

No U.S./UN/EU Intervention in the Near East!

Zionist Bloodbath in Jenin



Defend the Palestinian People!

Photos: Reuters, Fremson/NY Times

Unprecedented Israeli onslaught on Palestinian people has reduced much of West Bank to rubble, like Jenin above.

APRIL 16—Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem, Jenin, Qabatyia, Qalqilya, Yatta, Samua, Ber Zeit: the roll call of Palestinian communities devastated by Israeli troops, tanks and helicopter gunships encompasses almost all of the West Bank. Upwards of 200 Palestinians have been slaughtered in the Jenin refugee camp alone—where nearly 15,000 people are crammed into little more than a third of a square mile—as defiant fighters armed with automatic rifles have tried to defend homes and families against the Israeli juggernaut. Lkening Jenin to Vietnam, carpet bombed by the U.S., one Israeli soldier said, “There’s nothing left there now.”

Over 4,000 Palestinians have been arrested, including Marwan Barghouti, second only to Palestinian Authority (PA) leader Yasir Arafat in the Fatah party. The PA now exists in name only. Estimates of the death toll range to 500—on top of more than 1,200 killed and 50,000 wounded over the previous 18 months. The full extent of the slaughter will only be known, if ever, after the Zionist storm-troopers pull out. Journalists have been barred from besieged towns. In Jenin, Israeli troops have reportedly dug mass graves to conceal the actual number killed. In most cases, Palestinians are not even allowed to bury their dead. In Ramallah, nearly 30 decomposing bodies were buried in a hospital parking lot in order to make room for more in the morgue. Scores of wounded have been left to die because ambulances were not allowed through or their drivers were shot.

Cities and towns that once had a sem-

U.S. Hands Off Iraq! Down With Zionist and Arab Bourgeois Rulers! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

blance of an economy and life have been reduced to ruins. Old towns and casbahs, some of them with walls dating back to the Roman Empire, have been turned to dust. The West Bank is now a massive rubble of twisted metal and destroyed lives, with nearly two million Palestinians effectively imprisoned in their homes by Israeli curfews. It will take years, if not decades, to rebuild what the Israelis have destroyed: homes, businesses, shops, libraries, hospitals, paved roads, electrical plants, sewage mains, water pipes—the entire infrastructure of the West Bank. The looming health disaster may well claim many more lives.

As the Palestinian people are sub-

jected to an unprecedented onslaught, imperialist spokesmen engage in hypocritical hand-wringing and the Arab regimes recite their usual litany of empty United Nations resolutions. But in cities throughout the Near East, and elsewhere, hundreds of thousands march in outrage, desperate for some way to put an end to the savage Israeli assault.

What is urgently necessary is the mobilization of the working class, in the Near East and internationally, in defense of the Palestinian people against Zionist state terror. From black and Arab workers in Detroit to the proletariat of France, with its key North African component, to the port workers of Egypt and the oil

workers of Iran, working people throughout the world must take up the cause of the Palestinian people as their own through demonstrations, protest strikes and other class-struggle actions.

In Morocco, upwards of a million people marched through the streets of Rabat making a zero sign with their fingers to express their contempt for the Arab regimes that do nothing to stop this new catastrophe against the Palestinians—but the Arab bourgeoisies have always been enemies of the Palestinian national struggle. Arafat and an array of pseudo-socialist groups in West Europe and the U.S. appeal to the UN or the European Union (EU) or even the Zionist state’s American patrons for an “international protection force”—but it was just such a force that paved the way for the 1982 Sabra/Shatila massacre. EU powers Britain and France once had forces in the Near East—as colonial overlords of the Arab masses. It was under the auspices of a UN intervention force that the U.S. perpetrated its 1991 slaughter of the Iraqi people.

Particularly now, calls for imperialist military intervention serve to legitimize and facilitate Washington’s plans for a new war against Iraq. Secretary of State Colin Powell’s “mission of peace” is a transparently cynical attempt to quell the popular Arab outrage that stands in the way of even nominal support from client states like Egypt for the drive to smash Saddam Hussein.

The current White House cabal has been itching to “finish the job” begun by Bush Sr. in 1991, when tens of thousands of Iraqis were slaughtered. In the intervening years, one and a half million people, mainly children and the elderly, have died as a result of the starvation embargo imposed under UN sanctions. Now, under the rubric of the “war on terror,” Bush has

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WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at April 11 UCLA protest in defense of Palestinians.



Ashcroft's "Anti-Terror" Frame-Up of Leftist Lawyer

Hands Off Lynne Stewart!

On April 9, New York City attorney Lynne Stewart and three Arab men—Ahmed Abdel Sattar, Yassir Al-Sirri and Mohammed Yousry—were indicted on charges of supporting “terrorism.” Stewart is facing up to 40 years in prison for the “crime” of being an attorney for blind Egyptian sheik Omar Ahmed-Rahman, who is imprisoned for life on “seditious conspiracy” charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Yousry is included in the indictment for having acted as Rahman’s interpreter. The other two are alleged to be members of Rahman’s Islamic Group. All four are charged simply for having communicated with Rahman or with each other. They were indicted under the USA-Patriot Act enacted last October, which broadens the definition of “terrorist” to include just about anybody deemed an opponent of the government. We demand that all charges against Stewart, Sattar, Al-Sirri and Yousry be dropped now!

Supported by dozens of attorneys who filled the courtroom, the 62-year-old Stewart pleaded “emphatically not guilty.”

Outside the court she defiantly stated, “My whole entire career has been about the government expanding its powers to make more and more criminal what could be considered political. This is an example of that.” In going after Stewart, who for three decades has represented leftists, black activists and others deemed enemies by the racist rulers, Ashcroft is seeking to make a sinister amalgam between leftist political activity and “terrorism.” As we warned in “‘Anti-Terror’ Law: Shredding Your Rights” (WV No. 770, 7 December 2001): “The purpose of the new measures is to revive and deepen the broad-ranging repression and intimidation that marked the Cold War McCarthyite witchhunt of 50 years ago. The aim today as then is to coerce the entire population into ideological conformity, with the government wielding the spectre of seemingly pervasive ‘Islamic terrorism’ as a surrogate for Communism.”

It was the witchhunt atmosphere whipped up by the government following September 11 that made Stewart’s prosecution possible. The flimsy nature of the

charges against her are evident in the fact that the alleged “crime” took place over a year ago, and the Feds did absolutely nothing. In fact, what they claim she did wasn’t even illegal at the time. Only by violating the constitutional proscription against *ex post facto* prosecutions (passing laws to outlaw something that has already taken place) could the government charge her under the USA-Patriot Act.

Ashcroft claims that Stewart provided “material support and resources” to Rahman’s Egyptian-based Islamic Group during a prison visit with the sheik two years ago, during which Stewart purportedly made “extraneous comments” in English to “mask” from prison guards a conversation between Rahman and Mohammed Yousry. Following her arraignment, Stewart remarked: “They have now arrested the lawyer and interpreter. Are they going to arrest the lady that cleans the sheik’s cell?” Her other “offenses” were to announce to the press that the sheik no longer supported a cease-fire in terrorist activities and to publicly state that he was being denied medical treatment by prison officials.

Stewart has announced her hope that the indictment become “a touchstone case...something that points out the limits the government can go through in prosecuting people they don’t like.” The frame-up of the four is part of the frontal attack on civil liberties that accompanies the U.S.-led “global war on terror.” Using the fear born of the attack on the World Trade Center as a pretext, the Bush administration, with most Democrats in tow, pushed through a package of legislation, executive fiats and Justice Department regulations which marked a qualitative diminution of democratic rights.

The USA-Patriot Act gives the government the authority to declare almost anyone it wants a “terrorist” and enumerates the multitude of ways the Feds will destroy their lives—wiretapping, indefinite detention, rifling through financial records, breaking into homes and deporting non-citizens. The law’s definition of “terrorists” as those who commit unlawful acts that “appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population” or “to influence a policy of a government by intimidation or coercion” could be applied to postal strikers who mobilize to stop scabs or who disable a scab truck. At least 1,200 immigrants, mostly young men from Arab and South Asian countries, have been rounded up in the “anti-terror” witchhunt so far, and although none have been charged with anything to do with the World Trade Center attack, hundreds remain in jail. We



AP

say: Free the detainees now!

The government’s vendetta against Stewart reveals the lengths to which the capitalist rulers will go to chill any efforts to defend those caught in the “anti-terror” dragnet. Testifying to the significance the government places on the prosecution of Stewart, Attorney General John Ashcroft personally announced the indictment. The 11 April *New York Post* ran a scurrilous attack on Stewart’s lawyer, Susan Tipograph, trying to connect her to the prison break of the Puerto Rican nationalist FALN leader William Morales... **23 years ago!** For Bush & Co., model lawyers for those in the government’s gun sights are the kind who typically represent death row inmates in Texas—lawyers who get tanked up on Jack Daniels and sleep through the trial.

Equating lawyers with the alleged crimes of their clients is nothing new. In the 1950s, when the Communist Party was declared an illegal organization and its members and anyone having contact with them were dragged before the House Committee for Un-American Activities (HUAC), their lawyers were vilified or indicted as well.

While Ashcroft proclaimed that Stewart and the others helped Rahman “direct the terrorist activities of the Islamic Group from his prison cell,” the 24-page indictment points to not one single terrorist act resulting from such contact—or any criminal act for that matter. The charges of conspiring to “provide material support” to Rahman stem purely from the fact that the State Department designated the Islamic Group a “terrorist” organization (although Rahman and his Islamic reactionaries had earlier received plenty of support from the CIA, which deemed him a “valuable asset” in the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan).

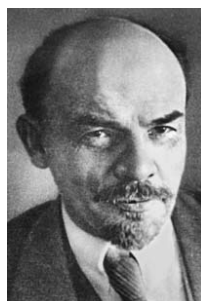
The Feds claim that Stewart violated the “Special Administrative Measures” she allegedly agreed to in 1999 which allowed her access to her client Rahman only on the condition that she not convey



TROTSKY

Against American Imperialist Militarism!

In the name of the “global war on terror,” the Pentagon has dispatched troops to, among several other countries, the Philippines, an American neocolony and until the end of World War II an outright colony of the U.S. At its founding conference in 1938, the then-Trotskyist American Socialist Workers Party emphasized the reciprocal relationship between the struggle of the colonial and semicolonial masses against



LENIN

American imperialist domination and the fight for proletarian revolution in the U.S.

