. The next thing I remember I felt myself being kicked, hit and being brought out of a stupor. When I opened my eyes, I saw cops all around me. They were hollering and cursing, grabbing and pulling on me."

This blows to bits the frame-up that railroaded Mumia Abu-Jamal to Pennsylvania's death row 19 years ago. And it is for this reason that the evidence submitted by Jamal's new legal team has been subjected to a total blackout by the capitalist media outside Philadelphia. Their wall of silence is aimed at furthering the drive by the capitalist state to silence forever this former Black Panther Party spokesman, MOVE supporter and eloquent journalist who is known as the "voice of the voiceless" for his searing



At May 12 Jamal rally in San Francisco, Revolutionary Contingent fought for mobilization of labor/black power in counterposition to reformists' reliance in capitalist "justice" system.

indictments of racist capitalist "justice."

For the same reason, this dramatic new evidence should serve as a clarion call for redoubled effort by the many working people, black people, anti-racist youth and opponents of the barbaric death penalty who have rallied to Mumia's cause in this country and around the world. Addressing a May 12 rally in Philadelphia, Jamal's new lead counsel, Marlene Kamish, told protesters that the new papers "should elevate your spirits and should give you courage and enthusiasm and optimism.... We don't want to hear a thing about keeping Mumia another day in that prison. We don't want to hear a thing about it! We want him out! We want him out now! We want him free!"

Jamal's conviction was based on lying, extorted testimony without a shred of physical evidence. The prosecutor got the death sentence for Jamal because of his radical political beliefs as a Black Panther. The drive to execute him throws into stark relief the whole nature of racist

American capitalism. It is the extension of the COINTELPRO terror campaign by the FBI under which dozens of Black Panthers were assassinated at the hands of the state. It is a demonstration of the machinery of repression wielded by the capitalist rulers against any perceived threat to a system based on the exploitation of the many by the few, which in America is rooted in the forcible subjugation of the black population at the bottom of society.

Reveling in the fabulous increase in their profits secured through the increasing exploitation of labor and the brutal impoverishment of the poor, the rulers continually enact new laws to punish those who would fight back. In a message from death row some years ago, Mumia himself eloquently noted:

"The extension of the death penalty to dozens of new crimes is not a reflection of a secure state, but a state swimming in insecurity, a system that is unsure of itself. As they scuttle the Constitution and create judges fit for a star chamber, they

loosen the very ground on which they stand, quickening their fall. This government, which bombed babies in Philadelphia and in Baghdad, which mows down babies in Somalia, is sowing the seeds of their own destruction. It is a time, not for confusion, but for opportunity, to transform what is into what must be."

What must be is a massive struggle centered on the social power of the multiracial working class to fight for Jamal's freedom! Based on the only significant integration in racist America—the workplace and the factory floor—the trade unions have the social power and potential to become battalions in the struggle against racism and exploitation and to shake the foundations of this decaying capitalist system. If undertaken with a mobilization of the union movement, the fight to free Mumia and to abolish the racist death penalty would be a first, giant step in

that direction. To that end, labor must break the chains forged by the trade-union misleaders that have shackled the unions to the political parties and the state agencies of the enemy class. This is the class-struggle perspective that the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee have fought for since we first took up Jamal's defense some 14 years ago.

This was certainly not the message coming from the reformist organizers of the Philadelphia rally and another the same day in San Francisco. Far from seeking to bring in fresh forces from among workers and ghetto and barrio residents who know well from their own experience the frame-up methods of the cops, the reformists have been squirming to avoid or downplay the new evidence, effectively acting to abet the blackout by the bourgeois media. Speakers from the Workers World Party (WWP) and its International Action Center (IAC), the main organizers of the Philly protest, did

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The French Left and the Popular Front Workers Struggles, Ghetto Upheavals in France See Page Four



Plantation Justice

Racist Suppression of *The Wind Done Gone*

In a blatant act of racist censorship, Atlanta Federal District Court judge Charles A. Pannell last month blocked the publication of black writer Alice Randall's book *The Wind Done Gone*, granting an injunction sought by the estate of Margaret Mitchell, author of *Gone With the Wind*. Pannell ruled that Randall's book was an unauthorized sequel that "infringes on the copyright owner's right to create and control derivative works."

The real reason *The Wind Done Gone* has been suppressed is because it rips into the glorification of the brutal slave system and the demeaning portrayal of black people that is *Gone With the Wind*, a thou-

sand pages of racist trash that mourns the "tragic" destruction of the "Southern way of life" by the Civil War and Reconstruction. Pannell's affections clearly lie with the slavemasters on the Tara plantation, as this Clinton appointee expresses concern for "what becomes of Mrs. Mitchell's beloved characters, and their romantic but tragic world." The legal premises for this censorship are so bogus that even a *New York Times* (1 May) editorial titled "Gone With the First Amendment" objected that "the right to produce comic parodies of prior works is well established in law."

Ridiculing the charge that she had written a "sequel," Randall explains in a col-



New Line Cinema



Corbis-Bettmann

Movie still from *Gone With the Wind*, racist trash glorifying brutal slave system. Right: 1863 photo of slave scarred from whipping.

umn in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (8 May) that a sequel would have maintained "the theme that slavery and the Confederacy were benign institutions" and would better have been titled *Uncle Tom Goes to Tara*. She states, "I wrote with the hope of creating an antidote to a poisonous text." Her book retells life on the plantation from the standpoint of the slaves. It also contains interracial sex and homosexuality, which the Mitchell estate has banned in any "authorized sequel." Randall's main character, a black slave named Cynara Brown, is the daughter of the plantation master and thus half-sister to Mitchell's heroine Scarlett O'Hara.

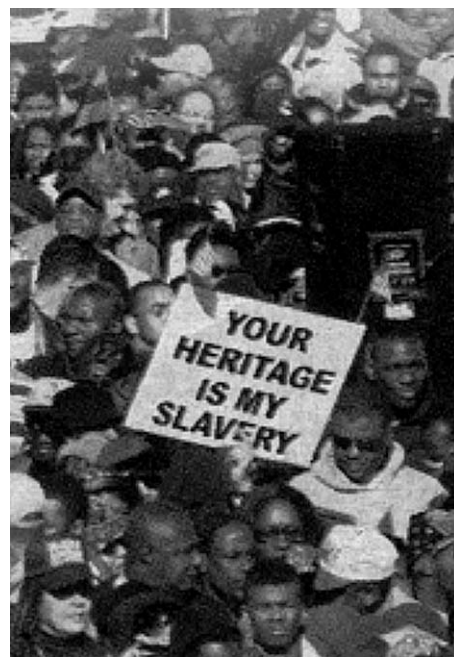
Judges are politicians in black robes, and their decisions reflect the political climate of the time. Pannell's ruling comes amid a blitz of university campuses by Republican strategist and racist ideologue David Horowitz, who decries calls for reparations for slavery and pushes the sickening lie that black people *actually benefited* from being enslaved (see "SYC Leads Anti-Horowitz Protest," WV No. 755, 30 March). The ruling comes on the heels of a huge racist mobilization in Mississippi that defeated a ballot referendum to remove the Confederate battle flag from the state emblem. But there has also been a wave of protest *against* the flag of slavery and KKK terror, highlighted by the January 2000 march of some 50,000 people, including trade-union contingents, in Columbia, South Carolina to demand the Confederate banner's removal from the State House. While the Democrats hustled votes by cynically echoing calls to remove the flag, George W. Bush, then campaigning for the Republican presidential nomination, openly sided with the racists.

Once installed in the White House, Bush assembled one of the most right-wing administrations in years. Attorney General John Ashcroft is an open admirer of the Confederacy. In a 1998 interview in *Southern Partisan*, he praised the magazine for its "heritage" of "defending Southern patriots like [Robert E.] Lee, [Stonewall] Jackson and [Confederate president Jefferson] Davis" and proclaimed: "We've all got to stand up and speak in this respect, or else we'll be taught that these people were giving their lives, subscribing their sacred fortunes and their honor to some perverted agenda." Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton openly expressed regret over the slaveholders' defeat in the Civil War during a visit to a Confederate cemetery before her appointment: "We lost too much. We lost the idea that the states were to stand against the federal government gaining too much power over our lives."

What was "lost" in the Civil War was the system of black chattel slavery, which was *the* issue, as every Confederate leader proclaimed at the time. Norton's grotesque falsification of history in the service of racist reaction is taken straight from the mouths of the defeated slaveholders. As historian James McPherson noted in the *New York Review of Books* (12 April), the myth that the war was fought over "states' rights" arose as part of "the Lost Cause view of the origins of the Civil War," which glorified it as "a war of Northern aggression against Southern constitutional rights" and "en-

tered the mainstream of historical writing in the first half of the twentieth century." It was under the banner of the "Lost Cause" that the Ku Klux Klan, led by former Confederate officers, perpetrated terror with the aim of smashing the democratic rights won by the black freedmen under Reconstruction. For much of the next century, the Democratic Party, the party of slavery, ruled the Jim Crow South with an iron fist of racist sheriffs and White Citizens Councils supplemented by murderous KKK terror.

As protesters in South Carolina declared last year, "Your heritage is my slavery." And it is that heritage that is celebrated by *Gone With the Wind*. Mitchell's book, a paean to the "Lost Cause," became an American icon because it perpetuates the racist ideology of segregation, that black people belong at the bottom of American society. It was published in 1936 (and made into a movie three years later), during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose "New



AP

50,000 marched in Columbia, South Carolina against flag of slavery and KKK terror, January 2000.

Deal" coalition encompassed everything from black and Communist union organizers to Southern sheriffs and Klansmen. A 1936 review of *Gone With the Wind* in the *New York Times* lauded the book for conveying "a sense of the tragedy that overcame the planting families in 1865."

McPherson points out that only since the 1950s have most historians written that slavery was, indeed, the cause of the Civil War. This was an outgrowth of the massive civil rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s, which profoundly shook American society and resulted in the dismantling of legal segregation in the South. Hard on the heels of these struggles came the growing opposition to the losing, dirty U.S. colonial war in Vietnam. These overlapping mass movements and a growing radicalization especially among sections of youth, both white and black, led to a kind of bubble in the racist norm of American society, and a nervous ruling class felt compelled to grant some reforms. Notably, in its editorial on *The Wind Done Gone*, the *Times* cites a Supreme Court ruling 30 years ago which established "the constitutional doctrine

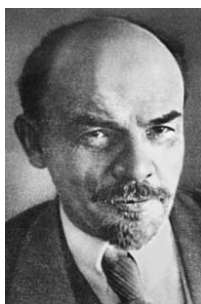
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TROTSKY

Class Society and Capitalist Greed

Combatting the AIDS epidemic that is particularly ravaging the world's poor, especially in Africa, would be the highest priority under a socialist economic system of planned and rational production for human needs. But under the irrational capitalist profit system, millions are consigned to death because they are deemed "expedient" by the exploiters. Writing in 1884, Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx's comrade-in-



LENIN

of society into antagonistic classes—slaves and slaveowners, serfs and feudal lords, and finally workers and bourgeoisie. To break the fetters on social progress imposed by class exploitation requires the overthrow of the capitalist system internationally through socialist revolution.

With slavery, which attained its fullest development under civilization, came the first great cleavage of society into an exploiting and an exploited class....

From its first day to this, sheer greed was the driving spirit of civilization; wealth and again wealth and once more wealth, wealth, not of society, but of the single scurvy individual—here was its one and final aim. If at the same time the progressive development of science and a repeated flowering of supreme art dropped into its lap, it was only because without them modern wealth could not have completely realized its achievements.

Since civilization is founded on the exploitation of one class by another class, its whole development proceeds in a constant contradiction. Every step forward in production is at the same time a step backwards in the position of the oppressed class, that is, of the great majority. Whatever benefits some necessarily injures the others; every fresh emancipation of one class is necessarily a new oppression for another class. The most striking proof of this is provided by the introduction of machinery, the effects of which are now known to the whole world. And if among the barbarians, as we saw, the distinction between rights and duties could hardly be drawn, civilization makes the difference and antagonism between them clear even to the dumbest intelligence by giving one class practically all the rights and the other class practically all the duties.

But that should not be: what is good for the ruling class must also be good for the whole of society, with which the ruling class identifies itself. Therefore the more civilization advances, the more it is compelled to cover the evils it necessarily creates with the cloak of love and charity, to palliate them or to deny them—in short, to introduce a conventional hypocrisy which was unknown to earlier forms of society and even to the first stages of civilization, and which culminates in the pronouncement: the exploitation of the oppressed class is carried on by the exploiting class simply and solely in the interests of the exploited class itself; and if the exploited class cannot see it and even grows rebellious, that is the basest ingratitude to its benefactors, the exploiters.

—Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (International Publishers, 1942)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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



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25 May 2001

Break with the Democrats—For a Workers Party!

Labor, Latinos and the L.A. Elections

LOS ANGELES, May 21—As the June 5 mayoral election draws near, Democratic candidate Antonio Villaraigosa looks likely to become the first Latino mayor of Los Angeles since 1872. That a Latino liberal who boasts of his credentials as a labor organizer could well be the next mayor of this historic bastion of anti-immigrant racism and “open shop” union-busting points to the dramatic changes that have taken place in Los Angeles over the last 20 years. Last year, L.A. became known as “Striketown USA” as the city was gripped by widely popular strikes by janitors in the spring and transit workers in the fall. Propelled by an influx of combative immigrant workers from Mexico and Central America, L.A. has seen a series of labor battles in recent years, including one of the largest single organizing victories in the past several decades, as some 70,000 home health care workers were brought into the Service Employees (SEIU) in 1999.