United States imperialism, exploiting the masses within its national boundaries, at the same time and to an even greater degree, exploits the peoples of Latin and Central America, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Liberia, the Philippines. These people are thus the potential allies of the American workers in the struggle against U.S. imperialism, and neither they nor the American workers can expect to win freedom except in joint combat against the common enemy. The SWP supports every progressive struggle of these peoples. It stands for the immediate and unhampered right of self-determination for them, free from military, political, or economic intervention or pressure by the U.S. government. It stands for the immediate and unconditional independence of all the territories, colonies, and dependencies of the U.S. and for the withdrawal of all troops from them. It is opposed to any attempt by American imperialism, open or masked, to infringe upon the right of self-determination of any nation or people.

The revolutions in the colonies, semicolonies, and spheres of influence of United States imperialism are integrally and reciprocally related to the revolutionary struggle against that imperialism at home. A successful revolution in the United States would be decisive for the emancipation of the toiling masses throughout Latin America; while, on the other hand, a revolution beginning in one of the Latin American countries, or in one of the colonies or semicolonies of the U.S., could spread throughout the continent and powerfully accelerate the development of the class struggle and the revolution within the United States. The SWP regards it, therefore, as a central task to aid and support the revolutionary movement in these nations and colonies, and to establish the closest relations with the revolutionists and revolutionary organizations within them.

— Socialist Workers Party, *Declaration of Principles* (1938); reprinted in *The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party* (1982)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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



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19 April 2002

Spartacist League/TLC Forums

**All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!
No U.S./UN/NATO Intervention in the Near East!
U.S. Hands Off Iraq!
For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!**

Defend the Palestinian People!

Thurs., April 25, 7:30 p.m.

Columbia University,
Hamilton Hall, Room 517
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For more information: (212) 267-1025

NEW YORK

Sat., April 27, 4 p.m.

Mt. Hollywood Congregational Church
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For more information: (213) 380-8239

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Sat., May 11, 7:30 p.m. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre

427 Bloor Street West (just west of Spadina subway)

TORONTO

For more information: (416) 593-4138

Welcome Spartacist Ireland

We send internationalist greetings to the comrades of the Spartacist Group Ireland on the occasion of the first issue of their press. We reprint below the introductory article from the newspaper dated Spring/Summer 2002. Forward to the reforging of the Fourth International!

We are proud to announce the publication of the first issue of *Spartacist Ireland*, newspaper of the Spartacist Group Ireland (SGI)—formerly the Dublin Spartacist Group—Irish section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). As stated in our international “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (*Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998), the ICL “is a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist tendency which is committed to the task of building Leninist parties as national sections of a democratic-centralist international whose purpose is to lead the working class to victory through socialist revolutions throughout the world.”

The establishment of this journal is a modest but real step in the consolidation and construction of an Irish section of the ICL. As V.I. Lenin explained in *Where to Begin* (May 1901), the intervention of the revolutionary party is necessary to make the working class conscious of its historic task to overthrow capitalism. Lenin underscored the importance of a newspaper in building such a party:

“The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In the last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour.”
—*Collected Works*, Vol. 5

The banner of the ICL was first planted in Ireland in Autumn 1990 with the founding of the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group (DSYG). Key to the founding of the DSYG was the intervention of the ICL into the nascent political revolution which unfolded in the East German deformed workers state in 1989-90. We fought for unconditional military defence of the DDR and for a red Germany of workers councils, for revolutionary reunification through proletarian political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The restoration of capitalism led to massive immiseration of the working class, attacks on the rights of women and the rise of racist attacks and communalist wars throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Today we uphold the Trotskyist programme of unconditional military defence of the remaining deformed workers states: China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam. We stand for proletarian political revolution to oust the



Subscribe now to *Spartacist Ireland*! 4 issues/€4, order from: Dublin Spartacist Group, P.O. Box 2944, Dublin 1, Republic of Ireland. For single issues, \$1, order from: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10013.

Stalinist bureaucracies whose policies of conciliating imperialism threaten the gains of the social revolutions in these countries—the collectivised economy, central planning and monopoly of foreign trade.

In addition to the devastating consequences in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the counterrevolution emboldened the imperialists to undertake new imperialist interventions from Serbia to Afghanistan and beyond. Although Ireland is a very small, weak capitalist country, nevertheless its position at the western Atlantic approaches to Britain and continental Europe gives it strategic military significance. Despite the nationalist myth of Irish “neutrality,” pushed not least by the fake left, Ireland has never been neutral. The Irish bourgeoisie has deployed troops as part of UN imperialist “peace-keeping” missions from Lebanon to the Balkans and East Timor and regularly makes Shannon airport available for refuelling by U.S. military aircraft including in

the recent war against Afghanistan. During that war we raised the demand for class struggle at home and called on the working class to defend Afghanistan. *Irish/UN troops out of the Near East, Balkans and East Timor!*

Against Labourite chauvinism and Green nationalism, the SGI is committed to raising the banner of proletarian internationalism, not least in the context of Northern Ireland. As stated in the ICL’s 1977 “Theses on Ireland” (reprinted in *Ireland: Workers to Power!* [1991]) the key components of a revolutionary working-class perspective include: For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the British Army! Full democratic rights for the oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland! Not Orange against Green, but class against class! No forcible reunification! For an Irish workers republic in a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles! This leaves open the question of where the Protestants will fall and highlights the relationship of the proletarian revolutions throughout the British Isles and the virtual impossibility of a resolution of the Irish question on a working-class basis outside this framework.

James Connolly, the internationalist socialist workers leader, aptly characterised women in Ireland as the “slaves of the slaves.” We are including in our newspaper a regular section dealing with the fight against women’s oppression under the *Women and Revolution (W&R)* masthead. This is continuing in the tradition of the Bolsheviks who published the paper *Rabotnitsa (The Woman Worker)* and our own journal *W&R* which was published by the Spartacist League/U.S. from 1971 to 1998. The ICL continues to publish articles under *W&R* mastheads in our international theoretical journal *Spartacist* and in the press of various ICL sections.

The fight for women’s liberation is strategic for socialist revolution in Ireland where social policy, education and healthcare basically remain in the grip of the Catholic church hierarchy. Conditions for women in Northern Ireland are little better: Protestant fundamentalists routinely join the Catholic church in opposing the extension of Britain’s 1967 abortion law. The revolutionary party must champion struggles against every form of social oppression to become a “tribune of the people”: combating not only the oppression of women but also that of gays, Travellers and immigrants.

We fight to forge a Bolshevik party to lead the working class in its historic mission to liberate all the oppressed and establish a planned economy based on socialised property forms. We, along with our comrades in the Spartacist League/Britain, fight for workers revolution on both sides of the border and both sides of the Irish Sea. *For a reforged Fourth International that Trotsky would recognise as his own!* ■

any communications to or from him. Stewart’s indictment is being used to justify Ashcroft’s fiat last fall allowing prison authorities to violate attorney-client confidentiality by eavesdropping on their discussions. In dictating what defendants and attorneys can say to each other, Ashcroft is effectively denying the right to any real legal defense.

Such moves flagrantly violate the rights of prisoners and attorneys alike. But already the nearly two million men and women entombed in America’s prisons, over half of them black and Hispanic, have virtually no rights. The courts have repeatedly declared that prison officials can read inmates’ mail, censor their speech, restrict visits from and communications with family. Class-war prisoners such as Mumia Abu-Jamal, Ray Luc

Levasseur, Hugo Pinell and dozens more are held in “super-max” prisons, locked up 23 hours a day, with rigid restrictions on the literature they can receive and access to the press.

The U.S. rulers have a long history of resorting to conspiracy laws against their perceived opponents when they can’t pin any illegal activities on them. The early trade unions in this country were outlawed as “criminal conspiracies.” Leftists, union organizers and opponents of America’s entry into the First World War were imprisoned on charges of “seditious conspiracy,” and in 1943, 18 Trotskyists and leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters were thrown in jail under the Smith Act for conspiracy because of their opposition to U.S. imperialism in World War II.

Today, the capitalist rulers sell their

assault on civil liberties with the watchword of “national unity,” claiming that only a small and vulnerable sector of the population would be affected by the “anti-terror” roundups. But as we warned in December, “In the government’s gun sights, however, is just about everyone perceived as an opponent by the capitalist rulers—from those who oppose U.S. imperialist wars abroad to those who speak out against racist oppression or fight to defend their unions and live-

lihoods against attacks by the employers.” As we noted in that article, what the government is able to get away with will be determined by the level of social struggle. The labor movement, fighters for black rights and all opponents of capitalist injustice have a direct interest in joining in defense of Lynne Stewart, Ahmed Abdel Sattar, Yassir Al-Sirri and Mohammed Yousry and in calling for freedom for all those detained in the anti-immigrant witchhunt. ■

Spartacist League/SYC Forum

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Young Spartacus

From Korea Through the Vietnam War The U.S. Left and the “American Century”

We print below the fourth and final part of an educational on the American left given over two days by Spartacist League Central Committee member Joseph Seymour to a gathering of Spartacus Youth Club members and youth from throughout the International Communist League in New York last summer. The first three parts were published in WV Nos. 773, 775 and 777 (25 January, 22 February and 22 March) and are available for order at \$.50 each from the Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Before discussing the left and the Vietnam antiwar movement, I want to say a few words about the *non*-left in the antiwar movement because it was a lot bigger than the left. Today, there is a generally held *false* conception of the Vietnam antiwar movement, a conception that is perpetuated by all sides of the bourgeois political spectrum. Liberals claim the antiwar movement as their own and credit themselves with ending the war. Right-wingers claim the U.S. could have won the war in Vietnam but lost it on the home front due to the opposition of bleeding-heart liberals and hippie peaceniks.

Some months ago, I was watching a TV biography of the film actor Gregory Peck, a liberal Hollywood icon, who was one of the first big-name movie stars to speak out against the war. He explained he had done so because the U.S. was “destroying a nation” in the name of saving it from Communism. I have no doubt that Peck was sincerely motivated by humanitarian concerns for the Vietnamese people.

However, the bulk of the hundreds of thousands of people who by 1968 were involved in the antiwar movement were not primarily concerned with stopping the killing of Vietnamese by Americans, although they certainly wanted that to



Wide World

Part Four: The Impact of the Vietnam War on the Left

Publication of Spartacist supporters in U.S. Army during Vietnam War sought to intersect growing opposition to war among soldiers forced by imperialists to kill and be killed.

happen. They were primarily concerned with stopping the killing of Americans by Vietnamese. The U.S. then had a draft army. At the height of the war, half a million U.S. troops were in Vietnam, and they were constantly being recycled. So millions of young American men risked being killed, wounded or captured in the war. It was they, their girlfriends, their brothers and sisters, their parents and grandparents who took to the streets demanding an end to the war. For example, in 1970 the working-class Chicano community in East Los Angeles staged a mass antiwar protest that was murderously attacked by police. Comrade



Victor G. was an eyewitness to this event, called the Chicano Moratorium.