Many of these workers are now being organized to ensure Villaraigosa’s election. One of his biggest backers is the L.A. County Federation of Labor under Miguel Contreras, which represents 800,000 unionists. The federation mobilized 2,000 workers and shelled out \$1 million in union funds for Villaraigosa for the April primary vote. Rallying cooks, dishwashers and maids to canvass Latino neighborhoods for Villaraigosa, Contreras declared: “Every army has its special troops. That’s why you’re here today.” Contreras enthuses that Villaraigosa will be “the first union mayor in the history of Los Angeles,” and such sentiments are heard among many Latino workers.

In supporting Villaraigosa, the labor tops are pushing the same old shell game of Democratic Party “lesser evilism” that chains the working class and minorities to this party of the capitalist class enemy. A *Wall Street Journal* (16 April) column by Joel Kotkin ranted that Villaraigosa is a “left-wing Democrat” whose election would mark a return to “socialistic policies” that a decade ago left American cities “looking like Soviet-bloc relics.” But more far-sighted sections of the L.A. ruling class, including some Republicans, are supporting Villaraigosa as the “right candidate for the times.” Republican mayor Richard Riordan—elected in 1993 on a platform of racist “law and order” and union-busting privatization—has come out for him, as has Democratic governor Gray Davis, whose scabberding “back to work” order during last year’s L.A. transit walkout was thrown back in his face by the union membership.

Yet another Villaraigosa backer, to the tune of \$100,000, is Ron Burkle, former owner of Ralph’s supermarkets, notorious for using non-union janitorial companies employing recent immigrants who were paid less than minimum wage and cheated on overtime. Referring to Burkle, billionaire businessman Eli Broad and others, the *New York Times* (21 March) wrote of “a group of wealthy Westsiders...who are supporting Mr. Villaraigosa as the right candidate for the times, in much the way Manhattan elites supported David N. Dinkins’s successful effort to become New York City’s first black mayor more than a decade ago.”

As he proceeded to slash the municipal payroll while putting more cops on ghetto streets, the liberal Dinkins assured his Wall Street backers that the city’s black and working people “will take it from me.” Riordan states that Villaraigosa “will unite business and labor, Democrats and Republicans, neighborhoods and downtown in a common effort to keep our city moving forward.”

In the wake of the 1965 Watts upheaval, the city rulers brought in former cop Tom

Bradley as L.A.’s first black mayor in 1973. By the time South Central exploded in 1992 following the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King, it was not only black people who took to the streets in outrage but desperately poor young immigrants from Mexico and Central America. In the 25 years following the Watts rebellion, the city’s population went from 85 percent white to 37 percent white, plummeting even more after 1992. The black population has also declined, by over 50,000 in the last ten years alone, as those with any means have moved to areas like Lancaster, Riverside and Las Vegas. Asians, while making up only

strike to campaign for Villaraigosa, inviting him to speak at the picket line. One picketer told WV that support from electricians, teachers and hotel workers was irregular because the Villaraigosa campaign took precedence. Strikers have even been withdrawn from the picket lines to campaign for this capitalist politician!

The Poison of Democratic Party Ethnic Politics

The L.A. election provides a stark example of how Democratic Party “ethnic politics” serve the racist “divide and rule” politics of the bourgeoisie. Villaraigosa’s opponent is City Attorney

187, which sought to deny social services, health care and public education to undocumented immigrants. Hahn’s campaign smacks of an attempt to rebuild the anti-immigrant coalition that pushed through that racist initiative.

Hahn calls for a thousand more cops to maraud the ghettos and barrios. He charges that his rival is “more likely to be sympathetic to the criminal.” With barely veiled racism, his campaign spokesman explains that this is because Villaraigosa “comes from a different background.” For his part, Villaraigosa today also came out for hiring 1,000 more cops, after declaring at a recent debate with Hahn: “I want to keep cops on the streets of Los Angeles and Jim Hahn wants to take them off.” The LAPD is notorious for its brutal strikebreaking and murderous terror against black people and immigrants. Remember the bloody cop attack on Latino janitors marching for union recognition in Century City in 1990!

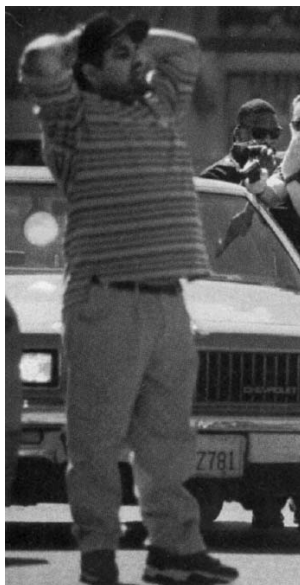
Wrapping himself in the American flag, Villaraigosa refers to his youth on the rough streets of East L.A. and boasts of being “a poster child for the American dream.” But the reality for immigrants in L.A. is a nightmare of cop terror and desperate poverty. Villaraigosa’s patriotic appeals cater not only to Anglo voters but also to politically conservative and largely petty-bourgeois layers of Mexican Americans whose forebears came to the U.S. in the first decades of the 20th century. Many of them are also hostile to undocumented and recent immigrants and supported the anti-immigrant Prop. 187 and the racist “English only” Prop. 227 eliminating bilingual education. Villaraigosa’s campaign makes no mention of bilingual education, and his campaign workers even try to get rally participants to chant the popular farm workers’ slogan “Sí, se puede!” (Yes, we can!) in English.

Nevertheless, a vile racist backlash has erupted against Villaraigosa. The L.A. *Daily News*, centered in the San Fernando Valley, recently ran a full-page ad headlined “Does Los Angeles Need a Mayor Who Reports to Mexico City?” which ranted that Villaraigosa’s “union friends threaten Los Angeles.” The ad was taken out by a sinister outfit called “Voices of Citizens Together/American Patrol.com,” which organizes auxiliaries to *la Migra*, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), to terrorize immigrants crossing the border. These racist forces aim their sights at black people as well.

It is vital for Latino workers to understand that the color line has always been the central, strategic question in racist capitalist America and that anti-black racism remains the touchstone of social reaction in this country. And black people must understand that immigrant-bashing and anti-black racism go hand in hand. Prop. 187, for example, was part of a

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Republican incumbent Riordan endorses Democrat Villaraigosa, as L.A. rulers look to Latino “labor” candidate to preside over racist cop terror, keep lid on working people and minorities.



AP

4 percent of the city’s electorate, now outnumber the black population in the metropolitan area. Latinos now make up 46 percent of the city’s population and 70 percent of public school enrollment. Though many of these are non-citizens, the Latino share of the electorate has nonetheless climbed from 8 percent to 20 percent just in the last eight years.

Increasing sections of L.A.’s ruling elite see the “friend of labor” Villaraigosa as the best candidate for putting a lid on growing labor militancy and refurbishing the image of the notoriously racist LAPD, which is now under federal “oversight” after being rocked by the Rampart scandal and other exposures of systematic frame-up, corruption and outright murder. The day after the primary, the *Los Angeles Times* (12 April) editorialized that Villaraigosa must “persuade nervous business investors that he won’t drive up their costs with a relentless pro-union agenda.” Villaraigosa has made that amply clear.

The labor tops’ support to Villaraigosa is part of their program of class collaboration that hamstring the labor movement. This can be seen in a strike against Hollander Home Fashions in Vernon by the UNITE textile and garment workers union. When the strike began on March 9, the 450 largely immigrant workers were able to stop scab “temporary workers” from crossing the picket lines. The Hollander bosses turned to the capitalist state to break the strike, securing a court injunction allowing only five pickets on the line. Beholden to the capitalist courts and politicians, the UNITE bureaucrats bowed to the injunction, defeating the central purpose of strike action—to stop production and the flow of profit. Meanwhile, Contreras & Co. have used the

James Hahn, a “moderate” white Democrat who finished ahead of Riordan protégé Steve Soboroff in the primary. Largely because of the reputation of his father, a liberal county supervisor for 40 years who was seen as sympathetic to black people, Hahn got 71 percent of the black vote in the primary, including among the heavily black SEIU city and county workers unions. His strongest supporters include black Democratic Congresswoman Maxine Waters and black county supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke.

Following the multiracial upheaval in 1992, the bourgeoisie—abetted by black and Latino nationalist demagogues—worked to pit the black and Latino poor against each other in a scramble over the crumbs from the “Rebuild L.A.” project. Two years later, more than 50 percent of black voters in California supported Prop.

April 2000 strike by predominantly Latino janitors exemplified growing labor combativity in historically “open shop” L.A.



The French Left and the Popular Front

Workers Struggles, Ghetto Upheavals in France

Municipal elections in France in March saw a significant turn away from Socialist Party (PS) prime minister Lionel Jospin's coalition government, which includes Communist Party (PCF) transport minister Jean-Claude Gayssot and environment minister Dominique Voynet of the bourgeois Greens. The humiliating

LE BOLCHEVIK

defeat of the parties of the French popular front, coming after a series of electoral victories by social-democratic parties and popular-front coalitions in West Europe in recent years, points to widespread anger over the layoffs, austerity measures and racist cop terror these parties of the "left" have presided over. This was underlined in Italy last week. After five years of attacks on workers and immigrants by the Ulivo (Olive Tree) popular front—whose mainstay, the Party of the Democratic Left, is a successor to the defunct Italian Communist Party—a right-wing coalition headed by media magnate Silvio Berlusconi swept to victory in parliamentary elections.

The following article, written in the aftermath of the French elections, is translated from Le Bolchévik No. 156 (Spring 2001), published by the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, section of the International Communist League.

After four years in office running the capitalist state, the popular-front government of Jospin-Gayssot-Voynet has become increasingly unpopular. This government was installed after the powerful 1995 public sector strikes brought down the right-wing Juppé government. Like all popular fronts—governmental alliances between workers parties and capitalist parties which rule on behalf of capital—this one has done its job in attacking the interests of the workers and serving those of the capitalists and in shifting struggles from the factory to parliament. The presence of so-called "socialists" and former "communists" in the government serves only to disguise the vicious anti-worker policies of the

Jospin popular front: the 35-hour week, which means insane hours with no overtime pay; capitalist austerity; plant closings and layoffs; attacks on unemployment benefits and pensions.

Keeping step with the shrinking economy is the expansion of the French police

A veritable army of 5,000 additional cops (assisted by youth finks/auxiliaries) is being put on the streets of the bleak and impoverished ghettos which ring every major French city and which have erupted in upheavals over the past year against systematic cop terror against

periodical return put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society.... And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones."

In sum, the capitalists propose as *their* solution to *their* crisis to take it out of our hides, to increase the rate of exploitation. As we are not machines or beasts, they can only do this to the degree we fail to organize to resist their attacks. It comes down to a question of political consciousness: they seek to break the solidarity of the workers movement by playing one race or one nationality against another, the older worker against the young, the "citizens" against the "sans-papiers" [undocumented immigrants], and by the timeworn deception of the popular front, of deceiving workers with calls on labor misleaders and fake socialists to "represent the workers"...in a *capitalist government!* The Ligue Trotskyiste de France opposes and has always opposed the popular front *as a matter of principle*: No to class collaboration! Our starting point is the fight to forge a genuine workers party, like Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, to fight for a genuine workers government that expropriates the bourgeoisie and that leads to a classless, socialist egalitarian society.

An ominous aspect of capitalist economic crisis is that the boom/bust cycle has always been punctuated by bombs. It is through imperialist war that the rapacious rulers gain new markets for exploitation. As the U.S. spy plane provocation over China indicates, there is every threat that the next conflict could go nuclear, and it's not just the crazed anti-Communists in Washington trying to overthrow the Chinese deformed workers state. Let's not forget France's nuclear tests in the South Pacific and imperialist troops in the Balkans and its bloody history and appetites in the Near East, North Africa and elsewhere.

Capitalism Leads to Unemployment, Poverty, War

There is a lot of anger in the working class, and much of it is directed against the traditional leaders of the workers movement, the PS and the Socialist-dominated CFDT trade-union federation and the PCF and the allied CGT union federation. This message came across clearly in the March municipal elections, where the PCF suffered humiliating losses of long-held municipalities, and prominent government ministers in both the PS and PCF, from Guigou and Lang to Gayssot, lost their races for local posts. Working-class anger is hardly surprising given the PCF's betrayal of its base. When the CFDT at Michelin in Clermont-Ferrand tried to shove a company-sponsored "referendum" on the "35 hours" down their throats, former CFDT members set up a chapter of the rival SUD union federation. Last fall, the CGT leadership lined up with the Jospin government and tried to sabotage support for the militant and popular truckers protests against the price of fuel with the lie that this was "a bosses strike." At a CGT delegates meeting at the Mutualité, the union tops were met with boos and jeers

April 2000: Demonstrators in Lille denounce police killing of Ryad Hamlaoui, a youth of North African descent. Recent years have seen repeated ghetto eruptions over rampant cop terror, mass unemployment.



Orand/Gamma

state. This acquires a particular racist aroma and coloration of segregation and repression of the youth in the *banlieus* [suburban ghettos], youth of immigrant descent for whom the French capitalist rulers currently have no use: No jobs means no profits can be extracted from this pool of cheap labor, which is now viewed as dangerous social surplus to be contained and repressed through massive police force. The Jospin government's new "security" campaign must be the only major hiring going on in France.

"second generation" youth, mainly from the Maghreb [North Africa] and West Africa.

Unemployment among these minority youth may be a staggering 90 percent, but the French state in its royal hypocrisy avoids publishing, under the pretext that it's "racist," statistics according to ethnicity (above all, they don't want the truth to be seen!). Other statistics tell the story: According to a 1999 report by the human rights organization MRAP, the number of youth incarcerated in French prisons has nearly doubled in the past decade, from under 100,000 in 1990 to 172,000 in 1998. If a society's youth represent its future, this statistic alone tells you that this system must go!

The French bourgeoisie and its government try to convince us that the French economy is basically healthy and chauvinistically argue that any problems are the result of foreign contagion, such as the closing of that British store, Marks & Spencer, or the "intrusion" of American pension plans into French business. This is done in order to amnesty and push forward unity with French bosses and capitalists. This is nationalist poison and a chauvinist illusion. The three biggest powers in the capitalist world are in trouble: Japan is in a deep economic crisis, the U.S. is in recession, and Germany is in trouble. Thousands of workers in these countries are suffering layoffs, particularly the industrial proletariat. Other links in the imperialist chain, like the second-rate power of France, cannot be exempted from the laws of capitalism. As Karl Marx wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*: "Modern industry has established the world market" and in its drive to expand its markets is repeatedly and inherently subjected to financial "crises that by their



January 2001: Mass labor protest in Paris against attack on pensions by popular-front government.

from the delegates for this. The PCF’s support to the sham 35-hour Aubry law, which has increased “flexibility” (like elastic bands ready to snap!) for the benefit of the bosses, has workers leaving the PCF and CGT in droves. During the recent rail strike, at least one CGT chapter, in Lens, reportedly dissolved itself.

But recognizing the misleadership of the Communist Party and its utterly craven subservience to the Jospin government is only the very beginning of wisdom. There are a lot of other hustlers out there with slick left rhetoric to cover up the same kind of politics of *reforming* the capitalist state when what’s needed is *socialist revolution*. No question better illuminates the problem than the urgent fight against unemployment in France today. Tens of thousands of workers have been thrown out of jobs in the last few months and the list grows daily: LU-Danone, Marks & Spencer and AOM get the most publicity, but there is telephone with Sagem, Alcatel, Philips, Ericsson; auto with Sylea, Valeo, Delphi; chemical with Aventis, as well as Bull and Moulinex-Brandt.

In *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* (The Transitional Program), Leon Trotsky wrote:

“*The right to employment* is the only serious right left to the worker in a society based upon exploitation. This right today is being shorn from him at every step. Against unemployment, ‘structural’ as well as ‘conjunctural,’ the time is ripe to advance, along with the slogan of public works, the slogan of *a sliding scale of working hours*. Trade unions and other mass organizations should bind the workers and the unemployed together in the solidarity of mutual responsibility.... “If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. ‘Realizability’ or ‘unrealizability’ is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery.”

This revolutionary Marxist approach draws a clear line of proletarian class independence and charts a way for workers and the unemployed to fight together against the ruling class. In contrast, the miserable and misnamed French “far left” binds the oppressed to the oppressors in the unemployment crisis with ridiculous appeals to the capitalist state to “ban layoffs.” If the capitalist state could ban layoffs, then capitalism must be a rational economy and not, as every Marxist knows, a system whose profit motive drives down wages and impoverishes the proletariat and leads to periodic crises of “overproduction,” i.e., mass unemployment. In addition to their pipe dream of state bans against layoffs, the reformists seek to liquidate the power of the proletariat as a class—as the producers at the point of production in the capitalist economy—by diverting strike actions or factory occupations into appeals for impotent consumer boycotts. In the face of an economic downturn, bold actions like plant occupations can be more effective than economic strikes. But the reformists prefer not to do this because this is a challenge to bourgeois property rights.

The Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) of Alain Krivine is the most



AFP
Riot cops attack youth at demonstration in Paris last fall demanding better schools.

enthusiastic in trying to replace strikers with consumer boycotters, arguing “What is the boycott, if not a strike of purchasing, which can have the same effect as a strike of production?” (*Rouge*, 12 April). Lutte Ouvrière (LO), while somewhat critical, in the end went along with the LCR, cynically arguing that a boycott “could, maybe, weigh on the decisions of the leadership of Danone, and influence its plans” (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 6 April). Leaving aside for a moment that some Danone workers themselves are opposed to a consumer boycott because they fear it will lead to more plant closings or further layoffs, the central point is that society is not divided fundamentally between owners and consumers. It is the workers, who produce the wealth of this society, who have tremendous social power, but that power is being diverted and misled by charlatans from the PCF to LO and the LCR. It is a measure of the degeneration of the left that they don’t even think in class terms anymore and push this nonsense of a “consumer boycott.”

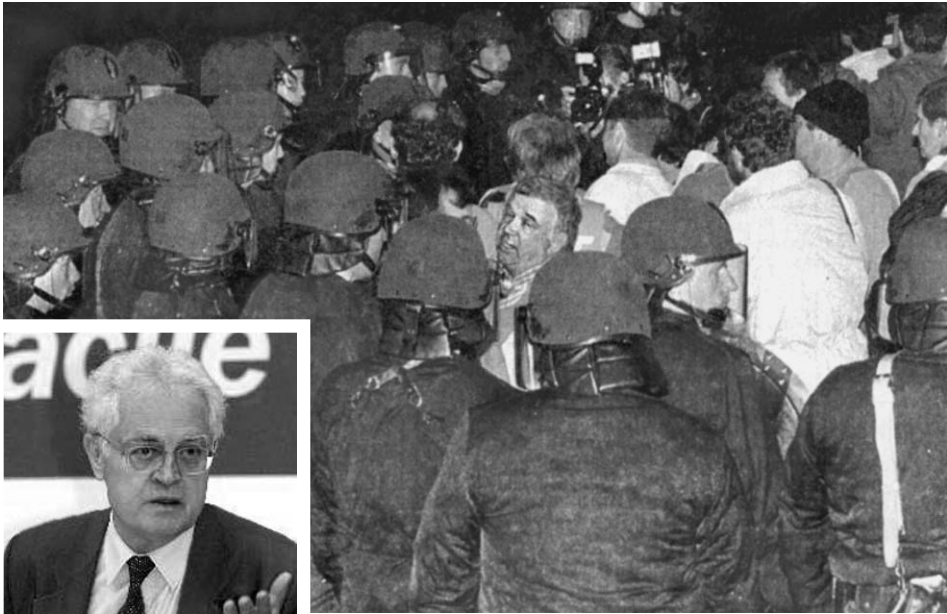
LO has long called for “banning layoffs in companies that make profits,” and this demand figured prominently in their municipal election campaign. They argue that “it is not a question of finding a good way to manage the layoffs better, but of imposing their banning, starting in the enterprises that make profits” (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 6 April). The LCR similarly proposes that “layoffs for profit-making must be legally forbidden by the labor code” (*Rouge*, 5 April). These parliamentary cretinists bring all the struggles of the workers back from the shop floor and the streets...to parliament. In this they are no different from the PCF, which calls for a “moratorium on layoffs” (i.e., ban them, but only temporarily!), or the PS, which calls to “make the decision to get rid of jobs more costly.” (Right, we can imagine the boss saying, “This hurts me more than it hurts you.”) All these proposals have in common the inviolability of the capitalist state and the belief that capitalism is a just and fair system that can be regulated. This is impossible and a *brutal lie*! The bourgeoisie keeps what Marx called “a

reserve army of the unemployed” as a club to use against the workers movement; to maximize profits, the capitalist rulers will gouge the workers and buy labor as cheaply as possible.

Against the reformist props to the capitalist order, we demand: *A sliding scale of wages and hours! Divide the work among all available workers with no loss in pay! Organize the unorganized! For union-run youth and minority training programs! Cops and prison guards out of the unions!*

Race, Class, Party and Trade Union

Faced with the sellouts by the trade-union tops and reformist parties, it is not surprising that there is a notable revival of syndicalist ideas in the labor movement. The railworkers (SNCF) strike showed the combativity of a young sector of the proletariat...and the bankruptcy of its leadership. One young worker told a *Le Bolchévik* salesman that he and others discussed whether they needed a party at all or just a new revolutionary union movement. These young workers—who courageously stopped freight traffic completely and were sabotaged by their own union tops who called on everyone to go back to work (CGT, CFDT) or prevented workers from setting up “illegal” picket lines (SUD, FGAAC)—understandably are looking for a way to fight. The option of bypassing the union, of finding some kind of fresh, uncorrupted organization, some kind of revolutionary trade union, is



Reuters photos
Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin sent cops against striking truckers, November 1997.

appealing to these young militants. It is not a new idea.

This is a political period marked by the rollback of political consciousness with the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and the bourgeois triumphalism over the so-called “death of communism” (they won’t be laughing so hard as their stock markets crash). It’s not communism that failed, but Stalinism. The collapse of the Soviet Union was a world-historic defeat for the working class internationally. The International Communist League fought with every resource at its disposal to defend the Soviet Union against capitalist counterrevolution and to reimplant the ideals of genuine Bolshevism in the homeland of the October 1917 Revolution. In contrast, our fake-Trotskyist opponents in LO and the LCR pushed every Cold War anti-Soviet crusade from the Pope’s anti-woman Solidarność “union” to Islamic reaction in Afghanistan to the counter-revolutions which transformed East Europe from deformed workers states to capitalist potholes and the final undoing of the October Revolution itself. Those who can’t defend old positions will never conquer new ones. So before you look to these outfits to defend your job, look what they fought for in the crucial battles for the Russian proletariat, whose lives and livelihoods have been destroyed!

But to reject the whole idea of Leninist parties is to *misidentify* Bolshevism with the Stalinist reformists or centrists who call themselves Communists. This has spared a revival of anarcho-syndicalist

ideas. The fundamental mistake with attempts to build a new, “revolutionary” trade union is that they reduce to an organizational experiment the great *political* problem of how to win the mass of workers from the influence of the trade-union misleaders. The trade unions are organizations for the defense of the workers at the point of production, for the protection of the integrity of the proletariat as a class in itself. The conquest of *state power* requires mobilization on the basis of *revolutionary political consciousness*, which must be brought to the proletariat from *without* through the mechanism of a Leninist vanguard party that goes beyond the narrow confines of the trade-union arena.

To substitute the idea of a “revolutionary union” or a “syndicalist party” further fractures and divides the labor movement. We communists believe in *industrial unions*: the proletariat should be organized as one along industrial lines, the better to fight the owners and the capitalist state. This is absolutely contrary to the policies of the French left, which tend to substitute parties for unions, splitting the proletariat along sectarian party lines and weakening the workers’ ability to organize and fight *as a class*. In contrast, we in the Ligue Trotskyste de France think that the party must be organized on the basis of a well-defined program, that fighting out the political differences as Leninists is vitally important. A crucial task of the revolutionary party is to fight

to win leadership in the unions and to build strong trade unions to defend the interests of the proletariat against attacks by the capitalists and their state.

To our railworker friend who raised creating a new revolutionary union as the sole organization necessary to change this society for the better for the working people: it is important to understand that *any* trade union, no matter how revolutionary its leadership, would be quite insufficient an instrument to transform society. Why? The trade unions embrace only a very small minority of the working class and generally only the skilled and better-paid layers. To draw in the oppressed and the majority of the working people, women, the Maghrebin and African workers, etc., it is necessary to go beyond the trade-union arena. It is necessary to build a revolutionary workers party, a party of the Bolshevik type, a revolutionary *tribune of the people*.

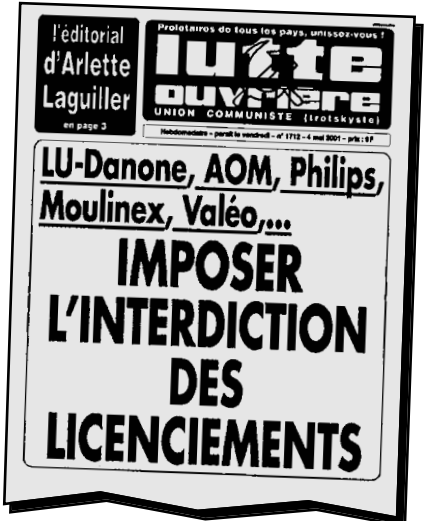
For example, catastrophic youth unemployment in France has become a classic “divide and conquer” game of the French state, which now employs the youth as a club against the unions themselves as lower-paid temporary workers. Where this takes on added social dimensions is among minority youth in the *banlieus*, where the unemployment is astronomical and the ghettos have been seething scenes of police crackdown and brutality. The French left and labor movement that are capable of mobilizing tens of thousands of workers on the streets have largely done nothing to protest the routine cop

continued on page 11



Lutte de Classe

LO’s Arlette Laguiller and LCR’s Alain Krivine. LO paper appeals to capitalist state to “Impose Ban on Layoffs.”



Mumia ...

(continued from page 1)

not even mention, much less emphasize, the new evidence. And in San Francisco, Socialist Action (SA) leader Jeff Mackler managed to present a “legal update” without *once* referring to it.