More generally, the large majority of those participating in the big semiannual “peace” demonstrations were *not* leftists or liberal activists; they were so-called “ordinary people.” We were selling *Spartacist* at antiwar protests to contingents from Methodist congregations in small New Jersey towns. A few years earlier or a few years later, we would have had to have gone to suburban church bazaars to intersect the same people. The main popular slogan of the Vietnam antiwar movement was “Bring Our Boys Home,” to which we said, “Our boys are the North Vietnamese and the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front.” When the American “boys” were brought home in 1973 and the draft was abolished shortly thereafter, the size of the antiwar protests plummeted from hundreds of thousands to a few tens of thousands.

Nonetheless, it’s important to appreciate the large-scale youth radicalization caused by the Vietnam War, not only on the campuses but also in the armed forces. In 1968-69, we did some antiwar work in the military, putting out a newsletter called *G.I. Voice*. One of the few people recruited through this work was a young navy medic named Eric, a very nice, very likable guy. He had no prior background as a leftist or liberal activist. He was drafted, or perhaps volunteered, trained as a medic and sent to Vietnam. There he saw his best friend killed up close. This experience was so traumatic that it made him willing to join a very small revolutionary Marxist propaganda group. We were not able to keep Eric.

But the war was propelling tens of thousands of previously apolitical youth like him toward the far left.

I noted previously that the first major national antiwar protest took place in Washington, D.C. in the spring of 1965 and was organized by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). At the invitation of the SDS leaders, the rally was addressed by two liberal U.S. senators. One of them, the Democrat Ernest Gruening of Alaska, denounced the “expansionist” policies of Communist China while also calling for a negotiated solution to the war in Vietnam. A few years later, it would be inconceivable for the SDS leadership to invite Democratic senators to one of its antiwar protests, and anyone who spoke of Chinese “expansionism” would have been booed off the speaker’s platform. By 1968, a favorite chant among leftists in the antiwar movement was “Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh—NLF is gonna win!”

The leftward radicalization within the antiwar movement was mirrored in the propaganda we directed at that movement. Our first antiwar leaflet—titled “What Gives in Vietnam?”—was put out for the 1965 SDS rally. We here addressed a left-liberal position on the war. Thus, we argued for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam in opposition to the negotiated withdrawal advocated by the liberal bourgeois politicians speaking at this rally.

By 1968, in a *Spartacist* supplement for one of the big antiwar demos, we were taking on the widespread illusions in the revolutionary virtues of Vietnamese Stalinism:

“There has been an understandable but nevertheless unfortunate tendency on the part of the American left to idealize Ho Chi Minh and the leadership of the NLF [National Liberation Front], and for radicals to turn their correct demands for military victory against imperialism and its puppets into uncritical political support for these leaders and their politics. This is a grave error, for not only do these would-be revolutionaries not understand the deformities of those they support—and are extremely likely to feel personally betrayed when the inevitable occurs—but are likely to carry over the Stalinist hallmarks of class-collaboration and murderous opportunism into the American revolutionary movement.”

The transition from the New Left liberalism of the mid 1960s to the New Left Maoism of the late ’60s was not a sudden and inexplicable conversion but rather was an organic evolution. When paleontologists study the evolution of species, they look for the fossil remains of an intermediate species. This species has some of the distinctive characteristics of both its forerunner and its successor.

I’m pretty sure few youth have heard of Carl Oglesby. Yet, in my opinion, he was a significant figure in the intellectual history of the American left in this period because his political ideology was



Doan Cong Tinh

Parade outside Hanoi in October 1973 displays might of Soviet-armed North Vietnamese military. America lost the Vietnam War on the battlefield.

an intermediate species between New Left liberalism and New Left Maoism. Oglesby was a leader of SDS who in 1967 wrote a book on the Cold War called *Containment and Change*. In it, he came out for defense of the Asian Communist regimes and movements against American imperialism by arguing from radical democratic principles, centrally the right of national self-determination. Oglesby did not claim to be a Marxist-Leninist. In fact, he rejected Marxism, and especially Leninism, as an inadequate set of ideas for explaining the contemporary world.

Oglesby maintained that the Cold War, at least in the 1960s, was fundamentally a national conflict, not a conflict between capitalism and socialism. He viewed the Asian Communist countries of China and North Vietnam as the most radical expressions of the anticolonial revolution. He wrote, "One should be able to show somehow that the issue of the Vietnam war is not Western freedom versus Eastern slavery, but foreign versus local control of Vietnam." Similarly, he asserted that the Chinese Revolution "has nothing at all to do with communism, but rather with the independent organization of China and her acquisition of modern fire." Oglesby argued that Mao's China and Ho's Vietnam were fundamentally closer to (though more radical than) Nehru's India and Nasser's Egypt than to Soviet Russia.

Furthermore, he maintained that the Soviet Union and the United States were working together to keep in check revolutionary forces in the Third World:

"With the Soviet Union, we have gone from confrontation to *détente*.... Direct military collision is feared and avoided equally by both sides, crises are referred to hot lines instead of war rooms, and one sometimes wonders if there is not something still springier in the air: a slow convergence of political aims. The European Cold War no longer finds Russians and Americans peering at each other through gunsights. Instead, we have had the experience of virtually integrated aid programs in Afghanistan and India. We are in open solidarity on the vexatious Kashmir question—and behind it, perhaps in essential agreement on the China question."

As is evident, Oglesby was not very prescient. The important point is that his identification of Asian Stalinism with modernizing nationalism and of Soviet Stalinism with American imperialism represented an intellectual bridge between New Left liberalism and New Left Maoism.

The Rise of New Left Maoism

The question remains: why did so many radical activists traverse that bridge? There are a number of explanatory factors, both negative and positive.

I already discussed one of the main negative factors: the demise of "revolutionary" black nationalism signaled by the split in the Black Panther Party. Political and organizational support to black nationalism was a core element of the New Left that distinguished it from "old left" radicalism. Defense of the Panthers, like defense of North Vietnam and the South Vietnamese NLF, was common



Howard Ruffner

4 May 1970: Ohio National Guard advances on student antiwar protest at Kent State University. Massacre of four students sparked nationwide wave of campus strikes.

to the entire spectrum of New Left radicals, from drugged-out anarcho-hippie types to earnest young would-be communists grappling with the pseudo-dialectics of Mao's *On Contradiction*. The manifest failure of black nationalist-inspired lumpen vanguardism impelled many white radicals, as well as black radicals, toward proletarian vanguardism.

Concurrently, "student power" demonstrated its impotence by its very success. What do I mean by this paradoxical statement? By 1969-70, antiwar sentiment among students and also faculty had become so widespread that campus-based leftist radicals were able to disrupt the normal functioning of the university system.

In the spring of 1970, U.S. president Richard Nixon ordered American troops in South Vietnam into neighboring Cambodia. This move was seen as a significant escalation of the war. In the ensuing campus protests, Ohio National Guardsmen opened fire and killed four students at Kent State University. Ten days later, white police and state patrolmen killed two black student protesters at Jackson State University in Mississippi.

These events triggered a nationwide antiwar strike which shut down hundreds of colleges in the country. Four and a half million students—*more than half* the entire U.S. student population—were involved in these protests. Many colleges remained shut down through the end of the semester. Yet the war continued as before. The more serious and intelligent movement activists recognized that after the Kent-Cambodia events "student power" could go no further. Other sections of American society had to be mobilized.

If the Kent-Cambodia events demonstrated the impotence of "student power," the May '68 events in France demonstrated the actual power of the working class. A leftist student protest triggered a workers general strike that shook the semi-bonapartist regime of Charles de Gaulle to its foundations. For over a month, France was engulfed in a pre-revolutionary crisis. Finally, the French

Communist Party managed to sell out the strike and bring it to an end in exchange for some comparatively minor economic gains.

What was important to the American left was that the "old left" traditional Marxist view of the working class was clearly and dramatically vindicated. To be sure, many American radicals, and especially black nationalists, maintained that France was not the United States. They argued that, unlike in France, the white majority of the American working class was racist because they benefited materially from the oppression of blacks. Nonetheless, the French May '68 events exploded one of the central premises of New Left ideology—that the working class in the advanced capitalist countries had become completely bourgeoisified and no longer had any revolutionary potential.

Furthermore, there also was in this period a heightened level of labor struggle in the U.S., in part conditioned by the war. Economically, the war was generating rapid price inflation, which meant an erosion of real wage value. Simultaneously, a layer of young workers—some Vietnam vets, some college dropouts, some both— injected a mood of rebellious militancy and hostility toward established authority into the labor movement. For example, in the spring of 1970 a nationwide postal strike took place, the first national strike of federal government employees in U.S. history. It was a big deal because it was illegal under the government's anti-labor legislation prohibiting strikes by government employees. We wrote a leaflet on the strike that is included in the first bound volume of *Spartacist*.

The French May '68 events and the heightened level of labor struggle in the U.S. do much to explain why many New Left radicals turned toward the working class in the early '70s. But this does not explain why most of them—not all, but most—did so under the ideological and organizational banner of Maoism-Stalinism. Here the Vietnam

War was of decisive importance.

By 1970, it was clear that the U.S. was likely to lose the war. U.S. forces would probably pull out of South Vietnam, which would then be taken over by the North Vietnamese and NLF. That was in fact what happened between 1973 and '75. With the looming defeat of U.S. imperialism, the Vietnamese Stalinist leadership acquired enormous political authority among young American leftist radicals. Ho Chi Minh, who died in 1969, and his colleagues were viewed as demonstrably the world's best revolutionaries. They had inflicted an unexpected historic defeat on American imperialism.

Whereas the leaders of the Cuban Revolution—Castro and Guevara—were New Leftists in the world Communist movement, the leaders of the Vietnamese Revolution were very much "old" leftists. Ho Chi Minh had joined the Communist International in Lenin's day. The Vietnamese Communists always had been orthodox Moscow-line Stalinists. Unlike Mao, Ho did not even claim to have made major original contributions to "Marxist-Leninist" doctrine.

The enhanced authority of Vietnamese Stalinism led to a resurgence in the authority of orthodox Stalinism among young American leftists. By the early '70s, it was common in Maoist organizations and circles to study the work of Stalin along with that of Lenin and Mao. In 1973, a major bourgeois publishing house, Doubleday, brought out a paperback edition of the selected theoretical writings of Stalin with an introduction by a Maoist intellectual. There was now a market for such a book. I remember some liberal academic complaining indignantly that while Harry Truman's memoirs were out of print, Barnes & Noble was displaying the works of Stalin. Incidentally, if you are ever in a masochistic mood and want to inflict mental torture on yourself, read Stalin.