Why would avowed socialists who claim to be fighting for Jamal’s freedom do this? In a statement to the protests from his death row cell, Mumia said: “Many of you have said that you don’t believe in the system, yet, in your hearts you refuse to let it go.” Indeed, the very idea that the cops would deliberately frame up an innocent man, and could have set up one of their “own,” is an affront to the reformists’ ingrained belief in the inherent democracy of the bourgeois state and in the police as an institution that exists fundamentally to “serve and protect” the people.

Since taking up Jamal’s case a few years ago, WWP and SA have centered all their efforts on courting Democratic Party politicians, consciously limiting the movement for Jamal to appeals for justice from this system of racist *injustice*. While the central slogan at the recent rallies was the legalistic appeal “Overturn the Con-

Campaign to End the Death Penalty, which prominently featured the call “New Trial Now,” came to our table to ask for a black magic marker to cross that slogan off. As one of our comrades declared in urging protesters to join us:

“If you believe that calling to ‘overturn the conviction’ is not enough, if you believe that Mumia is an innocent man and must be freed, if you believe that there is no justice in the capitalist courts, if you believe that the fight to free Mumia must be tightly linked to the fight to eliminate this racist capitalist system of oppression and exploitation, you belong in this Revolutionary Contingent. This is the contingent that tells the truth, not what the liberals want to hear. We tell it like it is: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty! There is no justice in the capitalist courts!”

Reformists Demobilize Fight for Mumia’s Freedom

The extent to which the reformists would go to hide the truth was starkly evident at the SF rally. Introduced by Eliot Grossman, one of Jamal’s new attorneys, to read Mumia’s affidavit, IAC spokesman John Parker even *tried to censor Mumia’s own words*. When he got to a passage citing former lead counsel Leonard Weinglass for urging Mumia to “not testify in the post-conviction pro-

Jamal in hospital after being shot and beaten by cops in December 1981.



deranged conspiracy theory—on the grounds that the cops neither would nor could knowingly frame up an innocent man. But even a casual reader of the bourgeois press in the last couple of weeks knows otherwise, not least from accounts of the crooked Oklahoma state chemist who sent dozens of people to death row or long prison terms. Commenting on another case, the release of two Brooklyn men who had spent 14 years behind bars on a murder rap on the basis of fabricated testimony, even liberal columnist Bob Herbert wrote: “There is little or no effort being made to protect the innocent against these kinds of utterly unsubstantiated lies. Worse, when evidence is brought forward that makes it clear that a case has been built on lies, the knee-jerk reaction among criminal justice officials is to cover it up” (*New York Times*, 17 May).

As we detail elsewhere in this issue, Williams’ “inside account” is literally a brief for the prosecution. Yet the decision to withhold this critical evidence of Mumia’s innocence was implicitly amnestied and justified in an article by Mackler in *Socialist Action* (April 2001) only weeks before the Beverly confession was introduced by the new legal team. Alluding to that article in his own speech on May 12, Eliot Grossman stated:

“There was a story in a left newspaper a couple of weeks ago which floated Daniel Williams’ statement in his rotten book that supposedly they did not present this evidence because it wasn’t worthy of belief, and then floated the idea that this kind of evidence was completely crazy and no one would ever present it. We presented that evidence. It is not crazy. This is the evidence which proves Mumia is innocent.”

Many protesters readily bought copies of *Workers Vanguard* with the article “New Evidence Smashes Frame-Up to Bits: Free Mumia Now!” afterward, and a couple said they were now sorry they hadn’t marched with our class-struggle contingent fighting for Jamal’s freedom.

While the Revolutionary Communist Party’s Refuse & Resist made available excerpts from the new evidence, a statement to the Philadelphia demonstration by leading Refuse & Resist spokesman Clark Kissinger did not even hint at the crucial confession by Arnold Beverly. In the summer of 1995, when Mumia faced a scheduled execution and the Fraternal

Order of Police (F.O.P.) was organizing veritable lynch mobs of cops on the streets of Philadelphia, Refuse & Resist challenged these hired killers of the capitalist class to a “debate” on Jamal. Today, Kissinger again focuses on “rebutting” the F.O.P., writing in his statement:

“For years, cops, prosecutors, and their hired media have been whining because both Mumia and his brother rightly refused to use Judge Sabo’s kangaroo-courtroom to give their accounts of what happened on the night Mumia was shot and arrested.

“Now, as we await Mumia’s appearance in federal court, both have given detailed descriptions of that evening to the people. And these statements have now been filed with the federal court. So the FOP can just shut the fuck up.”

This thin veneer of “militant” anti-cop rhetoric aimed at Refuse & Resist’s youthful supporters is simply a cover for the same liberal politics promoted by the more staidly social-democratic Socialist Action.

While deep-sixing the evidence of Jamal’s *innocence* in his May 12 “legal update,” Mackler focused on the purely constitutional question of Jamal’s “fundamental right to counsel under the Sixth Amendment” at his 1982 trial under notorious hanging judge Albert Sabo. Sabo’s denial of Jamal’s right to represent himself is now one of the issues before federal district court judge Yohn. Mackler intoned, “If that judge rules with Albert Sabo, Mumia is a dead man.” Why seek to mobilize labor/black power on the streets if Jamal’s fate is, indeed, in the hands of a single judge? This is the *defeatism* born of the reformists’ reliance on the capitalist state.

From their call for a new trial to their aversion to the Beverly confession, the reformists have pursued a strategy aimed at cozying up to bourgeois liberals who don’t necessarily believe in Jamal’s innocence and have no particular interest in seeing him free. Voicing the sentiment of such types, Temple University law professor David Kairys, reported an AP wire story (9 May), “criticized the new [legal] team for skipping a more straightforward legal strategy, such as seeking to commute the death sentence down to life in prison”—i.e., a living death.

The liberals claim that Jamal’s 1982 kangaroo court trial was simply an aberration in an otherwise “just,” “demo-

Mumia: “Many of You Refuse to Let Go of the System”

The following statement was issued by Mumia Abu-Jamal on May 10 and read to the May 12 rallies in Philadelphia and San Francisco.

Dear Sisters, Brothers, Friends and Enemies,

We are at a crossroad, one dictated by time, by history, by circumstance and even by chance.

We are here because it is the right place and the right time to be. I thank all of you for coming to this encampment in the hopes of joining you at our next such encounter.

Many of you have said that you don’t believe in the system, yet, in your hearts you refuse to let it go.

Lawyers are not agents of comfort to be exchanged like throw pillows.

They are agents of freedom or they are aiders and abettors of repression.

I have received some criticism for

recent changes in my legal team. I don’t fear criticism, but I must say I don’t agree with this one.

You have seen lawyers violate their own rules with total abandon with the blessing of the courts.

How can you say you don’t believe in the system and then believe lawyers who betrayed their so-called client’s interests?

I thank you all for joining in this ongoing battle for freedom and justice.

And, if you by chance choose not to join me, I have one simple request: don’t get in my way.

To quote John Africa: “Freedom is urgent. Direction is necessary and freedom cannot be taken by any god-damn judge’s opinion.”

I Thank You
Ona Move
Long Live John Africa

viction—Free Mumia Abu-Jamal,” at earlier protests any call for Mumia’s freedom was buried in favor of the call for a “new trial,” pushing illusions in the capitalist courts in order to reach out to bourgeois liberals whose only concern was that Jamal’s original frame-up trial was an embarrassment to American “democracy.” Now the mask of liberalism is revealed to be the face of these reformists.

In San Francisco, the SL, Spartacus Youth Club and Labor Black League for Social Defense organized a Revolutionary Contingent in counterposition to the reformist politics of the rally organizers. Over 50 people marched in our contingent, and our chants and signs were picked up throughout the crowd. One person carrying a sign distributed by the International Socialist Organization’s

ceedings in 1995,” Parker skipped over Weinglass’ name. When Grossman vigorously protested that “we’d like to hear the words of Mumia Abu-Jamal and not apologies for Leonard Weinglass,” Parker muttered concerns about getting “divided” and “demoralized” and pleading for “the unity of the movement.”

Given that they tried to censor Mumia himself, it is not at all surprising that they refused to allow our class-struggle strategy to be heard from the speaker’s platform and denied the PDC’s request for a speaker. The “unity” prized by the reformists is unity with the bourgeois liberals. The criminal impact of their class-collaborationist politics was evident on May 12, as barely 1,500 turned out in San Francisco and no more than 500 in Philly. The shrinking size of the Jamal protests over the past few years is a striking testament to how the reformists, black nationalists and assorted petty-bourgeois “radicals” have served to demoralize and demobilize workers, youth and others who want to defend Jamal by making such defense contingent simply on the decisions of the capitalist courts.

Despite its dramatic confirmation of Mumia’s innocence, Weinglass and fellow former defense attorney Dan Williams had refused to use the Beverly confession. With the clock ticking on his life, Jamal was forced to fire them after Williams wrote a treacherous “inside account” of the case, aptly titled *Executing Justice*, which tried to pre-emptively kill this evidence—portraying it as a

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cratic” system. The reformists peddle the notion that the capitalist state can be pressured to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. These self-styled “Marxists” are a walking repudiation of the Marxist understanding that the bourgeois state—with the cops, courts, prisons and military at its core—is nothing other than an instrument for the repression of the working class and the oppressed. In a grotesque paean to the fiction of “equal justice for all,” *Socialist Action* (May 2001) intones:

“There used to be a beautiful image of a solemn, stern, and discerning woman who, with blind eyes and an impartial scale, determined what was the truth. Today this image, quite contrived in itself, has been betrayed.”

This denies the whole brutal history of racist American capitalism, from the 1857 Dred Scott decision buttressing the Southern slave power to the anti-Communist, anti-Semitic frame-up of the Rosenbergs nearly a century later, and the countless black people and labor militants who have been imprisoned or executed by capitalist courts before and since.

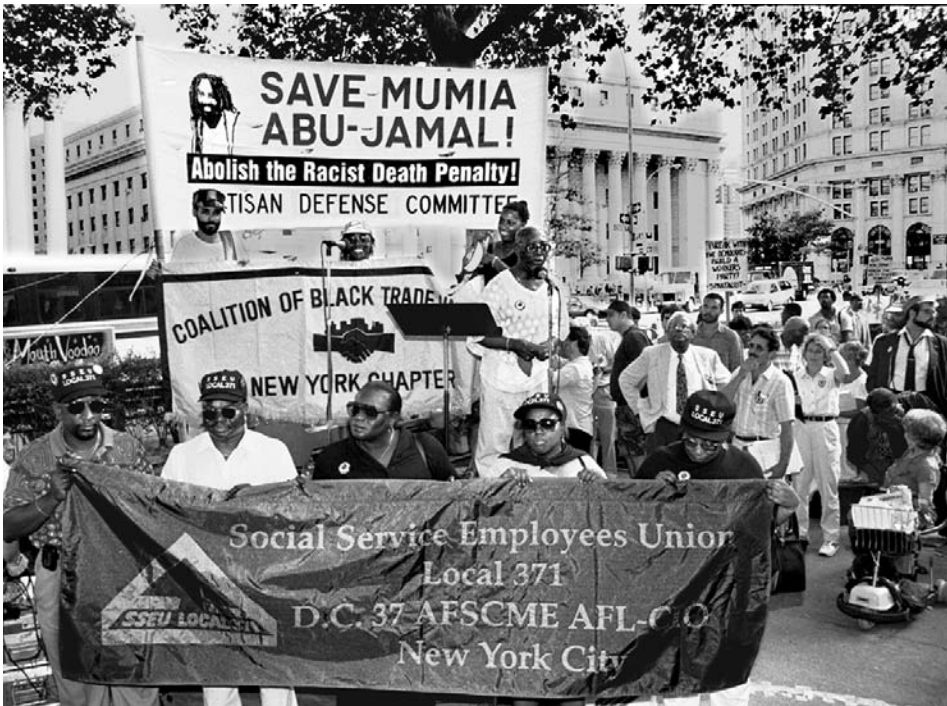
Mobilize Labor/Black Power—Break with the Democrats!

In his speech at the San Francisco rally, attorney Eliot Grossman concluded: “We need to prove that Mumia is innocent. We have the evidence, but we know that may not be enough. Because Shaka Sankofa, previously known as Gary Graham, was innocent. He had the evidence. They executed him anyway. We cannot allow this to happen. We need the help of every single person here.... If ever we needed real labor solidarity and militant action and the kind of action that saw the longshoremen shut down the West Coast

and saw the Oakland teachers conduct their teach-in, we need that kind of labor solidarity in every workplace in the city, in the state and in this country.”

The April 1999 stopwork by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) did point to the sort of powerful labor action needed to strike a giant blow against the capitalist frame-up system. But thanks to the efforts of ILWU Local 10 labor opportunist Jack Heyman, the impact of that stopwork on the shipping bosses was minimized and the longshore action was tied to support for the reformists’ pro-Democratic Party mobilization for a new trial. Now the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, an occasional vehicle for Heyman which is mostly made up of supporters of the absurdly misnamed International Bolshevik Tendency, has put out a “Call to Action” declaring: “The strongest weapon the working class can bring to bear in the class struggle is its power to withdraw its labor, and we must prepare to bring that about *now* to win freedom for our brother.” The cynicism of this lip service to labor action is revealed by the fact that Heyman brought *not one* longshore worker to the May 12 demonstration, quite a dramatic statement given the widespread support for Jamal among black longshoremen.

In fighting to mobilize labor in Jamal’s behalf, we seek to win workers to the understanding that they cannot break the chains of exploitation as wage slaves of the capitalists without simultaneously combatting every manifestation of racist oppression. Black oppression is the bedrock of American capitalism, which forcibly segregates the overwhelming mass of black people at the bottom of society.



WV Photo
Partisan Defense Committee initiated labor-centered mobilizations in New York City (above) and elsewhere in summer 1995 as Jamal faced scheduled execution.

Obscuring the class divide, racism and white supremacy have served to bind white workers to their capitalist masters based on the illusion of a commonality of interest based on skin color. At the same time, black workers constitute a strategic part of the multiracial proletariat in the U.S. Won to a revolutionary program, they will be the living link fusing the anger of the dispossessed ghetto masses with the social power of the proletariat. We seek to build the Leninist vanguard party needed to lead the struggle for black liberation through socialist revolution.

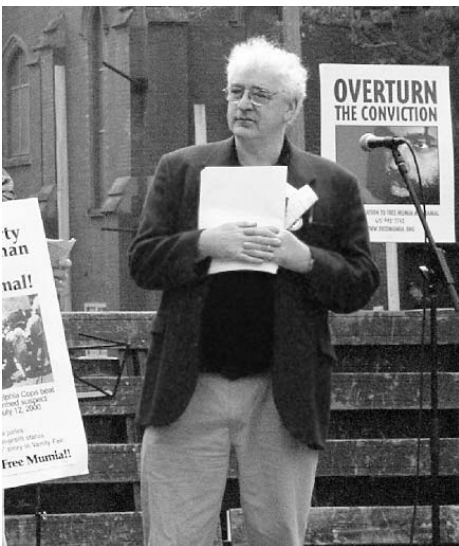
For labor’s power to be unleashed, the working class must be mobilized independently of the capitalist class and its political parties, both Democrats and Republicans. From WWP/IAC to Refuse & Resist’s Kissinger and the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the reformists at the May 12 rallies wallowed in pro-Democratic Party “fight the right” rhetoric, focusing on Republican Bush’s support for the death penalty and amnestying the Democrats who pushed through a massive expansion in capital punishment under Clinton. Standing to the right of even many liberals, the ISO’s Campaign to End the Death Penalty promoted its call for “Moratorium Now, Abolition Next,” while a Campaign speaker at the SF rally echoed the liberal line that the death penalty “simply doesn’t work.”

Unlike the liberals and their reformist hangers-on, our starting point is not what is the most effective means for the cap-

italist rulers to repress those they exploit. We oppose the death penalty on principle, for the guilty as well as the innocent. Our purpose is to wage the sharpest political struggle against the current bourgeois consciousness which the reformists pander to and reinforce, to explain the true nature of the capitalist state as the machinery for organized violence against the working class and oppressed, and to bring to the working class an understanding of the class-struggle methods by which they can organize to fight and eventually overturn the system of capitalism. We seek to imbue the proletariat with the understanding that the capitalist state must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced with a workers state. As we said in our call for the Revolutionary Contingent:

“In this decaying capitalist system which offers no future to millions of inner-city black youth, the death penalty, the mass incarceration of black men and the elimination of welfare represent the capitalist rulers’ *impulse to genocide*. The death penalty stands at the apex of the machinery of repression which increases in direct proportion to the widening gap between the handful of filthy rich and the millions of poor and working people.”

The capitalist executioners are gearing up for the legal lynching of Jamal as an act of terror and intimidation against all who would resist their racist rule. Now is the time to mobilize all opponents of racist oppression to demand: **Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■**



WV Photos
Fake lefts demobilize fight for Mumia’s freedom. ISO pushes liberal “death penalty moratorium” call (left), Socialist Action’s Jeff Mackler deep-sixes new evidence smashing Jamal’s frame-up.

Dan Williams’ Brief for the Prosecution

In its effort to prevent the conclusive new evidence of Mumia Abu-Jamal’s innocence—the sworn confession by Arnold Beverly that he shot Daniel Faulkner—from even being considered by the court, the Philadelphia District Attorney’s office has resorted to its threadbare pack of old lies and one new lie. In legal papers filed on May 11, the D.A.’s office rehashes its bogus claim from the 1982 frame-up trial that “there were eyewitnesses to the murder” who saw Jamal “commit the murder.” In fact, only one of the prosecution’s coerced or bought-off “witnesses,” a prostitute named Cynthia White who was then allowed to work the streets unhindered under police escort, even claimed to have seen Jamal with a gun. White, whom no other witness ever recalled seeing at the scene, had initially denied seeing Mumia with a gun and described the shooter as five inches shorter than Mumia, while at least five witnesses from five different vantage points had told police they saw a black man flee the scene while Jamal lay slumped on the ground after being shot. One of those

five, William Singletary, saw someone other than Mumia shoot Faulkner. The new lie, and the bulk of the prosecution attack on Beverly’s confession, comes straight from Jamal’s former attorney Dan Williams, whose book *Executing Justice* denigrates the Beverly confession as “bona fide lunacy,” “patently outrageous” and “absurd.” We wrote in the last issue of *Workers Vanguard* that Williams had penned a brief for the prosecution, and that is what it is. Introducing a lengthy excerpt from the book, the D.A.’s papers lyingly assert—in language lifted straight from Williams—that Jamal himself had withheld the Beverly confession when it came out in 1999 “because he knew it to be a ‘patently outrageous story’ and ‘a lie.’” In fact, even Williams’ book demonstrates *that* to be a lie, as it recounts how it was former lead defense attorney Leonard Weinglass who “sought out ways to push this witness onto the trash heap,” just as Weinglass (and Williams) had also attempted to prevent Singletary’s testimony from being heard at the 1995 appeal hearing. And as Williams

makes abundantly clear in the excerpt quoted by the prosecution, both he and Weinglass threatened to abandon Jamal if the Beverly confession were used to prove his innocence. Virtually signing on to the D.A.’s papers are the Democratic Party social democrats at *In These Times* (11 June). In his latest hatchet job on Jamal, Dave Lindorff promotes the D.A.’s line from beginning to end—from citing the prosecution’s so-called witnesses to denouncing Mumia for withholding Beverly’s confession to deriding “the new conspiracy theory.” Now Williams has been featured in the Philadelphia newspapers attacking the evidence, while the wire services have cited an anonymous source “familiar with Abu-Jamal’s appeals” propagating the willful *lie* that Beverly failed two lie detector tests. Why would a lawyer work so hard to bury evidence of his client’s innocence and then publicly trash it? In his book, Williams makes it clear that to him maintaining the sanctity of the bourgeois “justice” system stood above presenting evidence prov-

ing Jamal’s innocence. His central premise is that the cops never could or would knowingly frame up an innocent man. But as any inner-city resident can tell you, cop corruption, murder and frame-up is a fact of life. As far as the prosecution’s rants that Beverly’s account is “implausible,” even a cursory glance at Philadelphia’s daily newspapers reveals just how plausible it is. For weeks now, they have run front-page stories on the city’s latest mob racketeering and murder trial, featuring as the key government witness Ron Previte, a former cop, Mafia thug and FBI informant. Previte admitted he was a “crook” from the time he joined the Philadelphia Police Department in the late 1960s. In a revealing anecdote from the 1995 appeal, Williams recalls an incident where “[prosecutor] Grant and some of the detectives pulled me aside...and chided me that I was still young enough to salvage my otherwise promising career as a trial lawyer if only I would cross over that great divide and fight on the side of the angels.” Williams said he laughed off the invitation. But with his new book serving as exhibit No. 1 for the state in this last round of Jamal’s appeals, Williams has certainly earned his wings.

South Africa...

(continued from page 12)

SACP-influenced COSATU bureaucracy, in helping to chain the powerful black proletariat to neo-apartheid capitalism through the ANC-dominated nationalist popular front.

To even begin to provide free, quality health care and treatment for all in South Africa requires the creation of a workers government and the expropriation of the pharmaceutical giants. As we wrote in “Disease, Bigotry and Imperialist Hypocrisy: South Africa Torn by AIDS Crisis” (WV No. 749, 5 January):

“The AIDS pandemic also exposes the lie of ‘nation building’ rhetoric; it obviously cannot be solved within the borders of one country. “Only world socialist revolution can tear the means of production out of the hands of the greedy capitalist class, ushering in an egalitarian socialist society. Then all the positive gains of modern science can be put at the service of mankind, and all the fake science that is used to justify and defend capitalist rule can be rejected. How we approach this grim epidemic is shaped by our vision of a communist future.”

Scabs, Bigots and “HIV Denialists”

This vision is utterly alien to a small, social-democratic outfit in the U.S. called Labor’s Militant Voice (LMV), which openly retails in this country the same anti-scientific obscurantism pushed by Mbeki. “Does HIV Really Cause AIDS?”



WV Photo



University of Heidelberg

“HIV denialist” diatribes by labor opportunist John Reimann (top) and biologist Peter Duesberg provide pseudo-scientific legitimacy for reactionary social agenda pushed by religious bigots, fascists.

questioned a headline in *Labor’s Militant Voice* (Fall 2000), answering “Labor’s Militant Voice writer John Reimann doesn’t think so.” Reimann’s article was also posted on the LMV Web site in a special section titled “Questioning AIDS,” which provided a platform for such prominent “HIV denialists” as Mbeki’s “expert” Duesberg—including a direct link to Duesberg’s Web site—chemistry Nobel Kary Mullis and one Charles Geshekter, a professor of African history at California State University’s Chico campus and self-described “adviser” to the U.S. State Department.

While averring that it “does not have an official position on this controversial issue,” LMV claimed that “there has been a suppression of views that differ from the HIV=AIDS=Death hypothesis.” Belying their protests of objectivity, LMV’s “present editors” boast of having organized a debate appearance by Duesberg at the University of California in the mid-1990s. Duesberg argues that HIV is only a harmless “passenger virus” that never hurt anybody and blames the spread of AIDS on things like the use of stimulant drugs (e.g., amyl nitrate “poppers”) by gay men. He even claims that medications like AZT are responsible for killing people!

By early May, LMV had removed the “Questioning AIDS” page from its Web site, explaining in a statement that “it was causing some confusion” because “it seemed to some that (despite our statement to the contrary) we were taking a position in support of the views of



AP

ACT UP activist arrested at NYC protest against drug conglomerate GlaxoSmithKline, February 21.

the dissidents. (Some of us do, some don’t.)” This squeamish disavowal notwithstanding, the LMV statement concludes: “Once again we recognize how difficult it is to get the viewpoint of the aids [sic] dissidents.”

The supposedly “suppressed dissidents” hailed by LMV hardly needed its Web site to propagate their reactionary views. Firstly, there is Duesberg’s own Web site, which includes an article titled “Mbeki Takes on the AIDS Industry” by one Tom Bethell, who identifies himself as a contributor to the right-wing journals *American Spectator* and *National Review* and a “media fellow” of the Hoover Institute. A book edited by Duesberg, *Inventing the AIDS Virus*, with a foreword authored by Mullis, is published



Spink/Atlanta Constitution

by Regnery Publishing. Before revamping its Web page this month, Regnery boasted of being “America’s most dedicated conservative publisher.” Regnery also publishes fascistic, anti-gay bigot Patrick Buchanan and works like *Coolidge: An American Enigma* (“one of the most successful presidents in history”), *The Quotable Ronald Reagan* and *Leftism Revisited: From de Sade and Marx to Hitler and Pol Pot!* Another Regnery gem is *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS*, which “exposes” such “rumors” as that “AIDS is no longer anchored to the high risk groups of homosexual men and intravenous drug abusers but is spreading from heterosexual to heterosexual through intercourse at epidemic speeds.” Exporting this line to southern Africa would be grotesque, as AIDS has overwhelmingly been transmitted there through heterosexual sex.

LMV’s choice of such reactionary company is in keeping with its own reformist politics. LMV is a split from Labor Militant (now Socialist Alternative), U.S. affiliate of Peter Taaffe’s Socialist Party in Britain. Pandering to chauvinist backwardness among English workers, the Socialist Party refuses to call for withdrawal of British imperialist forces from Northern Ireland and regularly provides a platform for an anti-Catholic Loyalist killer, Billy Hutchinson. Until the 1990s, Taaffe’s outfit (then called the Militant Tendency and centrally led by Ted Grant) was buried deep within the Labour Party—even as Labour in government deployed troops against the Catholic

minority in Northern Ireland and ordered disgusting “virginity tests” against Asian women seeking entry into Britain. For a number of years, the Militant Tendency itself administered the Liverpool city government, presiding over massive unemployment and ghetto repression.

In the case of their South African operation, this “entrust” policy translated into liquidation into the bourgeois-nationalist ANC as the Marxist Workers Tendency, better known by the name of its paper, *Congress Militant*. Now renamed the Democratic Socialist Movement and out of the ANC, they devote their efforts to appeals to the ANC-allied COSATU bureaucracy to form a Labourite, economist “workers party.”