The New Left Turns to the Labor Movement

The final chapter of our story can be called "the New Left goes to the working class." Most of these young radicals entered the factories with the expectation that they would soon be leading significant numbers of workers, just as they had been leading significant numbers of students. Also, many of them had college or even graduate degrees, so they could always pursue petty-bourgeois livelihoods if their careers as professional revolutionaries did not play out as expected. In short, most young radicals joined the labor movement with a short time horizon, which made them especially susceptible to opportunism.

The political culture of America's factories in the early '70s was very different than that of America's campuses. While the Vietnam War had become generally unpopular, the large majority of white workers and many older black workers were still American patriots. If they were liberals, they supported *détente*—that is, better relations—between the U.S. and

continued on page 6



WV Photo

The SL and its youth group, the Revolutionary Communist Youth, put forward anti-imperialist program at march in Boston, 1972. Socialist Workers Party leader Fred Halstead (right) headed effort to build class-collaborationist "antiwar" bloc with liberal bourgeoisie.

Young Socialist



U.S. Left...

(continued from page 5)

Soviet Russia and between the U.S. and Communist China. But they did *not* support North Vietnam and China against the United States. New Left radicals quickly figured out that if they wanted to be elected shop steward or to some other local union post, it was not a good idea to chant “Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh—NLF is gonna win” at union rallies.

There was in this period also a sizable layer of young black and Latino workers who could have been won to an anti-imperialist perspective in solidarity with the oppressed nonwhite peoples of the Third World. These were the workers who a few years earlier, as high school students, might have joined the Black Panthers, the Chicano La Raza party or the Puerto Rican Young Lords. However, young black and Latino workers, like other workers of all ethnicities, generally had conventional if not reactionary views on many social questions. Women’s liberation, not to speak of gay liberation, was not exactly a cause near and dear to the hearts of most young black and Latino males.

As a result, when they went to work in the labor movement, most left-radical groups dropped the anti-imperialist rhetoric, they dropped the sexual-revolution rhetoric and they sought to build support on the basis of shopfloor militancy and trade-union economism.

In terms of national union politics, most left-radical groups supported militant-talking, so-called progressive oppositionists like Ed Sadlowski in the United Steelworkers of America and Arnold Miller in the United Mine Workers. These were mainstream pro-Democratic Party liberals who supported the Cold War against the Soviet Union and China. Furthermore, the main tactic of out-bureaucrats like Sadlowski and Miller was to convince the federal government to intervene

I introduced this educational by emphasizing that the interaction between the American left and American liberalism is a two-way street. This development is a good example of what I meant. When young leftist radicals, mainly of the Maoist-Stalinist persuasion, entered the labor movement in the early 1970s, they encountered the bourgeois-democratic illusions prevalent within the working class. Liberal-minded workers, though dissatisfied with the existing pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, believed the government could and should intervene to help install “progressive,” equally pro-capitalist, union oppositionists. So as not to alienate themselves from these liberal workers, almost all leftist groups likewise supported government intervention into the unions despite their formal adherence to Marxist-Leninist doctrine on the class nature of the state as an instrument for the exploitation of the working class.

While almost all left groups adapted to liberal prejudices in the American working class, there were also some cases of adaptation to reactionary prejudices. The most extreme case of which I know was that of Bob Avakian’s Revolutionary Union—subsequently renamed the Revolutionary Communist Party—in the 1974-75 Boston busing crisis. The Revolutionary Union was a quintessential New Left Maoist tendency. In the late ’60s, the Avakianites were ardent supporters of the Panthers and of black nationalism more generally. Yet a few years later, they were endorsing the actions of white racist mobs led by right-wing demagogues.

In 1974, a federal judge in Boston ordered the initiation of large-scale busing with the stated aim of integrating the city’s de facto segregated school system. This provoked a violent racist reaction in white, predominantly Irish and Italian, neighborhoods. We agitated for labor/black defense of black schoolchildren against the white racist mobs. The Avakianites, who in Boston were presumably working mainly among lower-class



Helena Hermes

29 May 1968 was high point of prerevolutionary situation in France as 800,000 workers took to Paris streets in march called by the General Federation of Labor (CGT), trade-union arm of the Communist Party.

It registered a major change in the character of the American left and, therefore, in our relation to the rest of the left. During the 1960s, the American left was dominated by various forms of petty-bourgeois radicalism—black and Latino nationalism, student vanguardism, radical feminism. The Spartacist League was primarily distinguished from the rest of the left (the Progressive Labor Party was an exception in this regard) by our classic Marxist position that the industrial working class was the main social agency capable of overthrowing capitalism.

By the early ’70s, almost all left groups formally claimed adherence to proletarian vanguardism and engaged in trade-union work to some degree. What now primarily differentiated us from the rest of the left was that we intervened in the workers movement with a revolutionary, not a reformist or economist, program. As we wrote in the ’72 memorandum, “While the possibility exists, however, for a qualitative altering of the relationship of forces in the labor movement in favor of revolutionary leadership, the fundamental question is whether the bureaucracy will be defeated by communism or renewed labor reformism, i.e. by revolutionists or slicker fakers.”

What are the main lessons to be drawn from all this for us today? First, it is important—indeed, absolutely essential—to recognize and respond to leftward motion and left-right differentiation in the workers movement, in the organizations of oppressed ethnic minorities and also among liberal student youth and intellectuals. But it is no less important to recognize that such motion is not necessarily and, especially in the U.S., usually is not in our specific direction, that is, toward Trotskyism as the present-day expression of revolutionary Marxism.

We recognized that when black militants raised the “Black Power” slogan in the mid 1960s, they were breaking to the left from pro-Democratic Party liberalism. But we also recognized that most of them were moving toward black separatism rather than revolutionary integrationism. We recognized that student radicals who in the late ’60s were chanting “Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh—NLF is gonna win” had certainly moved left from when a few years earlier they supported or at least accepted calls for a negotiated withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. But we also recognized that most of the “Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh”ers were supporters of Asian Stalinism, not Trotskyism.

To cite a present-day example, generally speaking the anarchists and anarchist youth are on the left wing of the anti-globalization milieu. But they still are very distant from us, especially on the Russian question, the question of social revolution and its defense. Many hard-line, doctrinaire anarchists are more hostile than some liberals to Castro’s Cuba. The world of politics is not a neatly logical place in which all tendencies fit perfectly into a predetermined grid.

If you read the material in the first bound volume of *Spartacist*, you will see we were not at all given to sectarian abstentionism and what Engels denounced as “revolutionary phrasemongering.” We were very active and interventionist. We were always attuned to changes on the left. Yesterday’s pacifist became today’s cheerleader for Third World guerrilla movements. Yesterday’s intellectual elitist became today’s workerist. We always sought to respond to new developments intelligently, even creatively. We engaged in political struggle with a broad range of organizations, movements and milieus.

In the favorable conditions of the early ’70s, we underwent regroupments with former Black Panthers and former white radical feminists and somewhat later with former gay liberationists. We recruited from New Left Maoist groups and Progressive Labor, from the Socialist Workers Party and the International Socialists. We did so by honestly and intelligently confronting our basic differences with these tendencies. We didn’t soften or blur our line to attract people from a given organization or milieu.

Especially in the present period, it is important not to fall into an attitude of sectarian disdain for the rest of the left, for the anti-globalization and other milieus in which we work. Almost all our contacts and the circles we encounter are going to be pretty distant from revolutionary Marxism. There are no unconscious Spartacists out there. Revolutionary politics does not consist of running up a red flag with the International Communist League’s hammer-and-four and looking around to see who salutes it. Recruiting and assimilating youth is hard, time-consuming mental labor.

I suppose the basic point is that the road to an American socialist revolution is long and narrow. But it is a very interesting road if you stick it out. As we used to say in the 1970s, when you joined the Spartacus Youth League—in the present case the Spartacus Youth Clubs—we never promised you a rose garden. ■



People Must Unite To Smash Boston Busing Plan

October 1974

“Jim Crow” Maoists of Revolutionary Union (later Revolutionary Communist Party) courted racist anti-busing movement in Boston. Anti-busing thugs attack black lawyer, April 1976.



Forman/Boston Herald American

on their behalf against the incumbent union leadership. Leftist radicals who in the mid 1960s abandoned the liberal program of appealing for federal government intervention on the side of black people in the civil rights movement now returned to that program by appealing for government intervention in support of “progressive” union oppositionists.

I recall giving a public talk in 1972 in Chicago, where many left groups, including our own, had concentrated their forces in unionized industry. This talk covered a broad range of our positions on the main contentious issues of the day. The discussion period, however, was dominated by our principled opposition to government intervention in the unions. A leader of a small, eclectic left-Stalinist group called the Sojourner Truth Organization denounced this position as ultraleft and sectarian. From his standpoint, it was ultraleft and sectarian because most left groups were supporting union oppositions that were taking the incumbent leadership to court, in some cases working directly with the Justice Department.

whites, decided to compete for leadership of the anti-busing forces. Denouncing the busing plan as a “capitalist hoax,” the front-page headline of the October 1974 issue of their paper *Revolution* raised the slogan: “People Must Unite to Smash Boston Busing Plan.”

Had the ghost of Hegel bothered to monitor the evolution of the Avakian group, he would have recognized here a perfect example of dialectical logic. This tendency originated as petty-bourgeois liberal moralists who condemned the white working class for its racist prejudices. When they later decided they wanted to lead the very same white workers, they adapted to those racist prejudices. For New Left radicals like the Avakianites, workerism was simply the flip side of intellectual elitism. Both attitudes were premised on the belief that the mass of workers could not attain the lofty moral values and attitudes of intellectuals like themselves.

In retrospect, our 1972 “Trade Union Memorandum” (reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9) was an important document.

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In Response to Spartacist Protest: Army Recruiters Abandon Campus Stall

Australia

We reprint below the leaflet issued by our Spartacus Youth Club comrades in Sydney, Australia to build for a speak-out at the University of Sydney on March 20 to protest a city cop attack on leftists who were demonstrating against right-wingers and military recruitment stalls at the school. The speakout demands were “Cops/Military Recruiters Off Campus!” and “Down With Capitalist State Repression Against the Left—Drop the Charges Against Sydney University Protesters Now!” Earlier in the month, a Spartacist-initiated protest at RMIT, a Melbourne university, caused military recruiters to leave campus.

On March 6, the Marxist Spartacist League/SYC led a protest demanding “Army recruiters off the campus!” in response to the Australian army having a recruitment stall at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) on the “Big Festival Day.” As our fiery

along with the International Socialist Organisation (ISO), joined chauvinist demonstrations calling for Australian troops into East Timor, helping to feed the climate of increased bourgeois militarism. In contrast, we protested *against* the Australian/UN imperialist occupation of East Timor. The main enemy is the capitalist class at home. Soon after our polemic, as security guards ordered SYN FM [campus] radio (who had turned music off for our protest) to turn their music back on to drown out our protest, WP and SA withered away.

The Laborite National Union of Students [federation of campus student governments, supporters of pro-capitalist Australian Labor Party (ALP)] had posters up on the campus against increased defence spending reading: “Join the army...gain self esteem...meet interesting people...then kill them.” The RMIT student bureaucrats fervently claimed to agree with our opposition to militarism, then in the next breath they complained bitterly about the fact that we audaciously and loudly protested for army recruiters off campus!

Spartacist-led protest against military recruiters on RMIT campus, Melbourne.



Australasian Spartacist

attacks on immigrants, especially of Near Eastern background, has sharply intensified in the post-September 11 climate. The “war on terrorism” is lifting the usual cover of capitalist “democracy,” revealing the imperialist state—the cops, courts, prisons and army—as nothing but the instrument of organised violence to protect the interests of the filthy-rich capitalists against the workers who produce society’s wealth.

That our small communist protest at RMIT could cause the army to close down their stall indicates that the bourgeoisie is nervous that there are youth who are not too loyal to their state apparatus. Recent revelations of lies pushed by the government and cover-ups by the military over claims of refugees throwing their children overboard [a lie retailed by the Liberal Party on the eve of federal elections last November to justify its racist, anti-immigrant policies] have bred widespread revulsion amongst youth and somewhat discredited the armed forces.

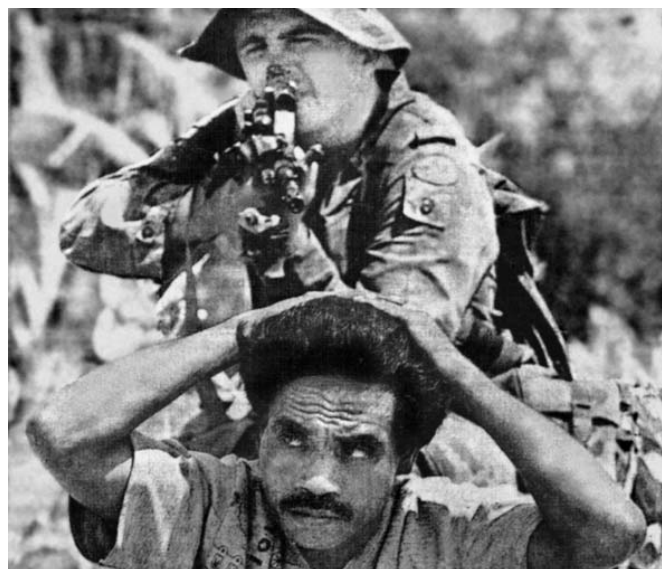
The military has sought an increase in recruits to maintain and further the imperialist aspirations of Australian capitalism. The Australian bourgeoisie worries that its military is too small, and they constantly try to beef it up. Recruiting on campuses is part of that. While today they are recruiting volunteers, in the future working-class youth face being conscripted as cannon fodder for the imperialist bourgeoisie’s wars, and to kill their class brothers and sisters in other countries. Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military!

The military is not a sports club signing up people to go on barbecues or harbour cruises, but trains killers to ensure that the super-exploitation of workers of the region continues to pour profits into the pockets of the Australian rulers. The racist, bloody, imperialist army is occupying East Timor and Bougainville, the navy patrols around Australian neo-

colonies like Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands and kidnaps desperate refugees on the high seas. It also fulfills the Australian capitalists’ commitment to broader imperialist adventures, helping enforce the starvation blockade which has already killed over a million Iraqis and with Australian SAS [Special Air Services] assassins involved in occupying Afghanistan, helping prop up the woman-hating imperialist-installed regime there and killing Afghanis.

As the U.S. imperialists and their allies’ armies rain death on Afghanistan and strangle Iraq with embargo, now they announce openly their intention to target China and North Korea, bureaucratically deformed workers states where capitalism has been overthrown. For all their “No to War” sloganeering, the DSP, ISO, SA, WP and Love and Rage all refuse to defend China and North Korea against the “democratic” Australian imperialists and their ALP frontmen who aim to restore capitalism in those deformed workers states through a combination of military pressure and economic encroachment. The Trotskyist SYC and Spartacist League stand for the unconditional military defence of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. From that basis we fight for workers political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with workers and peasants councils, led by a genuine revolutionary, internationalist party.

The SYC seeks to win youth to the side of the working class, rallying them to a *revolutionary* perspective in an effort to overthrow capitalism, which is based on exploitation and oppression. The SYCs are organisations of revolutionary education and action. Fittingly, we ended our RMIT protest with the chant “Break from the pro-imperialist ALP—workers need a revolutionary party!” Join us! ■



Reuters

Australian soldier terrorizes East Timorese civilian in September 1999 as part of UN “peacekeeping” force that included U.S. military. Much of fake left, in Australia and the U.S., endorsed call for imperialist intervention.

red protest marched through campus, chants of “Army recruiters—imperialist looters—off the campus now!” and “Australian troops out of East Timor now!” rang out. Our placards included: “U.S./UN/Australia Get Out of Afghanistan, Persian Gulf and Central Asia Now!” and “Defend China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba! For International Socialist Revolution!”

Some campus workers, rank and file members of the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union, encouraged our action. Later, student bureaucrats and their specially hired security guards complained that we had infringed on the army’s “freedom of choice” and that they had felt “harassed” and “pressured” by our protest and had to pack up and leave. Good!

The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) pointedly did not join our protest, despite having people cringing behind their stall as we marched past. Of course, the DSP called for “Australian army in” to East Timor, so why would they protest it recruiting? Members of Workers Power (WP) and Socialist Alternative (SA) initially joined our protest, which we acknowledged. But we pointed out that in 1999, while claiming “Peacekeepers are not the answer,” these fake-left groups,

Outrageously, a week earlier, cops attacked and arrested four leftists—supporters of the ISO, SA and [anarchoid] Love and Rage—at the University of Sydney’s orientation week for protesting against Liberal Club [adherents of the governing right-wing Liberal Party] and army recruitment stalls. After a provocation by Liberal Club students, city cops, who were on campus to “train” their security guard mates, suddenly appeared and viciously attacked the leftists. They violently arrested a woman for “swearing”(!), twisting her arm, and later strip-searched her. When the others went to her assistance, they too were summarily arrested. Three students face charges of indecent language, resisting arrest and assault. While the “troops in” DSP reported on the arrests in an article, they managed to omit any mention that the army was also a target of the protesters (*Green Left Weekly*, 6 March)! Despite our political differences, we defend the victimised students against the capitalist state. *Drop All Charges Now! Cops/Military Recruiters Off Campus! Campus Security Guards: Hands Off Leftists!*

These attacks against leftists are not an aberration. The job of cops *is* to violently suppress workers and leftists! Such capitalist state repression, along with racist

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University of Illinois at Chicago
104 Stevenson Hall, 701 South Morgan St.
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
spartacist@iname.com

NEW YORK CITY

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April 23: For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Columbia University (116th and Broadway)
Hamilton Hall, Room 306
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025

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Bloodbath...

(continued from page 1)

openly declared his intent to attack Iraq in order to topple Saddam Hussein and install a pliant client regime in Baghdad. Underlying the war plans against Iraq is the drive to strengthen U.S. imperialism’s control over Persian Gulf oil fields in order to reinforce American strategic interests against its European and Japanese rivals.

A victory for American militarism in Iraq—or anywhere else—will embolden the power-mad U.S. ruling class to wreak more death and destruction around the world and will mean further misery for working people and the oppressed in the U.S. The international working class has a vital interest in the military defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack, without giving any political support to the anti-working-class, bourgeois-nationalist Saddam Hussein regime.

Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now! All U.S./UN forces out of the Persian Gulf and Near East! Down with the starvation blockade—U.S. hands off Iraq!

Protests Sweep Arab East, West Europe

From Cairo to the Jordanian capital of Amman to Ankara, Turkey, pro-Palestinian demonstrators have clashed with riot police. In Egypt, protests have spread beyond the capital to Alexandria in the north and Sohag in the south; thousands upon thousands have defied a nationwide ban on demonstrations, facing down cops firing tear gas and water cannon. Even the small, oil-rich Emirate of Bahrain—where the U.S. Fifth Fleet is based—has seen an upsurge of mass protest, with demonstrators demanding the closure of the U.S. naval base after one protester was killed while trying to approach the American embassy.

The Arab rulers could well seek to deflect this popular unrest by stepping up anti-Zionist and even anti-American demagoguery, as they have done so often in the past. The solidarity of the Arab masses with the oppressed Palestinian people must be directed toward *proletarian revolution* against their *own* Arab rulers who, whether bourgeois nationalists or Islamic traditionalists, are fundamentally the political agents of Western imperialism. If this does not happen, the intense hostility toward Israel and its American protector will only continue to strengthen the forces of Islamic fundamentalism, which posture as the “radical” opposition to the mainly pro-Western Arab regimes.

Huge protests have also erupted throughout West Europe, and to a lesser extent in the U.S. In Paris on April 6, some 40,000 people took to the streets, shouting “Bush, Sharon—Assassins!” Though overwhelmingly Maghrebini (North African), the demonstration also included black African, Turkish, Kurdish and French protesters, among them the Union of French Jews for Peace. The Maghrebini population is besieged by unemployment, “terrorist”-baiting in the press and stepped-up cop repression. Yet among the thousands who marched in Paris were entire families, including children and grandparents, who overcame their fear and defied the segregation that keeps them restricted to the working-class suburbs (*banlieus*).

The Jospin government has seized on a series of reprehensible firebombings of Jewish schools and synagogues to justify its police-state measures against Maghrebini youth. It is not at all clear who is responsible for these heinous attacks, especially given the sizable fascist movement in France. What is clear is that the fascists benefit when justified hatred for the racist capitalist rulers of Israel is turned into vile anti-Semitism, the “socialism of fools.” Commendably, as at previous pro-Palestinian protests, Arab community organizers on April 6 made public statements condemning the anti-Semitic attacks.

In contrast, a huge pro-Israel march the next day was an orgy of anti-Arab chauvinism, with mobs howling for Arafat’s blood. Armed thugs from the Jewish Defense League and Betar, which identified with Mussolini’s fascists in the 1930s, savagely beat any Arab or African that they could lay their hands on, also attacking a secular Jewish demonstration that included supporters of the Israeli army reservists who have refused to serve in the Occupied Territories.