This is the retrograde “tradition” LMV continues in the U.S. Both Reimann and another LMV leading light, Richard Mellor, are former union bureaucrats in the San Francisco Bay Area. Expelled by the International bureaucracy of the Carpenters union for leading a 1999 wildcat strike, Reimann responded not by mobilizing the union membership in his defense but by dragging the union into the courts. And Mellor, a onetime vice president of AFSCME Local 444 in Oakland, firmly supported the union tops’ “organizing” of cops and prison guards, lamenting in his *AFSCME Activist* newsletter (July-September 1995) that the “union movement is weakened” by efforts of “correctional officers” in New York to *leave* AFSCME. Trying to emulate his Liverpool comrades, Mellor ran for Oakland City Council in 1995 in a campaign single-mindedly devoted to the reformist proposition that the capitalist state can be made to represent the interests of the working people. His program did not oppose the death penalty, or defend abortion rights or immigrants.

With embrace of the capitalist courts and the racist, anti-labor cops—the core of the capitalist state—as their hallmark, it is no wonder these small-time social democrats reinforce social backwardness in the U.S. and fall in line behind the reactionary crusade of the anti-gay bigots. LMV’s stance is reminiscent of the “sewer socialists” of the pre-World War I U.S. Socialist Party right wing, which included outright racists like Victor Berger.

Marxism and Science

As a Marxist political organization, we do not purport to have expertise in medical science. Our purpose is to build the revolutionary workers party that is needed to lead the proletariat in overthrowing the capitalist profit system and

ushering in the planned, collectivized economy that will mobilize resources on the basis of social need and not what the drug companies find profitable. We seek to approach general social questions in a scientific manner. What is at issue here is the defense of science itself.

As Regnery’s publishing output lays bare, what animates the “HIV denialists” is not the science of retrovirology but providing pseudo-scientific legitimacy for a reactionary social agenda that would condemn millions of people to death. Their message that AIDS only affects gays and drug addicts and that white, middle-class, heterosexual America is safe serves the bible-thumping bigots who view AIDS as “god’s punishment” for gays, the ghetto masses, drug users. Suicidally, some gay activists formerly associated with ACT UP, which was founded to fight for more research funding and treatment for AIDS, have also bought into this reactionary campaign. Small ACT UP splits in San Francisco and Hollywood promote Duesberg’s lie that HIV doesn’t cause AIDS and have blanketed the heavily gay Castro district in San Francisco with signs declaring, “Plague Peters Out—AIDS Is Not Caused by a Virus” and “No More Tests! No More Pills! No More Fear! AIDS Is Over.”

Ironically, such deadly illusions speak to the *effectiveness* of AIDS prevention and treatment programs—based largely on advances in medical science—especially among middle-class white homosexuals. More fundamentally, it is a measure of a broader climate of social reaction that avowed “Marxists” and gay lifestylists would join with overt anti-gay bigots in promoting the lie that HIV does not cause AIDS. Over the past couple of decades, accelerated in good part by “death of communism” reaction in the imperialist centers following capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union in 1991-92, there has been a growing assault on science by anti-technology Greens and the forces of religious backwardness—from “New Age” crystal worshippers to Christian fundamentalists seeking to purge Darwin’s theory of evolution from the classroom.

The very formula “HIV=AIDS=Death,” thrown up as a straw man by Reimann and the rest of the “HIV denialist” crowd, is an assault on the dialectical materialist method which is at the core of Marxism. No reputable scientist argues that the HIV virus *equals* AIDS, only that HIV is the *cause* of what is clinically diagnosed (usually years after infection) as AIDS. Reimann not only denies that HIV causes AIDS but even that there is an “AIDS crisis,” a phrase he puts in quotation marks. “Here in the United States, AIDS certainly has not developed anywhere near as it was predicted,” he asserts.

Reimann’s dismissiveness reeks with contempt for the impoverished and oppressed. AIDS is today the *leading cause* of death among black people between the ages of 25 and 44 in the U.S.; 30 percent of black gay men are infected, and black women account for 64 percent of all new infections. While the death rate in the U.S. dropped sharply in 1997 following the advent of powerful anti-retroviral cocktails (whose effectiveness Reimann denies), the number of new AIDS cases *doubled* in the following year. And the decline in new cases among whites has been more than offset

Contents include:

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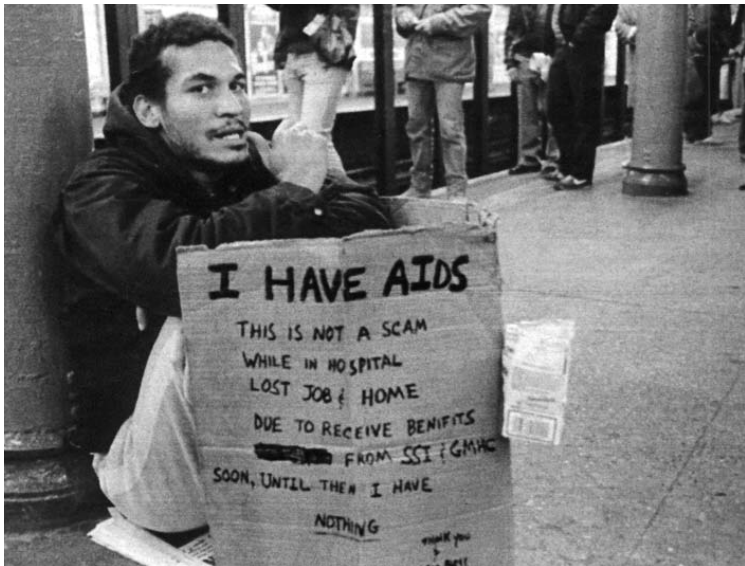
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AIDS Ravages Black America



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals



Biddle/Washington Post

Poverty, lack of medical care fuel AIDS epidemic in inner cities. Protest in March against closing of only public hospital in Washington, D.C.

The AIDS epidemic is wreaking a devastating toll on America's black and Hispanic population. Taken together, blacks and Hispanics account for almost *two-thirds* of new AIDS cases. AIDS is eight times more common among black people than white. Fully one in every 50 black men is today estimated to be infected with HIV, as is one in every 160 black women—a rate of infection 20 times that of white women. Though less than 15 percent of the population, black people now account for more than half of all new HIV infections, and black women account for 64 percent of all new infections among women in the U.S.

AIDS is caused by a virus, not by poverty, much less by race—which has no biological significance whatsoever. But the rate of transmission of HIV and treat-

ment of AIDS are very much conditioned by social factors. AIDS calls out every hatred, every prejudice in this sick society: against sexual “deviants,” against the poor and the sick—the victims themselves—and especially against minorities. Black people are almost twice as likely as whites to lack health insurance, and Latinos almost three times as likely. Underlying the policy of malign neglect toward the AIDS crisis, especially in the inner cities, is the capitalist rulers' calculation that huge numbers of the ghetto and barrio masses are “expendable” because their labor is no longer of use for the extraction of profit.

The astounding increase in HIV infection among black women in particular is explained by the fact that the virus is now being spread predominantly

through sexual relations and not mainly through intravenous drug use. In the ghettos and barrios, many homeless women are forced to trade sex for shelter. Others are forced into prostitution.

Black and Hispanic gays, who have always suffered disproportionately high death tolls from AIDS, are today being infected at rates rivaling those in southern Africa. A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 30 percent of gay black men in their twenties were HIV-positive. Their condition is compounded by intense anti-homosexual bigotry, endemic throughout capitalist society and promoted particularly by black churches and nationalist demagogues like Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, who also pushes the notion that AIDS is a government con-

spiracy against black people. In his book *A Torchlight for America* (1993), Farrakhan rants: “We must change homosexual behavior.... We must change all behavior that offends the standard of moral behavior set by God.” Many gay black men are forced to live secret lives “on the down low,” often engaging in sex without condoms and in denial of the risks.

The AIDS epidemic throws into sharp relief the criminality, the decay and the cruel injustice of the whole capitalist system. As epitomized by the infamous Tuskegee syphilis experiment, racism is so deeply institutionalized in this country's health care system that many black people don't trust white doctors and other health care workers, sometimes discounting even good medical advice. Yet black and Hispanic doctors are few and far between, and the widespread attacks on affirmative action programs ensure that in the future there will be fewer still.

Given the wealth and technical resources of this country, free quality health care for all is objectively within the reach of material possibility. But it cannot happen within the framework of this capitalist system. The capitalist rulers reject even such elementary measures as distributing free condoms and instituting needle-exchange programs, which could drastically reduce the spread of AIDS in the inner cities. But the real obstacle to fighting the epidemic is the whole matrix of poverty, inequality and racial oppression that is integral to capitalist class society. Among the first acts of a workers government would be to provide the food, medical care, housing, education and social services whose lack is so starkly underlined by the AIDS crisis. It will take a proletarian socialist revolution to bring such a government to power. ■

by an increase among minorities. In Reimann's own backyard in Alameda County, blacks now make up 42 percent of all new AIDS cases (*Oakland Tribune*, 4 July 2000).

Reimann's article essentially rehashes all of Duesberg's arguments. Reimann writes:

“Surely, something is weakening the immune systems in AIDS patients. Is it a virus? Is it drugs—both illegal as well as such toxins as AZT? Is it malnutrition? Is it repeated assaults on the immune system by frequent diseases (including, but not limited to, std's) as well as continued usage of anti-biotics? Could the general poisoning of the environment have anything to do with it? Who knows? The fact is that these alternative theories have never received the funding to be investigated adequately.

“Of course, there's no millions in profits to be made in this research, and furthermore it would prove politically explosive. So the millions in Africa can die premature deaths, victims of lack of adequate health care, lack of proper sanitation, malnutrition—victims of global capitalism, that is. Much better for big business and their hired and paid-for politicians and ‘researchers’ to label them as ‘AIDS victims’!”

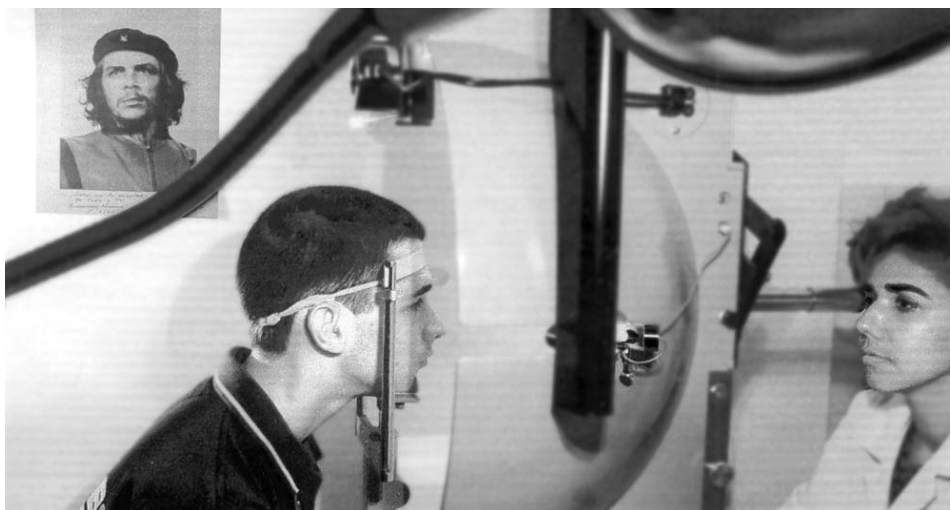
With his references to “illegal drugs” and “frequent” sexually transmitted diseases, Reimann insinuates what the anti-HIV bigots say openly: AIDS is the result of “drug abuse” or “promiscuity.” As we asserted in an article headlined “Billions for AIDS Research!” in the early years of the epidemic: “*AIDS is caused by a virus, not by sex, not by ‘sin,’ not by pornography*” (WV No. 389, 18 October 1985).

That HIV causes AIDS is a fact, just as gravity is a fact. How the virus works to break down the immune system is a topic of much research and debate. But that it causes AIDS is not a matter of scientific dispute. A National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Fact Sheet cites one study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 1993 which found **99.9 percent** of 230,179 AIDS patients surveyed to be HIV positive. The NIAID Fact Sheet also answers the myth (promoted by Duesberg) that AIDS is simply a new name for long-existent diseases of poverty, noting: “The diseases that have come to be asso-

ciated with AIDS in Africa—such as wasting syndrome, diarrheal diseases and TB—have long been severe burdens there. However, high rates of mortality from these diseases, formerly confined to the elderly and malnourished, are now common among HIV-infected young and middle-aged people, including well-educated members of the middle class.”

Indeed, if AIDS is the result of poverty or sex—both of which, even Reimann/Duesberg will acknowledge, have been around for some time now—why did the AIDS epidemic begin only in the early 1980s? Perhaps the clearest evidence that AIDS is caused by an infectious agent (HIV) and not “bad lifestyle” is provided by studies showing that anywhere between 15 percent and 40 percent of infants born to HIV-infected mothers go on to develop AIDS (documented in NIAID's “The Relationship Between the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome”). Moreover, even primitive anti-HIV drugs like AZT dramatically reduce the transmission of HIV infection from mother to child, with rates falling from 25 percent without AZT treatment to 8 percent or less with AZT. By Duesberg's lights, drugs created on the basis of the hypothesis that HIV causes AIDS should have no effect. But protease inhibitors, which are specifically targeted at the virus on the basis of molecular genetics, have significantly lengthened the lives of AIDS patients and dramatically improved their quality of life.