Fake Lefts Plead for Imperialist Intervention

In appealing for imperialist “peacekeepers” or economic sanctions, the reformist and centrist left groups promote the illusion that their respective imperialist rulers can be pressured into serving the interests of the oppressed. In France, the fake-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Rév-



UPI

Above: Survivors of 1970 Black September massacre of Palestinians by Jordan’s King Hussein. Cops attack pro-Palestinian demonstration in Beirut early this month. Arab bourgeois regimes are enemies of Palestinian national rights.

olutionnaire (LCR), among others, calls on the same imperialist government that waged a colonial war of terror in Algeria and today rounds up and terrorizes Arab youth in the *banlieus* to protect Palestinian Arabs in the Near East.

The LCR and other left groups call for delegations of European and American civilian observers in the Occupied Territories. Many of the participants are undoubtedly courageous and are risking their lives out of humanitarian concern for the Palestinians. But such idealistic efforts are being used as a way of bringing about imperialist “peacekeeping” intervention.

In the U.S., with neither the Democrats nor Republicans even feigning to sympathize with the Palestinians, reformists like the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the Workers World Party (WWP) and Socialist Action focus on the call to end U.S. aid to Israel. These groups peddle the illusion that by changing its policy toward Israel, American imperialism can be a force for “peace” and “justice” in the Near East. Thus the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (5 April) declares: “We have a responsibility to stand up for justice—and demand that the U.S. government end its support for Israel’s terrorist regime.” The clear implication here is that the American government is somehow less of a terrorist regime.

Massive military and economic aid to Israel has been a cornerstone of American foreign policy in the Near East for decades. Israel today has a highly mechanized military apparatus that dwarfs those of the Arab regimes that surround it. And Sharon’s recent rebuff to Bush’s call for a truce demonstrates that while Israel is a junior partner of U.S. imperialism, it is a regional power with its own interests.

Marxists fight to mobilize labor in concrete acts of class-struggle solidarity with the besieged Palestinian masses, including political protest strikes and labor action to prevent the shipment of military goods to the Israeli rulers. But such a perspective can only be realized by mobilizing workers in the U.S. against their *own* rulers, not by fostering illusions in the potential benevolence of the American state. As Leon Trotsky wrote in the 1930s, when many leftists

were demanding sanctions by the League of Nations (predecessor of the UN) against the Italian invaders of Ethiopia, “Workers’ action can begin only by absolute opposition to the national bourgeoisie and its international combinations. Support of the League and support of workers’ actions are fire and water; they cannot be united” (“Once Again the ILP,” November 1935).

The campaign to get the American government to end aid to Israel is closely related to agitation for campus administrations—which have been handing over the names of Arab and Muslim students to the FBI or INS—to “divest” their stocks in companies doing business in Israel. This demand was raised in a recent building occupation by the UC Berkeley Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), whose main spokesman is a member of the ISO.



AP

The Israeli economy is dependent not so much on U.S. corporate investment but on direct aid from the American government, to the tune of over \$5 billion a year. Thus the pathetic campaign promoted by the ISO over how best to manipulate endowment portfolios is ultimately aimed at redirecting American government policy and, implicitly, appealing for U.S. intervention in defense of the Palestinians. The SJP group at New York’s Columbia University made this explicit by sponsoring an April 5 talk on “The Need for International Intervention to Hold Israel Accountable.”

The Bankruptcy of PLO Nationalism

For its part, the Stalinoid Workers World Party, which is prominent in organizing Palestinian solidarity protests, has always been characterized by its enthusiasm over Third World nationalist movements. One will not find a critical word about Arafat or his appeals for imperialist intervention in *Workers World*. Moreover, following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the WWP organized a protest that called for “effective U.S. action to achieve Israeli withdrawal.” A few months later, American and other imperialist “peacekeeping” forces went into Lebanon and took “effective action,” disarming the Palestinian fighters and paving the way for the Israeli-organized massacre of some 2,000 refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps.

Today, *Workers World* (11 April) enthuses that in the wake of the first *Intifada*, in the early 1990s “Washington and Tel Aviv were forced to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization after 20 years of struggle,” calling this a “victory they had won on the battlefield.” The outcome of what the WWP hails as a “victory” was the U.S.-brokered Oslo “peace” accord between Israel and the PLO in 1993. We forthrightly denounced this accord as a “grotesque bargain over the subjugated Palestinian people” that “would place the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses” (“Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto,” WV No. 583, 10 September 1993).

Underlying this betrayal of the Palestinian masses was a world-historic defeat

for the international proletariat, the destruction of the USSR through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. Without the diplomatic and financial support previously provided by Moscow, the PLO (like other Third World nationalist movements and regimes) quickly came to terms with U.S. imperialism.

The 1993 “peace” accord served only to deepen the oppression of the Palestinian people. The entire Gaza Strip was surrounded by an electrified fence, literally turning it into a glorified concentration camp enclosing over one million Palestinians. The Israeli capitalist rulers drastically curtailed access to low-wage jobs in Israel, which had been the source of income for most Gaza residents. The number of Israeli settlers—the heavily armed, ultra-chauvinist auxiliaries to the military occupation forces—has *doubled* since 1993. A series of internal check-

points and fortified “Jewish only” highways has carved up the Palestinian population into a multitude of isolated ghettos.

The WWP particularly glorifies the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) as “the largest Palestinian Marxist organization” (*Workers World*, 10 January). Despite its occasional verbal opposition to Arafat’s conciliationism, the PFLP is simply a petty-bourgeois nationalist formation fundamentally akin to Arafat’s Fatah. Like Arafat, PFLP leader Ahmad Saadat looks to the UN, as he said in an interview in *Al-Hadad* last year, to “force Israel to implement United Nations resolutions.” At Palestinian protests in Berlin, PFLP supporters have denounced our comrades for calling for class struggle on the grounds that that would divide the Palestinian people. In the early 1970s, the PFLP was notorious for airline hijackings and indiscriminate terror attacks against Israeli civilians.

While scorning any notion of proletarian class unity between Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers, the “Marxist” PFLP readily unites with Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas. And in its January article, WWP cheers that support “has been growing dramatically” for “nationalist, left and Islamic Palestinian organizations.” The anti-Semitic reactionaries of Hamas and Islamic Jihad are a deadly threat to Palestinian leftists and especially to women who refuse to submit to the dictates of *sharia* (Islamic law). In fact, many Palestinians see imperialist intervention as a way of maintaining Arafat’s rule in the Palestinian Authority as a lesser evil to Hamas. But it is precisely the utter bankruptcy of PLO nationalism that has driven so many among the historically cosmopolitan Palestinian people into the arms of the Islamic fundamentalists.

WWP’s vicarious nationalism goes so far as to enthuse indiscriminately over Palestinian suicide attacks: “The determined campaign of suicide resistance bombings shows the determination to end the occupation has taken such deep root among the people, young and old, women, children and men, that after 35 years there is no way to eradicate the struggle” (*Workers World*, 11 April). In fact, these are acts of desperation in the face of an overwhelmingly superior

military force. Moreover, WWP draws no distinction between attacks on Israeli troops and settlers, who are part of the oppressive military occupation regime, and innocent civilians in Israel. Criminal suicide attacks on civilian populations are typical of nationalist struggles, just or otherwise.

As we noted in a 30 March Spartacist League statement titled “Defend the Palestinian People! All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!” (WV No. 778, 5 April):

“Now, not just Islamic fanatics but secular Palestinians, including women, see no other option than to immolate themselves and random others in suicide bombings. But such attacks only serve to seal any fissures in Israeli society, such as the recent protests among Israeli army reservists and their supporters against the occupation, and drive the Hebrew-speaking population into the arms of the Zionist nationalist madmen.”

Popular support for the butcher Sharon among the Hebrew-speaking population climbed significantly in the wake of the recent series of suicide bombings, with an overwhelming majority supporting the current onslaught. Indeed, Sharon has always sought to provoke Palestinian terror attacks in order to have a pretext for his far more deadly campaign of terror against the Palestinians.

The “Mini-State”: A Palestinian Ghetto

Behind the reformist left’s appeals for imperialist intervention and support to Palestinian nationalism lies the utter incapacity to conceive of any solution to the Palestinian question outside the framework of the bourgeois nation-state system. They reject the prospect of Arab/Hebrew workers revolution to sweep away both the Israeli and Arab bourgeoisies as utopian. In fact, that is the only road to national emancipation for the Palestinian people. It is patently clear that the Palestinians cannot prevail in a military conflict with the Zionist state. Yet there can be no genuine expression of Palestinian self-determination without the destruction of that state, which is inherently oppressive to the Palestinian people. Every “solution” to the Palestinian national question under capitalism either perpetuates the oppression of the Palestinian Arab people or envisions a reversal of the terms of oppression, denying the legitimate national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people.

In 1974, the PLO leadership declared its support for the creation of a Palestinian “mini-state” in the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinian left-nationalist leaders like George Habash of the PFLP opposed the mini-state solution, but could offer no alternative other than continued wars between the Arab regimes and Israel. This was premised on the perspective that the Arab regimes could be pressured to fight for Palestinian rights. The reality, however, is that the Arab bourgeois regimes are no less hostile to Palestinian national aspirations than the Zionist rulers.

Protesters in Arab cities have demanded, “Where are the Arab armies?” But when Arab armies went to war with Israel in 1948, it was not to “liberate” Palestine but to carve it up among themselves. And the Zionist leaders were well aware of this fact. In November 1947, Jewish Agency leader Golda Meir had secret negotiations with King Abdullah of Transjordan, who informed her of his plans to take over what was then eastern Palestine: “I want to annex the area to my kingdom. I don’t want to create another Arab State that would ruin my plans. I want to ride, not to be ridden!” (quoted in Dan Kurzman, *Genesis 1948* [1970]). Indeed, between 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the West Bank and Gaza were occupied by Jordan and Egypt respectively. And the Palestinians there remained politically dispossessed and subject to brutal repression.

Stunned by their defeat at the hands of Israel in 1967, the Arab regimes had their authority sufficiently shaken to allow more freedom of maneuver for Palestinian nationalist forces. But the Arab regimes could not long tolerate indepen-

S.F. Labor Council Motion Bureaucratically Suppressed Labor: Defend the Palestinians!