The lies pushed by Reimann et al. are a literally deadly poison for any HIV-infected people who might be influenced by them. Given the racism inherent in American capitalism, and especially the legacy of the infamous Tuskegee syphilis experiments where black men were criminally allowed to go untreated for decades by researchers who wanted to study the effects of the disease, many black people are justifiably suspicious of the government and the medical establishment. A survey of a thousand black church-goers reported in the *Miami Herald* (2 November 1995) found that one-third thought AIDS was a government conspiracy to



Creutzmann/Zeitungspiegel

Despite U.S. imperialist embargo, Cuba's planned economy provides medical care for all.

kill blacks and another third weren't sure. But as the survey's author noted, those who believed these conspiracy theories (promoted by the likes of nationalist demagogue Louis Farrakhan) would be “less likely to get tested, less likely to use condoms, and less likely to participate in clinical trials.”

National Reformism vs. Revolutionary Internationalism

In his statement on the LMV Web page, Gesheker says: “Perpetuating the myth of an ‘African AIDS epidemic’ caused by sexual promiscuity deepens African dependency on infusions of Western aid for diagnostic tests, high-tech sterilization equipment, medical personnel and drug therapies.” Reimann echoes that “the pharmaceuticals as well as all those ‘researchers’ and others in the AIDS establishment who make a living off of AIDS...found it necessary to manufacture this African AIDS crisis.” He complains: “While funding for AIDS ‘research’ and ‘care’ has vastly increased in Africa, funding for malaria control has practically disappeared.” This reformist is so thoroughly bound by the constraints imposed by the ledger books of a capitalist system in decay that he could not conceive of demanding the vast increases in funding needed *across the board* for

health care and medical research.

While bandying about talk of “global capitalism,” Reimann's arguments boil down to a polemic *against* anti-capitalist struggle, serving to amnesty South Africa's capitalist government and to let the “multinational” pharmaceuticals off the hook. The imperialist monopolies and the ANC nationalists join in denying necessary medication to the people of Africa, and Reimann chimes in to criminally deny that such medications are even necessary. At bottom, Reimann and his ilk accept that the masses of Africa and the rest of the “Third World” should maintain their conditions of “pristine” poverty free of Western dependence.

In arguing that the drug giants have an irrevocable stake in AIDS research, Reimann pushes the same line as Glaxo-SmithKline CEO Jean-Pierre Garnier: “The Aids drugs exist because we've discovered them” (London *Guardian*, 25 April). This is how Garnier justifies Glaxo's astronomical first-quarter profits of close to **\$2 billion**, which works out annually to more than 25 percent of the South African government's total revenue; the combined worth of the world's top five drug companies is **twice the combined GDP of all sub-Saharan Africa**.

In fact, AIDS drugs exist largely *continued on page 10*

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because others discovered them. As spy novelist John le Carré, who researched the drug giants for his new book, *The Constant Gardener*, observed in the *Nation* (9 April):

Research and development of the five major AIDS drugs was financed by the National Institutes of Health or academic institutions like Yale and the University of Minnesota. These discoveries were then licensed to Glaxo and other companies, who market them and reap enormous profits. When it comes to vaccine research, as *Science* magazine writer Jon Cohen documents in his book *Shots in the Dark* (2001), Big Pharma has actually been an obstacle. "The AIDS vaccine 'race'...more closely resembled a crawl. Large pharmaceutical companies like Merck had little interest in developing an AIDS vaccine," writes Cohen. "The result: many promising vaccine

Cynically seizing on the South African health ministry's false claim that it's blocked by the complexities of administering anti-retroviral drugs to an impoverished and uneducated population, a Glaxo spokesman told the *Wall Street Journal* (20 April), "That's the ultimate proof the issue of pricing...is irrelevant in the grand scheme of things." For these bloodsuckers, pricing—and profit—is the ultimate issue. They scrambled for a deal in South Africa only after Indian drug manufacturer Cipla announced that it could provide anti-retroviral cocktails for as little as \$350 a year, less than 5 percent of Western prices. And the example of Brazil, which started distributing free generic AIDS drugs in 1997, gives the lie to the Mbeki regime's excuses for refusing to implement a treatment program.

“Brazil has shredded all the excuses about why poor countries cannot treat AIDS. Health system too fragile? On the shaky foundation of its public health service, Brazil built a well-run network of AIDS clinics. Uneducated people can’t stick to the complicated regime of pills?”

Even Botswana, South Africa's neighbor, has now announced that it will begin providing free anti-retroviral cocktails. A report in the *New York Times* (8 May) makes clear what is motivating Botswana's bourgeois government to implement this measure: the country is home to the richest diamond mine in Africa, from which the South African De Beers conglomerate reaps fabulous profits, and one in every three employees at the mine is infected with HIV. The capitalists understand that no workers means no profits!

“The need to know nature is imposed upon men by their need to subordinate nature to themselves. Any digressions

More than with any other disease in modern history, every step in the search to control and cure HIV/AIDS has been hampered by the profit-driven capitalist system and all the accompanying backward, repressive, racist and anti-woman ideological crap, which has come ever more to the fore since the counterrevolutionary collapse of the Soviet Union. Even in the most advanced industrialized countries, people with AIDS continue to be viciously stereotyped, ostracized and stigmatized—and many of those without insurance are denied treatment at all. We fight to wrest the existing scientific knowledge to treat HIV/AIDS and the material resources to apply and develop it from the grip of the capitalists and place it at the service of all humanity through international socialist revolution. It is the purpose of the International Communist League to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, to lead that struggle to victory. ■

(continued from page 3)

Labor in the “City of Angels”

The closure of auto plants in the 1970s and '80s and mass layoffs in the aerospace industry meant the loss of 100,000 decent paying, unionized jobs, hitting black workers particularly hard. While aerospace still plays a large role in the area's economy, the Hollywood entertainment industry, the shipping of cargo through the L.A./Long Beach ports, and low-wage service, tourist and small-scale manufacturing play an increasingly substantial role, employing vast numbers of Latino and Asian immigrants. There is a widespread desire to fight, and labor struggle is seen as the means to do that. This was exemplified by the "Justice for Janitors" campaign for union recognition and decent wages. The 1990 cop assault on the Century City protest is to this day commemorated by Latino janitors in L.A. The janitors struggle is the subject of a new movie by Ken Loach titled *Bread and Roses*, a fictional account which focuses on the role played by heroic Latino women labor militants.

The recent organizing victories in L.A.

It was prodding from L.A. labor officials which spurred the national AFL-CIO to change its posture on immigration, dropping the strident calls for sanctions against employers who hire “illegal” immigrants. Last year, the AFL-CIO organized rallies in several cities around the country to demand amnesty for undocumented workers, including one in L.A. that drew nearly 20,000, mostly Latino immigrants. At the same time, the Sweeney bureaucracy calls to further *strengthen* the militarization of the border—already vastly strengthened by the Clinton administration—which since 1996 has resulted in the deaths of at least a thousand people attempting to cross over. With their protectionist call to “defend American jobs,” the labor misleaders seek to alibi their own refusal to fight against job losses and runaway shops by scapegoating workers abroad, lining up with the American bourgeoisie against its capitalist rivals overseas. In the U.S., this chauvinist poison fuels racist attacks against foreign-born and minority workers.

Like Contreras himself, much of the L.A. labor leadership consists of slicker-talking, social-democratic types who over the last decade ousted the old (and mostly white) labor bureaucrats who completely ignored their immigrant base. Typical of this new breed of labor bureaucrat in L.A. is Contreras' wife, Maria Elena Durazo, who took over HERE Local 11 as part of

Last year's transit strike provided an object lesson in how the labor bureaucracy's allegiance to the Democratic Party is counterposed to class struggle. The United Transportation Union strikers faced down the city's union-busting efforts, and their co-workers in the other transit unions defied orders by their bureaucrats to cross the picket lines. The bourgeoisie was unable to pit the black and Latino poor who use public transportation against the integrated transit workers union, despite strikebreaking appeals to the inner-city poor by Democratic politicians like county supervisor Burke, who is also chairman of the MTA board.

With Burke and other local Democrats exposed as enemies of the strike, Contreas invited Jesse Jackson to L.A. to preach the virtues of "reconciliation" with management and "mediate" a settlement at a critical point in the strike. The

labor tops then turned a contract ratification meeting into a revival meeting for Jackson and other Democratic politicians. In the midst of the transit walkout, a strike by 47,000 SEIU Local 660 county workers was scuttled after one day in response to Cardinal Mahony's cynical concerns over its impact on the "most vulnerable members of our community." In fact, the union did not even have a strike fund, having poured its money into the campaign coffers of the same county supervisors they were going to strike against.

What's needed is a new, class-struggle leadership in the trade unions, which understands that the interests of labor can only be defended on the basis of the political independence of the working class from the capitalist class enemy, its state and its political parties. While the left-talking labor tops look back to the "New Deal" Democratic Party of the 1930s, we fight for the working class to have its own party, one whose aim is a socialist revolution that sweeps away the repressive apparatus that is the capitalist state. A workers government would rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalists and use the wealth produced by the working people for the service of all, providing jobs, housing, free quality health care and education for everyone. Those who labor must rule! ■

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France...

(continued from page 5)

terror in the ghettos or to link this to the superexploitation of youth with [government-subsidized] “youth jobs” and temporary work. As such, the French left, like LO, apes the *racist* measures of the French state, which tells youth of the “second generation” to forcibly “assimilate” and expels young girls for wearing the *hijab* [headscarf] in public school. One can hardly “assimilate” into a society that offers no jobs and only police repression! The French fake left’s and labor traitors’ indifference to racial oppression flows directly from their perspective of class collaboration. We Trotskyists in the LTF insist that the interests of labor and oppressed minorities must advance together or they will fall back together!

What the Municipal Elections Revealed

The March municipal elections revealed in the parliamentary arena what the strikes and ghetto upheavals have shown on the shop floors and streets of France for the last several years: working people and minorities have had enough! In some poor neighborhoods, the abstention rate from the elections was as high as *70 percent*. The elections showed France to be a very polarized society: the right made gains, except for Paris and Lyon which the left captured, but the pseudo-Trotskyist groups made significant gains as well.

Most significant from our standpoint is that Lutte Ouvrière, the one group which made opposition to supporting the popular front the center of its campaign, made significant gains in this election and directly at the expense of the Communist Party, which was widely perceived to be “punished” for its continued participation in the government. Revolutionaries could have given critical support to LO in the municipal election. For LO, opposition to the popular front is not a question of principle—indeed that’s why they don’t even call it by its real name (they call it the “governmental left”), so as not to refer directly to what Trotsky called this form

of class collaboration: “not a tactic but the greatest crime.”

LO’s opposition is entirely conditional, tactical and only to this particular government. We would not be surprised if in the next presidential election, LO maneuvers for a slightly more left-wing popular-frontist formation, perhaps with the transfer of some deputies from LO’s chateau to the National Assembly. Thus LO waited until just before the second round to declare categorically that they were opposed to supporting any slate of the popular front. In 1997, LO helped elect



Le Bolchévik

LTF opposes popular front, calls “For a Multiethnic Revolutionary Workers Party That Fights for a Workers Government!” *Le Bolchévik*, 4 issues/\$5. Order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing, Box 1377 GPO, NY, NY 10116.

the Jospin popular front. Throughout their history, whenever workers had illusions in the popular front, LO capitulated to them. In 1981, they called for voting “without illusion but without reservation” for [PS presidential candidate] Mitterrand, using the rationale that if the workers want it they should have the experience, or that it’s a fight against the fascist National Front. LO always has a pretext in these cases, but essentially it helps to put the popular front in power under the pretext that we must “fight the right” and vote for the “lesser evil” on the second round. As regards the role of their own

deputies, [LO standard-bearer] Arlette Laguiller couldn’t be clearer on “pressure politics”: “They will know how to carry out local politics on behalf of the exploited by pressuring the municipal majority whatever its political coloration” (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 16 March).

Krivine’s LCR scrambled for alliances with anybody who would have them, from the PS to the PCF to the Greens and community associations. It won seats in Clermont-Ferrand by fusing its list on the second round with that of the PS mayor and in Kremlin-Bicêtre, south of Paris, by



fusing with a list headed by the Mouvement des Citoyens [the bourgeois Movement of Citizens of the chauvinist former interior minister Chevènement]. But after seeing that LO had achieved some success by capitalizing on justified anger among workers and the oppressed against the government because LO offered the only slate opposing the government in the elections, the LCR cynically declared, “Let’s get together for the presidentials” and we’ll stop supporting the government, too! Program and principles have absolutely nothing to do with it, as Krivine explained in *Libération* (25 April) that LO and the LCR could expect to win less than 10 percent of the vote next year running separate slates but more than 10 percent on a joint slate.

To look at the election posters of LO and the LCR reprinted in the March-April *Lutte de Classe* is revealing. The LCR’s campaign posters are all about ecology, clean air, green parks, nursery schools, moratoriums on roads, artistic research, etc. and blah, blah, blah. LO’s posters are simple workerist, economist demands of ten words or less on pensions, wages or benefits—nothing outside the shopfloor. From neither the LO nor LCR election posters would you know that the ghettos around Paris, Lyon and Nice are burning and that every day youth are being attacked by the police. Nor would you know that thousands of immigrant “*sans-papiers*” are being held in deportation camps waiting to be expelled.