SAN FRANCISCO—In a rare and welcome act of labor solidarity with the besieged Palestinian masses against Israeli state terror, on March 11 the San Francisco Labor Council passed a motion that “condemns the bombing of civilian and political targets, most specifically, but not limited to, the Palestinian trade union offices in Nablus, Palestine and remind(s) the U.S. government that this is both a moral and legal crime.” Noting that the February 17 bombing of the Nablus union headquarters was carried out by American-supplied F-16s, the resolution decried the U.S. for “supplying the Israeli state billions of dollars in arms to suppress the Palestinian struggle for both Statehood and ancestral lands while oppressing and dividing the Jewish and Arab worker for the benefit of national and international capital.”

Introduced by Charles Minster of National Parks and Public Employees (LIUNA) Local 1141, this resolution was an important statement of international working-class solidarity as against the pro-imperialist “national unity” front promoted by the Democrats and Republicans in their “war on terror.” Predictably, it provoked a

storm of opposition from the Zionists, who cited their “close and longstanding relationship” with the Labor Council tops in an article in the *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California* (29 March) and vowed to “undo” the resolution. The labor tops do indeed have close ties to such staunchly pro-Zionist local Democratic politicians as Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congressmen Nancy Pelosi and Tom Lantos.

Describing how the bureaucrats spiked his resolution to the audience at a Bay Area Spartacist League forum on the Near East on April 10, Minster said: “The Democratic Party politicians and the bosses’ politicians called: when they bark, the labor lieutenants snap to. And that’s exactly what happened. I’m sure Pelosi, and Lantos especially who is among the most arch-Zionist in the Congress, probably went rabid and told Johnson: you’d better do something about this, or we’re going to cut off your luncheon dates.” S.F. Labor Council head Walter Johnson told the *Jewish Bulletin* that he “isn’t exactly thrilled” about the resolution, but had to sign and submit it as it had been “taken care of in a democratic manner.” But Johnson &

Co. soon took care of that, overturning the resolution as soon as they could.

Minster reported that an Executive Committee meeting devoted an hour and a half to mapping out a strategy to rescind the resolution. At the Labor Council’s next meeting on April 8, the Executive Committee pushed through a move to rescind the resolution in violation of the council’s own bylaws. After two and a half hours of debate, Minster told the SL forum, “if it was a delegate count, the pro-resolution people won.” But the Labor Council tops got their way by pushing through a per capita vote, according to delegates not one vote each but a weighted vote depending on the number of workers they represented.

For the labor movement to go forward, a struggle must be waged against the pro-capitalist misleaders and for the political independence of the unions from the class enemy, especially the Democratic Party. The urgent need remains for international protest action drawing on the power of the proletariat to demand: Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of all the Occupied Territories now!

dent armed forces operating on their territories. With occasional prodding by the Zionists, the Arab rulers suppressed the Palestinian resistance. In the decade following the 1967 war, *nearly 50,000 Palestinians were slaughtered by Arab governments*, including some 10,000 militants killed by the Jordanian monarchy in the 1970 Black September massacre.

When the PLO came out for a “two-state” solution in 1974, we declared “West Bank Mini-State No Solution,” while acknowledging it as “a very partial

lion in Jordan, 1.5 million in Israel and one million in Lebanon and Syria.

A “Democratic, Secular” Palestine?

While most American left organizations today reject the mini-state solution, the ISO, WWP, the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and others cling to the call for a “secular, democratic Palestine” proposed for many years by the PLO. For example, the ISO’s *Socialist Worker* (12 April) declares: “We must



Le Bolchévick
Palestinian solidarity demonstration in Paris, March 24. Banner carried by our comrades reads: “Defend the Palestinian People! French/UN/U.S. Troops Hands Off the Near East!” Workers action internationally in defense of Palestinians is vital.

and deformed expression of the Palestinian Arabs’ right to self-determination” (WV No. 57, 22 November 1974). Such a statelet under the stranglehold of Israel would have meant an impoverished existence for the Palestinians living there. But what has been on offer as an “independent” Palestine since the Oslo accords would not represent even the most deformed expression of self-determination. At best, it would resemble what former prime minister Ehud Barak offered Arafat at Camp David two years ago: the Gaza Strip and four isolated cantons in the West Bank, crisscrossed by “strategic highways” and surrounded by fortified settlements. This “mini-state” would be nothing more than a bantustan where neighboring states could dump their unwanted Palestinian populations—2.5 mil-

unconditionally support the struggle for self-determination for Palestinians—and fight for a democratic and secular Palestine in which Jews, Arabs, Muslims and Christians have equal rights.”

To begin with, such a state would exclude the millions of Palestinians today living in Jordan, which is a majority-Palestinian country. More fundamentally, while a secular, democratic Palestine may appear to many Western leftists and liberals as a humane, rational solution, it preserves the essential core of the Arab nationalist position, which *denies* that the Hebrew-speaking people constitute a nation with the right to self-determination. Rather, they are to be treated simply as a religious minority.

Consonant with this outlook, the ISO, RCP, WWP et al. describe Israel as a

“settler-colonial state.” Behind this position is the argument that since the Israeli Jews are the oppressors, they have forfeited their own national rights as against the oppressed Palestinians. This argument is made explicit by the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), which declares in a 5 April leaflet, “All Israel is ‘Occupied Territory’!” While speaking of “Jewish workers” and “class divisions within Israeli society,” the LRP characterizes the whole of the Hebrew-speaking proletariat as a “labor aristocracy” and calls for “a single Palestinian workers’ state.” The logic of the LRP position is that if the Israeli working class is unwilling to live in a Palestinian-dominated state, then it has no right to live in the region at all.

This perspective rejects any possibility of winning the Hebrew-speaking workers to a program of *class unity* with their Arab brothers and sisters in a common fight around common class interests against all the exploiters and oppressors of the region. And without that, any talk of “revolution” or national justice is simply empty rhetoric that does nothing to advance the cause of the Palestinians.

The doctrine that an oppressor nation forfeits its right to self-determination has nothing in common with socialism and democracy; it is the ideology of genocidal irredentism. The Zionist state was created by crushing the national rights of the Palestinians. But securing national justice for the Palestinians does *not* mean reversing the terms of oppression and denying the democratic rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. Basic to the Leninist position on the national question—the only consistently democratic position—is that all nations have a right to self-determination.

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

At the heart of the Palestinian question is the impossibility of achieving national justice for geographically interpenetrated peoples within a capitalist framework. Both Palestinian Arabs and Hebrew-speaking Israelis live in and lay claim to a small sliver of land in the Near East. Under capitalism, the exercise of national self-determination by either of the populations will necessarily be at the expense of the other. The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to

continued on page 10

Keep Government Out of Chicago Transit Unions! No to Anti-Union Court Suits!

CHICAGO—In a vivid display of class-collaborationist treachery, the leadership of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 308 has joined hands with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) in a union-busting lawsuit against sister union ATU Local 241. The suit seeks to force Local 241 (bus) to implement the pension provisions of a giveback contract foisted on Local 308 (rail) members last year, after their leadership broke from joint bargaining with the bus drivers' local and the craft unions that represent other CTA wage workers. Continuing anger over that breach of labor unity combined with discontent over the new contract have reportedly fueled opposition to the lawsuit within Local 308.

This lawsuit, however, is not just a break in working-class solidarity. It is an open invitation for the bosses' government to step in and assert control of union affairs. It poses a deadly danger not just to Local 241, but to Local 308 and the labor movement as a whole. Far from being neutral, the capitalist courts, a crucial arm of the state, represent the organized machinery of violence and repression wielded against the working class and oppressed on behalf of those who live off the exploitation of labor. The ruling class welcomes such opportunities to come into the unions as a way to gut their independence and dictate how they are run. *Government, cops, courts out of the unions!*

The revised pension plan at issue holds out the promise of higher pension payments for older workers—if the fund meets “actuarial assumptions”—while curtailing pension benefits for new hires when they retire, in particular denying them hospitalization insurance. The suit also seeks to change voting rules for the pension board by getting rid of bloc-voting, allowing the CTA to get a majority by luring just one union representative to its side. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out why the CTA is so anxious to gain decisive control of the billion-dollar pension plan. With the transit pension fund generally seen as financially healthy, attempts to pilfer the coffers are nothing new.

In 1981, the Byrne administration managed to finagle a “loan” of \$33 million from the plan. In 1983, Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, successfully extended repayment of this “loan” and further looted the pension fund of \$100 million through the passage of HB 1805. This viciously anti-labor

bill, which Washington worked aggressively to push through the Illinois state legislature, also outlawed what remained of the cost-of-living allowance (COLA) and gave the company the right to hire part-timers. When he tried to defend this blatant anti-union attack at a Local 241 meeting in January 1984, Washington was shouted down and driven out by predominantly black bus drivers and mechanics.

Today ATU leaders habitually blame anyone—downstate Republicans, state Democratic leader Michael Madigan, Madigan's daughter—anyone, that is, except Harold Washington, for HB 1805. The trade-union bureaucrats need such “progressives” to sell the lie that the Democratic Party can be pressured to serve the interests of workers and oppressed minorities. Democrats are no friends of labor or black people! They, like the Republican Party, are a party of the ruling class, no less committed to maintaining racist capitalism, just more wily about getting the job done. The capitalist class has *their* parties to administer *their* state. Workers need a party of their own, a party that will fight for all the oppressed—a *workers party*. Instead of trying to ameliorate the racist profit system by reforming the bosses state, such a party would fight for a workers government to expropriate the capitalists and construct a planned economy based on social need.

Local 308's court action comes after a similar action by elements of the Local 241 bureaucracy. Last May, Local 241 First Vice President Richard Stomper filed a complaint with the U.S. Labor Department that led to its takeover of union convention delegate elections (see “Labor Department Out of the ATU,” WV No. 761, 6 July 2001). Simultaneously in Local 308, an “oppositional” newsletter called *Union Watchdog* admitted turning over union material to the attorney general, setting off an FBI “investigation” of alleged corruption in the union (see “Chicago Transit Workers at a Boil,” WV No. 756, 13 April 2001). Through more than two years of contract talks, labor board complaints, arbitration hearings and lawsuits, the misleaders of *both* locals have worked overtime at every turn to head off and defuse an increasingly angry workforce.

Both local leaderships used the binding arbitration clause of the expiring contract—which supposedly outlaws striking—as a club to keep their members

in line. When the contract expired in December 1999, shutting the city down through solid strike action was not only posed *but possible*. Subsequent union meetings were packed with hundreds of angry workers chanting “Strike, strike!” The union tops flat out refuse to wield the social might of this powerful, heavily black union. Their commitment to the no-strike stranglehold of binding arbitration is based on the fantasy that the state can be used to reconcile the *counterposed* interests of labor and capital.