Youth and workers who have turned to Lutte Ouvrière as a left-wing alternative to the Communist Party have to confront

the fact that all LO offers is...more of the same fundamentally reformist program. LO wants more social welfare and more tactful police, and to “ban” layoffs in companies that make profits—in short, LO wants capitalism with a human face. But poverty and oppression are rooted in the very workings of the capitalist system and can’t be eradicated short of the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system itself. LO’s program therefore consists of looking to channel working-class anger into pressuring this capitalist government for reforms and, as such, LO is an obstacle on the road to revolution, not a vehicle for the liberation of the workers and the oppressed.

Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The Russian Revolution of October 1917 was a huge inspiration to the working class throughout the world. For many syndicalists, the lesson was learned through the experience of the Bolsheviks that in order to overthrow capitalism, you need a vanguard party of professional revolutionaries. The best elements among the militant syndicalists—like James P. Cannon, founder of American Trotskyism, and Alfred Rosmer of France—were won over to the fight to build a revolutionary party to lead international workers revolution. In the years after the Russian Revolution, Trotsky spent a great deal of time and effort trying to win over French radical syndicalists to the building of a revolutionary party. In a 1920 letter to syndicalist leader Pierre Monatte, Trotsky wrote of the need to build the revolutionary vanguard party:

“The task of the working class is to expel the bourgeoisie from power, annihilate its apparatus of violence and oppression, and create organs of its own labor dictatorship in order to crush resistance on the part of the bourgeoisie and reconstruct all social relations as quickly as possible in the spirit of communism....

“But in the working class itself, as you know, there are different levels of consciousness. The task of the revolution is clear in its totality only to the most conscious revolutionary minority of the proletariat. The strength of this minority lies in the fact that the more firmly, the more decisively and assuredly it acts, the more support it finds on the part of the numerous and more backward masses of workers. However,...it is indispensable that the working class be led in all aspects of life by its best, most class-conscious representatives, who always remain true to their colors.”

—“Lettre à un syndicaliste français” [Letter to a French Syndicalist], 31 July 1920 in Leon Trotsky, *Le Mouvement Communiste en France 1919-1939* (1967)

The Ligue Trotskyiste de France, along with our comrades around the world in the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), is fighting in the tradition of Bolshevism to bring to the proletariat the consciousness of its historic task as the gravedigger of capitalism. To sweep away this capitalist system and to eliminate racism and war, a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party must be built to link together all forms of resistance to immiseration and oppression and to create an egalitarian socialist society here and internationally. For new October Revolutions! ■

Wind...

(continued from page 2)

against prior restraint” by allowing publication of the “Pentagon Papers”—confidential documents on the U.S. war in Vietnam—over the objections of the government.

There have been no such mass movements since then, mainly because the trade-union misleaders and black elected officials have been able to divert the anger in the workplaces and in the ghettos into the dead end of Democratic Party “lesser evilism.” It was Democratic governors who raised the flag of slavery in Georgia and other states to show their defiance of the civil rights movement. On the eve of the 1984 Democratic convention in San Francisco, Democratic mayor and current U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein raised the Confederate flag there as well to placate Southern delegates. The Spartacist League and Labor Black League for Social Defense repeatedly mobilized to tear down that racist banner until the city was forced to replace it with the flag of the “California Hundred,” the first 100 volunteers to fight with the Union Army.

In the late 1970s, Southern Democrat Jimmy Carter praised the virtues of racial segregation with his slogan of “ethnic purity,” while promoting “moral rearmament” to overcome the legacy of U.S. imperialism’s humiliating defeat in Vietnam. The “New South” exemplified by Carter meant the same old racist reaction and “open shop” union-busting without the formal structures of Jim Crow. It was near the capital of the “New South,” the Atlanta of black Democratic mayor Andrew Young, that the 50th anniversary of *Gone With the Wind* was celebrated at

a Tara ball where Young and his wife were the only black people in attendance. The following decade, Clinton and Gore, another pair of Southern Democrats, presided over the imprisonment of hundreds of thousands of black men and condemned untold numbers of women and children to destitution and malnutrition by axing welfare.

With the civil rights and antiwar movements relegated to the distant past, both the Democratic and Republican capitalist parties have attacked the gains, however minimal, that issued out of the ’50s and ’60s. Today, the mass of the black population lives in more segregated and more impoverished conditions than they did then. A measure of how the ruling class denigrates black life can be gleaned from the *New York Times* (10 May), which devoted half a page to the murder trial of a 14-year-old black student in Florida and all of six sentences to the conviction of a white-supremacist who murdered five people in a rampage of racist terror near Pittsburgh last year.

We say: Let Alice Randall’s book be published! The true story of the fight for black freedom and the emancipation of the working people as a whole and of the countless heroes who gave their lives in this cause will only be told when the multiracial proletariat replaces the racist bourgeoisie in power. As we wrote at the time of the Columbia, South Carolina protest in “Down With the Confederate Flag of Slavery!” (WV No. 728, 28 January 2000):

“To achieve black freedom will require a third American revolution, placing in power a workers government committed to building a socialist economy with genuine equality. One of the first acts of a revolutionary proletarian regime would be to tear down every last Confederate flag and monument and replace them with the red flag and monuments to *our* heroes.” ■

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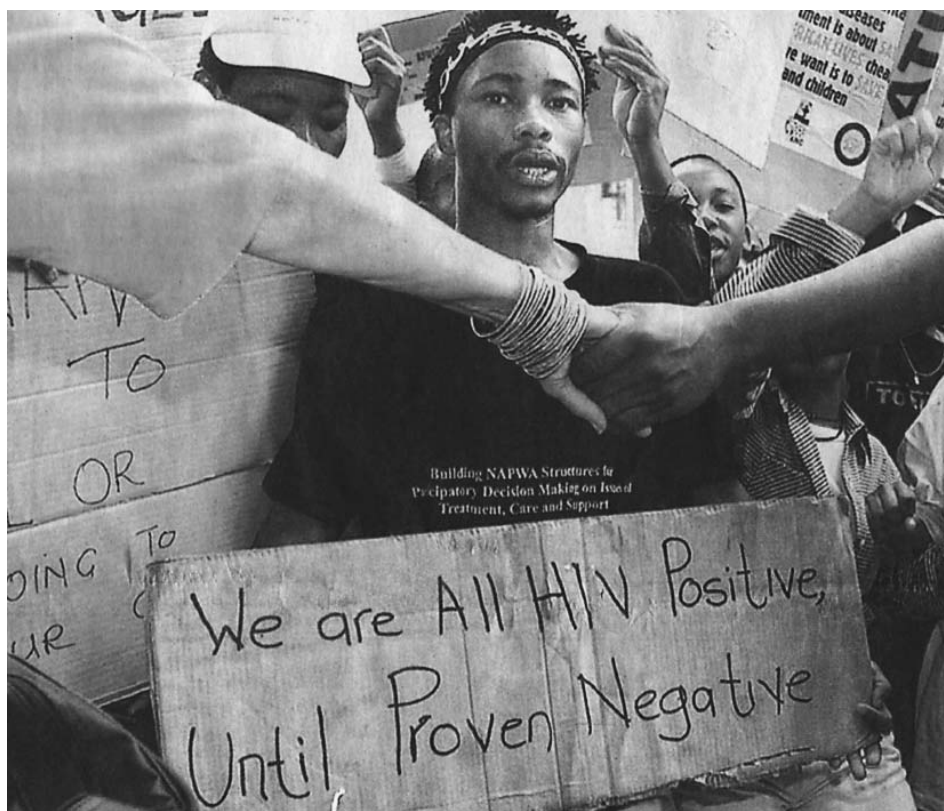
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South Africa: Thousands Protest Drug Monopolies, Mbeki Regime

A Pretoria courtroom erupted in singing and dancing on April 20 when AIDS activists heard that 39 major pharmaceutical companies would abandon a lawsuit against the import and production of generic anti-HIV drugs. The extortionate prices charged by the bloodsucking drug giants have helped ensure that all but a tiny handful of South Africa's nearly five million HIV-positive people—and some 20 million others in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa—are denied the anti-retroviral cocktails which have vastly extended and improved the lives of many in the U.S. and other Western countries. Speaking at an international AIDS conference in Durban last year, an HIV-positive South African high court justice, Edwin Cameron, declared: "Amidst the poverty of Africa, I stand here before you because I am able to purchase health.... I am here because I can pay for life itself. To me this seems a shocking and monstrous inequity."

The drug monopolies' suit targeted a law passed by the African National Congress (ANC) government in 1997 aimed at circumventing patent "rights" on essential medicines. But the bourgeois-nationalist government of ANC president Thabo Mbeki is no less complicit in this monstrous inequity. Minutes after the announcement, ANC health minister Dr. Tshabalala-Msimang stated, "We never said we want to use anti-retrovirals," arguing that such drugs are still too expensive and too dangerous for widespread use. "We are doing very well," she professed, simply with nutrition programs and treatment of opportunist infections. This smug claim comes only months after a report by the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS predicted that *half* of all current 15-year-olds in South Africa and Zimbabwe may die of AIDS.

Mbeki's ignorant diatribes last year denying that the HIV virus causes AIDS were aimed in large part at deflecting criticism over his government's refusal to allocate medical resources to combat the epidemic. To lend credence to his anti-scientific bigotry, Mbeki set up a panel of



As AIDS epidemic devastates southern Africa, protesters outside Pretoria court last month denounced extortionate drug companies.

"experts" including the scientific godfather of the anti-HIV "theory," Peter Duesberg, a professor of molecular and cell biology at UC Berkeley. Despite overwhelming evidence that a course of anti-retroviral medication for HIV-positive

ists. With patent claims imposed under the terms of the World Trade Organization, "some [South African government] officials opposed the legislation permitting the import of generic and other cheaper drugs, fearing that it would harm

"Labor's Militant Voice" Reformists Push Deadly Anti-Science Bigotry

pregnant women can prevent transmission of the virus to the fetus, the Mbeki government has thus far refused to implement even this relatively inexpensive program, rejecting a German firm's offer of free AZT for this purpose.

While the ANC nationalists talk of "nation-building" and an "African renaissance," they are beholden to the imperial-

the confidence of investors," reported the London *Guardian* (18 April). Meanwhile, the U.S., Britain and other imperialist governments, despite hypocritical criticisms of Mbeki's rantings, act as enforcers for the pharmaceutical monopolies. A February 1999 State Department report boasted that "all relevant agencies of the U.S. government...have been engaged

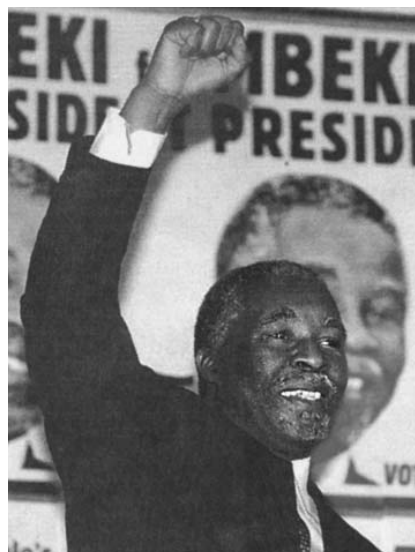
in an assiduous, concerted campaign to persuade the government of South Africa to withdraw or modify" the 1997 statutes. Having finally dropped South Africa from its punitive "trade watch" recently, on April 30 the U.S. raised the spectre of trade sanctions against Brazil for manufacturing and distributing generic anti-retrovirals.

In fact, what led to the climbdown by the pharmaceutical monopolies in South Africa was fear of growing international competition from generic drug producers like the Bombay-based firm Cipla, combined with a campaign of mass protest by the South African Treatment Action Campaign (TAC). TAC was formed by activists outraged over the government's decision to halt programs—carried out in the guise of research—under which anti-retroviral drugs were given to pregnant women at Soweto's Chris Hani Baragwanath and other hospitals. Beginning with the Durban conference last July and again throughout the spring, thousands have taken to the streets of Pretoria and Johannesburg—joined by solidarity demonstrations in London, Paris, New York and other cities—to demand that anti-retroviral drugs be made available to the millions of HIV-positive Africans.

Contingents from the COSATU trade-union federation have been prominent in the recent multiracial protests, reflecting the fact that AIDS runs rampant among South African miners and other workers. The protests also featured large numbers of openly gay men and women along with demonstrators wearing T-shirts reading "I Am HIV Positive." The protests are all the more dramatic given that just over two years ago, in December 1998, AIDS activist Gugu Dlamini was stoned and knifed to death by a KwaZulu-Natal mob for daring to speak out about her HIV-positive status. Protesters have carried such slogans as "Workers United in the Fight for Affordable Drugs," "To Hell With Patent Rights When It Comes to Our Lives" and "Capitalism—A Sick System."

A 20 March statement by the South African Communist Party (SACP), which is part of Mbeki's "tripartite alliance" government along with COSATU, "heartily welcomes" an offer by Cuban leader Fidel Castro to help "circumvent patent laws to produce cheap generic drugs for AIDS." It speaks to the power of a planned, collectivized economy that the Cuban deformed workers state, though far smaller and poorer than capitalist South Africa, has been able to develop such medicines even in the face of a suffocating U.S. blockade. But in an earlier statement following the Durban conference, the SACP agnostically alleged it had "not sufficiently studied the complex issues about anti-retroviral HIV/AIDS drugs so as to comment." The SACP's doubletalk illustrates its treacherous role, and that of the

continued on page 8



AP photos

While ANC government of Thabo Mbeki pursues policy of criminal neglect, trade unions have joined in recent protests demanding access to anti-HIV drugs.