From inviting government intervention to binding arbitration and support for capitalist politicians, this program of class collaboration acts to subordinate the unions to the class enemy. Praising national unity “around shared values” after the attack on the World Trade Center, the ATU International came out in support of the USA-Patriot Act. This law arms the government with the means to jail striking transit workers as “terrorists” if government property—like bus tires—were harmed in the course of stopping scabs! Now the ATU tops lobby for passage of the “Over-the-Road Bus Security and Safety Act of 2001,” which ominously calls for background checks of employees in collaboration with the government! It's not hard to imagine what this means for the job prospects of those, disproportionately black and Hispanic, who've been entangled in the racist, frame-up “justice” system.

These laws underscore the fact that the defense of the labor movement in this country is inseparable from the fight to defend immigrant and black rights. On February 9, the Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League for Social Defense initiated a demonstration in Oakland, California that cut through the “national unity” hoax. For the first time labor was mobilized to flex its muscle in defense of its immigrant brothers and sisters targeted under the U.S. rulers' “war on terrorism.” A solid contingent of over 30 ILWU longshoremen was at the core of this demonstration in opposition to the USA-Patriot Act, the Maritime Security Act and the anti-immigrant witchhunt. This mobilization illustrated on a small scale what a revolutionary workers party would do.

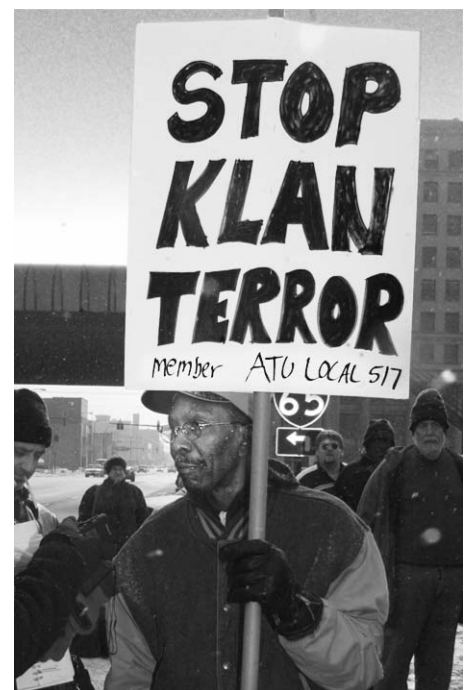
The union misleaders' program of unity with the bosses inevitably divides and weakens the working class, as Chicago transit workers have seen for themselves. After two and a half years, Local 241 is tied up in court, at the state Labor Board and in arbitration—without a contract. CTA craft unionists just got shafted in binding arbitration. And Local 308 members, who narrowly approved the separate settlement last summer (union leaders had to conduct two votes to get it right), are bristling as the company uses it to attack seniority rights under the guise of “rostering” and the “excel program.” What is needed is *one industrial union for all transit workers*.

The trade-union tops' submission to the use of part-time bus operators and multi-tier wage progression only serves to pit old-timers against new hires and undercuts union solidarity. Part-timers remain superexploited by on-call schedules, no benefits and meager wages. The ATU International's *In Transit* (January-February 2002) reports that Local 1700 has signed a contract providing for janitors at the 95th St. Terminal to earn as little as \$6 an hour at jobs formerly done at full union-scale wages and benefits. The CTA is also eliminating union jobs by bringing in misdemeanor convicts to perform “community service” under armed guard. The union must stop these modern-day racist chain gangs! *For full-*

time positions with one scale of union pay and benefits for all transit workers!

Transit workers pay dearly for every giveback by the bureaucracy. They are literally dying on the job. George Blue, a car servicer at the Racine Shop, fell off the elevated tracks where he lay for hours before dying. Because of the company practice of eliminating partners, no one was aware of Blue's accident until it was too late. Supporters of the Labor Black Struggle League were among the many co-workers who came out to Blue's wake.

Far from being helpless, Chicago transit workers could bring this city to a standstill! This integrated union can and should act in defense of immigrants and all minorities against racist capitalism, welding the power of labor to the anger of the ghetto and barrio unemployed. That union members are prepared to fight has been shown by those who have come out in recent years in PDC-initiated mobilizations to demand freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and to stop fascist provocations—most recently when the



WV Photo

Chicago ATU members joined anti-Klan mobilization in Gary, Indiana, January 2001.

Klan threatened to mobilize in Gary, Indiana in January 2001.

The union's potential power is squandered by misleaders who look to the institutions of capitalist rule—arbitrators, courts, Congress, etc. An example is the ATU's upcoming “Lobby Day” to pressure the Democrats in Springfield, which is counterposed to mobilizing transit workers in militant struggle. It's going to take a political fight to oust the current labor bureaucracy and replace it with a class-struggle leadership, one that will break the chains that tie working people and minorities to the parties of the capitalist class. For a workers party that fights for a workers government! Only when those who labor rule will the wealth of society be used to provide decent jobs, good integrated housing and education, safe and free public transportation and quality medical care for all. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • E-mail address: vanguard@tiac.net

National Office

Box 1377 GPO,
New York, NY 10116
(212) 732-7860

Boston

Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441

Public Office:

Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan (Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles

Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239

Public Office:

Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York

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

Public Office:

Tues. 6:30-8:30 p.m.
and Sat. 1-5 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland

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

Public Office:

Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd Floor

San Francisco

Box 77494
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 395-9520

Public Office:

Tues. 6-8 p.m.
564 Market Street
Suite 718

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Toronto

Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
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WORKERS VANGUARD

“War on Terror” Targets Leftists, Muslims

U.S. Troops Out of the Philippines!

Having already dispatched more than 600 U.S. troops, together with combat aircraft, to the Philippines since January, on April 8 the Pentagon announced that it would send 300 additional troops to that U.S. neocolony. The U.S. intervention force, sent to open a “second front” as part of Washington’s “global war on terror,” is the largest single American troop deployment outside Afghanistan since September 11. It is also the first ongoing American military presence in the Philippines since the U.S. abandoned its Clark and Subic Bay bases there a decade ago.

Under the cover of a “training” exercise named after the annual *Balikatan* (“shouldering the load”) U.S.-Philippine military maneuvers, the American troops are on a tour of duty of at least six months, primarily in the southern islands of Mindanao, Basilan and Jolo. This is a region torn by struggles by the oppressed Muslim population and peasant insurgents. A 160-strong contingent of American Special Forces “trainers” has been attached to units of the Philippine Army that are pursuing the Muslim secessionist Abu Sayyaf group, which has been responsible for a number of kidnappings and is currently holding an American Christian missionary couple and a Filipino nurse captive in the jungles of Basilan. In fact, the hunt for the unsavory Abu Sayyaf group is a pretext for intensified military repression against insurgent Muslims on these islands.

The arrival of the U.S. military received the blessings of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and was hailed by the Makati Business Club bourgeoisie, which together figured prominently in the “People

Power” coup that installed Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as president a year ago. Arroyo’s choice of international advisers includes former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani and former Australian prime minister Paul Keating. Her government distinguished itself as one of the more rabid supporters of Washington’s war against Afghanistan, providing access to Philippine airspace and military facilities for U.S. warplanes en route to aircraft carriers and bases in the Indian Ocean. An indication of the upbeat mood among the Philippine rulers is the buoyancy of stock prices following news of the American deployment.

The Philippine oligarchs are hoping that the presence of imperialist troops will help quash social unrest in this country, which is beset by a long-running peasant insurgency, Muslim secessionist rebellion and worsening economic conditions. The American military is reinforcing the Philippine bourgeoisie’s repressive capability by arming and training elite killer units called Light Reaction Companies. The U.S. is also supplying stockpiles of small arms, mortars, night vision and communications equipment, helicopters, transport planes and a naval patrol craft. In return, the Philippines signed the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA). Although its terms are supposedly being renegotiated after it was exposed in the press, the MLSA allows the United States imperialists access to military facilities beyond the period prescribed by the 1998 Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

Washington’s current military adventure in the Philippines is part of a broader shift of forces to the Pacific Rim

February 26 protest, one of many in the Philippines against U.S. troop deployment in name of “war on terror.”



Reuters



AP

region, aimed in particular at aiding the drive to overturn the 1949 Chinese Revolution and restore capitalism. The Taiwan bourgeoisie’s offer to provide the dilapidated Philippine Air Force with two F5E jet fighter squadrons in return for Taiwan’s right to access Philippine air space and bases during training maneuvers is a provocation aimed against the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state.

The latest U.S. moves can also be seen in part as enforcing its interests against its traditional imperialist rival in Asia, Japan, which depends on nearby sea lanes for its oil supply. Not least, the deployment in Mindanao puts the United States in a strategic location to crush social unrest in the region, especially in Indonesia, which has remained highly unstable since student-initiated protests ousted the bloody Suharto regime in 1998. *Smash the VFA and MLSA! No to U.S. bases! For unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution!*

Down With Military Occupation of Mindanao!

Exploiting the fear and genuine outrage resulting from the September 11 bombing of the World Trade Center, the Philippine bourgeoisie has used allegations of ties between Abu Sayyaf and Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda network to turn the screws of repression on Muslims, dissidents and leftists. The number of attacks against leftists increased sharply in the two months after the American troops arrived. The Bayan Muna (Nation First) party, which is politically identified with Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison, said that six of its party workers have been “disappeared” by the army in Luzon. On March 1, para-

military gunmen assassinated Pedro Trabador, the 70-year-old local leader of the National Federation of Sugar Workers in Negros. At the same time, the government resumed its vilification campaign in the bourgeois press against the CPP-led New People’s Army (NPA), calling the NPA guerrillas worse than Abu Sayyaf in order to set them up for liquidation by U.S.-backed killer units.

The capitalist rulers are trying to sell the lie that the imperialist military presence will bring progress to the masses of Mindanao. This resource-rich region, which is a prize for further imperialist exploitation, is noted for the highest incidence of poverty and illiteracy in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the longstanding terror campaign against oppressed Muslims continues unabated. Scores were recently rounded up on mere suspicion of being Abu Sayyaf sympathizers, and hundreds were driven from rural villages by artillery and aerial bombardment. On January 15, at least 17 people were killed and dozens wounded when a rally in Jolo ended in a clash with Philippine Marines. The protesters were demanding the release of imprisoned Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari, who had been ousted as governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and faces charges of rebellion.

Bloody repression in Mindanao and the displacement of its Moro (Muslim) population dates back to the early years of the American colonial occupation of the Philippines, which began with U.S. imperialism’s seizure of the islands in the 1898 Spanish-American War. In 1906, troops under General Leonard Wood, commander of the U.S. occupation force, carried out the methodical slaughter of some 900 Moro men, women and children who

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AFP

Philippine president Arroyo, installed in “People Power” coup last year, carries out vicious repression of leftists, Muslim minority.